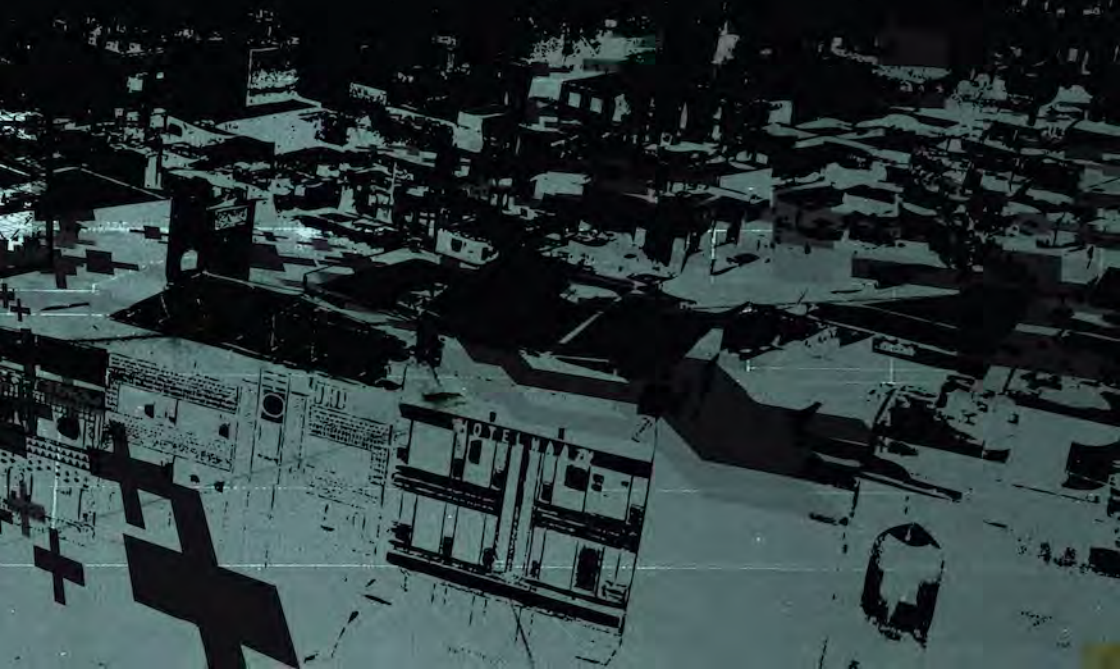# THE FUNAMBULIST PAPERS
VOLUME 1

35 GUEST WRITERS ESSAYS FOR THE FUNAMBULIST
CURATED AND EDITED BY LÉOPOLD LAMBERT

LUCY FINCHETT-MADOCK / EDUARDO MCINTOSH
NORA AKAWI / HIROKO NAKATANI / MORGAN NG
MATTHEW CLEMENTS / NIKOLAS PATSOPOULOS
MARTIN BYRNE / LIDUAM PONG / FREDRIK HELLBERG
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THE FUNAMBULIST PAPERS: VOLUME 01
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INTRO/

WALKING ON A TIGHT ROPE
BY LÉOPOLD LAMBERT

Since 2007, the blog *The Funambulist* tells stories about lines. The line is architecture's representative medium; it creates diagrams of power that use architecture's intrinsic violence on the bodies to organize them in space. If the white page represents a given milieu — a desert, for example — when an architect traces a line on it, (s)he virtually splits this milieu into two distinct impermeable parts, and actualizes it through the line's embodiment, the wall. The Funambulist, also known as a tight rope walker, is the character who, somehow, subverts this power by walking on the line. She is the frail figure moving along the lines between the two towers in 1974. She is the person doing the 'V' with her fingers while standing on the edge of the Wall in November, 1989. And, if she happens to fall, she will find a tall Nietzschean character to say that she can die peacefully because she would die from the danger she dedicated her life to.[1]

This book is a collection of thirty five texts from the first series of guest writers' essays, written specifically for *The Funambulist* from June 2011 to November 2012. The idea of complementing my own texts by those written by others originated from the idea that having friends communicate about their work could help develop mutual interests and provide a platform to address an audience. Thirty nine authors of twenty three nationalities were given the opportunity to write essays about a part of their work that might fit with the blog's editorial line. Overall, two 'families' of texts emerged, collected in two distinct parts in this volume. The first one, *The Power of the Line*, explores the legal, geographical and historical politics of various places of the world. The second, *Architectural Narratives*, approaches architecture in a mix of things that were once called philosophy, literature and art. This dichotomy represents the blog's editorial line and can be reconciled by the obsession of approaching architecture without care for the limits of a given discipline. This method, rather than adopting the contemporary architect's syndrome that consists in talking about everything but being an expert in nothing, attempts to consider architecture as something embedded within (geo)political, cultural, social, historical, biological, dromological mechanisms that widely exceed what is traditionally understood as the limits of its expertise.

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1 Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus spoke Zarathustra*, New York: Penguin Books, 1978

The lines that this book addresses are also the limit between what is acceptable and what is not for an architect, or any other profession for that matter. Saying 'no' is as important as saying 'yes.' Too often, we compromise on issues that cross these lines. In order to give a more concrete approach to this problem, I propose a story:

One of this book's guest writers, Michael Badu, recently told me about the recent situation in which he felt obliged to quite literally say "no." As he was designing the new mosque of Malmö in Sweden, he was attempting to combine the rules of the program with his own ethics.[2] Traditionally, a mosque separates men and women into two sections. For Michael, this distinction between genders should in no way imply that one of them should be better served than the other one. He therefore designed a mezzanine within the main prayer room where women would feel just as much part of the office than the men. Unfortunately, the commission board insisted on the strict spatial separation of genders, and requested that Michael revise his design to integrate an additional room where women would pray on their own. Michael categorically refused and was then laid off from the project.

It probably would have been easy for him to concede a bit of 'ground,' find a compromise and tell himself that his ethics were not affected by this deal. On the contrary, he realized that he found himself at a point where any concession from him would have indubitably implied crossing the line. The line is different for each of us, depending on how we construct a consistent ethical system. Often, our line crosses others' or overlaps with them in a collective sharing of values and principles.

If one question motivates the articulations of thoughts and problems on *The Funambulist*, it surely consists in wondering whether we, as architects, can accept the commission for a prison, thinking that we might be able to improve the conditions of the people who will be subjected to this architecture, or rather simply refuse it. Reform or revolution? In that case, more questions arise. If we categorically reject the idea of designing a prison, what about a bank, a corporate office building, a retail store, a factory, an (anti-homeless) bench, etc.? This question, seen here through an architect's eyes, is the same for any profession that fundamentally affects the lives and bodies of a given society. None of these projects can be politically innocent and intervening on them in one way or another requires a deep understanding of the way they operate. My hope for this book is to contribute to that field of knowledge through the texts of my guests. I would like to thank each of them for having accepted to participate to this first series, and look forward to the next one.

2 See his text below, "The Mosque: Religion, Politics and Architecture in the 21st century," about his experience as an architect designing mosques.
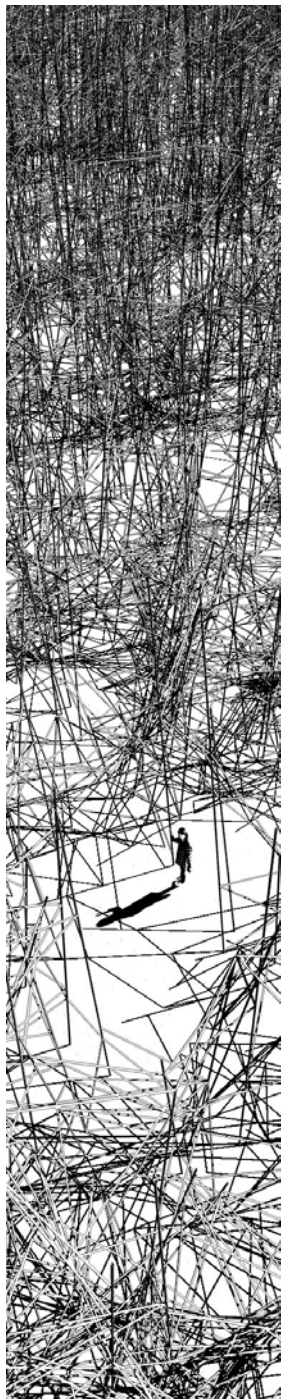
PART 1:
THE POWER OF THE LINE

08/

ENTROPY, LAW AND FUNAMBULISM
BY LUCY FINCHETT-MADOCK

This piece is more reminiscent of a stream of consciousness than a discussion on entropy, analogising the intriguing applicability of thermodynamism in relation to understandings of law, lines, and extant resistances. To speak of exerted energy, that which is wasted in the machinations of a seemingly closed system, is prescient in a time of disruption and apoplexia. Beyond the aesthetic nerve that enticed the writing of this piece on entropy, there are legal and political analogies and extant anxieties that lend an overwhelming familiarity to this encounter with thermodynamic processes. Entropy is a measurement, a method of quantifying energy that is available for unuseful work within a thermodynamic process. Without involving the reader entirely with the science or statistical mechanics of entropy (and within the bounds of what this non-scientific author knows of the phenomenon), entropy is an accumulated inefficient resource that gathers as a machine or engine has reached its 'theoretical maximum efficiency,' the energy thus having to be exorcised, or 'dissipated' in the form of waste heat.

Like a mechanical system that has a ceiling to its useful quantum of energy, the law has limits, too. The law operates as a system of frontiers and in characterized by moments of change and transformation produced with the external or internal occurrence of events. Whether these events come from within or without its legal demarcations, it reaches a point where there are waste subjects that act as the collateral of precedents and landmark cases. Cases offer a clean and detached way of dealing with subjects, a categorisation that allows the human(s) involved to be lobotomised by law's pompous casuistry.

Entropy is where at a given juncture in a manoeuvre of time, a limit of worthy energy is used, and from that point onwards, the forces are irreversibly non-utilitarian. The terms utility and useless conjure depictions of heads downward-looking in hooded tops, abandoned youth clubs and unrequited dreams quarterised into bleeding fists cradling expensive stolen shoes. It is at this juncture of coordinates that those who are forgotten are obliged to force themselves in to the ether's tranquilised conscience. It is here that those who are excluded from

legal and political advocacy, manifest polyps of societal entropy as they exert their 'dropout' souls to highlight the system's inefficiency.

The word 'chav' must never be uttered again. Chav's anger enacts a coagulation of the system reaching outside the ramparts of itself, and yet chavs remain within its categorical property as capitalism's externalised waste product. Chavs, like entropy, are the quantifiers of disorder within our supposed structure of order, whereby the normativity of the system is measured by its very exception – that which is not the norm.

Without stretching too much one's juridical imagination, this smacks of a Schmittean or Agambean 'state of exception,' whereby the rule itself is governed by its moments of removal, such as the functioning of prerogative or reserve powers within a constitutional configuration. The maximum efficiency or limit of a system is reminiscent of the threshold where the legal decision or rule is based upon the existence of those who are excluded from the rights enshrined within the law, those who may be killed but not sacrificed (bare life), and yet they are the very heart of the law. That is where the project of the 'proper' and purity unravels within the law, and entropic impurity is revealed. 'Proper' is the ability to exclude others: "Positive law itself is also conceptually based upon an originating exclusion, decision, or splitting which establishes a realm of law and a realm of that which is other to law."[1] Here are the lines, the liminality where entropy is produced, where it resides and flourishes.   Just like the architect's medium is the reflection on the line, one trajectory becomes two through a divisive splice. Entropy is the original funambulist, the tight-rope walker emancipated by the act of walking on the line.

An efficient system produces less entropy than an inefficient. If a system is in crisis, one can imagine mass polyps and plumes of force that are not work-consigned, operating as a reaction to the balance or imbalance of their surrounding environment. Its manifestation is indicative of constraint and of a structure that is not functioning to its maximum potential, some parts benefiting more from its design than others. Given the wanton fury that has surfaced in the United Kingdom, it is not difficult to see that there is a malfunctioning system whose systemic violence has been answered with the eruption physical violence, an infernal exasperation and charge of mass retribution.[2] These are the polyps of entropic mistrust and disenchant-

1 See Davies, Margaret, *Property: Meanings, Histories, Theories*, London, Routledge, 2007.

2 Having written this piece in the aftermath of the Summer Riots 2011, I have been increasingly interested in the idea of entropy in relation to resistance, and as a result have made it the focus of my research. In a forthcoming publication on the riots, I explore further the thermodynamic property of entropy as a metaphor for aesthetics and politics, law and resistance in the case of the Summer Riots 2011. Taking inspiration from

ment emanating from those who are secreted and stigmatised by the mechanics of a politics of gluttony modele from above. Here forms the entropy of the forgotten *homo sacer* of consumerism, erased by the structures of society as the exception.And yet, *homo sacer* is the rule: the expelled that facilitates the existence of the very few.

Entropic changes take place in the heat, whether of smouldering businesses or not. Within a mechanical organism, entropy never decreases, and thus there is always an overlap, an ever-growing appendage of 'waste' burning, that grows within a failing organism in a parasitic dissatisfaction, irreversible discontent. There will always be the unuseful, non-utilitarian product: that which is either the machine itself or what the machine seeks to create and vicariously manifests as a consequence. It is where limits are reached, boundaries created, and the quagmire within which those who risk their being, reside. But what does this apocalyptic non-usefulness mean? It summons the relevance of Ruskin or Morris and their belief in utility in art, and yet aren't those redundant, ornate, unplanned entropies, the stuff of most beauty? Aren't we overlooking disorderly disruptions and their culprits and assuming their lack?
When in actual fact they are our ignored projection of now and the fundamental direction of our being.

/// **Published on August 15th 2011**

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THE CLEAR-BLURRY LINE
BY DANIEL FERNÁNDEZ PASCUAL

> A good part of globalization consists of an enormous variety
> of micro-processes that begin to denationalize what had been
> constructed as national—whether policies, capital, political
> subjectivities, urban spaces, temporal frames, or any other of a
> variety of dynamics and domains.[1]

Harvesting energy from the centre of the Earth, squeezing drinking
water from maritime fogs, grabbing atmospheric pollution or discov-
ering treasures from sunken ships could soon become sources of
wealth for today's nation-states. But to whom do all these resources
lawfully belong to? The physical boundaries of a country extend far
beyond a two-dimensional geographical border. Surrounding the
ground surface, three areas of sovereignty - waters, airspace and
underground – together with their three dynamic limits articulate
these clear-blurry lines. Where does the sovereignty of a nation-state
actually end? How is that line drawn? Their demarcation is tightly
linked to circulation of capital and economic resources. Regulations
struggle to define clear lines that reality blurs. We are uncertain how
to locate them accurtely. How to demarcate spatial rights on the sea,
the clouds and the magma? The logic of modern sovereignty over
natural resources of a territory is being inverted. The notion of col-
lective natural resources supersedes and reshapes current system
of sovereignty. We experience more and more a shift from the flat
nation-state towards four-dimensional complexities. How does criti-
cal spatial practice operate within this frame?

Let me take the Spanish case as the first example. Spain has
7,880km of seashore. It is not a bucolic or naïve landscape, but the
arena for a clash of interests between politicians, investors, nature
and citizens. Urban booms, corruption, real estate speculation, crisis
and natural disasters constantly pound the seaside. If we fly along
the shoreline of Spanish Atlantic island Tenerife with Google Maps,
some mysteriously blurred spots appear. An artificial fog veils con-
structions and landscapes under the process of urban change. The
proximity to the dark blue deep waters reminds one of the *Terra In-
cognita* or *Hic Sunt Draconis* (Here be dragons) legends that used to

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1 Saskia Sassen, *Territory, Authority, Rights – From medieval to global as-
semblages*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006.

designate unknown territories in Renaissance maps. The uncharted was nonetheless named or represented at that time. But back to the Canary Islands today, there is no apparent technological reason for such inaccuracies. The shoreline, one of the most contested sites for its speculative potential, makes the demarcation of the physical limit between sea and land a constant conflict. As a result, the more geography is censored in the public eye, the better.

Expanding landscapes. Fuerteventura, Spain. 2000 & 2009.

The Spanish Shore Protection Act (Ley de Costas, 1988) draws two static lines: the shoreline, according to the very questionable principle of the highest tide ever recorded in history; and a 100 m offset easement of protection, where no construction is allowed. If any building already exists on the strip, it is sooner or later to be torn down, losing any private property rights. EU authorities, which pushed the law through in order to protect massive coastal developments, are also facing claims from many Northern Europeans with second residences by the shore under potential menace of demolition. However, the radical problem is the very concept of a law trying to give a static boundary to a dynamic flow.

The shoreline puts an end to the land and a beginning to territorial waters, which extend to another offset parallel line 200 miles away from the coast. The domain of international waters constitutes another ideal framework for profitable market exceptions. Constant conflicts arise about where a fishing vessel is operating and from where does a fish shoal actually come. Just as it is impossible to determine the borders of an endless fluid surface, demarcating the line between airspace and outer space is a squaring-the-circle odyssey. International law claims that every state has complete and exclusive sovereignty over its airspace (Chicago Convention, 1944) and that outer space is meant to be international domain, the 'province of all mankind.' There is no official rule for the boundary outline, except for the (beautifully named) Air Law and Space Law. We could also read this as if the atmosphere were no actual space! Gbenga Oduntan brilliantly suggests in his essay *The Never Ending Dispute*, that 'it indeed may be better not to grant sovereignty over the airspace at

all than to grant it without specifying precisely where it ends.'[2] In his text, he goes through different schools of thought arguing for possible versions of this uncertain boundary. It even deals with nations vertically overlapping, as in the case of the US partly controlling the airspace over the Pacific. As a result, sovereignty is turned into a malleable volume that does not always coincide with its horizontal perimeter. If we look into Israeli-controlled bridges flying over Palestinian ground, we then come to the extreme of a border presumably running through the thermodynamic joint between the column and the beams on which the bridge sits, as Eyal Weizman describes in *Hollow Land*.[3]

Censoring the shoreline in Tenerife, Spain. Google Maps 2012

According to other theories, airspace is to aircrafts, as outer space to spacecrafts. The difference isn the line where the flying object loses its aerodynamic lift and centrifugal force takes over (this happens at

2 Gbenga Oduntan, *The Never Ending Dispute: Legal Theories on the Spatial Demarcation Boundary Plane between Airspace and Outer Space*. Hertfordshire Law Journal, 1(2), 64-84

3 Eyal Weizman, *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation*. London & New York: Verso, 2007.

approximatively 53 miles). Here, the machine typology demarcates the boundary of sovereignty.[4] But as Oduntan points out, this rule does not take into account hybrids like the X-15, a manned rocket-powered aircraft able to navigate in both.

Exceptions to Environmentalism: Industrial Harbour Avilés

Another controversial demarcation of the same boundary is determined by the speed of the flying object. Every movement with less than circular velocity has to be considered a flight through airspace regardless of its height. As soon as an object has escape velocity, it becomes a space flight. Then, one could speculate again with hybrid aircrafts accelerating up to 11 km/s just to avoid restrictions of nations denying transit through their airspace.

Apart from the three-dimensional space wrapping a country, sovereignty disputes can even be related to a line itself, like the near-polar orbit. A satellite using a very specific invisible trajectory also turns into an economic resource, where time and duration play a decisive role. In the Bogota Declaration (1976), eight equatorial states claimed rights up to the geostationary orbit (GSO), 36,000 km above their territories. And what happens to the moon? The Outer Space Treaty (1967) — forming the basis of international space law and signed by the United States and other major spacefaring nations — prohibits countries from exercising territorial sovereignty over the moon or other celestial bodies. But it doesn't prohibit resource extraction, according to the same logic as the concept of international waters.

The challenge of global market and resources defining new territorial

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4 Bruno Latour and Peter Weibel (eds.) *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005.

boundaries makes nation-states more and more flexible in their management of sovereignty. As Aihwa Ong pointed out with his idea of flexible citizenship, "in the era of globalization, individuals as well as governments develop a flexible notion of citizenship and sovereignty as strategies to accumulate capital and power."[5] As a result, we face the conflict of developing nations outsourcing mining concessions to foreign investment. The underground of a country becomes the subject of a new conception of post-colonial sovereignty. Who has the right to drill a gas pocket expanding underneath several nations? What happens with oblique drills overpassing surface boundaries? Until now, mining resources simply belonged to the state they are located in, without limit in depth. However, at some point, boundaries at certain depth towards the centre of the earth may play a decisive role, aided by new prospection and drilling techniques. As for today, the 'deepest nation-state' in the world is South Africa (Tau Tona gold mine, 2.5 miles deep).

Beyond using the highest man-built towers to demarcate the aerial boundary of a country, what will be the role of architecture in all this turmoil? We could assist an emergence of fantastic typologies of flying cities, floating settlements and excavated resorts either supporting models of these clear-blurry boundaries of sovereignty, or trying to trick the laws demarcating them. Political powers have been colonising new territories throughout history by means of built infrastructure, be it the vast network of Roman roads, or the Laws of the Indies for urbanisation of the Americas under the Spanish Empire. There is a whole set of possibilities in post-sovereignty space, not in the sense of determining to whom it belongs, since the market logic will take care of that, but in the sense of articulating the space of the boundary as a dynamic flow.

/// **Published on February 21st 2012**

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5 Aihwa Ong, *Flexible Citizenship – The Cultural Logics of Transnationality*. Duke University Press, 1999.

06/

POST-POLITICAL ATTITUDES ON IMMIGRATION, UTOPIAS AND THE SPACE BETWEEN US
BY ETHEL BARAONA POHL & CESAR REYES

> Politics is not made up of power relationships; it is made up of relationships between worlds.[1]

Geopolitical space has always been a conflicted and fragile topic. Borders and frontiers are changing so fast that sometimes one's sociopolitical status can change from "citizen" to "immigrant" or remain "immigrant" much of your life. We are getting used to words like refugee, enclave, war, borders, limits. This critical condition is not a minor problem. The International Migration Report 2006 states that in 2005, there were nearly 191 million international migrants worldwide, about three percent of the world population, a rise of 26 million since 1990. This is one of the biggest political problems we face. In this context, we can see how the political implications of some architects had led them to design what we may call "critical utopias." The concept of dystopia is a critic and utopia is an evocation of a new world to come. This duality was the basis of some radical projects of the 1960s and 1970s, such as Superstudio's Twelve Ideal Cities, their satirical vision of humanity's search for an ideal world, or Archizoom's No-Stop City.

Pier Vittorio Aureli wrote that architectural thought can propose an alternative idea of the city rather than simply confirm its existing condition, and Manfredo Tafuri noted in his 1976 book:

> Architecture now undertook the task of rendering its work "political." As a political agent the architect had to assume the task of continual invention of advanced solutions, at the most generally applicable level. In the acceptance of this task, the architect's role as idealist became prominent.[2]

Recently, Joseph Grima wrote an open letter to President of the Eu-

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[1] Jacques Rancière, *Dis-agreement: Politics and Philosophy*, Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1998.

[2] Manfredo Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia: Design and Capitalist Development*. Cambridge. Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1976.

ropean Council about the social, cultural and political implications of a bridge between Europe and Africa across the Strait of Gibraltar, and is easily to see that this is a kind of uncomfortable proposal for such politicians inasmuch as their political ideas are based on words like "control" more than "bridges."[3] Grima proposes the idea of a city where migratory flows are not an unfortunate yet inevitable reality, but rather the mainstay of its identity. The main issue is to avoid that this new archipelago or infrastructure, capable of linking two territories become the non-place described by Marc Augé. Augé pointed out in 1995 that Europe assumes its full meaning in relation to the distant elsewhere, formerly colonial, now under-developed. This still applies today. Recent events in Norway and the reaction of right-wing leaders are among the many examples of the great political "problem" posed by immigration, as seen by governments of developed countries.[4] Augé also recalls these this kinds of movements, part of the same phenomenon are based on an important criterion of hyper-modernity: individuality and singularity. This makes us think again about the importance of utopias and makes us wonder if the utopic proposals that face this conflicts are helpful nowadays.

