INTRODUCTION

The modern era, it is often alleged, has been dominated by the sense of sight in a way that set it apart from its premodern predecessors and possibly its postmodern successor.


All of this leads to more efficient consumption: architecture as a barrier is removed. In fact, the whole legal system is now bent on the negation of traditional architectural elements: smooth ramps, which elide the differences in groundplanes so important to defining the traditional architectural object replace the striation of stairs.


Contemporary architecture no longer seeks to advance the project of modernity but by adhering to a highly visual form of image-making, it ceases to function as a critical investigation to our act of perception. Indeed, we find that the blind minorities are intentionally excluded from participation in this architectural 'experimentation'. Subsequently, they become subjects for the promotion of accessible design, which, on the one hand, improves their mobility but, on the other hand, it offers little to one’s appreciation of aesthetics and may even prove offensive to one’s dignity. The work presented here is not to reject the traditional, historical role of architecture or herald the shift of a new paradigm of inclusive design; instead, like Habermas, we need to reappropriate the modern project in light of its original purpose. Hence, this thesis looks at one aspect which modernity has not achieved - the integration between blindness and architecture.

In my dissertation, I have done research on the sensory perception of a blind person relating to cognitive and behavioural awareness. I have also discovered the tendency of such an individual to perform tasks at a slower and quantitatively different level
(topological-specific and sequential). It led to a conclusion that any architectural
design should employ both non-visual aesthetic and an appropriate formal strategy.\

By using blindness as an allegory on transposing visual imagery to touch and
movement in architecture, by repudiating the excess reliance on the visual principle of
ordering space, I hope to look at the project of modernity in a new perspective, to
which, Rasmussen writes, “understanding architecture, therefore, is not the same as
being able to determine the style of a building by certain external features. It is not
enough to see architecture; you must experience it.”

This thesis, thus, explores 3 themes, given as:

1. to propose an alternative to the visual order of architectural design;
2. to study the characteristics of blind people whose touch and movement are
   highly specialised and how they respond to architecture;
3. to justify the aim of this project to build on a sloping site and how the
   ground condition shapes the scheme with design for non-visual aesthetics
   (touch and movement).