

BIG★BOX

REUSE

JULIA CHRISTENSEN

© 2008 Massachusetts Institute of Technology

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form by any electronic or mechanical means (including photocopying, recording, or information storage and retrieval) without permission in writing from the publisher.

MIT Press books may be purchased at special quantity discounts for business or sales promotional use. For information, please email special_sales@mitpress.mit.edu or write to Special Sales Department, The MIT Press, 55 Hayward Street, Cambridge, MA 02142.

This book was set in Caecelia by Graphic Composition, Inc. Printed and bound in Spain.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Christensen, Julia.

Big box reuse / Julia Christensen.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 978-0-262-03379-4 (hardcover : alk. paper)

1. Department stores—Remodeling for other use—United States. I. Title.

NA6227.D45C46 2008

725'.21—dc22

2008007043

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful that I have so many tremendous people to thank at the beginning of this book. It takes a village, and I am glad that mine includes the following cast of characters.

First and foremost, I would like to thank my family for their enduring support and involvement in this project, especially Becca Christensen, Bill Christensen, Virginia Christensen, Susan Keene Christensen, Betsy Keene Nelson, and Emily Rae Keene. You are all experts on big box reuse.

At The MIT Press, thanks go to Roger Conover, whose wisdom and patience is invaluable. Also, thank you to Kathy Caruso, Patrick Ciano, and Marc Lowenthal.

Thanks to all the innovative big box renovators who took the time and energy to share with me what they've done with the place.

Thank you to each of the individual donors and art collectors who have bought work from this project, the institutions that have invited me to lecture about this project, and the myriad of friends and strangers who have offered couches and Internet connections over the years. Each of these seemingly small acts have collectively propelled and funded the research, resulting in this book. Thanks also to Oberlin College for support.

Thanks especially to the following readers, whose feedback is manifested throughout these pages: Rick Prelinger, John Schlichtman, and Chris Taylor. Thanks also to my friends Christina Amini, Nina Baldwin, and Susannah Slocum, who all read and gave me substantial feedback over the course of this writing.

Thanks to my thesis committee at RPI for helping lay the groundwork, my advisor Kathy High (this one's for Saturn), Tomie Hahn, and Frances Bronet. Thanks also to my friend Matt Coolidge, who acted as my "outside advisor" on the thesis committee,

and who has remained supportive throughout, along with the Center for Land Use Interpretation.

For one reason or another, the following people must also be acknowledged: Anne Barnes, Chris Brown, Nao Bustamante, Carrie Dashow, Lauren Feeney, Fred Frith, Niki Haynes, Cameron Hickey, Penny Lane, Cat Mazza, Jarred McAdams, Branda Miller, Reina Mukai, Pauline Oliveros, Maggi Payne, Rich Pell, Steve Rein, Sarah Schuster, Courtney Scott, Igor Vamos, Gail Wight, Nanette Yanuzzi-Macias, and Adam Zaretsky.

Much of this book was composed while looking out of a certain window in Troy, New York. So I must pay homage to those old buildings, the cracks in the road, the rock bands, the ice cream stands, and the lucky crows (with their excellent point of view).