> It is a city made only of exceptions, exclusions, incongruities, contradictions. If such a city is the most improbable, by reducing the number of abnormal elements, we increase the probability that the city really exists.[5]

All we have to do now is ask some questions regarding the exclusion and violence, physical and emotional, generated by the 'journey' of migrant people to discover new territories, and relate it to our response as architects. Jean Baudrillard wrote in *Utopia Deferred: Writings from Utopie [1967--1978]*:

> The equivalent of a symbiosis between a few architects and young intellectuals effectively occurred at the end of the 1960s, but at that time, it seems to me that architecture didn't have the façade, the surface that it has today. And since these architects were still unknown, they could take more risks in a certain way, leave their "technical" space so as to see elsewhere.[6]

It's time to think whether we are acting with some political engagement while using our utopic projects to respond to the conflicts men-

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3 Joseph Grima, "An open letter to the President of the European Council,." *Domus Web*, July 6, 2012.

4 The 2011 Norway attacks were two sequential lone wolf terrorist attacks against the government, the civilian population and a Workers' Youth League (AUF)-run summer camp in Norway on 22 July 2011, claiming 77 lives. (source: wikipedia 11/8/12)

5 Marc Augé, *Non-Places: Introduction to Anthropology of Supermodernity.* New York: Verso, 1995.

6 Jean Baudrillard, *Utopia Deferred: Writings from Utopie [1967--1978]*, Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2006.

tioned above. Following Tafuri's and Aureli's idea that architecture can be political and architects can act as political agents, we want to talk here about two projects that go beyond the simple utopian approach to radically confront the immigration problem as a major socio-political and socio-economic change in the last twenty years.

> … we are within a new experience, which is of our times and places us in the new utopian condition; or, rather, makes us face the 'potenza' of utopia.[7]

The *potenza* of utopia mentioned by Negri can be found in the idea behind the N.E.M.O. Project [the Northern Europe Migrants Organisation], an entreprise that enables people to illegally migrate to the United Kingdom. This fictional project proposed an organization able to end immigration and human trafficking problems while creating a kind of non-place in the port of Calais. You're able to book on-line, ask for a fake passport and even request English lessons during the journey. The passenger then arrives in a secret base located in a Second World War bunker near the city of Calais. The facilities are only 42 km off the British coast. The fictional essence of this project is at the same time, a critique of the system and how governments allow human traffic between different countries, and deny the freedom of movement that should be a civil right. Immigration polices that selectively grant freedom of movement to targeted individuals are intended to produce a net economic gain for the host country, but what about people from poor countries that are simply seeking better life opportunities?

The U.S. and Mexico border's total length is 3,169 km (1,969 miles), according to figures given by the International Boundary and Water Commission. It is the most frequently crossed international border in the world, and this has allowed a deep archive of suspect movement across this border to be traced and tagged, mostly of immigrants moving north. The danger of moving north across this border is not a question of politics, but of vertiginous geography. The idea of using new technologies as communication tools was present in much of the avant-garde utopias of the 1960s and 1970s. Ugo La Pietra said about his project *Casa Telematica*:

> ... it becomes a center for gathering, processing and communicating information; a microstructure that can intervene in the information system by enlarging and multiplying exchanges among people, with everyone participating in the dynamics of communication.[8]

7 Antonio Negri, *Empire and Beyond,* London: Polity, 2009.

8 Ugo La Pietra, Sistema disequilibrante. LA CASA TELEMATICA, 1971." Presented in the exhibition "*Italy: the new domestic landscape*" at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

The use of this dynamics of communication to help immigrants to cross the border between U.S. and Mexico can be one of the most powerful ways to revisit past utopias and bring them to the present. As Bertold Brecht wrote, "only the lessons of reality can teach us to transform reality."[9] Ricardo Dominguez uses GPS technology to develop Transborder Tools for Immigrants, and allow virtual geography to mark new trails and potentially safer routes across the desert. As described on the website, The Transborder Immigrant Tool would add a new layer of agency to the emerging virtual geography that would allow segments of global society that are usually outside of this emerging grid of hyper-geo-mapping-power to gain quick access to it with a GPS system.

> We have no need of other worlds. We need mirrors. We don't
> know what to do with other worlds.[10]

If the sixties, the question of the radical nature of utopian architecture, and how can it be utopian — avoiding reality — and still be political, as Peggy Deamer pointed.[11] One of the most interesting projects was to see if architecture can be helpful to avoid living in a non-place or in a heterotopia. It is possible that architecture transform this other world to mirrors where people can search for their own utopia? As Foucault said, "I believe that between utopias and these quite other sites, these heterotopias, there might be a sort of mixed, joint experience, which would be the mirror. The mirror is, after all, a utopia, since it is a placeless place."[12]

We believe that utopias can also be more than an intellectual divertimento. Designer's creativeness should also be oriented to address real challenges faced by humankind as a result of their economic and geopolitical relationships. Given that a world with no borders is still far away from our mental framework, why not get involved and provide solutions for this huge "mobile nation" of 191 millions of inhabitants? A giant mobile mirror reminding that all of us are also immigrants, passing through this life.

/// **Published on August 1st 2011**

9 Bertold Brecht quoted by David Harvey. *Justice, Nature and the Gepgraphy of Difference*. Queensland, Australia: Wiley, 1997.

10 Stanislaw Lem, *Solaris*, Berkley Books, 1955.

11 Deamer, Peggy. *The Everyday and the Utopian.* February 23, 1997.

12 Michel Foucault, *Of Other Spaces*, 1967. trans Jay Miskowiec..

22/

THE MOSQUE: RELIGION, POLITICS AND ARCHITEC-TURE IN THE 21ST CENTURY
BY MICHAEL BADU

/// Definitions:

- Mosque/*Masjid*(Arabic):From the verb *sajda* which means 'to pros-trate.' Therefore strictly speaking, the word *masjid* means 'the place of prostration.'

The act of prostration is a 'part' of the Islamic formal prayer service which is known as *Salaat*. It is curious that the Islamic house of wor-ship is not generally known as *Bait us Salaat* or *Bait ul Ibaadah* (re-spectively, house of formal prayer or house of worship) and that the more utilitarian term *masjid*, derived from the Muslim holy book, the *Quran*, became current. This would seem to suggest a more 'humble' architectural characterisation of this building type than that to which we have become accustomed, a suggestion that history seems to bear out.

The first *masjid* built under the supervision of the prophet Muham-mad at Medina shortly after his flight from Mecca, was a rudimentary enclosure of earth and rock walls, built around a small grove of date palm trees and roofed by their canopies. When it rained heavily, this tree canopy roof leaked profusely, literally turning the earth floor of the mosque into a 'mud bath.'

- Politics: From the Greek *Politika* meaning 'relating to citizens.' This definition carries with it the connotation of 'urbanity' which in turn speaks to us of densely populated settlements and the subsequent need for sophisticated forms of government and legislature. The high and stable population densities that constitute urban settle-ments also foster knowledge transfer and innovation, a process ac-celerated by advances in telecommunications which have increased the 'virtual density' of urban settlements, leading to what we now know as the 'Global Village.' In this sense, 'modern urbanity' as we now know it could be thought of as an Islamic invention. The sul-

tans of southern Spain actively incentivised, perhaps for the first time, the pursuit of knowledge for it's own sake on cross cultural/ cross national basis. It was perhaps the first true international knowledge economy. Translated into Arabic, the treasures of Ancient Greece were safeguarded. Non-Muslim scholars from Aquinas to Scotus engaged in knowledge transfer and capable Christians and Jews found themselves occupying political office in the southern Spanish sultanates along with the ruling Muslim class.

Architecturally, the practical problem of how to locate the *masjid* among a plethora of other building types, was born. To solve this problem, in the true spirit of knowledge transfer, the Muslims turned to the mature Byzantine Christian culture, first in the building of the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem under caliph Abd al Malik, where the dome was co-opted as an ingenious device for bringing natural light into the centre of the necessarily deep-plan mosques, as well as a means to signify the mosque's status at the top of the urban hierarchy.

Then, in Syria, at the Ummayad Mosque in Damascus, the belfry form became the minaret, a high place from where the call to prayer could be delivered to the citizens. Much later on in Spain (Cordoba, Alhambra), we seem to come full circle, back to the *masjid* as the utilitarian place of prostration first encountered at Medina, albeit in a more artistically sophisticated, technologically advanced form.

Mosque design arguably reached its apotheosis under the Ottomans in the 'sphinx' — like constructions so admired by Le Corbusier. The work of the foremost Ottoman architect, Sinan, who was of Armenian Christian heritage, was known to the Renaissance master Palladio and vice versa. Sinan's work was inspired by the Byzantine cathedral, Hagia Sophia.

How things have changed. Today the free movement of knowledge and healthy artistic competition between cultures has been replaced by a battleground where parochialism and paralysis reign. Many contemporary Muslim cultures across the world, apprehending the essential 'poverty' of Modernist architecture — as identified by Venturi & Scott-Brown in the 1970s — sense an apparent incompatibility with their needs, and seek refuge in comfortable pastiche. On the other hand, the 'modernists' have largely absented themselves from this arena, their Modernist conditioning having prepared them for a 'reduced' world from which the unexplained and the intangible have been banished. It could be argued that these attitudes have led to the 'anachronisation' of the mosque as building type; the temple of 'savages,' tolerated more in some 'advanced' societies than in others. My own experiences as client and architect in the procurement of mosques are instructive in this regard. Those who commission the

design of mosques often seek to force the architect to incorporate 'Islamic' motifs such as domes and minarets, even though history shows them to be non-essential, and even if they serve no function. To most architects today, questions of symbolism and meaning in relation to form and function are anathema. What we as clients are presented are decidedly 'un-mosque-like' in character.

An undercurrent of mistrust and fear between modernist architect and Muslim client tends to solidify the intransigence. Muslims are wary that the modernist architect is trying to tell them how to practice their faith through design and modernist architects, like their coun- terparts in legislature and politics, fear that Muslims are trying to im- pose a 'backward' culture on them through the commissioning of mosques. This invariably leads to parochial Muslims and mercenary architects being the only type of client and consultant who can work on a mosque project together.

The fact that there is an element of truth in the assertions of both camps needs to be recognised. For the past couple of years mina- rets have been banned in Switzerland, hijabs in France and for the past century or so, non-Muslims have been banned in Mecca. Re- ports on the activities of Islamic theocracies from Saudi Arabia to northern Nigeria abound in stories of beheadings, amputations and stonings, mostly of women. Parts of the UK have become little more than ghettoes, outposts of foreign cultures where foreign languages are spoken, sometimes exclusively, whilst adherents to the faith are characterised as dangerous deviants in our midst, regardless of their level of integration or education.

We are at an impasse and the question of what can be done to over- come it is as important to the design of mosques as it is to attain socio-political harmony. In this regard, non-Muslim architects and policy makers would do well to consider the attitude of one of the greatest modern architects, Le Corbusier, who as a lover of architec- ture praised both Phidias' Parthenon and Sinan's mosques, minarets and all.

Adherents to the faith must be confident enough to fearlessly engage with the world around them as their Ottoman and Spanish forbears once did. It is no use for Muslims to continue to talk about Avicenna, Averroes or Sinan if they are unable to furnish the world with their likes today. In the realm of architecture Muslim architects must take the initiative and find a way to reconcile Islamic philosophy and cul- ture with the contemporary world. In order to do this, Muslim archi- tects must have a command of both religious and secular knowledge and become intellectuals who can actively contribute to the cultural evolution of both their chosen discipline and their chosen faith and help to rescue them from the grip of self-serving dogmatists. This

is the 'baggage' that I carry as a Muslim architect about to embark on the design of a mosque for the northern European city of Malmo in Sweden. The client is the local branch of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association and money is very tight. I am confronted with the problem; how to design a mosque, appropriately 'lofty' and convincingly reconciled with our age, on a low budget? Like Abd al Malik before me, I have turned to a more mature Christian architectural culture for clues to the solution of this problem.

Robert Maguire & Keith Murray were Christian architects engaged in the design of churches in England between the mid 1950's and 1970's. As committed Christians they thought deeply about the meaning of Christian worship and contributed greatly to the reform of liturgy (prescribed worship) in the Church of England and the corresponding development of architecture. They sought to go back to the 'roots' of formal Christian worship; fellowship, altar, bread and wine. It is said that they did not even believe that worship necessitated built enclosures, but that since these were customary, they should be designed so as to not encumber worship, a philosophy that resonates with the straightforwardness inherent in the Arabic word *masjid*. The first and most potent built example of their philosophy is St Paul's, Bow Common in east London, a 'spare' essay in the common tongue of brick and concrete, topped by a 'Taut-esque' crystalline 'dome.' The whole affair is marshalled by tight geometrical and proportional relationships which raise it above the level of the utilitarian, as does the superlative workmanship. It is said that the young foreman on the project had the habit of dismissing from site bricklayers whom he felt weren't doing a good enough job.

The building positively vibrates with the young post-war architects' seriousness, idealism and passion for interpreting their faith in 'modern' (as distinct from modernist) terms and for using it to mould a better world. The development of modern mosque design, as well as the rejuvenation of the faith of Islam itself, demands the same seriousness, idealism and passion from Muslim architects and other members of a Muslim intellectual laity. The idea of faith in a vacuum is contrary to Islam. Many of its modern problems can be traced to the relinquishing of religious responsibility by 'the Muslim in the street' into the hands of self-appointed clergy. There is a need to rediscover faith as the individual's journey to God and the mosque as it's architectural corollary, 'the place of sajda,' over and above the political and cultural associations that this building type posseses.

23/

NOTHING TO HIDE
BY MARIABRUNA FABRIZI & FOSCO LUCARELLI

Some years ago an eye-catching tv commercial for Elave, a skincare products company, provoked a rather discernible YouTube backlash. The ad showed completely naked laboratory staff technicians wandering, talking and studying in an ethereal-white open work environment, apparently unaware of their nakedness. The literal message was that Elave had no worrying chemicals in its formulations and therefore "Nothing to hide," as asserted through the campaign's tagline.[1]

Curiously enough, in order to promote the safety of the work done in the house, the campaign choose a rather NSFW attitude. Yet it would be misleading, if not puritanical to target the stunt as the usual "sex sells" example: not only is it hard to detect any sex appeal in the perfectly shaved humankind appearing in the spot, but digging deeper could reveal the subliminal and perverse way public institutions and private corporations are hiding work exploitation and new means for profit under pseudo ethical calls for transparency and openness.

Léopold Lambert often claims that violence is inherent in architecture. Architecture, he mantains, is never innocent, because even the simple translation of a drawn line into a physical wall can express the material condition for an oppressive act of territorial division, thus identifying the locus for the manifestation of authority and repression. In the following text we'll try and evaluate a dialectical position: what if contemporary existential violence linked to (first world) immaterial work exploitation is no longer perpetrated through physical borders, but also through the deliberate blurring of marks, limits, lines? What if this physical lack of boundaries finds an existential counterpoint in the societal blurring between domestic and collective space, between work time and life time, between childhood and adulthood?

As the symbol of countercultural 1960's utopia, the exposed, naked body was the most literal expression of the overcoming of Foucault's disciplinary universe and the so-called "paradigm shift."[2] The eman-

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1 The Elave *Nothing To Hide* campaign was developed by Saatchi & Saatchi New Zealand . Filming (in New Zealand) was directed by Brendan Donovan via Prodigy, New Zealand. Post production was done at Images Post .

2 Michel Foucault, *Surveiller et punir. Naissance de la prison* (1975), Par-

cipation from an ordered, paternalistic model where religious, moral or political authority interferes with individual freedom, to a new "individualistic" model where the individual is able to determine his own conception of Good and to decide whatever is worth doing of his own life was, two decades later, instrumentalized by a new managerial discourse that translated the original demand for freedom and emancipation into a reorganization of work around the rhetoric of flexibility and the "construction of the self."

According to post-operaism thinker Paolo Virno, as post-Fordist labor gets dematerialised, capital occupies not only the working hours but absorbs a worker's entire existence, as well as his thoughts and creative desires.[3] Products are not just meant to be consumed but they aim at setting new modes of communication and knowledge. Maurizio Lazzarato says that production is no longer only the mere production of goods, but the setting of new conditions and variations for production itself.[4] As post-industrial capitalism has blurred the boundaries between production, consumption, information and communication, the consumer himself does not merely consume, but is "creatively" engaged.[5]

In modern-day networked society, even individual knowledge is a means for profit. As well as companies' employees, students are subjected to instances of flexibility and are supposed to evolve their capacity of adapting to the changing conditions of work. The pedagogical offer and demand surrenders to the imperative of production and it is subject to the new-management rhetorics of adaptability and elasticity.[6] All this is reflected into architectural's speculation and practice. One example is the project for the new school of architecture at Nantes, built in 2009 after winning the competition by Parisian office Lacaton & Vassal. Following the competition brief's demand for "adaptable, elastic, flexible, evolutive and neutral spaces," the architects provided a literal interpretation of a vocabulary that's more common to corporate workplaces than to public educational institutions. Designed as a Koolhaasian generic plan, this building-manifesto is constructed "like an Ikea," empty like one of the corporate offices in the London City, but visually brutal as a huge manufacturing ware-

is, Bibliothèque des histoires, Gallimard, 1994, and Michela Marzano: *Extension du domaine de la manipulation : De l'entreprise à la vie privée*, Grasset & Fasquelle, 2008

3 Paolo Virno, *A Grammar of the Multitude: For an Analysis of Contemporary Forms of Life*, Semiotext(e) / Foreign Agents

4 Maurizio Lazzarato: *Les Révolutions du Capitalisme*, Empêcheurs de Penser en Rond, 2004

5 Keti Chukhrov: T*owards the Space of the General: On Labor Beyond Materiality and Immateriality in: Are You Working Too Much? Post-Fordism, Precarity, and the Labor of Art* - E-flux Journal, Sternberg Press, 2011.

6 Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello: *The New Spirit of Capitalism*, Verso, 2006.

house whose structures are, in naked concrete and transparent, poly-carbonate skin.[7]

In a comparable shift from the workplace as a disciplinary space (we remember Tati's Playtime cubicles) to the 60's rational heterotopia of the Bürolandschaft, the underpinning conception of the school of Nantes is the reduction to superposing, neutral plateaux. Here, the spatial indeterminacy and the "weakness" of the plan are destined to favour a permanent adjustment, and an eventual openness to third party activities (other than teaching and architectural researching) by private ventures, as clearly asked even by the competition's brief. At the same time, the first years of the school show how the individual students feel disoriented and seem incapable of transforming these huge, empty spaces into a warmer place, a defeat that evokes Fredric Jameson's analysis of postmodern hyperspace:

> This latest mutation in space--postmodern hyperspace--has finally succeeded in transcending the capacities of the individual human body to locate itself, to organize its immediate surroundings perceptually, and cognitively to map its position in a mappable external world.[8]

Educational institutions tend to adopt the spatial rhetoric linked to spaces of manufacturing and immaterial production. In turn, contemporary, advanced workplaces borrow their aesthetics from places that are traditionally antinomic to productive environments. Following the idea that the longer an employee voluntarily stays at work, the more productive (s)he is, a new trend in office design increasingly updates the general model of the open plan into a further iteration, currently sold under the name of "imaginative" or "creative" workplace. Behind this expression lie environments are conceived to adapt to different personalities, allowing to work in a more static or nomadic way, to relax, to gather with co-workers through the integration of facilities like gyms, cafes, yoga and play courts. The best known example is the Google Headquarters (Googleplex) whose entire effort behind the design seems to let people forget that they are entering an actual workplace. More than an interior design, a camouflage operation, that makes the whole complex look as a bizarre collage between a domestic environment, a public city-scape, a playground for grown-ups, a college: confusing the qualities of heterogeneous environments, blurring the line between typologies and the spaces they identify. Geek references and legends, somehow connected to the toponymy, and a generically chaotic and informal space layout, tend to underline the resemblance with a university campus, where you are

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7 Valéry Didelon, "Valeur d'usage, valeur d'image: la nouvelle école d'architecture de Nantes," *Criticat magazine #8* / septembre 2011.

8 Fredric Jameson, *Postmodernism, or The cultural logic of late capitalism*, Durham: Duke University Press, 1991.

expected to work long term hours.[9]

> It's designed almost as a living environment—it's much more like being at a university than being in a conventional work environment.[10]

Googleplex is considered one of the best places to work, according to a number of reports. The rhetoric of the management discourse, employee manipulation through the illusion of self-realisation through corporate work, has found another ally: the ambiguity of space decoration. The inclusion of furniture like lounge sofas, houseplants and lamps, alongside walls' and floors' bright color schemes dissimulates an office typology behind the appearance of an idealized home, cozy and somehow responding to a personal style. "Why head home when everything you need is at work?"[11]

The rhetorics of creativity as a rediscovery of an inner child is underlined by a parallel infantilization of taste and entertainment throughout the campus: round coloured pillows, slides, retro video games. But is not an eternal child someone who needs advice and guidance?

These places mirror the culture of "coaching," increasingly promoted by contemporary management, or the practice of "supporting an individual through the process of achieving a specific personal or professional result."[12] Motivational speeches, devoted to the idea of self respect and the promotion of an individual lifestyle, translate into space organisation and decoration. The workplace itself can guide the employee to an apparent self-realization, while improving his/her own efficiency and better fitting the company's goals. Personalization and apparent freedom of these places coincide with the need for "flexible, evolving spaces": the capacity to adapt to changes in the organic world is a feature easily sold even by the firms which provide the interior design: "Such flexibility is highly significant, since it comes in an age where needs quickly change, technology constantly advances, staff members are added or positions are deleted."[13]

Google promotion of individual creativity, through the creation of a proper complex for its expression, is becoming a model for companies willing to adopt the "Don't be evil" look, while increasing their

9 "Googleplex" is the name of a computer that plays a minor role in The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy. Douglas Adams, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, Crown; 25 Anv edition (August 3, 2004)

10 Jade Chang, "Behind the Glass Curtain," *Metropolis Mag*, 9 June 2006

11 Strickland, Jonathan, "How the Googleplex Works," 04 August 2008. HowStuffWorks.com.

12 "Defining Coaching for Researchers," vitae.ac.uk

13 "New Trends in Work Place Design," maispace.com

employees' productivity and market value. And if a complete make-over is too expensive, why not capitalize on the sympathy factor of "creative" employees glueing 8-bit figures of post-it against the companies windows?

An all-encompassing marketing strategy and the consequent building of brand's identity are increasingly setup through the commercialization of the workplace's *mise en scène*. By breaking down the fourth wall, under the pretense of having nothing to hide, the company focuses on the image of the worker, that smart-naked-playful individual who is supposed to embody the spirit of the company, while becoming its voluntary prisoner.

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BRIEFLY ON WALKING
BY CAROLINE FILICE SMITH

Even tonight and I need to take a walk and clear
my head about this poem about why I can't
go out without changing my clothes my shoes
my body posture my gender identity my age
my status as a woman alone in the evening/
alone on the streets/alone not being the point/
the point being that I can't do what I want
to do with my own body because I am the wrong
sex the wrong age the wrong skin and
suppose it was not here in the city but down on the beach/
or far into the woods and I wanted to go
there by myself thinking about God/or thinking
about children or thinking about the world/all of it
disclosed by the stars and the silence:
I could not go and I could not think and I could not
stay there
alone
as I need to be
alone because I can't do what I want to do with my own
body and
who in the hell set things up
like this.....[1]

As a genderqueer woman and a practicing architect, the realities of how architecture manifests and reinforces dominant social and political power structures [on my body] is inescapable. And while it is fairly easy to find communities of people who would like to speak about the relationships between capitalism/colonialism/imperialism and architecture, the dialog becomes sparse when the subjects of gender, class, and race are introduced. Issues conveniently considered 'special interests' despite the fact that they affect a majority of the population... though because of the social/educational 'cost' of becoming an architect, not much of the population actively designing buildings. And so it is inevitable that these 'interests' will be regarded as secondary and possibly selfish, when compared to the 'larger' demons like unregulated 'capitalist development.'

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1 June Jordan, *Poem About My Rights* from *Directed By Desire: The Collected Poems of June Jordan* Port Townsend, WA: Copper Canyon Press, 2005.

