THE INTERACTIVE SKIN
Maximizing the Technology of Glass

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ABSTRACT

This paper sets out to explore and define a building skin of the future that will revolutionize architecture, in an important epoch when the human environment enters a new age; a media age. The new building skin takes its root from the technology of glass. However, the technology of glass has out run its predecessors so much that glass has to be redefined. Glass is not glass anymore, but a hermetic skin of the building that is intelligent and mediates weather and human conditions within and without the building envelope. It is an “interactor”. Thus, it is an interactive skin.

As this paper attempts to uncover the latest glass technology in the making of this skin and its impact on architecture and our built environment, it will only be logical to divide it into two parts. The first will focus on the latest technology and research currently carried by many scientist around the world. It will provide an understanding of what is possible and the full potential of the skin. In others words, the first part will provide that palette of colors to allow one to paint the picture of what the building skin of the future might be. In this case, the interactive skin. It is a crash course in glass technology. Without it, it will be like painting and not knowing colors. The second deals with the implications of such an interactive skin in our built environment. It tries to go beyond the established phenomenon of glass as a separator, connector, regular and illuminator of light, drawing itself parallel to the media revolution which has become so realistic in this informative age.

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