

THE EMERGENT MEDIATHEQUE:
RESPONSIVE GROWTH IN ARCHITECTURE

By

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This thesis enters the dialogue regarding the role of emergent systems in architecture and architectural research by seeking to understand through application the role that self-organizing emergent growth systems can play in the advancement of architectural theory, and how these emergent systems can simultaneously inform and be the product of multiple design considerations, including the application of program, structure, distribution of space, and architectural effects.

This thesis explores the library - or mediatheque - as a vehicle for developing and testing the viability of such a multi-scalar approach to a cohesive and emergent system. Furthermore, this thesis posits that to ensure the survival of the institution of the library – its ability to thrive – as an instrumental component in both the academic and public realms, it must radically shift its overall organizational strategy to synthesize new and old technologies in a novel fashion that allows the strengths of each to amplify one another. The generation of a new architecture and programmatic logic based on emergent system will provide the fundamental spatial and experiential reconfiguration demanded for such a transformation. Emergent systems will guide the the dual processes of spatial and technological reorganization through which the library will be reactivated as a stimulator of research, a catalyst for both academic dialogue and public debate, and as a vibrant center of public interaction.