I recently moved from Los Angeles, where I was involved in the *Occupy* movement, to Shanghai. Moving from a city where you have spent the last several months facing more and more visible political/physical oppression, to a city where political dissidents are kept fairly invisible involved not only a political shock to the system but also a good amount of political concession. And then, on a particularly warm day in May, I wore a skirt; and I walked two blocks; and.... nothing. For the first time in 25 years, I could walk down a street without much fear of being: grabbed, followed, whistled at, hollered at, or attacked. For the first time in my life, I had the opportunity to potentially have ownership of my own body while also existing in 'public.'

And so we come to statements like these:

> Architects are called upon to develop urban and architectural forms that are congenial to contemporary economic and political life. They are neither legitimized, nor competent to argue for a different politics or to 'disagree with the consensus of global politics' (as David Gloster suggests).[2]

This statement has already been discussed on the Funambulist.[3] Binary ideologies supported by privileged positions. The concept that changes in social/political policy alone can 'fix' the the deep rooted and systematic oppression of marginalized people is a farce at best. It has rooted itself into all parts of social/political life. Attempting to pinpoint the cause or conversely 'fix' one thing denies entire histories of oppression. As a woman working in a profession where I am often reminded of how much my body does not belong to me, from the constant use of female models as props in renders, the idea that the 'correct' height for all objects is always the average euro-male height, to the development in countries where my 'body' is simply not welcome in most public places; this statement can be easily distilled to: 'sit down, and shut up' or 'if you dont like it, then get out.'

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> There are some areas where, in the nature of our society, personal experience is impossible for the male architect, and feedback from the public unlikely," "I have become convinced that the architect's lack of personal experience and involvement in what he is planning constitutes a real problem here—the more so since I imagine he is unaware of it.[4]

Its fairly simple; I am able to speak about the city, I am even 'quali-

2 Patrik Schumacher, "Schumacher Slams British Architectural Education" in *The Architectural Review*. 31, January, 2012.

3 See the open letter to Patrik Schumacher from the editor *Yes, Architects are Legitimized and Competent to address the Political Debate* (2. February 2012) on thefunambulist.net

4 Scott Brown, Denise. *Planning the Powder Room* Having Words. Architectural Association. 2009.

fied' to design cities, but I am not able to 'be' in a city, or really any place for that matter, navigating the city, much like navigating a building involves a constant negotiation of shifting boundaries, where the psychological becomes physical; where the leers, stares, hollers, and leans are so incessant that you can actually feel the space around you contract as you approach every new potential danger; every trip involving a constant negotiation of the risks involved in running through occupied territories.

We often speak about the urban carpet and the infrastructural patterns of the city, when in reality, the extensive grid does not exist. Instead we get small patches, short bursts of movement, and then you hit the wall. For the streets which do exist in my mental map of available routes, every intersection, every alley, every stairway, entrance, wall, corner, stop-sign, elevator, plaza, stoop, park and bench becomes a moment of potential violence. Every route taken is a careful equation of time-of-day, weather, clothing, shoes, weight of bag, hairstyle, time-of-year, and amount of harassment I feel I can manage at that moment. Always knowing, should anything ever happen to me, my 'body' will be to blame. This sometimes means the path from point A to point B becomes 3 miles longer, or ceases to exist at all. And this is the disconnect, the realization that there is a vast difference between the way we think about architecture/city and the way architecture is lived. The way we design traffic to flow vs the way we move while being chased through the streets. That the intersection is not JUST an intersection, that a glass staircase is not just a design detail [no skirts allowed!] and that a bathroom without hooks is a reminder that although I am expected to carry all this stuff with me, so that my body may continue to remain 'appropriate', no one cares if I have a place to put it.... and at that moment you are reminded of exactly where your body stands on the list of check boxes.

> What does an architect who is accountable to the bottom of the barrel, who can give an account of what that rock and hard place space of choosing feels like, what does that architect imagine and build?[5]

And so I will end with a brief introduction of June Jordans project for Harlem with Buckminster Fuller, entitled "Skyrise for Harlem." A project that is notable not because it is in any way a water-tight fix to the problems of "urban renewal" it was attempting to address, but because it addressed social and architectural issues from a place of action instead of projection, a place of personal experience in a space rather than paternalistic hand-me-downs, and from a place of lived personal/social struggle. This is not to say that an architect can not help a community of which they are not a part, but that no matter

5 Alexis P. Gumbs, *June Jordan and a Black Feminist Poetics of Architecture* Plurale Tantum. 21 Mar. 2010. Web. 03 June 2012.

how many "monoliths for the people" we draw, they will always fail if designed from a place fundamentally lacking in understanding the extent of the cultural/political/and social issues/violence at hand.

> Imagine...how home is impossible when whether you have water depends not on whether you go pump some, but on whether you can convince an absentee landlord to imagine you as human.[6]

June Jordan's and Buckminster Fuller's plan for Harlem addressed three major issues. First: through the replacement of the existing grid with 'psychologically generative' curvilinear streets, they addressed the pattern of the intersection as a pattern of inevitability: a psychological and physical certainty of violence. When the rhythm of intersection after intersection, embeds within itself the knowledge that every quarter of a mile will bring a new "psychological crucifixion," then there is no chance for life outside of struggle. Second: the project proposes highrises be built above, but connected to, existing housing. When the construction is completed, the old housing is removed, releasing the ground to be used as community gardens, playgrounds, etc., thus addressing the problem of 'urban renewal' as urban removal; and Third: the emphasis on creating spaces of personal 'production' to address the lack of social and political control the residents of Harlem had over their own neighborhood.

> As the plane tilted into the hills of Laconia, New Hampshire, I could see no one, but there was no tangible obstacle to the imagining of how this land, these contours of growth and rise and seasonal definition could nurture and extend human life. There was no obvious site that might be cleared for housing. No particular grove nor patch visually loomed as more habitable, more humanly yielding than another. And yet I surmised no menace of elements inimical to life in that topography. It seemed that any stretch, that every slope, provided living possibilities....

> By contrast, any view of Harlem will likely indicate the presence of human life – people whose surroundings suggest that survival is a mysterious and even pointless phenomenon. On the streets of Harlem, sources of sustenance are difficult to discover and, indeed , sources of power for control and change are remote. ..Keeping warm is a matter of locating the absentee landlord rather than an independent expedition to gather wood for a fire. This relates to our design for participation by Harlem residents in the birth of their new reality. I would think that this new reality of Harlem should immediately reassure its residents that control of the quality of survival is possible and that every life is valuable... [7]

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6 Alexis P. Gumbs, *June Jordan and a Black Feminist Poetics of Architecture* Plurale Tantum. 21 Mar. 2010. Web. 03 June 2012.

7 June Jordan, *A Letter to R. Buckminster Fuller* (1969) Civil Wars. Touch-

...but let this be unmistakable this poem
is not consent I do not consent
to my mother to my father to the teachers to
the F.B.I. To South Africa to Bedford-Stuy
to Park Avenue to American Airlines to the hardon
idlers on the corners to the sneaky creeps in cars
I am not wrong: Wrong is not my name
My name is my own my own my own
and I can't tell you who the hell set things up like this
but I can tell you that from now on my resistance
my simple and daily and nightly self-determination
may very well cost you your life.[8]

/// **Published on June 5th 2012**

stone; 1 Touchstone Ed edition (September 1, 1995)

8 June Jordan, *Poem About My Rights* from *Directed By Desire: The Collected Poems of June Jordan* Port Townsend, WA: Copper Canyon Press, 2005

31/

FEMICIDE MACHINE/BACKYARD
BY GREG BARTON

/// **Book**[1]

> In Ciudad Juárez, a territorial power normalized barbarism. This anomalous ecology mutated into a femicide machine: an apparatus that didn't just create the conditions for the murders of dozens of women and little girls, but developed the institutions that guaranteed impunity for those crimes and even legalized them. A lawless city sponsored by a State in crisis. The facts speak for themselves.[2]

So reads the sobering introductory paragraph of Sergio González Rodríguez's provocative *The Femicide Machine*, a recent installment in Semiotext(e)'s Intervention series. The compact primer distills the historical trajectory of entanglement among Mexico, the United States, global economy, and organized crime, delineating the femicide machine's genesis and current stranglehold. The author's journalistic credentials prove invaluable as the text slips in and out of straight reportage. In 2009 there were 164 female homicides in Ciudad Juárez -- 306 the following year -- many by strangulation, stabbing, and gunshots, often involving sexual violence. More than 30,000 have died since the beginning of the war on drug trafficking in 2006, almost a quarter of those deaths occurring in Ciudad Juárez. Often repetitive, urgent, and devastating, *The Femicide Machine* tells a story of extreme capitalism reshaping territory and a processual state-form fostering utterly inhumane machines.

Ciudad Juárez is many cities, as well as our future city: a theatre for war, a node in the global economy, a convergence of the "plutocratic, corporate, monopolistic, global, speculative, wealth-concentrating, and predatory, founded on military machinations and media control."[3]

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1 This text incorporates three or four sentences from *Critical Art Ensemble, Flesh Machine* (Autonomedia, 1998) share alike

2 Sergio González Rodríguez, *The Femicide Machine*, Los Angeles: Semiotexte, 2012.

3 Sergio González Rodríguez, *The Femicide Machine*, Los Angeles: Semiotexte, 2012.

González Rodríguez charts the industrial development of Ciudad Juárez, which simultaneously served as the femicide machine's foundation. What started as a leisure town in the shadow of the United States during prohibition and World War II was rapidly developed by the National Border (1961) and Border Industrialization (1965) programs that propagated maquilas, or manufacturing-assemblies, built with foreign capital and relying on inexpensive labour for operation. As migration exploded, basic infrastructure and health services could not keep pace. The burgeoning outskirts began to dwarf the city-center. In the 1990s, almost half of the population used mobile phones (at the time comparable to Europe) versus 15% in the rest of the country. Far removed from central Mexico and the capital, Ciudad Juárez's 'abject urbanism' emerged as a hostile laboratory.

Standard satellite aerial imagery of Ciudad Juarez (Mexico)

The North American Free Trade Agreement (1994) undoubtedly accelerated asymmetric conditions between Mexico and the US. Along with an unequal distribution of wealth and undervalued labor, lubricated trade laws led to 97% of raw materials being imported tax-free to in-bond plants only to have the product exported back to the US market. Indeed, a frictionless exchange between the two nations ushered in the aforementioned notorious spatial manifestation of corporate control: maquiladoras, vertically-organized industrial parks functioning as containers for a labour pool. González Rodríguez points these out as "bio-political territory par excellence."[4] As industry restructured public space, its neo-Fordist protocols, automation, and just-in-time production conditioned a nomadic and asocial population, a scenario not too dissimilar from the prosthetic instrumentalism depicted in Mexican science fiction film, *Sleepdealer* (2008). The body is on the verge of being placed under new management. The factory is positioned as the femicide machine's 'antechamber' in a passage borrowing Giorgio Agamben's description of the 'camp': "Inasmuch as its inhabit-

4 Sergio González Rodríguez, *The Femicide Machine*, Los Angeles: Semiotexte, 2012.

ants have been stripped of every political status and reduced completely to naked life, the camp is also the most absolute biopolitical space that has ever been realized -- a space in which power confronts nothing other than pure biological life without any mediation."[5]

Keller Easterling reminds us that the maquiladoras "organize a form of labour exploitation that is stable and within the law."[6] In her analysis of special economic zones, Easterling describes a neoliberal culture of multinationals that "prefers to manipulate both state and non-state sovereignty, alternately releasing and laundering their power and identity to create the most advantageous political or economic climate."[7] Despite its high mobility, capital circulates in the built environment through specific regulations. According to David Harvey, "landed capital often requires heavy support from finance capital and/or the state in order to elaborate and build projects" which "freeze (fine-grained) patterns of uneven geographical development."[8]

Post-NAFTA, violence multiplied and currency depreciated. Between 2001 and 2003, an estimated 500 maquiladoras shut down, prompting a mass exodus of the work force. The product of corrupt governing forces/economies/politics remains the marginalization of society and institutional degradation. Organized crime grew in parallel to the new markets opening up, its control reaching 71% of national territory. Furthermore, the crime machine diversified its activities and tactics, rendering it difficult to tell where a cartel ends and a bank begins..

The machine-apparatus is distinct from the state and feeds off its support structures as a self-reproducing parasite, encoding and inscribing.[9] González Rodríguez borrows a description from Intervention series #5 (Gerald Raunig: *A Thousand Machines*) to explicate how the machine "is not limited to managing and striating entities closed off to

5 Giorgio Agamben, *Means Without End: Notes on Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000), p40.

6 Keller Easterling, "The Zone" in *Visionary Power - Producing the Contemporary City*, exhibition catalogue, 24 May-2 September 2007, the Berlage Institute, Rotterdam, p7

7 Keller Easterling, "The Zone" in *Visionary Power - Producing the Contemporary City*, exhibition catalogue, 24 May-2 September 2007, the Berlage Institute, Rotterdam, p81.

8 David Harvey, *Spaces of neoliberalization: towards a theory of uneven geographical development* (Hettner-Lecture: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2005), p78.

9 Brian Holmes applies Michel Foucault's definition of the 'apparatus' to financial markets, writing, "The apparatus is the 'system of relations' that knits together a set of seemingly unrelated elements: 'a thoroughly heterogeneous ensemble consisting of discourses, institutions, architectural forms, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, scientific statements, philosophical, moral and philanthropic propositions.'" Brian Holmes, "Profanity and the Financial Markets: A User's Guide to Closing the Casino," *dOCUMENTA (13) 100 Notes-100 Thoughts No.064*, Hatje Cantz Verlag Press, 2012.

one another, but opens up to other machines and, together with them, moves machinic assemblages…It depends on external elements in order to be able to exist at all."[10] Now that the machines are globally and specifically interlinked with the ideology and practices of capitalism, we can be certain that a hyper-rationalized cycle of production and consumption, under the authority of nomadic corporate-military control, will become the guiding dynamic of the day.

The complicity of rotating characters, criminals, police, government officials, and an 'a-legal old-boy network,' ensures the femicide machine proliferates in Ciudad Juárez, its vestigial evidence in the streets: strewn mutilated bodies, bullet hole-ridden walls, automobile wrecks, electric fences, missing person ads. The contradictory narratives of violence vary by source, be it the state, academia, international organizations, media or art. Some accounts downplay the gendered element of the murders or point to broader machismo and misogyny in the rest of the country. Others portray the deaths as 'crimes of passion' or as the work of a serial killer. González Rodríguez observes, "While drug-related violence can be diffuse in the large cities of consumer nations, it often concentrates at bottlenecks--zones and corridors like Juárez.[11] "Overall, the majority of cases go unsolved and/or unpunished. This amounts to a culture of indifference and an attack on coexistence. When González Rodríguez offers a suite of typologies, the bridge (a valve controlling exchange), the wall (a failed container), and the garbage dump (a developed nation treating as a backyard a developing nation with which it shares a border), it is the garbage dump that is the most troubling. Females are re-signified as objects of refuse and discarded accordingly. In 1961 Octavio Paz identified a cultural denial of personal individuality in Mexico, writing, "woman is never herself…She is an undifferentiated manifestation of life, a channel for the universal appetite. In this sense she has no desires of her own."[12]

/// Exhibition

Many art and architecture practices have negotiated or fetishized the Mexico-US border to differing degrees of success. Past and present initiatives, such as the binational group Border Arts Workshop/Taller de Arte Fronterizo (1984-1997) and Teddy Cruz's "political equator" research, have operated in and between the two countries with a sensitive inclusivity. The InSite biennial straddling Tijuana and San Diego has commissioned major interventions, including Javier Téllez's launch of a human cannonball from one side of the border to the

10 Gerald Raunig, *A Thousand Machines* (Los Angeles: Semiotexte, 2010), p33.

11 Sergio González Rodríguez, *The Femicide Machine*, Los Angeles: Semiotexte, 2012, p70.

12 Octavio Paz, "*Mexican Masks," The Labyrinth of Solitude trans. Lysander Kemp* (New York: Grove Press, 1985), p37.

other (*One Flew Over the Void*, 2005) and Francis Alÿs' journey from Tijuana to San Diego foregoing the Mexico-US border by way of a route around the Pacific Ocean (*The Loop*, 1997). The absurdity of the latter's undertaking illustrates its author's axiom: *sometimes doing something poetic can become political and sometimes doing something political can become poetic*. The lone visual artwork referenced in *The Femicide Machine*, Santiago Sierra's *Sumisión (antes Palabra de Fuego)* (2006-2007), involved hiring laborers to dig 'SUBMISSION' in Spanish from the earth a couple miles west of Ciudad Juárez. Incidentally, this was not far from the burial site of multiple bodies. The gesture is both an accusation and declaration of the subjugation endemic to the region at every level.[13] The choice of a noun form implies and reflects a constant resignation, acquiescence or inertia. Sierra remains a controversial and divisive artist, due in part to his recurrent strategy of remunerating individuals for exploitative purposes: having women in Brazil tattoo a line across their backs in exchange for heroin, paying Cuban men to masturbate for a camera, and employing a worker to live behind a brick wall construction in the gallery. These humiliating transactions implicate the artist, subject, and viewer, as well as the framework that circulates and ascribes market value to such artwork. Unfortunately, we are left with only more description and more critique.

Installation view, *Radical Localism: Art, Video and Culture from Pueblo Nuevo's Mexicali Rose*, Artists Space, 2012. (Photograph by the author)

From March to May, 2012, the New York nonprofit Artists Space hosted *Radical Localism*, which presented work from and affiliated with

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13 see Kelly Baum, *Santiago Sierra: How to Do Things with Words*, Art Journal, Winter 2010.

a community media center on the Mexico-US border, Mexicali Rose. Organized by Semiotext(e) co-editor and writer Chris Kraus, with an accompanying symposium, the exhibition showed Mexicali Rose (founded in 2006 by Marco Vera) as a gallery, workshop, cinema club, radio station, but above all, as a reflexive space in the barrio where children and adults could come together in a creative capacity. Working with local youth, encompassing neighborhood kids and transient teenagers drifting between border towns, the center promotes a form of communal learning as an alternative assembly. The space catalyzes a regional and local intensity and gallery openings frequently turn into block parties. Born out of necessity and a pedagogic impetus, Mexicali Rose demonstrates a prolonged commitment and potent example of the new ways we might organize ourselves.

/// **Symposium**

A symposium, "*The City Machine and its Streets - Anomalous Ecologies*," co-presented *The Femicide Machine* and *Radical Localism: Art, Video and Culture from Pueblo Nuevo's Mexicali Rose* concurrent with the exhibition. The humble event brought together journalists Sergio Haro, Sergio González Rodríguez, and Ben Ehrenreich, and screened documentary and experimental films from Mexicali Rose youth and artist-mentors. According to González Rodríguez, we need to to make inroads in education and information. Likewise, Marco Vera notes that it is easier to critique the media than to create a viable alternative. A bridge, a wall, a garbage dump beget a book, an exhibition, a symposium. If *The Femicide Machine* personifies a para-state acting as a criminal or sociopath, we can imagine instead more productive professional or behavioural possibilities. Similarly, we might reconceive each side of the border modifying itself and the other as a lovers' quarrel. Ultimately, the transborder displays 'temporalities,' 'configurations,' and 'emergent mutations.' What is needed is still the most elusive of all things to conjure, since this circumstance of resistance requires that the unspeakable be spoken and that the impossible be done. Lest we forget the machine's integrity is "complemented by the human element that devised it, keeps it running, and at some point, can destroy it."[14]

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/// **Published on July 17th 2012**

14 Sergio González Rodríguez, *The Femicide Machine*, Los Angeles: Semiotexte, 2012, p.32.

09/

BECOMING FUGITIVE: CARCERAL SPACE AND RANCIEREAN POLITICS
BY MARYAM MONALISA GHARAVI

The police regime is endowed with the power of ordering space. This text stands at the crossroads of space, policing, and visual perception, as I articulate a Rancierean aesthetic dimension of the political and political dimension of the aesthetic. Jacques Rancière is a useful and rich source for this tripartite investigation because in his writings, aesthetics is not only about art, and politics is not only about the state. Politics, as laid out in *Disagreement*, is that which always takes a stage and takes a theatrical formation, putting 'two worlds in one world.' This staging often overturns sense-making at the level of language alone, relying also on microlevels of sensation and sense-making (we inherited the word 'aesthetic' from the Greek *aistheta* 'perceptible things'). In *Dissensus*, Rancière mentions to art works that focus on matters of space, territories, borders, wastelands, and other transient spaces, matters 'that are crucial to today's issues of power and community.' To provide a framework to the concern with visibility and emancipatory politics, my bifocal reading takes into account (1) the work of the police, seen in near vision, and (2) the work of politics, seen in distant vision.

/// Circulation and the Sensible

I deliberately choose the word fugitive in the title but it would also be appropriate to say 'outlaw.' In modern usage, an outlaw is someone who has broken the law and remains at large—a fugitive of the law who flees the scene of crime. Historically speaking an outlaw is someone deprived of the benefit and protection of the law, since the state can choose to ban a product or a person from its protection (e.g. outlawing a drug, an outlawed terrorist group). If you traced the notion of security (sine cura or 'without care'—you are without care for yourself because the police or state care for you) from Plato to Seneca to Machiavelli to Benjamin and so on, it would disclose someone both deprived of the state's care as well as someone who trespasses the legal system. There is also a sense of degradation

that is coterminous with this figure of a degraded outlaw in a degraded space (Rancière's 'wastelands and other transient spaces') so far removed are both from genuine concern for collective action or citizenship. The loaded term 'degradation' is derived from the Latin etymon *de* ('down, away from') and *gradus* ('step'), commonly associated with a lowly or destitute state, or a decline in intellectual or moral integrity. But I am most concerned with the implicit movement involved in de-grading—going or wandering—and how this relates to Rancière's use of circulation in the police order. In other words, outlaws run, they are almost defined by their movement—but Rancière might say that the movement and circulation of the space in which they run is already a circulatory lattice, or in the nightmares of Hollywood, a matrix.

> Thesis 7: Politics stands in distinct opposition to the police. The police is a distribution of the sensible (partage du sensible) whose principle is the absence of the void and the supplement. In this matching of functions, places and ways of being, there is no place for any void. It is this exclusion of what 'is not' tha constitutes the police-principle at the core of statist practices.[1]

In this law of distribution, the police divide up the sensible. (One might question Rancière—and I certainly would—about whether the absence of the void in this schema is as total as he claims.) It might sound clunky to restate it this way, but what is at stake is a division that defines the modes of perception in which it is inscribed. The spatial formation closest to this description and one I will pick up again shortly is the grid. What follows from this is an invocation of the void, with Rancière reminding us that the police regime disavows ruptures, seams, sutures, gaps because the police is a horizon or landscape of continual continuity. It hates cleavages or what Rancière calls bringing politics into being by separating it from the police.

We can return to the outlaw's degradation of the law. Imagine that the law is a sensory fabric (Rancière: *fabric of the sensible*), and the fugitive has pulled a thread or left a hole, as we glimpse in this startling passage from Derrida's *Force of Law* essay:

> The admiring fascination exerted on the people by 'the figure of the "great" criminal,' (die Gestalt des 'grossen' Verbrechers), can be explained as follows: it is not someone who has committed this or that crime for which one feels a secret admiration; it is someone who, in defying the law, lays bare the violence of the legal system, the juridical order itself. One could explain in the same way the fascination exerted in France by a lawyer like Jacques Verges who defends the most difficult causes, the

1 Rancière, Jacques. *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*. Trans. Steven Corcoran. London: Continuum, 2010.

most indefensible in the eyes of the majority, by practicing what he calls the 'strategy of rupture,' that is, the radical contestation of the given order of the law, of judicial authority and ultimately of the legitimate authority of the State that summons his clients to appear before the law.[2]

Two observations here: the first is a proto-Rancierean notion of dis-identification. You secretly admire the person who has disidentified themselves from the police regime or juridico-legal order or state. Second, in laying bare the sheer violence of this order and moving away from it (de-gradus), the grid or matrix that was there to begin with is revealed. To paraphrase both Rancière and the French litiga-tor, becoming a fugitive involves disidentification and a strategy of rupture.

