What happens when predictions of the future are manifested into an architectural vocabulary that results in buildings that are predominately driven by concept rather than function?

The public expects architecture to provide comfort, through shelter and permanence, with its structure, to provide an element of endurance in the face of passing time. But what if architecture is created to capture the ideas from a moment in time, or rather to predict into the future an image based upon the culture of today? Prototype and exhibit Houses of the Future and the progressive experiments at Disney World’s Epcot theme park are efforts that took on the complicated task of creating an architecture of the future, rather than simply an architecture that provokes a futuristic aesthetic, through two different approaches. The Houses of the Future, by nature of being temporary exhibits, prototype models, or even conceptual proposals, have the task of being “moment” architecture that acknowledges its limited physical lifespan in an effort to portray a greater message of the future potential of housing and the domestic model. Epcot’s Future World, on the other hand, was an attempt that originated from a proposal for a utopian city of the future, was meant to create a Center that would continuously be futuristic, meaning that at any point in time, the park would continue to exhibit possibilities of tomorrow’s potential without the limitations of being “dated”.

As time marches on, the concept of the future changes, but manifestations of these predictions deal with the physical realities of time upon an object. The constructed objects that create a future architecture face a very unique preservation threat. In addition to dealing with common effects of time such as structural failure or functional obsolescence, these buildings are more commonly under threat because of their conceptual anachronism, thus requiring an innovative and alternative form of preservation.

The goal of this project is to explore the possibility of design to preserve the ideologies, concepts, and ethos imbedded within this particular type of architecture. The position is to argue the importance of the relationship of form to intangible notions, and to specifically look at structures intended to embody the concept of the future beyond an aesthetic representation of the future. In order to examine the two approaches to architecture of the future and propose a designed preservation strategy, I will argue for Houses of the Future as a unique approach to creating ‘future architecture’ which presented new construction technologies in the context of one day being common place, looking closely at the case study of the Monsanto House of the Future. Additionally, I will propose a designed exhibit in Epcot’s Future World to incorporate the idea of a future within a heritage that was once a dominate theme for Epcot’s Future World,. By reusing the Wonder’s of Life pavilion for the exhibit, currently only open for conventions, I aim to reinvigorate Epcot’s ambitions of capturing continuous predictions of the future by creating a formula for portraying the future within a heritage which would be established by the assimilation of an expandable exhibit for Houses of the Future.