



# 6

## Multiview Drawings

Multiview drawings comprise the drawing types we know as plans, elevations, and sections. Each is an orthographic projection of a particular aspect of an object or construction. These orthographic views are abstract in the sense that they do not match optical reality. They are a conceptual form of representation based on what we know about something rather than on the way it is seen from a point in space. There is no reference to an observer, or if there is, the spectator's eye is an infinite distance away.

In orthographic projection, parallel projectors meet the picture plane at right angles. Therefore, the orthographic projection of any feature or element which is parallel to the picture plane remains true in size, shape, and configuration. This gives rise to the principal advantage of multiview drawings—the ability to precisely locate points, gauge the length and slope of lines, and describe the shape and extent of planes.

During the design process, multiview drawings establish two-dimensional planar fields on which we can study formal patterns and scale relationships in a composition, as well as impose an intellectual order on a design. The ability to regulate size, placement, and configuration also makes multiview drawings useful in communicating the graphic information necessary for the description, fabrication, and construction of a design.

On the other hand, a single multiview drawing can only reveal partial information about an object or construction. There is an inherent ambiguity of depth as the third dimension is flattened onto the picture plane. Whatever depth we read in a solitary plan, section, or elevation must be implied by such graphic depth cues as hierarchical line weights and contrasting tonal values. While a sense of depth can be inferred, it can be known with certainty only by looking at additional views. We therefore require a series of distinct but related views to fully describe the three-dimensional nature of a form or composition—hence the term multiview.