I think that *Thesis 7 (the police)* and *Thesis 8 (politics)* are sibling commentaries on the spacio-legal order so I have paired them here.

Thesis 8: The essential work of politics is the configuration of its own space. It is to make the world of its subjects and its operations seen.[3]

Police intervention marks itself not only in interpellating individuals (Althusser's 'Hey, you there!') but something that appears so obvi-ous we generally do not notice it at first: 'Move along! There's noth-ing to see here!' From the perspective of visual studies one could add: We (the police) are the ones who can see, but you must keep your eyes forward and move along. Politics, in contrast, is involved in transforming the space of circulation into a space for the appear-ance of a subject, and making subjects (Rancière: 'the people, the workers, the citizens') appear. I pause to note it because this is not the commonsensical understanding of visibility. Politics involves the appearance of a claim or dispute over how the sensible is distributed while the police regime demands that you keep on moving, without the pensiveness necessary to make a claim.

/// Carceral Formation in Hitchock

In Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window*, the photographer and newly wheelchair-bound Jeffries (James Stewart) watches his Greenwich Village neighbors through a pair of binoculars. Significantly, his proxy in the film is Thomas J. Doyle, an old friend and co-pilot during Jef-fries' World War II days, now a lieutenant police detective. One ob-ject of Jeffries' daily viewings is the songwriter he watches intently, framed by Hitchcock in a gridded window. In fact, one need not look

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2 Derrida, Jacques. *Force of Law: The "Mystical Foundation of Authority."* Cardozo Law Review 11 (5-6). Trans. Mary Quaintance. 1989: 921-1045.

3 Rancière, Jacques. *Dissensus: On Politics and Aesthetics*. Trans. Ste-ven Corcoran. London: Continuum, 2010.

very far in Hitchcock's universe for the grids or lattices as modular spaces that are already ordered. The opening credit sequence of *Psycho*, designed by Saul Bass, is a highly useful overture of the carceral form.

Still from *Rear Window* by Alfred Hitchcock (1954)

Another example is Bass's design for the opening credits of North by Northwest. Around thirty seconds into the sequence the thick outlines of the skyscraper's grid dissolve into the window frames, at once deflecting the prison-like vertical and horizontal lines and augmenting the reflection of the city onto the building's glass surface. The glossy, mirrored surface of the glass acts as an uninterrupted sensory fabric, in contrast to the strategy of rupture that follows Roger O. Thornhill (Cary Grant), a Madison Avenue ad executive, as he flees from a case of mistaken identity that threatens to kill him.

Is there ever a way out of the grid? *Thesis 7* delivers an emphatic no, however, the celebrated crop duster sequence of North by North-West provides an unparalleled opportunity to visualize strategies of rupture beyond the so-called unavoidable void.

If policing is authoritative empowerment in ordering space, there is a way that Thornhill's taking shelter within the corn stalks — a restoration of the right to see without being seen, which is usually only within the realm of possibility of the police — acts as a protectant. The aircraft tries to literally 'smoke him out' (think of the implications of President Bush's pronouncements on Osama bin Laden) until he re-exposes himself to their field of visibility, but ultimately, the aerial seeing-machine self-destructs.

But we can move beyond material grids into structures of surveillance—beginning with one of its first systemic modern uses with profound implications on the present day—that relied on less obvious forms of visualizing criminalization.

/// Suffragette Surveillance—Policing Beyond the Grid

Images of suffragette surveillance from the National Portrait Gallery, London.

In the first decade of the 20th century, Scotland Yard detectives procured their first photographic cameras, which they used to covertly follow suffragettes. It is no surprise that the verb 'surveil' is synonymous with following; the women's circulation to and from their homes and loci of political gathering were duly tracked. The pictures were compiled into (gridded) ID sheets, much like how we still imagine police photo profiles today despite advances in digital storage, for pa-

trolling officers. We can infer from their oblivious gestures and facial expressions that the women did not appear to know, at least initially, they were being secretly photographed. However, the photos from the National Portrait Gallery in the UK reveal one significant exception. Evelyn Manesta (No. 10), one of the Manchester suffragettes, apparently 'refused to pose for a picture [so] a guard was brought in to restrain her in front of the camera' (Casciani). The arm wrapped around Evelyn's neck was removed upon special instruction to the photographer so that the photo would appear 'less controversial.'

The violence of surveillance could not be made more visually intelligible as in this instance of a phantom ghost arm — later removed via whatever means of rudimentary Photoshop were available at the time — that physically restrains the police subject.

/// From Cary Grant to Oscar Grant

Anyone who follows domestic currents of police brutality in the U.S. will be familiar with the next case. In the early morning hours of 1 January, 2009, as a sizeable number of New Year's revelers were shuffling between the cities, a fight was reported on the Bay Area Rapid Transport (BART) train from San Francisco to Oakland. As noted by Reclaim UC:

> In Bayview, the T-Third MUNI line functions as a gateway to the rest of San Francisco. Especially for youth and others who don't have access to cars, it's the primary path toward downtown and by extension to the rest of the MUNI grid that crisscrosses the city. Guarded by armed police officers who, we now know, are ready and willing to use their weapons, the Bayview MUNI station operates as a militarized checkpoint that serves as a form of population control, regulating the flow of primarily black youth into but most importantly out of the neighborhood.[4]

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In the police search for young African-American men, Oscar Grant was detained by several policemen including Officer Johannes Mehserle. While witnesses reported no evidence of Grant resisting arrest — an unlikely scenario given that he was restrained on the ground in a prostrated pose — Mehserle stood up, drew his gun, and shot Grant in the back. Mehserle later reported that Grant yelled, "You shot me!" and another witness heard, "I got a four-year old daughter!"

This event is not particularly unique, however, not unlike the Rodney King case, it was captured on multiple video recording devices and watched hundreds of thousands of times. Video shows one officer hurrying toward Grant, punching him in the face several times minutes before he was shot. His family also alleges that he was thrown

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4 *Segregation, Public Transport, and the Murder of Kenneth Harding. Reclaim UC*. 25 July 2011.

against a wall, kneed in the face, and so on. It is presumably at this moment in the most horrendous day of his short life that Grant picked up his mobile phone and called his girlfriend Sophina Mesa twice to tell her he was being abused.

Image taken by Oscar Grant released from court and posted on Indybay.org (June10)

Despite overwhelming evidence and public outcry to the contrary Mehserle was ultimately found guilty only of involuntary manslaughter (for which he served less than a two-year term, and now walks freely) because his defense attorney claimed he had intended to fire his Taser, not a pistol. The juridical argument for his release came down to the instrument of shooting and how Oscar Grant was shot. (In North by Northwest there are several methods deployed by the airplane to 'shoot' Cary Grant's character, simultaneously the less powerful and more exposed of the two.) We know that there were many witnesses and bystanders that filmed the Grant event as it was taking place, beyond the regular BART cameras at the station. Police even chased people after the shooting in order to stop filming and confiscate cameras. One of the extremely rare things that happened in the Oscar Grant shooting is that Grant took a photo of Mehserle just before he was shot. I emphasize this rarity because it was intentional, unlike, say, war cameramen who unwittingly film their own deaths. The photo also shows Mehserle reaching for his holster with a strong right arm. Not only does a Taser weigh far less than a handgun—and ample video evidence exists showing no ambiguity as to which side of his belt this seasoned officer reached—the photo shot by Grant verifies it.

Returning to the term with which I began — the fugitive — it might

seem in Hitchcock's world that we are always already being cared for, always gridded and surveilled in an architecture of original sin. On the other side, there is something equalizing about the status of being fugitive. We are all cared for but a condition of possibility remains: any of us could create rupture. We are used to seeing the fugitive as an emergency or state of exception. There is an important ordinariness that the Cary Grant sequence and Oscar Grant incident show. In other words, the conceptual and material grid is a space of both incarceration and care. We have come to see gridded, diagonal structures as 'natural' to urban planning, though there is nothing that affords them naturalness *a priori*. Who can even say they are 'better' or 'best' structures without asking the question of better or best for whom?

Moving beyond Rancierean paradigmatics and toward Rancierean emancipatory politics, one may say that if there is a cleavage between aesthetics and politics, it is that in Hitchcock, we are left with image *qua* image, watching the iconic moment of an anthropomorphized plane chasing Cary Grant in the comfort of our home (one of my former film professors used to joke that you could watch Hitchcock with your friends while eating popcorn, or study him seriously, but at least you have the choice). Even with Grant's face in the dust, we know that he will arise, escape, prevail, and ultimately wrap his hands around the waist of a Hitchcockian ice blonde. There is no ambiguity about the iconic moment of Oscar Grant's shooting; he too is both the subject and object of a look within the police regime. With Oscar Grant, history will remember more than just an image of a black man hunched over on concrete. It will also remember that man pointing a camera back at the police.

/// **Published on August 25th 2011**

02/

MY DEAR FRANCIS... WHAT KIND OF PHOENIX WILL ARISE FROM THESE ASHES?
BY NIKOLAS PATSOPOULOS

> Don't look at the mud in my feet with disgrace, it only means I am escaping. Don't look at my ragged clothes, they are only sign I am free.[1]

The recent developments in Tahrir Square in Egypt and the Indignados in Spain followed by the London riots and the Syntagma Square uprising in Athens have forced me to revisit this quote. Albeit it is not mud anymore, in this fully "developed" corner of the world, but yellowish tear gas dust, just as the holes in the clothes have converted to rips from excessive police violence. Someone might ask, why is it any different now? Protests and demonstrations have been occurring non-stop, well after the "end of history" had been declared in the beginning of the 90's. Many of them are even more violent and oppressive than the ones I listed.

The answer is that, up to this day, there has always been a counterbalance to this game of power. A safety limit existed setting the rules and the extent of what was allowed and what was considered excessive. At the very beginning, there were the neighboring city-states and countries. After that, following the concurrent advancement of trade, the task of balancing fell onto the shoulders of other continents or even newly discovered faraway lands. Then it was time for the political opponent, the Soviet Union, to play this role. Eric Hobsbawm has all too well explained all that.

Nowadays the crisis has reached a new singularity. It is cannibalizing itself. This is the strategic difference that we can feel today. We don't have to be very close followers of David Harvey's work to realize that the system in which we are living is closing in on its limits. Human rights are being nullified in a heartbeat and market shares are the tune to which countries dance, indifferent to the repercussions on their citizens.

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1 Jamaican saying from the slave trade era.

> Even though freedom can run against itself, lines of flight will still open up in this ambivalence; Suffering can be productive, but it can never be revolutionary; Only excess, overflow and power can be revolutionary.[2]

The de-socialization of the analog life brought us remote relationships through digital social networking. This remoteness enhanced the dissolution between the social strata and the political function of the system. Shortly after the beginning of the 21st century, the economic market discovered a new fueling system, debt. In essence, market economy became debt economy of debt . Debtocracy became a distorted version of democracy. We live in the aftermath of this economy.

> We have to fight for the right to invent the terms which will allow us to define ourselves and our relations to society. We have to fight for these terms to get accepted. This is the first right of a free person, and also the first right that an oppressor will refuse.[3]

It has been left to us to decide if we will try to understand and smooth out the bumpy ride of dissolution or fight for its complete overtaking. Crises are a crucial ingredient in the capitalist recipe. Previous systemic crises on the "long 19th century" and "short 20th century" were different from globalised version of our world. Nations and populations have to find solutions on a local and a global scale simultaneously. This essay focuses on another aspect of the current crisis: the complete lack of obvious solutions.

In this era of multiplicities and conjoining disciplines, politics has long lagged behind and maybe it will be timely for it to finally catch up. It is generally accepted that time is and will always be of the essence in these matters, but the same time that is quickly running out, can now acquire attributes of historical importance.

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We can safely assume by now, that we can recognize most of our ghosts and that we do want to discard our self proclaimed heroes. We really can be the ones we have been waiting for, as Slavoj Žižek has argued. Single or multi-headed directive monsters face in terror the solitude of abandonment. The left has lived with these symptoms for at least 30 years and it yet has not produced a defined solution. So might I safely assume that since there is no solution, there is no problem?

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2 Antonio Negri, *Insurgencies: Constituent Power and the Modern State*, translated by Maurizia Boscagli. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.

3 Stokely Carmichael & Charles V. Hamilton, *Black Power: The Politics of Liberation in America*, 1967

Despite disparate aims and personnel of its constituent members, the underground is agreed on basic objectives. We intend to march on the police machine everywhere. We intend to destroy the police machine and all its records. We intend to destroy all dogmatic verbal systems. The family unit and its cancerous expansion into tribes, countries, nations, we will eradicate at its vegetable roots. We don't want to hear any more family talk, mother talk, father talk, cop talk, priest talk, country talk or party talk. To put it country simple, we have heard enough bullshit. […]Rotation and exchange is a keystone of the underground. I am bringing them modern weapons: laser guns, infrasound installations, Deadly Orgone Radiation. […] We will be ready to strike in their cities and to resist in the territories we now hold. Meanwhile we watch and train and wait.

I have a thousand faces and a thousand names. I am nobody I am everybody. I am me I am you. I am here there forward back in out. I stay everywhere I stay nowhere. I stay present I stay absent.[4]

Where does architecture fit in all this? As Bernard Tschumi once stated, architecture can never be self referential. It has to mirror what is going on around it. As an example of this situation one can easily refer to the early 20's in the still forming Soviet Union and its social experimenting. The groups of ASNOVA, OSA and the rest of their constituents set off for a magic journey that had a completely unpredictable outcome. They did not know what they wanted, they only knew what they were moving away from, as Moisei Ginsburg stated with utter confidence in his response-letter to Le Corbusier:

History confronts us with problems that can only have a revolutionary solution [paraphrasing Marx] and, however feeble our resources, we will solve them no matter what.[…]We are making a diagnosis of the modern city. We say: yes, it is sick, mortally sick. But we do not want to cure it. We prefer to destroy it and intend to begin work on a new form of human settlement that will be free of internal contradictions and might be called socialist. […] And all this will be possible not by smoothing out the contradictions with which the modern capitalist system is riddled, but by creating new forms of human settlement more worthy of the future.[…]We are aware that we have yet to find the solution to this very difficult problem. But we cannot refrain from posing it, we cannot refrain from trying to solve it. That is our duty, the duty of architects who would like to become the architects of socialism.[5]

In that exact historic time and space, architecture came face to face with problems that were not even conceived until then. The profit margin dissipated, leaving room for clear thoughts and liberated dialectic among the lucky participants. A handfull of them broke off

[4] William S. Burroughs, *My Mother and I Would Like to Know*, Evergreen Review Reader #67, June 1969

[5] Letter from Moisei Ginsburg in Sovremennaia Arkhitektura, 1930.

even further away and started calling for a completely different form of human settlement. Two of them paid with their lives… Can we really imagine an architect today standing firm between his spatial and political ideas and the threat of losing his life?

Nobody can really presuppose how the architectural world will deal with the current situation. Some might have thought that the greening of everything possible could be the next best thing, a trend even, for the profession and the academia. Still, environmental consciousness is only one of the things that we will have think about. In reality, the situations that we might be called to face in the near future might be as a grave as they can get. A whole structure set up on profit margins and carrier expectations will most probably come crumbling down. What will remain of it is a metaphysical mystery of sorts…

> What constitutes Mendeleev's great achievement is that he was the first one to have the courage to leave gaps in the table instead of trying to enforce artificial closure to it…[6]

The above comment by Manuel De Landa might be the finalizing point of this text. In short, sometimes not having the answer can be equally good and creative. The most important thing is to recognize the situation and allow for the timely gap-filing whenever possible.

The reason why this essay deliberately avoids coming into certain conclusions is exactly the very essence of it. Every reader is called to reach his own conclusions and thoughts out of the posed problems and opportunities. We have learned to live with multiplicities and gaps. Our newly defined digital world showed us the way to make the best out of it. It is high time to let go and maybe understand that although we have managed to reach a very high technical level as a civilization, not all can be mastered by us.

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As an answer to Jean Baudrillard's question, not only nobody knows the kind of phoenix but in all probability nobody wants or can know either.

The real issue is what this kind certainly is not going to be…

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6 Manuel de Landa, *A Thousand Years of Nonlinear History*, New York: Zone Books, 1997.

34/

MOVEMENT AND SOLIDARITY
BY ZAYD SIFRI

Momentous changes in the organization of society only occur infrequently. From memorable instances of thorough upheaval, social movements reap the fruit of the past and cultivate their own traditions. In the recent past the comparison between Israel-Palestine and Apartheid South Africa has become a convenient gambit for many solidarity activists in the United States and elsewhere. There are countless reasons for the popularity of this specific example and of course it is not the only material activists rely upon. The South African struggle, however, has been underscored as a successful model for international solidarity with the ongoing anti-colonial battle in the Eastern Mediterranean. For evidence of this, we can look at how the term *apartheid* has almost seamlessly permeated the progressive vocabulary for describing Israeli regime's treatment of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza. Looking at Israel-Palestine solidarity through a South African prism offers insight into the actors, values, and politics involved in building a movement on an international playing field. Fundamental to an effective conceptualization of a global solidarity model is the inevitably complex relationship between local, Palestinian and Arab actors, and activists based primarily in the United States.

In broad historical terms, both countries not only share a history of being European settler-colonies, but also did not experience decolonization at the same time as most of the Global South in the 1950s and 1960s. Others who missed the wave of independence during that era are the Portuguese colonies in Africa — Mozambique, Angola, Guinea-Bissau, Sao Tome and Principe — , which achieved independence from an impoverished yet violent regime in 1975, and the current pariah, Southeastern Africa Zimbabwe, in 1980. With the regimes of Antonio Salazar and Ian Smith relegated to the proverbial trash-bin of history, we are left with the South African mode of decolonization to be considered alongside Israel-Palestine. South Africans gained their independence in the form of the termination of the apartheid regime, the freeing of Nelson Mandela, and the triumphant return of the African National Congress to the country.

One element of significance for Palestinians and their friends in this

equation is the timing of the tremendous events in Southern Africa. Specifically with regard to the current solidarity movement, the end of apartheid is a relatively recent event that many can remember. Few ,of course, remember the Algerian War of Independence, but some at least have a concept of that enormous event in history. The apartheid example, on the other hand, has the capacity to inspire an approximation of the lived emotions tied to such massive transformations in the fabric of a society, even if those transformations are experienced through television and newspapers on the opposite side of the ocean.

In that sense, the biggest continuity for solidarity activists in looking to South Africa as a model is the presence of a global solidarity movement in Europe and the United States. In both cases, social forces in the United States have tried to pressure their own elites for a change in foreign policy. Furthermore, these solidarity movements are part of a cherished tradition of grassroots anti-imperialist and anti-war organizing that aims to make the imperial elites accountable to their citizenry. These movements have been driven by the principle that they do not support their country's actions internationally and support the self-determination of peoples, among other principles. This is not to be overly general, but rather to underscore that this sort of internationally minded solidarity movement has its own moral compass, style of tactics, and set of political conditions at home.

Subsequently, the parallels drawn between the two cases rarely have something substantial to say about, for example, the Palestinian factions' relationships with the African National Council. Or the geographic similarity those entities share in having waged guerilla style revolutionary struggle from neighboring countries, Mozambique and Jordan respectively. It seems to be completely reasonable to not regularly engage with these details of regional history if you are trying to build a global solidarity network from the United States.

Both South Africans and Palestinians are, by chance, blessed among their fellow nations in the Global South, with the existence of left-leaning actors in the United States and Europe directly interested in helping them achieve the goals of their struggles. Activists in the United States are becoming more knowledgeable about the Palestinian struggle for self-determination and their access to information on the subject is slowly improving. Although their numbers are marginal, there are institutions, for instance, the progressive Church, that can arrange for someone in northern Georgia to meet a Palestinian.

This being said, the Palestine movement currently lacks certain elements that were commonplace for the anti-apartheid movement in the United States. Congress passed a comprehensive anti-apartheid act in 1986. Other pieces of legislation were passed even earlier, in

the 1970s. As early as the 1970s, there were politicians in the United States who took positions against apartheid. To some extent, it was socially and professionally acceptable on an institutional level, to take stances against Apartheid. Unfortunately, no such environment exists yet vis a vis Palestine today.

Somewhat responsible for the absence of a public, center-left predilection in the United States towards Palestine is the dreary political atmosphere in Palestinian communities in historic Palestine and in the camps in neighboring countries. Until the end of the Apartheid era, South Africans engaged in massive strikes. In fact, we see that tradition continuing in the mines of South Africa today. This was an immense push on behalf of Labor. Without it, independence would have certainly not been achieved. In historic Palestine—not to disregard the decades of anti-imperial and national organizing that preceded this in the Arab world—the parallel mass mobilization against Zionism happened in 1987 with the First Intifada. In fact, the tactic of consumer boycotts became widespread among Palestinians in the occupied territories during that era. But the Palestinian national leadership—specifically Yasser Arafat—made arguably the worst decision any statesperson could have made in that scenario. Instead of pushing for a victory when he had leverage to negotiate, he capitulated to Israel and the US behind the backs of not only his people but also many of his political advisors and comrades.

The Oslo Accords were the straw that broke the camel's back with regard to the functioning credibility of the Palestinian Liberation Organization. Palestinians have historically agreed on the legitimacy of the PLO as their sole national representative. Today, however, the PLO is utterly dysfunctional and not representative. There are some valiant ideas to implement a Palestinian election but the calls for this are coming from corners that lack sufficient reputation, credibility, and capacity to mobilize Palestinians. At the very least, they acknowledge the PLO resembles something of a stubborn old uncle who cannot be ignored.

On the other hand, there are parts of a movement that have not sufficiently hashed out their position with regard the PLO. Perhaps they have not made that information public or do not have a position at all. Yet they have a strong relationship with much of the solidarity movement in the United States and play a dangerous game of claiming that they represent a consensus among Palestinians. How they got any such credibility without talking to the PLO—not that the PLO needs to be consulted for everything—is a mystery. If they could clarify that, it would probably be a challenging but positive step forward—on the level of an internal discussion—for themselves and the solidarity movement.

Being forthright and transparent about politics is a goal in its self, if

the intention is to create a liberation movement built on universal ethics. Leon Trotsky knew this when he opened the Tsar's archives to the public. In this act, Trotsky revealed to people in the Levant the Sykes-Picot deal, which partitioned much of the Arab world into something resembling the states existing there now. Of course, no one expects a solidarity movement's Palestinian liaison to ever be in that position. Yet, insisting on accountability as a universal principle, which is not only applied to activists in the United States, is necessary politically and ethically.

Before Apartheid was toppled there had been decades of educational work in the United Sates. South Africans as well had been visibly protesting Apartheid for decades. Recreating these historical conditions in Israel-Palestine right now is unlikely. At the same time, historic Palestine's neighboring Arabs have been engaged in a battle that is transforming the region. From the United States, expanding our scope of vision and supporting those movements when possible can have a substantive impact both domestically and internationally. After all, the Palestinian national movement was created in the refugee camps of Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Egypt.

/// **Published on October 16th 2012**

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OPEN STACKS
BY LIDUAM PONG

The banned book was carefully wrapped in Canson gray paper, which had a subtle relief of horizontal lines. Because it was surrounded by a few decoy books published in the DDR, and tucked away in a small shelf in my parents' room, itself tucked away in the mezzanine level of a minuscule apartment in Havana, it was easy to miss it entirely, unless you were a twelve-year-old with literary ambitions. I knew there was something special about this particular book because it was not downstairs with the others, because it looked and smelled foreign, and because my mother had told me I was not allowed to read it. All I knew about it was its mysterious title: 1984. I liked to imagine that in its forbidden pages one could find ancient prophecies for our city for that year, which had just passed not that long ago, or maybe for the entire island, perhaps the universe. One morning, when I had finally mustered the courage to steal it from its spot, I was disappointed to discover that it had disappeared. From that moment on, whenever we would visit anyone's house, I made a habit of inspecting their personal libraries looking for these mysterious annuals — secretly hoping for 2000, and a glimpse into the distant future — but I never found any such books.

As I grew older, I understood that there was an entire catalogue of books that I was never to casually find on display on people's bookshelves, or at the depleted stacks of the National Library, or in any other public library in Cuba. At around the same time, I also understood that "the terrible circumstance of water in every direction" confirmed the clear separation between inside and outside, the island and the world, *cubano* and *extranjero*, and that there seemed to be an expansive world abroad where certain books, which were considered "ideological diversions" by our leaders, were allowed to be published and distributed more or less freely.[1] Unless there was someone from that world willing to stash banned books in their luggage and bring them to our side of the buffer zone, there was an entire universe of literature that I was never going to read.

1 "The terrible circumstance of water in every direction," Virgilio Piñera, "La Isla En Peso: Obra Poética," *Marginales 187, Nuevos textos sagrados* Barcelona: Tusquets Editores, 2000..

Of course, books are small objects and people are creative. Just like the black market thrived in Havana for many things that were otherwise unavailable, foreign books, magazines and videos were passed from hand to hand, "below the radar." These items would, at first, enrich the privileged private stacks of people with friends abroad who had some special way of bringing them into the country, such as a contact in a foreign embassy. From there, they would make the rounds of the intellectual circles, eventually reaching the hands of anyone with enough curiosity and guts to risk reading a banned book. Since all public libraries were unanimous in their embrace of the official point of view, and watchfully reflected such ideology in their open stack collections, the concept of the "public" library was gradually dislodged from the physical institution, with its corresponding building, to take on a more portable format. Through informal lending and copying, the new "public" libraries of Havana began to be carried all around the city inside backpacks, purses and briefcases, with the more problematic titles wrapped with the cover of an official magazine as way of disguise. Even though there were no catalogues, people knew what books were circulating by word of mouth.

Once the public library becomes an idea, a group of books inside a bag, the rules of the "circulation desk" become, literally, those of circulation around the city, a circulation that falls under the scope of surveillance of the neighborhood vigilantes organized by the Revolution Defense Committees (CDRs, which have chapters on every city block), the Revolutionary Police, and the State Security. But once they are free from the confines of the bookshelf, these books manage to disseminate like pollen, carried diligently by the bike-riding citizenry, to be ultimately enjoyed and discussed away from public view.

In February of 1998, in a speech during the International Book Fair in Havana, Fidel Castro declared that "there [were] no banned books in Cuba, just no money to buy them ." Upon hearing such an interesting remark, a couple from the province of Las Tunas, Berta del Carmen Mexidor and her husband Dr. Ramón Humberto Colás, decided to put such statement to the test by opening their personal library to anyone interested in reading books and magazines that could be considered "enemy propaganda" by the state. With this, they began the Independent Library Project , which spread all around the island, with numerous new independent libraries opening in the homes of people willing to take the risk of being accused of being political dissidents. These libraries, often named after prominent Cuban scholars, scientists or writers, occupied the most unexpected spaces inside already crammed houses and apartments, and soon claimed the attention of international organizations, many of which began to send donations of books and other materials. By 2009 , there were around 200 of these libraries all over Cuba. It should be noted that many of these independent librarians have been subjected to ha-

rassment, persecution, confiscation of materials, and in some cases, long prison terms. Mexidor and Colás, who lost their jobs and their home as a consequence of their activities, had to leave Cuba in 2002.

The Independent Library Project marked a return to a more or less formal space (in the sense of a postal address) for borrowing unsanctioned books, even if these new spaces were often limited to a corner in someone's living room. This return to the shelf allowed for a better organization of effort and materials, including the donation of books and magazines, which would come from many different sources, including neighbors, relatives abroad, and foreign embassies who were interested in these cultural spaces. It also made independent librarians easy targets of attack by the "official" librarians, who accused them of treason, of undermining the Revolution and of being financed by foreign interests. The origin of the books, however, should not matter as much as the fact that there is even a need for these underground libraries to exist.

The fact remains that, in response to official censorship, the institution of the "public" library in Cuba moved away from the control of the state, and instead aggregated around people's desire to disseminate and pursue information, whether in the form of unorganized lending from hand to hand, or in the form of independent libraries run by private citizens . The growth of these informal libraries continues to take place in a fluid manner that clashes with the rigidity of the state and provides the public with the pleasure of reading and the benefits of critical thinking. These libraries, while lacking the traditional prestige of a dedicated building, or the backing of official institutions like universities or governments, provide a much needed alternative to the official discourse. At least in these independent spaces, banned books don't have to be wrapped in paper anymore.

/// **Published on July 10th 2012**

13/

A VISIT TO THE OLD CITY OF HEBRON
BY RAJA SHEHADEH

In the 1980s when I was still involved in defending land expropriation cases before Israeli courts, I used to make weekly trips to Hebron. I would leave Ramallah at eight in the morning and be in Hebron by nine. Now it is a different story. Only Israelis can get from Jerusalem to Hebron in fifteen minutes driving through two tunnels dug in the hill underneath the Palestinian city of Beit Jalla. Palestinians are barred from these. They have to circle around expanded Jerusalem going through Wadi Al Nar (the wadi of Fire) where they have to wait for hours at one of the notorious army barriers, called the Container Checkpoint.

Last spring the Israeli Minister of Education Gideon Sa'ar, made a plan for Israeli students to visit the Old City of Hebron. The veteran Israeli journalist Gideon Levy compared these to the annual visits Israeli students make to Auschwitz, which in his view "bring back thousands of teens who have learned nothing about the danger of fascism, who have heard nothing about morality, humanity and the slippery slope on which a dangerous regime might put down a complacent society. Just more and more blind faith in strength, xenophobia, fear of the other and inflamed passions." He feared that in visiting the Tomb of the Patriarchs in Hebron "during the visit, a curfew will be imposed on the last Palestinians left in the neighborhood…no one will show them what is around them. No one will tell them what happened to the thousands of people who lived near the tomb."

After an absence of many years I decided to visit the Old City of Hebron. I did so with some trepidation. The Jewish settlement in the heart of the Old City where 400 settlers live under the protection of 1500 Israeli soldiers has a reputation for violence and irrational behavior.

The Old City of Hebron is one of the best preserved Mameluke cities. It was planned according to Islamic tradition and customs. The public spaces were a variety of winding streets and piazzas leading to semi public alleys, often passing through archways underneath dwellings,

to semi private courtyards, sometimes topped by a cupola, leading in turn to private dwellings. It was divided into quarters, each referred to as a hara or mahalla, giving residents a sense of security and belonging. These quarters are traversed by a network of relatively wide main streets leading to public squares, worship places, government buildings, schools and souks. These consist of two or more rows of shops, with a stone platform in front of each for display purposes. Each two rows are separated by a stone-paved street, which was often covered by an arcade with openings set in its roof to let in the sunshine and allow for air circulation. Ceilings are usually vaulted or cylindrical, while roofs are flat with a slight tilt for rain water evacuation. The Market square includes a set of linear bazaars along both sides of the streets. Alleys link the piazza to the main road. Each market has a gated entrance, which would be locked at night and guarded by watchmen paid by the shop owners. For many years it was the commercial center that served a population of 220,000, including Hebron and its surrounding villages.

Market Street in Hebron (Photograph by Léopold Lambert 2010)

Until 1987, Hebron's old town, where 35,000 Palestinians lived, was a major tourist attraction. What I saw on my visit was a deserted city with eighty percent of shops closed. Some of their shut doors were overgrown with climbers of various sorts. In most parts, over 75 percent of the houses had been evacuated. I walked through its attractive souks, and all I could see were the occasional settlers scuttling about and Israeli soldiers, heavily armed, prowling the streets and manning the checkpoints.

When I got to the gold market, I could see that the gates that had once secured it were now open. I looked up and saw a netting overhead. It was put there to protect the occasional passerby from the missiles of rubbish the settlers who were living on top throw down on

the street. Conspicuous amongst the refuse was a plastic doll, pros-trated over the netting, once a play thing that must have belonged to an innocent child, now used as a projectile to frighten and insult those Palestinians who might be walking in the alley, and drive them away. Who would venture here to buy gold from a souk where they might be injured by dirty objects thrown down from the windows of the Jewish settlers living above. Without work, the gold shops, like hundreds of others, began to relocate, until none of them were in this market. I moved carefully, lest the netting with all the debris it was carrying collapse over my head.

But how did it come to this? How did this once vibrant city come to be practically deserted? The deceit began in the spring of 1968, a year after Israel occupied the West Bank when a group of supposed "Swiss tourists" under the leadership of Rabbi Moshe Levinger booked into Hebron's Park Hotel. This was the beginning of the Jewish settlement inside Arab Hebron. In 1970 the Israeli govern-ment gave permission for the establishment of Kiryat Arba north of Hebron. Then in spring 1979 settlers occupied Hebron's Hadassah Building. Menahim Begin, the then prime minister said "there will be no squatting and no seizing of houses in Hebron, and there will be none in Tel Avi either.. they have to be expelled." But expelled they were not and their numbers increased. The "three islands of Jewish revivalism in the heart of the city," were described by the journalist. David Richardson, in an article in the Jerusalem Post in 1983, as "the source and training ground for the most uncompromising Is-raeli drive to reclaim all of Judea and Samaria" (i.e. the West Bank).

The recent history of the city is marred by a number of bloody inci-dents culminating in the pre–dawn massacre of 25 February 1994 when the settler from the nearby Kiryat Arba, Baruch Goldstein, killed twenty–nine Muslim worshipers and wounded more than one hun-dred others in the Ibrahimi Mosque.

Over the past decade, the city endured one of the longest most dev-astating curfews imposed by the Israeli army on any city in the occu-pied West Bank, lasting for a total of more than 377 days, including a period when it ran non-stop for 182 days with short breaks to enable residents to obtain provisions. During more than five hundred days, the Israeli army imposed a curfew that lasted for a few hours up to an entire day. The justification given for all this extreme action was "se-curity." The real reason was to help the settlers expand and connect their three settlement points together and with the nearby settlement of Kiryat Arba.

As a result of all these actions, the Old City of Hebron, a vibrant centre for trade and commerce serving a population of 220,000 Pal-estinians from Hebron and its surrounding villages, has come to be

known as H2, home for 400 illegal Jewish settlers living in 3 points each comprised of a building or small group of adjacent buildings traversing the city and connected to each other by a contiguous road open only to their traffic. This strip, stretching from the Kiryat Arba settlement in the east to the Jewish cemetery in the west, is separated from the rest of the city, and the army controls and restricts entry of Palestinians to it.

H2 is an extreme case of an Israeli settlement. The people living here are not representative of the Israeli public. They are more orthodox, more extreme, more callous and in fact despised by most Israelis. But without the support of the institutions of the state their zealotry would have gotten them nowhere. It is the state that offers them services, subsidies and protection. No defensive claim has ever been made of the military significance of this settlement. Its right to exist is based   purely on a religious claim. This is the city where the tomb of the Patriarch can be found. Because of this singular fact the city, as it exists, this ancient beautiful world heritage, must be destroyed and replaced by one exclusively for these orthodox Jews who believe they have a God-given right to "return" to it.

In this sense H2 is a microcosm of Israel itself. Until today Israeli politicians appear to be incapable of conceiving of another way of life for their country in the region of the Middle East than as a fortress state with a strong army living by the gun in an area of millions of Arabs with whom Israel makes no effort to construct bridges, communicate peacefully, learn their language, read and enjoy their poetry and integrate amongst them. The only language Israel knows is that of force, power and violence.

36/

CITY, SPACE, POWER: LAHORE'S ARCHITECTURE OF IN/SECURITY
BY SADIA SHIRAZI

/// Casualties of War

Lahore today looks like a city at war. One of the greatest unacknowledged casualties of the United States' "war on terror" has been the cities — and citizenry — of Pakistan. The US invaded Afghanistan in 2001 to oust the Taliban from power in response to the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center.[1] In 1985, sixteen years prior, President Ronald Reagan equated the Taliban *mujahideen* who had defeated the Soviet's in Afghanistan with "the moral equivalent of America's founding fathers."[2] This presidential stance has obviously changed since. In 2008 the US committed another surge of troops to Afghanistan due to the continued presence of the Taliban in the region. Pakistani military operations were waged in parallel in the Northwest regions of the country bordering Afghanistan. Since then, Pakistan has seen a particularly stark backlash within its borders as a response to its continued collaboration with its close ally.[3] Militants within Pakistan have retaliated by targeting police and security sites in cities throughout the country. Lahore is just one unsung casualty of

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1 This essay is not an inquiry into the invasion of Afghanistan or its efficacy — it is now the longest ongoing war in American history — but is focused on the effect it has had on one particular city in Pakistan.

2 President Reagan actually hosted the *mujahideen* in the White House where he announced to the press with the men standing before him their likeness to the founding fathers by saying "These are the moral equivalent of America's founding fathers." Metaphorically speaking of course because they were dressed much as the Taliban dress today – vintage *mujahideen*. Eqbal Ahmed, *Terrorism: Theirs and Ours,* Speech given at University of Colorado Boulder, 12 October 1998.

3 A contentious parallel policy of the US's War on Terror has been to conduct raids and drone attacks within Pakistan, violating the sovereignty of the country and further straining the relationship between the two nations. While Pakistan publicly condemns drone attacks, it has also been reported that the country secretly shares information with the US and/or allows drones to operate from their army bases with the consent of the Pakistani army, according to cables leaked by Wikileaks. The situation is complicated to say the least.

the war that links Lahore and New York City across disparate geographies, through the legacy of US policy and Pakistani collaboration during the Cold War.[4] As Eqbal Ahmed presciently said: "These are the chickens of the Afghanistan war coming home to roost."[5]

Lahore is renown for its food and its inhabitants' penchant for pomp. It has been described as "the city of people who love unconditionally, without reserve, the 'heart of the Punjab.'"[6] Unlike Karachi, its more populous southern rival, it is neither regarded as particularly violent nor cosmopolitan in the popular imaginary.[7] The writer Mohammad Hanif describes: "Half a dozen people are killed on an average day: for political reasons, for resisting an armed robbery, for not paying protection money, and sometimes for just being in the wrong spot when two groups are having a go at each other. If the victims don't belong to your family or your neighborhood, or if you are not carrying out the killings, you are not likely to hear the gunshots. On television, you'll catch a glimpse of ambulances…and you'll thank God that it was a relatively peaceful day."[8] Lahore has not historically experienced such incidences of daily violence and was instead wearier of attacks on its religious minorities that intermittently punctuated its past.

Beginning in 2008 Lahore experienced a wave of retaliatory attacks that were both unprecedented in scale and frequency.[9] The attacks

4 Eqbal Ahmed on this topic: "The reason I mention it [jihad] is that in Islamic history, *jihad* as an international violent phenomenon had disappeared in the last four hundred years, for all practical purposes. It was revived suddenly with American help in the 1980s. When the Soviet Union intervened in Afghanistan, Zia ul-Haq, the military dictator of Pakistan, which borders on Afghanistan, saw an opportunity and launched a *jihad* there against godless communism. The U.S. saw a God-sent opportunity to mobilize one billion Muslims against what Reagan called the Evil Empire. Money started pouring in. CIA agents starting going all over the Muslim world recruiting people to fight in the great jihad. Bin Laden was one of the early prize recruits. He was not only an Arab. He was also a Saudi. He was not only a Saudi. He was also a multimillionaire, willing to put his own money into the matter. Bin Laden went around recruiting people for the *jihad* against communism." Eqbal Ahmed, *Terrorism: Theirs and Ours*, Speech given at University of Colorado Boulder, 12 October 1998.

5 Eqbal Ahmed, *Terrorism: Theirs and Ours*, Speech given at University of Colorado Boulder, 12 October 1998.

6 Ismat Chugtai, *"Lihaaf," City of Sin and Splendour*, (India: Penguin Books, 2005), 174.

7 It should be stated that these two things are not necessarily related. Despite the increase in violence, Lahore has not, unfortunately, become more cosmopolitan.

8 Hanif continues: ""And just like any corner shop owner or cab driver, a writer needs a bit of peace and quiet to keep working." Mohammad Hanif, "The Good Life in The World's Most Violent City: Sweet Home Karachi", The New Republic, 14 September 2012.

9 These were in retaliation for Pakistan's anti-Taliban military operation in Swat and other provinces that is perceived as occurring at the behest of the United States. "Taliban Commander Hakimullah Mehsud said the

were in response to Pakistani military operations that were perceived as occurring at the behest of the United States. The seemingly incessant bomb blasts that escalated form 2008 through 2010 gave rise to a public discourse of fear, anxiety, and paranoia, with a sense of incomprehension as to the reasons for the chosen sites of violence and dismay at their human toll. The repercussions of these blasts are now so interwoven in the daily experiences of the city's inhabitants that youth particularly cannot remember – nor imagine – the city otherwise. The attacks have given rise to what I describe as Lahore's architecture of in/security, which is reshaping the contours of the city as well as the way its inhabitants thread through it. This has continued despite the fact that since 2010 these attacks have abated. Bomb blasts today are no longer perpetual, and yet in effect they persist in the urban psyche and endure through the markers of securitization that populate this considerably altered city. It is increasingly difficult to gauge safety in Lahore, to situate the reality of lived experience against the symbols proliferating in the city that continue to mark it as unsafe.[10] The Lahore High Court in February of this past year even ordered the provincial government to remove security barriers and apparatuses obstructing the flow of traffic in front of administration and police headquarters throughout the city. The police and senior officials have refused this request and barriers remain in place.[11] Residential areas are another issue altogether.

/// Lahore's Architecture of In/Security

I am interested in the emergence of Lahore's securitized zones and the way power inscribes itself in urban space through architecture. Parallel with this is my interest in using cartography as an analytic tool to interrogate processes of securitization.[12] By architecture I mean conceptual approaches to space, following Eyal Weizman's definition of it in his work on Israel's architecture in the Occupied Palestinian Territories:

Wednesday morning attack in Lahore was payback for the ongoing military offensive in the northwest part of the country, which has become a haven for Islamic militants." Mehsud declared that "If the government continues to carry out activities at the behest of America, we will continue to hit government installations."

10 It is the least safe city for its police and security officers whose presence imperils the lives of the rest of Lahore's inhabitants and who are lonely in public spaces, since no one likes to stand near them, particularly during festivals, processions, or protests.

11 The Lahore High Court issues this directive after hearing a case of a woman's death due to a traffic jam. http://www.nation.com.pk/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/lahore/19-Feb-2012/barricades-still-on-roads-despite-lhc-order

12 I found the conversation between the Visible Collective and Trevor Paglen useful as a way of thinking through the perils of "mapping" and considering cartography as an analytic as opposed to authoritative tool: Visible Collective and Trevor Paglen, "Mapping Ghosts," *An Atlas of Radical Cartography*, (Journal of Aesthetics and Protest Press: 2008).

On the one hand, the book deals with the architecture of the structures that sustain the occupation and the complicity of architects in designing them…On the other hand, architecture is employed as a conceptual way of understanding political issues as constructed realities...[where] the occupation is seen to have architectural properties, in that its territories are understood as an architectural 'construction', which outline the ways in which it is conceived, understood, organized and operated.[13]

Normative discourse responding to the bomb blasts in Lahore attributes the rise in securitization as an effective response to the attacks and also considers the city as a whole under siege. My focus in this essay is two-fold, one is investigating the process of securitization and its architectural effects while the other is creating new representations of the city that allow us to queer our understanding of it.[14] By queer here I mean to see the city otherwise, to defamiliarize and consider it against its popular semantic registers within Lahori public discourse.

I treat the city of Lahore as an "elastic geography," a dynamic entity that is both a physical site and imaginary construct.[15] I am particularly interested in the relationship between visual representations and our image of the city, and in using cartography as a tool to understand the way in which the securitization of Lahore manifests itself spatially. New means of representation can create alternative images of the city and my hope is that this provokes and challenges us to reconsider and ultimately transform the relationship that we have to space and power. From Henri Lefebvre's writing on the "right to the city" to David Harvey's insistence that "The right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city. It is, moreover, a common rather than an individual right since this transformation inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power to reshape the processes of urbanization. The freedom to make and remake our cities and ourselves is, I want to argue, one of the most precious yet most neglected of our

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13 Eyal Weizman, *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation*, (Verso: London, 2007)

14 I consider my use of queer here as opening up an avenue to rethink the urban expansively and not only in regards to sexual orientation. Queer is used here as a political category, a "disorientation device" that arose out of queer studies and is influenced by Sarah Ahmed's work on queer phenomenology. Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology*, (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).

15 The "elastic geography" that Weizman writes about also applies to Lahore, where borders are neither rigid nor fixed but elastic and in constant transformation. Eyal Weizman, *Hollow Land: Israel's Architecture of Occupation*, (London: Verso, 2007), 6-9. On the "urban imaginary" see Henri Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996) and Cornelius Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987).

human rights."[16] It is a markedly different thing to say that the attacks post-2008 in Lahore were primarily targeting police and security services than to say that Lahore is being indiscriminately bombed. It is even more striking if this is supported by visual representations that aid in our analysis of security issues.

Multiple layers of security barriers creeping onto Mall Road outside the entrance to the Governor's House. Photograph by Sadia Shirazi.

In Lahore securitization has become a primary method through which certain regimes of control are legitimized, which is what I refer to as Lahore's architecture of in/security. This most visible manifestation of a regime of control is legible in the preponderance of security measures distributed throughout the city – walls, barriers, gates, and checkpoints. These objects and apparatuses — some cropping up overnight, others calcifying over time into permanent structures — are found throughout the city in residential areas, religious spaces, governmental and police zones. They delineate boundaries, block vehicular and pedestrian access, restrict entry, and alter the city's urban fabric. In civic spaces barriers and checkpoints effectively shrink civic space and encroach upon the rights of citizens. In residential blocks they indicate a family or larger community that is fortifying its boundaries. Parts of the city look like it is at war because spaces are dominated by the presence of these objects and concomitant processes, which are the artifacts and performances of its in/security. This is further legitimized through a discourse of in/security by its multiple agents, state and non-state alike.[17]

Let us begin with Lahore's walls. Walls are interesting because, at the most basic level, they block you from accessing spaces physically but also deal with vision: they keep your eye from seeing through spaces. After the 2008 bombings the city issued an ordinance to public insti-

16 David Harvey, "The Right to the City," *New Left Review 53*, September – October 2008, 23-40. See: Henri Lefebvre, *Writing on Cities*, (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 1996).

17 Eqbal Ahmed, *Terrorism: Theirs and Ours*, Speech given at University of Colorado Boulder, 12 October 1998.

tutions recommending that they increase the height of their walls from six to eight feet. Residential quarters took note and did the same. It is inconceivable that two additional feet of brick, sheet metal, concrete block, or barbed wire are increasing anyone's safety but the symbolic gesture of securitizing space is the more valuable one. If you look closely at the city's walls, the brick and mortar betray their age and you can read the line at which the additional increment begins. This horizon line is legible throughout the city — a horizon denoting fear. The result of higher walls and the placement of boards to cover what was visually permeable before (the perimeter gates bounding Punjab University or National College of Arts) has been that if you are driving or walking along Mall Road, space has become flattened. It has no perspectival depth. This obliteration of transparency is a newer strategy of control that is moving from the physicality of the body to that of the gaze. Citizens are effectively cordoned off from using and even claiming these civic spaces now that they are no longer visible. Mall Road has become a purely symbolic space of power, evident during the spectacularized displays of fervor exhibited by "political" protestors who crowd the street, much to the chagrin of drivers, since all other spaces are barricaded.

Concrete barriers and new concrete wall outside the FIA headquarters on Temple Road. Photograph by Sadia Shirazi.

The counterpoint to the fixity of walls in Lahore is the movable barrier — the checkpoint. Checkpoints have a ghostly quality in the city and can appear and disappear, expand and contract through the day and night. They exploit this architecture of impermanence and are perceived as temporary objects that yet, remain in place for years. Checkpoints unlike walls, barriers, and the like, engage the social realm instead of simply blocking access to space or delineating boundaries. Checkpoints exclude, produce hierarchy, and restrict access. They also empower security services who monitor social behavior and control flows of circulation. Security details at checkpoints in

Lahore routinely harass and demand bribes from drivers, discriminating based on class, likeliness of alcohol consumption, and perceived occupation of the driver. The public discourse on safety considers the bomb blasts as the result of actions of people from outside the city, non-Lahoris, but through the infrastructure of checkpoints this is collapsed onto class tensions that arise from within Lahori society.

In the residential area of Cantonment, for example, checkpoints are now veritable tollbooths, with automated service lanes for residents. What was a temporary structure put in place after the spate of bombings is now concretized into a fixed entity. Defence Housing Authority (DHA) is another case in point. This residential development is owned and managed by the military and has checkpoints, guards, and barriers at points of entry between it and Charrar Pind, a village that predates the construction of Defence that is now strangulated by the constructions encircling it. Charrar's inhabitants are monitored as potential threats. The arrangement of concrete barriers forces people and vehicles to navigate around them at a clipped pace; the checkpoints here are slow spaces of compression that filter movement in one direction only. The residents of Charrar are *de facto* criminalized and scrutinized, since any departure from their settlement necessitates that they travel through Defence, which surrounds them and in which many of its residents are employed as domestic labor. In these sites of securitization the threat is perceived from within and from elsewhere. Charrar is elsewhere in a sense, both within and outside of Defence. These checkpoints are only visible to Lahoris who live or travel within this residential development. They target class difference exclusively, which distinguishes them from the temporary checkpoints that surface on Mall Road, leading towards its civic spaces in colonial Lahore. The checkpoints in Defence and Cantonment are not part of public discourse on the rise of securitization after the pervasive bomb blasts. The larger discourse on securitization elides this internal friction between class and caste, a village and military developers. The response from a perceived threat from the inside is justified by focusing on threats from the outside.

/// Cartography & the Spectacle of Security

It was in response to heated arguments with my mother regarding whether and how safe Lahore actually was that I began a research and cartographic project about the bomb blasts.[18] I wanted to make sense of the paradigm of in/security and began to consider ways to visualize information regarding the blasts. First, I combed through

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18 All my work on Lahore is inspired by my mother, Sakina Ramzan Ali, and in honor of my grandfather, Doctor Ramzan Ali Syed, who, after seeing me when I was five, presciently told my mother that I was trouble. His hospital on Temple road was damaged in the two consecutive bomb blasts that targeted the FIA headquarters further down the road in 2008 and 2009.

publicly available information on bomb blast sites, casualties, and perpetrators; I assembled the data into a table from 1997 onwards. In the span of ten years, from 1997 through 2007, I saw that there were only two bomb blasts in Lahore, both targeting the minority Shia community. These attacks occurred in 1998 and 2004 respectively. There were no attacks from 2004 through 2007. Beginning in 2008, Lahore experienced a series of high intensity bomb blasts concentrated in the colonial city at targets such as the High Court, Police Headquarters, and Federal Investigative Authority headquarters. None of the 2008 attacks targeted minorities. It was clear to me after completing the table that in 2008 the character, location and intensity of the blasts altered considerably, corresponding with the U.S. surge in Afghanistan that same year and coordinated military operations conducted by Pakistan. Each subsequent year has resulted in an escalation of those attacks, from five in 2008 to ten in 2009 to fifteen in 2010, after which attacks subsided, with three most recently in 2012.[19] Most high impact blasts were claimed — by militant groups ranging from the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan to Lashkar-i-Jhangvi — others, such as the horrific attack on Datta Ganj-Baksh, also known as Data Darbar, a shrine revered by Sunni's and Shia's alike, are still unaccounted for.[20] A series of low intensity copycat bombs, usually targeting cultural sites such as music halls and theaters, have also occurred.[21] They are usually unclaimed. Visualizing the information made many things legible that were otherwise obscured.

One of the most striking things to emerge out of the articulation of the cartography of Lahore's bomb blasts after 2008 was that most of the attacks in Lahore were targeting security outfits — the police, army, and security personnel. The first spate of bombings hit police and security outfits distributed throughout the city. The bomb blasts from 2008 onwards were also primarily concentrated within the colonial city — built by the British — since many governmental sites and police headquarters are located there. The blasts that occur far from the colonial city are targeting security outfits located in residential areas, as well, so civilian casualties are collateral damage. The reason for high civilian casualties in many bomb blasts is due to a number of factors. One is the fact that the colonial sites are densely populated, so civilians are literally everywhere and rarely travel alone, but at a minimum in pairs. Another factor is that security outfits now

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19 Blasts from 2009 onwards did target minorities, particularly Shia and Ahmadiyya communities. The attack on minorities is a serious issue in Lahore and Pakistan at large. By focusing on the shift in violence in Lahore towards citizens and sites which are not religiously motivated, I do not mean to gloss over the importance of sectarian violence, but am interested in the way in which this violence has shifted and also entered into the everyday experience of all Lahoris.

20 The Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) vociferously deny responsibility for the attack, claiming that they do not target public spaces and only police, army and security outfits. http://archives.dawn.com/archives/44749

21 These are also called "cracker bombs."

LAHORE
BOMB BLASTS

BOMBS INTENSITY

DEATHS   0-6   7-25   26-100
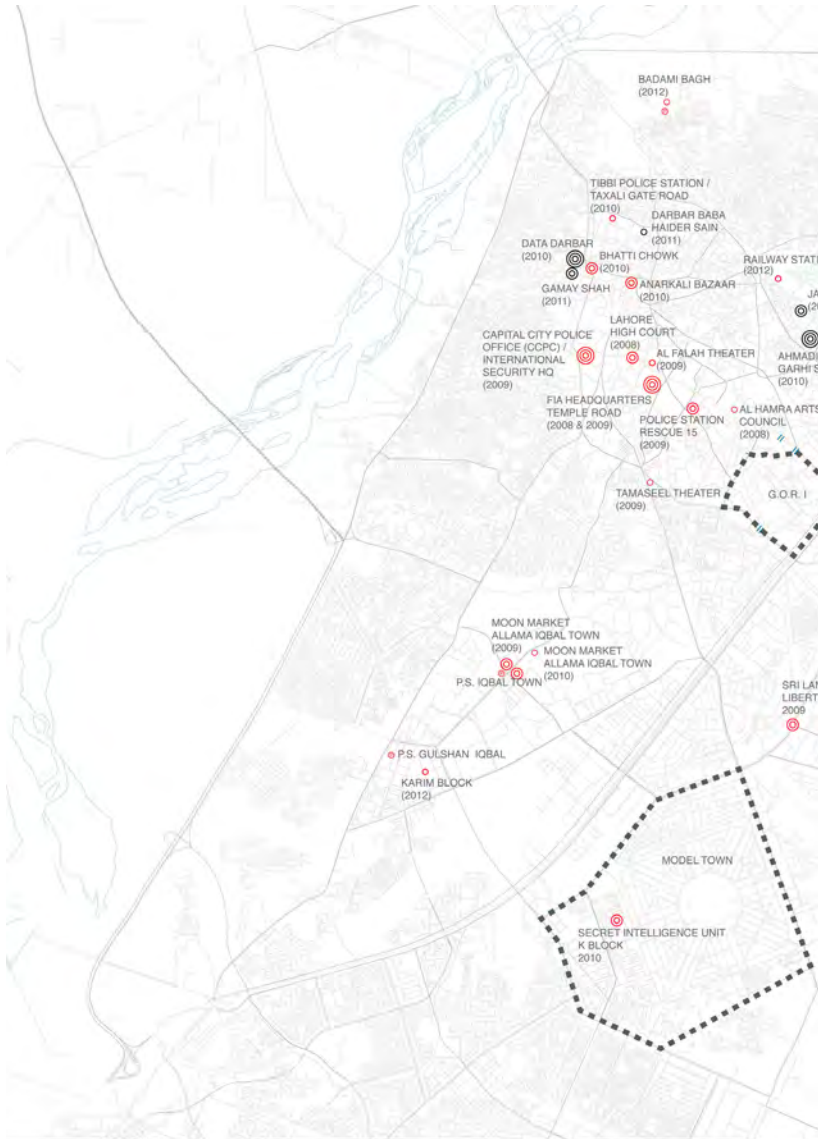
INTELLIGENCE / POLICE TAR

RELIGIOUS TAR

MANAWAN POLICE TRAINING ACADEMY
(2009)

ON

AMIA NAEEMIA MASJID
009)

YYA MASJID
HAHU

IQBAL POLICE STATION
DUBAI CHOWK
(2008)

NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
(2008)

NKAN CRICKET TEAM /
Y CHOWK

CANTONMENT
(CANT.)

R.A. BAZAAR
2010
P.S. SOUTH CANTT.

DEFENCE HOUSING
ADMINISTRATION (DHA)
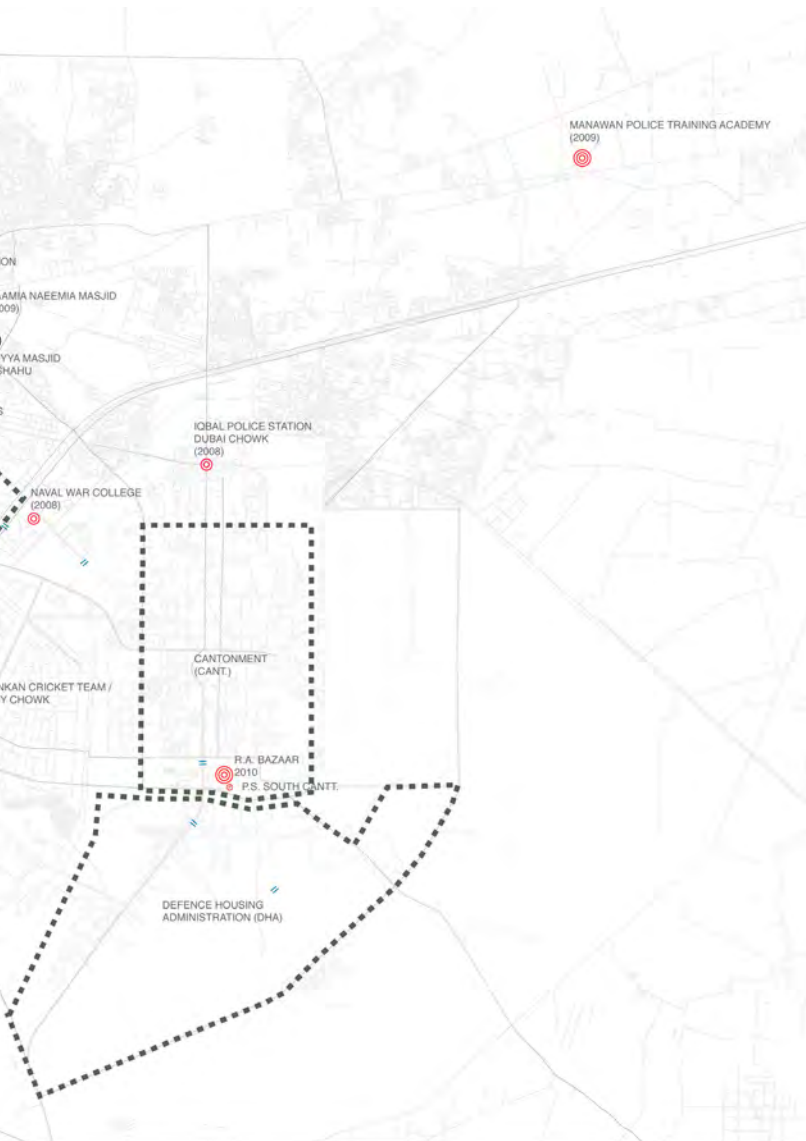
JANUARY 2008 - PRESENT

RGET

GET

CHECKPOINT

ELITE NEIGHBORHOOD

have satellite locations in residential areas, where their presence imperils civilians as they attempt to gain cover by inserting themselves within residential and commercial areas. The 2008 bomb blast in K block of Model Town, a prosperous garden-town inspired suburb of Lahore, was aimed at a Federal Investigative Agency (FIA) facility that also housed a US-counter terrorism unit. It was not a random blast in a residential neighborhood. The neighborhood also includes the enclave of the PML-N Sharif family.[22]

The map also proved that the checkpoints that have arisen post-2008 have no correlation to the frequent sites of attack, but are instead demarcations of elite residences and neighborhoods. The resultant fortification of parts of the city only protects a small percentage of the population from threats. The fortified enclave of the head of the PML-N itself has caused consternation amongst the public, as it extends outwards and blocks public streets at the periphery of their land, guarded by heavily armed police and private security forces, with the additional deterrent of a brightly painted tiger replica that sits atop a column. Security checkpoints indicate rarefied sites or crudely convey the exclusive nature of the spaces that they demarcate and the inhabitant's status. As noted above, the checkpoint in Cantonment is now a tollbooth for which residents purchase a pass that allows them through an automated fast lane. Securitization is shifting from a focus on citizens and terrorists to include the security of upper echelons of society from the lower, women from men, villagers from suburban residents.

One morning this past year, right before the Monsoon rains, as I drove to work, a route that used to take me five minutes took me forty minutes. This was due to a combination of security barriers and construction projects that were causing vehicular mayhem. I remember sitting in traffic, livid, cursing and enraged, to little effect. At that moment I felt with overwhelming clarity that both security measures and horrifically planned civic "improvements" had similar aims — they inconvenienced exactly those individuals who they were symbolically intended for. Leaving aside construction projects, one has to question whether securitization processes indicate a safer city or one that is made all the more threatening through these devices. It is also crucial that we tease apart just from whom the city is protecting itself. I began this essay by writing that Lahore looks like a city at war. After having described both the increased securitization measures alongside the deductions I was able to make based on my mapping of the bomb blasts, the question that remains is — with whom exactly is the city at war?

/// **Published on October 22nd 2012**

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22 Former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif is the head of the Pakistan Muslim League (PML-N).

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RUIN MACHINE
BY BRYAN FINOKI

The contemporary ruin today — in all its incarnations (from the abandoned auto factories in Michigan to the World Trade Centers' footprint in NYC, Saddam Hussein's elegant compounds in Baghdad that have since been converted into temporary barracks for the U.S. military — or from the vacant half-constructed towers in Dubai to the one billion squatters around the world who live in a different kind of recycled ruin, just to name a few) — hints at a spectrum of different spatial configurations of power that offer a kind of forensic evidence of not only neoliberalization's false claim of flattening the playing field of economic opportunity around the world, but of the ongoing failures in our social and political institutions themselves ,which have taken to a strategy of secrecy and deception in order to wage not just a War on Crime, Poverty, Drugs, Illegal Immigration, or Terrorism, but what I see as a War on Space itself — ruin on a brand new, unprecedented scale.

Consider the ways architecture is of essence to humanity as a medium through which democracy can be spatially organized. Architecture is practiced to help the concept of "self-rule" flourish through the creation of public spaces, the drafting of utopic visions of what the city can be as a space for everyone. Through cooperative models of 'community design' and spaces for ecologies of self-organization, architecture can resist,if even on the smallest of scales, the hierarchies of corporate consumerism. It can resist what appears to be transforming the urban environment: a landscape that aggressively attacks the very tenets of our ability to publicly participate in the production and utilization of our own spaces. The irony is that these aggressive spaces are created to allegedly manage our protection against a variance of new internal threats facing the city and the democratic world.

But, whereas once the public realm was hailed as the triumph of the 'democratic city' that prided itself on diversity and the openness of a civic life, now our cities seem to be undergoing severe reconstruction in the form of intense fortifications and security-makeovers which recast diversity and public space as potential incubations of hidden threats and plotting violence. The sanctity of 'democratic space' has fallen out of equilibrium with its own ability to trust and police itself, and to spread influence beyond its own sphere that would detract

from making itself a target. The irony is that the more the so-called 'free world' tries to secure itself from this new threat, the more it re-makes itself into an even more definitive target, not to mention the sacrifice of freedom that comes with this process. To try and use, much less, create public space these days almost seems like a criminal act; it's as if being public is becoming increasingly illegal.

Consider how Central Park has been taken away from protestors during the presidential elections (2008). We have entered into a new geopolitical era of urban and institutional ruination for which architecture now gets to play the role of civic corrosion instead of civic empowerment.

Beyond the mesmerizing visual effects of ruins being swallowed by nature we are so prone to aestheticize in design and film, I'm far more curious about the production of ruins and new notions of architecture and nature that might be emerging. Behind thefaçade of what writer Steven High calls the "deindustrial sublime," I fear our ongoing romance with staring into the ruin might just be creating a greater blind spot to another form of urban geopolitical ruin. That other, not fictional and not staged ruin is far more insidious and worrisome than any other concept of ruin up to this point. We should be watching it intently, since it is not simply an object on the landscape left to decay, but rather new and more subtle spatial products and architectural hijackings that directly threaten the powers of public agency. I'm talking about the cultural, economic, and political commodification of ruins creeping up in the shadows of democracy, taking form in secret detention camps, surveillance landscapes, designated protestor-zones, secret spaces of warfare, anti-homeless landscaping, ubiquitous fortress and military urbanism. These hidden spaces of human rights erosion threaten the definition of what constitutes both democracy and architecture. Here, we have a new ruin that deploys our fascination with the aesthetics of decay in order to redirect and disguise a more quintessentially postmodern geopolitics of decay seeping into our main social foundation elsewhere, in the periphery, beyond the scope of public scrutiny.

You can marvel at the textures of a dilapidated factory, fetishize the crumbled bits, have beautiful rust patterns grafted onto the door of your loft because you think it just looks so cool, but what do ruins really mean today? What is the larger process at work that results in these collapses of our times? Do ruins carry the same symbolic weight and meaning through out history, or do those that emerge within each era signify something new? In other words, are ruins truly epic or do they just offer fleeting reflections of their times? In slightly different terms: how have ruins come to represent a deeper political process at work that all of this "gawking" and "staring" may only help to mask? Maybe what is ruin today is not so much represented by

these obvious objects of architectural demise (like 'the modern ruin'), as they are now by the types of dubious political spaces forming and operating in the lesser visible niches just outside public view. I would suggest, for example, the proverbial "backroom" where dirty political "deals" are notoriously made in undisclosed closets to be a critical space of ruin today. Not that this space hasn't always existed in some form, but this seems like the kind of precursory space that later pre-empts the abandoned factory and the layoffs of thousands of jobs with it. The ruin began long before these visual correspondences of broken architecture made themselves apparent to us, by which time it is unfortunately too late. To inspect the ruins of today is not simply to idle in front of the 'dead shopping mall' or photograph the derelict factory, but to go back to the root that links the spatial litter of the corporate wasteland with the political ideations which have hatched them.

Perhaps "real" ruin is less in what is fading physically from the landscape before our eyes than in what is cropping up and percolating unbeknownst to political transparency well behind the scenes of our capacity for scrutiny. You might only consider Guantanamo Bay to be a ruin, insofar as the lush Cuban landscape has begun to overtake some of the camps that are no longer in use. But more so, the very existence of Guantanamo Bay itself as it has been constructed through excessive legal verbiage to exist outside the scope of law, constitutes a deep ruination of our entire spatio-political landscape. This bit of extra-territory whereby no law technically applies illustrates an extreme process of ideological de-industrialization because there is no assurance that any sort of human rights violations won't occur. We are going backwards in time with our use and rationales for such a space. Guantanamo Bay has also become a locus of attention on the topic of torture, whose perpetual existence may only help to draw public attention away from other practices of torture. There's something to be said for why it has not yet been shut down, even though the Obama administration said that it would be. Ruin can make for good camouflage, if deployed strategically.

To what degree is our obsession with "physical ruination" on the surface suggestive of a deeper denial of the systemic deterioration of our political optimism? Why do we fixate so intensely on the architectural manifestations of ruins, the very textures of disrepair, with myopic lust and incredible attention to detail, but then fail to observe even the most vague erosion patterns of our culture of fear and consumption, of our discriminatory social practices, our relative morality and the perishibility of our ideals? Why are we willing to romanticize the beauty of a fallen building, but then desperately make every attempt to turn away from the cracked walls of our government's integrity?

Detroiters get accused of being in denial about their situation, cling-

ing to nostalgia and operating as if one day those factories will again be turned back on and a prosperous life will resume. Meanwhile, the media too often reduces the conversation on Detroit to photo ops of 'abandoned buildings' and glossy 'infographics' calculating the immense footprints of vacancy.

The greater shrinking city phenomenon of the Rust Belt is generically phrased in terms of a uniform typology of abandonment. There is occasionally brief analysis given to the harsh facts of deindustrialization and the corporate logic of global capitalism that has left places in utter ruin, but rarely is any proper attention given to the history of de-unionization in this country or the exploitative cogs on which neoliberal capitalism depends. Most coverage is so captivated by the 'looks of urban decay' that it fails to lodge the critical analysis of runaway capitalism that these de-industrialized monoliths of decay actually memorialize.

Is it unfair to accuse Detroit of denial when pop culture stares into the ruins with its own forlorn fascination and ideological abandonment, to the exclusion of any deeper insight into the greater forces of systemic corruption that are hollowing essential foundations like social welfare, public health care, education. This love affair with ruins only perpetuates a visual and ideological language for nostalgia that is too easy to denounce in others. The ruin landscape depicts an America oblivious to the mass ruining of its political fabric. Are we in a state-of-shock about the impending demise of our country's legitimacy, or is it just plain ignorance that makes our 'ruin gaze' so blindingly selective?

The more our culture obsesses over the sensationalized optics of ruins, I fear, the more the political landscape falls apart at the seams without proper notice. Having exhausted its usual conduits, institutional corruption is running out of room to hide. But, does anyone really care? The statecraft of western superpower continues to show a blatant willingness to operate unilaterally above international diplomacy to preserve its power through brute force, to suspend domestic law, and go outside the U.S. constitution when it sees fit. Yet, in the end, pop media and the public seem more obsessed with promoting end-of-world action flicks and family vacations to New Orleans for Disaster Tourism!

Our preoccupation with places like Detroit and the urge to call it a 'Dead City' makes for a perfect distraction to draw attention away from the other locations where late capitalism is still seen as providing substantial benefit. And, yet, though these places have also already begun to show signs of the system's sheer lack of concern for any people or any place, in the same way as Detroit. You don't need to look any further than the U.S.-Mexico border, riddled with polluted

warehouses and toxic industrial sites, left to rot from the corporate maquilladoras that were supposed to freethe Mexican laborer from indigenous poverty.

Perhaps Detroit, having become the blackhole of our fascination with urban abandonment, is but the ultimate disguise tactic for the same deregulated free-trade policies that are coursing through the capitalist landscape in other regions now (Beijing, Sao Paulo, Cairo, Bangalore). These deregulated capitals have no allegiance to any nation anymore per se, and are perfectly willing to put workers of any nationality on the slab until they can be disposed of for a cheaper 'cost of labor' elsewhere. This is hardly a secret: this is predictably what corporations do, and that now includes those within the Empire.

Let's not forget: deindustrialization is not 'the end of industrialism,' or just the removal of it. Deindustrialization is just reindustrialization in the opposite direction. The economist Joseph Schumpeter 50 years ago described capitalism as a "gale of creative destruction." A force that stalks the planet through "the same process of industrial mutation" he said, "that incessantly revolutionizes the economic structure from within, incessantly destroying the old one, incessantly creating a new one." This is the fact of capitalism, he wrote: it can never be stationary. It must devour in order to persist.

That is to say, there is a whole other side to ruins, and the most significant ones of our times might not be about a process of 'de-walling' a natural collapse of outdated industrial buildings but rather is one of fanatical 're-walling.' In other words, the grand ruins of the neoliberal era are being constructed as we speak in the form of the world's largest shopping malls, tallest skyscrapers, the bunkered paradises of the super-luxurious, down to the squatter settlements made of scraps and their disparity with the rise of gated communities. The ruins of today do not need to see tomorrow in order to symbolize the corrosion of their own past. They are ruins even before they are ever completed, by virtue of their context, in itself an assault on the spaces of the global commons from their earliest stages of conception. The paradigm shift comes from observing ruin not just as a departure or even as a consequence but witnessing ruins as they are, in a constant state of reproduction.

/// Originally published on October 17th 2009 for *Where We Are 2*

14/

THE TEXTUAL-SONIC LANDSCAPES OF JACQUES PERRET'S DES FORTIFICA-TIONS ET ARTIFICES
BY MORGAN NG

It's exciting to contribute to the dialogue here because, despite our divergent historical interests, I feel a strong intellectual kinship with the editor of this blog. Rendered in striking graphic form and rife with modernist literary references, the editor's recent design research on architecture in the West Bank explores the full range of oppressive and emancipatory potentials in an aesthetics of militarization. We must of course heed the warning (pace Baudrillard) that an aestheticization of war runs the risk of dulling the senses to the reality of violence. Yet it's equally disempowering, especially for the disempowered, to reduce this violence to the mechanics of technical reason. War from the beginning is aesthetic: for the complicit it's mediated by political propaganda; for the traumatized victim, it's fought on a psychological, as well as a physical, battlefield. If our poetic relation to war forms our escapist habits, I believe it also bears the potential to catalyze emancipatory action.

Here I bring this theoretical position to bear on my own research on the Renaissance. As an historian, I'm committed to the view that aesthetic experiences are not identical at all times and places. Scholars of the early modern period have demonstrated that, before the mass proliferation of printed texts after the eighteenth century, the act of reading was a far different practice than the private, silent, and comparatively passive absorption of texts now taken for granted. During the Renaissance, texts were not only largely read aloud—in the long tradition of oral recitation and even by solitary readers—but reading itself was considered a holistic bodily practice, which could affect physical health and profoundly alter the passions.[1] Just as digital

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[1] Regarding the long shift toward silent reading, see Roger Chartier, "The Practical Impact of Writing," in *A History of Private Life, v. 3: Passions of the Renaissance*, ed. Roger Chartier (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 111-159; on the topic of early modern conceptions of read-

media has transformed modern communication, the clash of print in the Renaissance with an older oral/aural culture opened new fields of artistic experimentation. I will explore these largely forgotten modes of sensory experience, as they intersected with a particularly horrific chapter of early modern history, through the lens of a late-Renaissance treatise: Jacques Perret of Chambéry's, *Des fortifications et artifices. Architecture et perspective* (On Fortifications and military instruments. Architecture and perspective).[2]

Published three years after the 1598 proclamation of the Edict of Nantes, which granted unprecedented legal recognition to Huguenot communities, *Fortifications* was one of a handful of French military-architectural publications to emerge during the Wars of Religion.[3] Its author was a member of the minor nobility in Chambéry, Savoy and, as early as 1568, also a "lecteur ès arts d'arithmétique et géométrie" (lecturer in the arts of arithmetic and geometry) at a Jesuit college in that city. Coats of arms on many of *Fortifications*' illustrations suggest the author's probable affinity with a famous Huguenot family.[4] The treatise consists of seventeen sections, presenting urban and architectural designs of progressively greater size and complexity. Included are three citadels and two full-fledged urban plans (all in the form of regular polygons, ranging from five to twenty-three bastions), three Protestant temples, and various houses, châteaux, and a great royal pavilion. Every architectural structure comes illustrated in both plan and "perspective" (what would now be called axonometric) form, to constitute a total of twenty-four plates.

Yet this apparent overall unity between word and image has perhaps contributed to the almost total scholarly neglect of the most eccentric and insistent elements of Perret's illustrations. On *Fortifications*' frontispiece, as well as each "perspective" illustration, bears strings of religious inscriptions which curiously have no explanation in the primary text. Psalms trace the sides geometric fortresses; religious

ing and the passions, see chapter 6, "The Physiology of Reading" in Adrian Johns, *The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 380-443.

2 Jacques Perret, *Des fortifications et artifices. Architecture et perspective de Jaques Perret*. (Paris: s.n, 1601).

3 This contrasted with the many hundreds of fortification treatises to issue from Italy around the same time. Besides Perret's Fortifications, the other major French military-architectural treatises of the time were Ambroise Bachot, *Le Timon…joinct un traict fort utile des fortifications* (1587) and *Le gouvernail…l'architecture de fortifications* (1598); Claude Flamand, *Le Guide des Fortifications* (Montebeliard, 1597); and Jean Errard, *Le Fortification reducite en art* (1600). A fuller bibliographic treatment of these works can be found in John Bury and Paul Breman, eds. *Writings on Architecture, Civil and Military*, c. 1460 to 1640: A Checklist of Printed Editions (Netherlands: Hes & De Graaf, 2000).

4 On the archival evidence and the Reformation context, see Eneas Balmas, "Jacques Perret architetto riformato," *Protestantesimo 1*, (1958): 22-28.
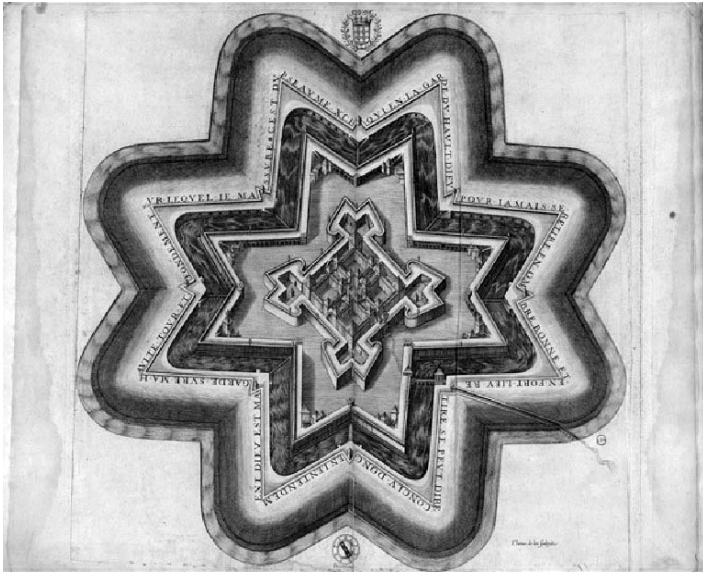
Cross-shaped citadel, with Psalm 91.

admonitions flutter on the frontispiece; verses from Matthew and Ezekiel frame entire plates. Despite their constant presence, however, these words draw a puzzling blank in modern literature on the treatise.[5] Their disappearance from later editorial iterations also merits notice.[6]

How can inscriptions, apparently so central to *Fortifications*, whose removal significantly reconfigures the appearance and distorts the meaning of the original work, become invisible in modern eyes? A closer look at these inscriptions, I argue, allows us access to an oral religious and political tradition, where sound (spoken and sung) constituted a Calvinist means of constructing society, as well as defining and demarcating territories. Perret's cities literally demand to be heard.

/// Walls of sound

5 Patricia O'Grady notes such changes to the de Bry edition, but concludes that this later version is "essentially faithful to Perret's original." Patricia Mary O'Grady, *An Investigation into Jacques Perret's "Des Fortifications et artifices. Architecture et perspective."* c. 1601. (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1993),12-13.

6 Enea Balmas admits that the de Bry family's "edizione contraffatta," printed in Frankfurt a year after Perret's, is "infatti modificato"—even though the religious inscriptions are entirely stripped from this version. And he describes a similarly scripturally-impoverished 1620 edition a "semplice ristampa" of the original. Enea Balmas, "La citta ideale di Jacques Perret," Studi di Letteratura francese 2 (1969):5.
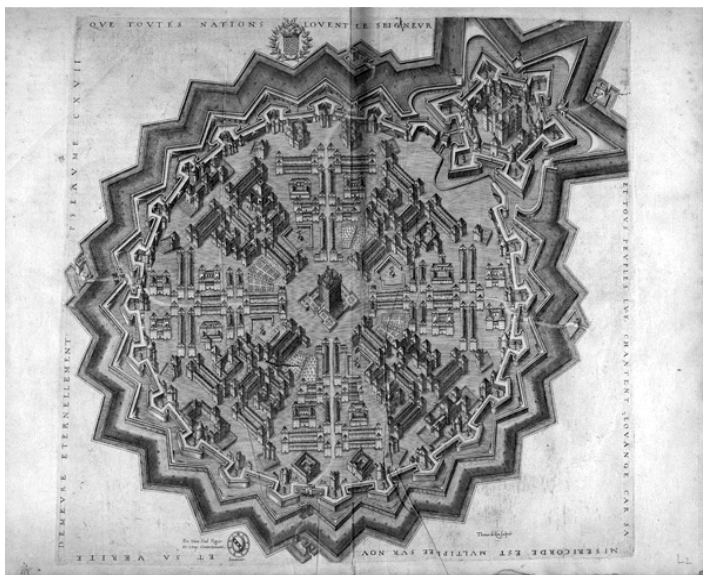
Twenty-three-bastioned city, with *Psalm 117*.

QVE TOVTES NATIONS LOVENT LE SEIGNEVR ET TOVS
PEVPLES LVY CHANTENT LOVANGE
CAR SA MISERICORDE EST MVLTIPLEE SVR NOV ET SA
VERITE DEMEVRE ETERNELLEMENT. PSEAVME CXVII[7]
(Let all nations praise the Lord and all peoples sing his praise
for his mercy is lavished upon us and his truth endures forever.)

Encircling the most elaborate of *Fortifications*' five fortresses — a
regular polygonal city defended by twenty-three bastions, crowned
with a pentagonal citadel, and replete with religious, civic, and do-
mestic structures — is a Psalm which encapsulates a Calvinist con-
ception of society, sound and space. The inclusion of this Psalm
117 into the 1545 Geneva Catechism's *Action de graces apres
le repas* would have burned these two lines into the conscious-
ness of French-speaking Protestants.[8] Its regular phenomenologi-
cal iteration as ritual song before the communal breaking of bread
committed the Psalm to individual and social memory through mel-
ody, language, public performance, and its relation to bodily sus-
tenance. On a broader scale, the Psalm meshed with a theological
conception of geographical conquest. In his commentary on the
verses, John Calvin exhorts readers to take seriously the words that
"toutes nations" (all nations) will resound in praises to the true God:

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7 Perret, Fortifications, fol. 11v.

8 A transcription of the Catechism can be found in Olivier Fatio and
Pierre Fraenkel, Confessions et catéchismes de la foi réformée (Genève:
Labor et Fides, 2005).

while not all Gentiles would become believers, those who did would "be spread over the whole world."[9] By daily chanting or reading these verses, the Huguenots would enter into literal harmony with a physically expansive community of believers, as well as with the natural landscape itself.

Given this theological framework, it's interesting to note the relation, or lack thereof, between Perret's structures and their surrounding contexts. Successful fortification treatises, such as the much-consulted works of Francesco de' Marchi and Jean Errard, were not merely theoretical exercises: their idealized geometric principles had to be adaptable to the specificities of real sites.[10] But Perret explicitly distinguishes his own work from these treatises: "Pour ce que plusieurs ont écrit des principes de géométrie, fortifications, architecture et perspective, je n'en met point en ce livre."[11] (Since many wrote treatises of geometry, fortifications, architecture and perspective, I do not put any in this book). Despite their formal similarities with Perret's structures, Errard's fortresses are emphatically planted in real physical space.

Instead, Perret's fortified cities appear to float on the paper's surface, describing an alternative religious "geography." They recall Calvin's Neoplatonic commentary on *Psalm 117*, which describes a nature that, despite its insentience, seems to speak. For if "rational creatures" sing verbal praises, the "Holy Spirit elsewhere calls upon the mountains, rivers, trees, rain, winds, and thunder, to resound the praises of God, because all creation silently proclaims him to be its Maker."[12] For modern readers, the highly regularized "ideal" cities of the *Fortifications* may appear to be technical drawings, albeit of high aesthetic value, but for Huguenot readers of the time, these structures, coupled with the surrounding sacred inscriptions, would have conveyed an entirely different emotive meaning. Calvin deliberately rejected dry academicism, placing music at the heart of his theology for its power in aiding the subjective internalization of the Word.[13]

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9 John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of Psalms vol.4* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2003), 375.

10 Francesco De'Marchi, Della Architettura militare del capitanio Francesco de Marchi,... libri tre... con un breve... trattato nel quale si dimostrano li modi del fabricar l'artigliaria (Brescia: Comino Presegni, 1599), I.i. On the formal similarities between de'Marchi and Perret's works, especially on the inclusion of a pentagonal citadel, see Martha Pollak, *Cities at War in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 65.

11 Perret, *Fortifications*, fol. 8r.

12 John Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of Psalms* vol.4, 375.

13 Calvin writes in the preface to his commentary that "there is no other book in which we are more perfectly taught the right manner of praising God, or in which we are more powerfully stirred up to the performance of this religious exercise." Calvin, *Commentary on the Book of Psalms*, vol.1, 23.

This understanding of Perret's architectural and urban design is enriched by scholarship from the past decades on the French Wars of Religion. Seven of Perret's twenty-four inscriptions borrow from the Psalms, using text co-translated into French by poet Clément Marot and theologian Theodore Beza for widely-circulated Calvinist Psalters.[14] The remaining scriptural or popular religious inscriptions all possess an incantatory quality.[15] Barbara Diefendorf has shown that Psalm-singing played a central role in crafting a complex militarized Huguenot identity: scriptural meditation both steeled the persecuted in the face of mass slaughter, as well as called the faithful to violent arms. Bloody events throughout the late sixteenth century, such as the Saint Bartholomew's Day massacre of 1572, prompted profusions of verse that came to terms with seemingly senseless violence by stressing God's omnipotence and mercy.[16] Perret works within this tradition, by framing his opening fortress illustration with *Psalm 91*, whose verses describe God as the believer's "fort lieu" and "haulte tour et fondement." If the Psalms' "martial imagery" carried "special resonance" for Huguenots — presenting a "Lord God of Armies" and "God of vengeance" — Perret envisions his ideal political authorities as instruments of this warlike Providence.[17]

On a profound phenomenological and psychological level, communal song for oppressed communities has the power to dismantle and reconfigure their perception of a given reality — a process one literary critic, describing wartime physical and emotional trauma, has called the "making and unmaking of the world."[18] This practice is no mere historical relic: there's a kinship between Huguenot Psalm-singing and episodes in modern history, such as the American Abolitionist campaigns and the counter-cultural movements of the 1960s and 1970s, where hymns and folk music played a pivotal role in community-formation, resistance, and action against the prevailing political and cultural establishments. Ringed around pictures of towns, temples, and homes, Perret's sacred text gestures toward a sonorous psychodynamic architectural conception, in which Godly sound wells up in all spheres of private and public life, affirming a

14 Natalie Zemon Davis, "Printing and the People" in Society and Culture in *Early Modern France: Eight Essays* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), 189-226

15 Michel Jeanneret, *Poésie et tradition biblique au XVIe siècle* (Paris: J. Corti, 1969), 117-24.

16 Barbara Diefendorf, "The Huguenot Psalter and the Faith of French Protestants in the Sixteenth Century," in *Culture and Identity in Early Modern Europe (1500-1800): Essays in Honor of Natalie Zemon Davis, eds. Barbara B. Diefendorf*, Carla Alison Hesse and Natalie Zemon Davis (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993) 41-63.

17 Diefendorf, "Huguenot Psalter," 47.

18 See especially Chapter 4, on the idea of bodily and emotional pain as an impetus for creative/artistic production in Judeo-Christian tradition, Elaine Scarry, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985), 181-278.

spiritual self undaunted by bodily mortality.

This imperative necessarily leads to a conflict with the majority religion, and raises the issue of urban contestation as a force shaping the city's form. As Natalie Zemon Davis has shown in her pioneering studies of Lyon, Protestants rejected the Catholic conception of sacred geography, which invested determinate sites with ritual power. Catholic Lyonnais processions stopped at the hill of Fourvière, and at the Saône and Rhône rivers, to perform miracles in remembrance of saints and their miracles; once the Protestants overtook the city in 1562, their iconoclastic acts purged these physical sites of their ritual significance.[19] Protestants rationalized the city's *ad hoc* medieval clutter, where mercantile stalls abutted churches, into an open infrastructure, "more uniform and available for exchange, traffic and human communication."[20]

But they didn't eliminate all ritual. Scholars have noted formal similarities between Perret's designs and Henry IV's Baroque planning of Paris; but more significant is how *Fortifications*' cities are also conceived as spiritual settings for ceremonial processions. Perret's pure radial plans create a space perfectly choreographed for the easy movement of Protestant worshippers, whose songs could spread unimpeded through the all the cities' streets. Documents testify to how Protestant Psalm-singing, piercing through church walls, scandalized nearby Catholics in Paris and Uzès; or how it attended anti-clerical processions through Lyon.[21] Singing transformed and sanctified the physical reality of the city, just as the quoted texts transform and sanctify Perret's printed illustrations.

The attentiveness to the sonorous aspects of religious practice did not merely concern phenomenological experience. It delineated borders, as an assertion of disciplining power in a Foucauldian sense, much as the rhythm of pealing bells created the "soundscapes" that regulated urban space in late-medieval and early-Renaissance cities such as Florence.[22] Sound, especially sound with religious as-

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19 Natalie Zemon Davis, "The Sacred and the Body Social in Sixteenth-Century Lyon," *Past & Present 90* (February 1981): 52-67.

20 Zemon Davis, "The Sacred and the Body Social," 59.

21 Natalie Zemon Davis, "City Women and Religious Change," in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France*, 86. Andrew Spicer, "'Qui est de Dieu oit la parole de Dieu': the Huguenots and their temples," *Society and Culture in the Huguenot World*, 1559-1685, 191. Natalie Zemon Davis, "Strikes and Salvation" in Society and Culture in Early Modern France, 5; Timothy Watson, "Preaching, printing, psalm-singing: the making and unmaking of the Reformed church in Lyon, 1550-1572," in S*ociety and Culture in Early Modern France*, 17.

22 For recent scholarship in this vein, see Niall Atkinson, *Architecture, Anxiety and the Fluid Topographies of Renaissance Florence*, (Ph.D. Diss., Cornell University, 2009); on clock towers in the Italian Renaissance, see Marvin Trachtenberg, Building-in-Time: From Giotto to Alberti

sociations, was a defining feature of early modern territoriality, and something that the original readers of Perret's treatise would have taken for granted.

/// **Open eyes and ears**

How might we relate these issues to the more traditional art/architectural-historical interest in visual representation? At first glance, the use of abstract axonometric and orthographic illustrations might seem, to quote Louis Marin, to provide the early modern subject a "total, exhaustive, synoptic," rational-scientific gaze.[23] But Perret's text suggests a far more complex relationship between vision and spirituality.

In *Fortifications* this vision operates on multiple scales. Within his all-important temples, the layout of seats allows all to observe and hear the preacher, with benches "l'un sur l'autre touchant la muraille en manière de théâtre" (on top of one another, touching the wall, in the form of a theater).[24] All congregants would thus have physical access to the sacred. On a larger scale, each of Perret's full-fledged city designs include citadels a full fathom (approx. 2 meters) "plus haute que ceux de la ville pour mieux la dominer" (higher than [the walls] of the city, so as to better watch over [dominer] it).[25] Perret's desire to provide civic authority with this militarily strategic vantage point seems to spring from a Calvinist conception of spiritual discipline. For Calvinist ecclesiastics, the shaping of moral societies and individuals depended on total visual and spiritual vigilance, involving the mutual exposure of sin among neighbors, consistorial admonition, and the enforcement of moral order in secular penal courts.[26] Indeed, Perret's inclusion of Psalmic musical references throughout runs in parallel to this aim, as the eradication of secular verse, ornate instrumental music, and carnivalesque merrymaking constituted a central preoccupation of such Huguenot authorities.[27]

When Perret points to his own achievement, in showing "le plan & la perspective" (the plan & the perspective) of his pious structures "tant

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and Modern Oblivion (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

23 Louis Marin, *On Representation* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001); and Chapter 10 "The City's Portrait in its Utopics" and Chapter 11 "Utopia of the Map" in Louis Marin, *Utopics: Spatial Play* (Atlantic Highlands: Humanities Press, 1984) 201-37.

24 Perret, fols. 14v & 17v.

25 Perret, folio

26 On this subject, see chapter fourteen, "The Exercise of Discipline" in Philip Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 460-89.

27 See chapter two of Weeda, *Le Psautier de Calvin*; and Benedict, *Christ's Churches*, 477.
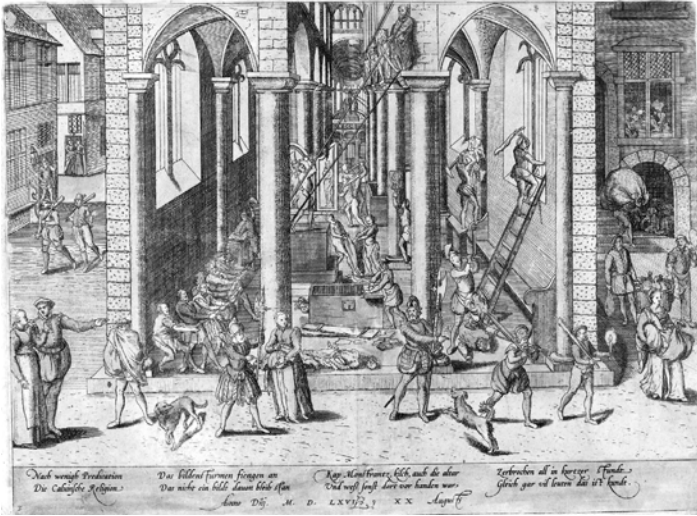
Frans Hogenberg, scene from *Iconoclasm*, late sixteenth century.

du dehors que du dedans" (both outside and inside).[28] A sense of the spiritual investment in such representation may be gleaned from illustrations like Frans Hogenberg's famous *Iconoclasm* series, completed sometime before 1590.

In an image depicting the 1566 Protestant takeover of Antwerp, the viewer's sense of the church's purification is enhanced by the imaginary removal of the structure's façade. Just as the faithful citizens of Antwerp pulled away the debased Catholic encrustations of ornament and sculpture to reveal the church in its purest form, this schematic removal of the building's foremost visual barrier invites the sympathetic viewer to see the structure with total clarity. As such, it recalls the actual act of peeling off architectural layers, such as the rood screen, that had hindered the congregation's access to the choir. Perret's open plan temples, their roofs (representationally) removed, functions similarly. Just as a Huguenot reader might automatically hum the melodies of the Psalms encircling the illustrations, he could also enter these paper churches into communion with imaginary congregants singing the same verses.

Recent writing on the Kleinarchitekturen and micro-architectures of the Renaissance offers additional interpretive possibilities.[29] The object-like quality of *Fortifications*' paper buildings points to the author's actual use of scale models in the design process. Perret explains the aesthetic and practical value: for "le modelle accomply…

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28 Perret, folio 26r.

29 Alina Payne, "Materiality, Crafting and Scale in Renaissance Architecture," *Oxford Art Journal 32* (2009) 365–386

le plus petit est le plus plaisant & commode" (the finished model…
the smallest is the most delightful and convenient). His book itself
is a corollary of his models, for these "ne sont pas plus grands que
leurs perspectives" (are no bigger than their perspectives).[30] Such
miniaturized materializations of Protestant temples, I argue, would
call to mind a particular Catholic antithesis: the reliquary. These
gilded, bejeweled objects were frequently crafted in the shape of
churches, or with architectonic elements that echoed other ecclesi-
astical *Kleinarchitekturen* such as pulpits.[31] Northern Renaissance
paintings, such as Jan van Eyck's *Madonna in the Church*, often
depicted churches in compressed scale, so that their saintly figures
seem to inhabit miniaturized buildings. Such works, as Zemon Da-
vis explains, embodied a Catholic view that "the sacred could be
enclosed in a thing—in a host, in a bone, in a building, in a piece
of land."[32] But by presenting his temples as models constructed of
humble materials (wood and cardboard) and assembled as sepa-
rable floors, Perret explodes the mystic power imputed to the pre-
cious reliquary.[33] He lays their interiors to full view, as if to purge
the church-as-reliquary of its dead bodies and stone figures, and
to invite faithful readers to repopulate it with living, breathing, and
worshiping saints.

There is, therefore, a unity of conception between the visual clarity
of Perret's representations, and his desire to invoke the aural experi-
ence of moving and worshiping through his cities. Both point to a
new purified sensory space, which would actively involve the faithful
worshiper. Calvinist music consisted of unadorned voices singing in
unison, rather than complex instrumental arrangements. In the same
way, for Perret, the bodies of the congregants, whether in free-plan
temples or the streets of the city — not the accessory material splen-
dor of traditional ecclesiastical architecture — are themselves the
Church (the body of Christ). The aggressive "deconstructive" acts
of the iconoclastic movements, not to mention the general physical
brutality experienced by both Catholics and Protestants in the late
sixteenth-century, radically reconfigured their sensory experiences
and psychological understanding of the world. To fully engage this
lost mentalité, conveyed to us through the recalcitrant medium of
print, we must also unlearn our own entrenched cultural habits.

/// **Published on November 2nd 2011**

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30 Perret, fol. 26r.

31 Payne, "Materiality," 373.

32 Zemon Davis, "Sacred and Social Body," 58.

33 On extant models, see O'Grady, *Investigation*, 73-74, 155.

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MAPPING INTERVALS: TOWARDS AN EMANCIPATED CARTOGRAPHY
BY NORA AKAWI

The map as a tool for domination is the visual inscription of a seamless story for a specific group of people sharing specific characteristics. It represents their history, knowledge and claims for control within a territory with specific borders.

So what is a map as a tool for liberation?

That would be a visual representation of and by a multiplicity of publics. It would represent their history, experience, knowledge and imaginaries of and within a shared space. Multiplicity entails ruptures. Within those ruptures lies the possibility for democratic spatial representation and organization. This tool is not to be confused with tools for negotiations. This is a public platform for the collective formation, aggregation and dissemination of public opinions. Nor is this a practice of counter-mapping, as it doesn't consist of building upon an initial map for developing its counter-product.

The institutional archive is an inscription of events selected for the act of collectively acknowledging their existence. The uninscribable events are rendered as ruins until they are sent into forgetfulness.

As the institutional archive aggregates its content to form a coherent and homogenous whole, it attempts to erase the fractures that inevitably exist within it, the same fractures that maintain within them the possibility for practicing democracy. Similarly, the map drawn to tell a static seamless story sends into spectral ruins the cracks assembling it. The cracks become the specters that haunt us as we look over a map, further engraving the illogical and imposed division of Palestine in our psyche, for example. It is through the visualization of those cracks and disagreements that we can collectively re-draw, re-imagine, and hence reshape our shared space. Disagreement and contestation would then continuously redraw the map, as the publics should continuously reshape the city.

To make this argument, this essay introduces briefly a theory of the map, a theory of the archive, and a realization that both are in fact a theory of democracy. It also investigates a theory of the network and the possibilities that information technology creates for building a platform for mapping as a tool for liberation.

/// Maps as Instruments of Control

Territoriality is a "basic geographic expression of influence and power."[1] And maps define and represent territory. According to Brian Harley, geodetic measurements, cartographic representations of landforms and demographic data, synthesis of statistics in thematic maps, are all ways of claiming possession and asserting knowledge. Maps function as instruments of control.[2]

/// Sovereignty, Territoriality and Fear

Sovereignty as a concept emerged from efforts to push fear out of a territory. Some etymologies connect the term territory to Latin *terrere,* 'to frighten' the same root as in terrorize, terrible. Other etymologies connect the word to Latin *territorium*, which combines terra (land) and -orium, a suffix that indicates place. With the role of sovereignty as 'overcoming [a territory's] 'primitive' disorganization', territory was then haunted by the fear of the 'primitive.' In other words, the 'primitive' was what the sovereign subject hoped to displace, in her role as the controller or organizer of space.

/// Map-Making and Boundary Marking: A Race to Imprint the "Scarcely Manifested"

In international law, sovereignty is defined as 'the control of a well-defined territory,' and territory designates the land 'under the jurisdiction of a sovereign.'[3] Also according to the law, a sovereign state could acquire territory through 'an act of effective apprehension, such as occupation or conquest.'[4] Mapmaking and boundary marking became the way to establish sovereignty over a territory.[5] The law stated: "states may, by convention, fix limits to their own sovereignty, even in regions such as the interior of scarcely explored continents

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1 Robert David Sack, *Human Territoriality: Its Theory and History*, Cambridgeshire: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

2 A. Sarah Bendall, *Maps, Land, and Society: A History, with a Cartobibliography of Cambridgeshire Estate Maps*, c. 1600-1836, Cambridge, New York, Oakleigh: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

3 Jean Gottmann, *The Significance of Territory*, Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1973

4 Robert Yewdall Jennings, *The Acquisition of Territory in International Law*, Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1963.

5 Karen Lynnea Piper, *Cartographic Fictions: Maps, Race, and Identity*, New Brunswick, New Jersey, London: Rutgers University Press, 2002.

where such sovereignty is scarcely manifested, and in this way each may prevent the other from any penetration of its territory."[6] Cartography became a primary tool for conquest.

/// Creating Maps, Erasing Histories

According to the definition of sovereignty and territory, pre-conquest territories belong to no one. In Australia, the doctrine of *terra nullius*, defined pre-conquest Australia as a 'territory belonging to no state, that is territory not inhabited by a community with a social and political organization.'[7] "Territoriality in fact creates the idea of a socially empty space."[8] Conquest, in the imagination of the colonizer, was the invasion of a void, unoccupied space. "The modern conception of space involves a perpetual separation of places and things followed by their recombination as an assignment of things to places."[9] As a result, we have the notion of virgin or empty land that is waiting to be filled by self-proclaimed 'civilized', and 'politically organized' communities. Sovereignty, like maps, became linked to erasure—creating a territorial blank on which one could construct colonial rule and authority.[10] The colonial map is as much about the boundaries of modern human identity, as it is about territorial designations. Colonial surveyors, however, could only create maps by relying upon indigenous geographic information and indigenous guides to the land. But the western cartographer's distrustful relationship with the 'native informant' will lead to the desire to eliminate the indigenous population and their resources as a source of knowledge.

/// Bypassing Indigenous Knowledge: Cartography's Trajectory into Space

In colonial discourse, the indigenous people of the colonized land are described as having insufficient or uncertain knowledge of the territory. Here the map is viewed as a purely scientific document.[11] The concept of cartography as a 'science' developed with the technological innovations and scientific discoveries of the Enlighten-

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6 *The Islands of Palmas*, Scott, Hague Court Reports 2d 83, 1932 (Perm. Ct. 43rb. 1928).

7 *CCH Macquarie Concise Dictionary of Modern Law*, Syndey: CCH, 1988.

8 Robert David Sack, "Territorial Bases of Power," in *Political Studies from Spatial Perspectives*, ed. Alan D. Burnett and Peter J. Taylor, New York: Wiley, 1981.

9 Robert David Sack, "Territorial Bases of Power," in *Political Studies from Spatial Perspectives*, ed. Alan D. Burnett and Peter J. Taylor, New York: Wiley, 1981.

10 Karen Lynnea Piper, *Cartographic Fictions*: *Maps, Race, and Identity*, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002.

11 Peta Mitchell, *Cartographic Strategies of Postmodernity: The Figure of the Map in Contemporary Theory and Fiction*, New York: Routledge, 2008.

ment. '[Cartography] evolved by slowly distancing itself from lived experience,' defining its methods as 'objective, and excluding all subjectivity.'[12] The 'insufficiency' of the indigenous people's knowledge ('primitivism') is the colonial justification for invasive mapping projects. To pursue 'scientific' knowledge of the land, cartography began moving away from the threat of native 'disorganization' by literally leaving the ground. The trajectory of cartography into space is manifested in the shifts of the mapping technology over time: the establishment of the prime meridian, the development of aerial photography, and the emergence of satellite/computer mapping.

/// What you See is What you Rule: The Privilege of Optics

Cartography left the ground in order to overcome gendered and racialized subjects, and to pursue 'scientific' objects of territorial information for promoting imperialism's claims to objectivity: "In order to fulfill its fantasies of objectivity, colonial discourse eliminates the very indigenous knowledge upon which it relied to produce the map."[13] With the aerial camera in 1915 "mappers were no longer required to 'slog' into the messy reality of the field in order to produce the maps." The elimination of the Native from the 'scientific process' is dependent upon the production of the pilot who sees through the camera.[14] Geography and cartography are considered to visually, 'self-reflexively, write the world,' and through this writing, they create objective realities.[15] Accordingly, sovereignty in colonial discourse is constructed through sight.[16] In the race to map the colonies, the common attitude was that what is seen can be claimed and owned.

/// Digital Cartography and the Democratization of Mapping

The democratization of mapping provided the public with access to previously inaccessible data. It has also turned the unidirectional flow of spatial information into a multi-directional network, allowing individuals to gather and create data as well as distribute it globally. However, technological innovation regarding the acquisition and visualization of spatial and geographic information is generally

12 Josué Harari and David Bell, "Introduction: Journal à plusieures voies," in *Hermes: Literature, Science, Philosophy,* by Michel Serres, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982.

13 Karen Lynnea Piper, *Cartographic Fictions: Maps, Race, and Identity*, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002.

14 Patrick McHaffie, "Manufacturing Metaphors: Public Cartography, the Market, and Democracy," in *Ground Truth: the Social Implications of Geographic Information Systems*, ed J.Pickles, New York: Guilford, 1995.

15 Consider the etymology of the term 'geography': geo, 'world'; graphein 'to write.' See Peta Mitchell, *Cartographic Strategies of Postmodernity*, New York: Routledge, 2012.

16 Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, New York: Routledge, 1992.

triggered by military considerations seeking control over the territory. The emergence of intelligent maps is no exception. Maps are a tool for social control, and are intended to serve the designs of their creators, rather than inform the public. Although many national mapping agencies were required to be more market-oriented and actively promote the public use of their database, the mere possibility for policies of openness and freedom of information is offset from the increasing monetary cost of spatial data to the average citizen.[17] Furthermore, the refined production of GIS technologies occurs primarily in first-world countries – just as satellites are owned by the most industrialized nations. Maps in developing countries are often out of date, the resources are uncharted, and census data generally weak or unavailable."[18] "The poorer the country, the less and worse the data."[19] Nations with 'less and worse' geographic information automatically become subjects for satellite data acquisition from developed countries.

/// The Availability of Cartographic Data and Self-Sustainability

The availability of information is seen as being of fundamental importance to decision making processes. Those with the information see themselves as the producers of the colonial maps did: as empirically more suitable to make decisions than those who do not have access to the data. "Urban Space and Cartographic Space remain inseparable."[20] The technologies providing the tools for visually understanding, interpreting and representing space, are the same tools that enable a critical perspective towards the territory as well as those which facilitate the visualization of its alternative spatial organization.

/// Active Forgetting: A National Consensus

Collective identities are based on a consensus of a shared experience of the past. The narrative of this experience, as a collective narrative, is built through the selection of stories and events. The process of selection requires not only active remembering, but also active forgetting of certain elements of the past. According to Erneste Renan, in order to define a new identity, or redefine an existing one, all those included in it must consent to a shared act of forgetting

17 Daniel Dorling and David Fairbairn, *Mapping: Ways of Representing the World,* New York: Routledge, 1997.

18 Karen Lynnea Piper, *Cartographic Fictions: Maps, Race, and Identity,* New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2002.

19 Stephen Best and Douglas Kellner, *Postmodern Theory: Critical Interrogations*, New York: Guilford, 1991.

20 Denis Cosgrove, "Carto-City," in Else/*Where Mapping: New Cartographies of Networks and Territories,* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003.

any formerly built identity. National consensus is thus an agreement to actively forget the past, an action facilitated in part by the fabrication of official collective archives: the materials and documents that are selected to be injected into a nation's collective memory. Cartography is a primary tool for the fabrication of such documents. Each map is a reformulation of the identity of the space it represents; each map is an archive. Every time an area is mapped, a new set of elements are strategically selected and rendered 'significant,' as they are granted the qualification required to appear on the map. Every time an area is mapped into a new identity, former identities are inevitably erased and sent into forgetfulness.

/// Lieux de Mémoire

The realms of memory (places, texts, symbols, or rituals), according to Pierre Nora, have become increasingly important to modern societies deprived of 'real' memories. The 'real' memories (passed on orally, based on experience rather than evidence) have no place in mass culture of modern, industrial societies. They have been replaced by a memory that is distanced from the individual, artificial, bureaucratic, and institutionalized: "Modern memory is above all archival. It relies entirely on the materiality of the trace, the immediacy of the recording, the visibility of the image."[21]

/// The Archive: Site for Fabricating Collective Memory

In the museum, collected and displayed objects go through a signifying process; they are valued and remembered institutionally. Susan Crane explains that the museum, as an archive, removes articulated memories from the mental world and places them in the physical world.[22] It holds the material manifestations of cultural and scientific production as records. Through material representation and preservation in the museum, collective memory is objectified and publicized; it belongs to audiences, publics, collectives, and nations, and is represented in the museum's collections. The process of collecting, organizing and displaying in the public archive culminates in what is perceived as the narration of collective memory. Archives are also the locus for interaction between personal and collective identities, between memory and history, between information (the past) and social imaginaries (the desired future from this past). Individual memories (and identities) rely on the frameworks of collective memory (and identity) for their articulation (Halbwachs, 1992). And collective memory, in turn, is fabricated by the organization of the past in the lieux de mémoire, creating meanings that groups later assimilate

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21 Pierre Nora, *Realms of Memory*, New York: Columbia University Press, 1996.

22 Susan Crane, *Museums and Memory*, California: Stanford University Press, 2000.

into collective identity. Through the lieux de mémoire, the organizers of the past select and discard from the infinite realm of materialized representations of memory, protecting against the loss (or forgetting) of the 'valuable.' According to Crane, 'lack of memory' may be regarded by curators as less of a problem than 'loss of memory': loss implies what is desired, but missing; lack connotes what is absent and unwanted despite its existence (not a lost memory, but a memory evaded).

/// **Criticism in the Public Sphere**

With the Enlightenment, the public institution (including the public archive) was advanced as the facilitator of the production of a public sphere as one that promotes public exchange and debate — the production of a public, political subject. The public sphere is distinct from the state. In fact, it is "a site for the production and circulation of discourses that can in principle be critical of the state."[23] Criticism is amongst the basic requirements for the manifestation of a political subject. The public sphere is where public opinion can be rendered into political action, a process demonstrating the exercise of participatory democracy.

/// **The Principle of Consignation**

In *Archive Fever*, Jacques Derrida's essential question concerns the politics of the archive.[24] By analyzing an entity's policies on the visibility and accessibility of the public archive, we can understand its ideals of the political and economic organization of the world. Derrida writes that the question of the politics of the archive is not "one political question among others. It runs through the whole of the field and in truth determines politics from top to bottom as *res publica*. There is no political power without control of the archive, if not of memory. Effective democratization can always be measured by this essential criterion: the participation in and the access to the archive, its constitution, and its interpretation."[25] The selection process of public archives is guided by what Derrida calls the principle of consignation:

> By consignation, we do not only mean, in the ordinary sense of the word, the act of assigning residence or of entrusting so as to put into reserve (to consign, to deposit), in a place and on a substrate, but here the act of consigning through gathering

23 Nancy Fraser, *Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy*, Social Text, Durham: Duke University Press, 1990.

24 Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.

25 Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.

together signs. […] Consignation aims to coordinate a single corpus, in a system or a synchrony in which all the elements articulate the unity of an ideal configuration. In an archive, there should not be any absolute dissociation, any heterogeneity or secret which could separate (secernere), or partition, in an absolute manner.[26]

There is a Tribunal, says Jean Louis Doette, which judges the stories and events of history and includes or excludes (inscribes or erases) them from public record.[27] The Tribunal's role is to cleanse the collective archive from friction and dissensus and to maintain a coherent homogenous record of the past in order to ensure homogeneity in the perception of collective identity and in the social imaginaries of the future. Doette elaborates on the link between ruin and event, explaining that event, (*l'événement, le cas*) is 'casus' in Latin, from the verb 'cadere,' 'to fall.'[28] Ruin comes from Latin verb 'ruere,' also meaning 'to fall.' The notion of collapse, as it appears both in the ruin and in the event inscribed, produces the archive as a gathering of ruins or fragments, in search of a whole. Doette criticizes the national archive as the main fabricator of historical events since it is the most representative of the national Tribunal—selecting what is seen as worth archiving, and condemning to ruin that which is not, despite its existence. Doette is haunted by the unrepeatable event, that which has 'fallen' (cadere) already as a ruin: that event which took place as it was burning all of its possible surfaces for inscriptions and identification, all that which could have identified, recognized and authenticated it: the uninscribable catastrophic event.

/// The Death Drive

The archive's raison d'être lies in its potential destruction. Derrida links the forgetfulness built into the archive to Freud's 'death drive' (sometimes referred to as 'destruction drive' or 'aggression drive'). "The archive always works, and a priori, against itself [...]. It destroys in advance its own archive, as if that were in truth the very motivation of its most proper movement."[29] The archive holds within it the memory of the arkhë. Arkhë, Derrida writes, is both commencement and commandment. "This name apparently coordinates two principles in one: the principle according to nature or history, there where things commence–physical, historical, or ontological principle–but also the principle according to the law, there where authority, social order,

26 Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.

27 Jean-Louis Deotte, O*ubliez! Les Ruines, L'Europe*, *Le Musée*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 1994.

28 Jean-Louis Deotte, O*ubliez! Les Ruines, L'Europe*, *Le Musée*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 1994.

29 Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.

are exercised, in this place from which order is given–nomological principle."[30] As for the Latin term *archivum* or *archium*, the meaning originates in the Greek *arkheion*: the house, domicile, address or residence of the superior magistrates, the archons, those who commanded.

> The citizens who [...] held and signified political power were considered to possess the right to make or to represent the law. On account of their publicly recognized authority, it is at their home, in that place which is their house [...] that official documents are filed. The archons are first of all the documents' guardians. [...] Entrusted to the archons, these documents in effect speak the law: they recall the law and call on or impose the law.[31]

/// Targeting the Archive: Cultural Genocide

The fallen event takes place as its traces are burning into ashes, what Derrida calls the archiviolithic power, the power to destroy the archive. "The struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting."[32]

> The constitutive violence of a political power rests on the possibility [...] of refusing to recognize one or another debt. This violence is defined in contrast to the very essence of the archive since the denial of the archive is equivalent to, sensu stricto, a denial of debt.[33]

/// Dissensus and Democracy

The maintenance of homogenous narratives and identities is necessary for the total regulation and control of the masses. This is achieved by the construction of what Robin Evans calls a 'wall against information,' in order to achieve a uniform and predictable society.[34] According to Jacques Rancière, a political community is 'a community of interruptions, and fractures, [it is] irregular and local, through [it] egalitarian logic comes and divides the police community from itself. It is a community of worlds in community that are intervals of subjectification: intervals between identities, between spaces and places. Political being-together is a being-between: be-

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30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

32 Milan Kundera, *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting*, New York: The Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 1988.

33 Achille Mbembe, "The Power of the Archive and its Limits," in *Refiguring the Archive*, ed. C. Hamilton, V. Harris, J. Taylor, M. Pickover, G. Reid & R. Saleh, Dordrecht, Boston, London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002.

34 Robin Evans, *The Rights of Retreat and the Rites of Exclusion: Notes Towards the Definition of Wall,* Architectural Design, Vol. 41, June 1971.

tween identities, between worlds.'[35]

For Rancière, consensus is anti-democratic and anti-political. Chantal Mouffe also stresses that democracy is required to provide a choice between conflicting alternatives. Democratic politicization must come with the 'production of conflictual representations of the world, with opposed camps with which people can identify, thereby allowing passion to be mobilized politically within the spectrum of the democratic process.'[36] She argues against the 'unified, pacified world' based on consensus.

/// Dissensus in the Archive: Challenging Consignation

"Effective democratization can always be measured by this essential criterion: the participation in and the access to the archive, its constitution, and its interpretation."[37] Mouffe and Rancière's argument, mentioned above, is in fact a theory of the Archive. In this sense, Mouffe calls for the dehomogenized archive: one that includes within it conflicting materials, rather than an edited 'whole,' 'beautiful,' and homogenous narrative. The conflicted archive allows the public to actively aggregate, interpret, criticize and qualify information according to a reasonable debate and the quality of arguments. Deotte believes that public archives must facilitate debate and confrontation, and provide a space for encounter with the other, with the stranger.[38] In other words, the homogeneity that, according to Derrida, is essential to the institutional archive, must be challenged. For Derrida, this challenge is the exercise of deconstruction; to deconstruct the archive is to challenge consignation.[39]

> [Wherever] one could attempt [...] to rethink the place and the law according to which the archontic becomes instituted, wherever one could interrogate or contest, directly or indirectly, this archontic principle, its authority, its titles, and its genealogy, the right that it commands, the legality or the legitimacy that depends on it, wherever secrets and heterogeneity would seem to menace even the possibility of consignation, this can only have grave consequences for a theory of the archive, as well as for its institutional implementation. A science of the archive must include the theory of its institutionalization, that is to say, the theory both of the law which begins by inscribing itself there

35 Jacques Rancière, *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy*, Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 1999.

36 Chantal Mouffe, *On The Political,* New York, Routledge 2005.

37 Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.

38 Jean-Louis Deotte, O*ubliez! Les Ruines, L'Europe*, *Le Musée*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 1994.

39 Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, Chicago, London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.

and of the right which authorizes it. This right imposes or sup-
poses a bundle of limits which have a history, a deconstruc-
table history [...]. This deconstruction in progress concerns, as
always, the institutions of limits declared to be insurmountable
[...]. The limits, the borders, and the distinctions have been
shaken by an earthquake from which no classificational con-
cept and no implementation of the archive can be sheltered.
Order is no longer assured.[40]

/// Digital Networks: Limits and Advantages

Before computerized information management, the heart of in-
stitutional command and control was easy to locate. In fact, the
conspicuous appearance of the hall of power was used by re-
gimes to maintain their hegemony. [...] Even though the monu-
ments of power still stand, visibly present in stable locations,
the agency that maintains the power is neither visible nor sta-
ble. Power no longer permanently resides in these monuments,
and command and control now move about as desired.[41]

Alexander Galloway builds on Michel Foucault's treatment of bio-
power to explain the role of protocol in the society of control. He
writes that 'protocol is to control societies as the panopticon is to
disciplinary societies.'[42] On the one hand, TCP/IP (Transmission
Control Protocol/Internet Protocol) enables the Internet to create
horizontal distributions of information from one computer to another.
On the other, the DNS (Domain Name System) vertically stratifies
that horizontal logic through a set of regulatory bodies that manage
Internet addresses and names. It is crucial to understand networks
as 'materialized and materializing media' in order to understand the
power relationships in control societies:[43] "Networks, by their mere
existence, are not liberating. They exercise novel forms of control
that operate at a level that is anonymous and non-human, which is
to say material [...]. They are [...] a form of contemporary power, yet
no single subject or group actually absolutely controls a network."[44]
Rather than stored in the monuments of power localizable in time
and space, power and command in control societies float in the
digital networks of data and code. Although digital networks are not

40 Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, Chicago,
London: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.

41 Critical Art Ensemble (CAE), *Electronic Civil Disobedience and Other
Unpopular Ideas*, New York: Autonomedia, 1996.

42 Alexander Galloway, *Protocol: How Control Exists After Decentraliza-
tion*, Cambridge, London: The MIT Press, 2004.

43 Eugene Thacker *Foreword: Protocol Is as Protocol Does* from P*roto-
col: How Control Exists After Decentralization,* Cambridge, London: The
MIT Press 2004.

44 Alexander Galloway and Eugene Thacker, *The Exploit: A Theory
of Networks*, London, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press,
2007.

intrinsically anarchistic and media spaces for communication are largely privatized (since no single person or group controls the network as such), the homogeneity of digital archives can never be fully guaranteed.

/// Refusing Protocol: Resistance in Control Societies

> It's true that, even before control societies are fully in place, forms of delinquency or resistance (two different things) are also appearing. Computer piracy and viruses, for example, will replace strikes and what the nineteenth century called 'sabotage' [...]. You ask whether control or communication societies will lead to forms of resistance that might reopen the way for a communism [...]. The key thing may be to create vacuoles of noncommunication, circuit breakers, so we can elude control.[45]

Let us consider Gilles Deleuze's suggestion to constructing circuit breakers and noncommunication as the ultimate form of resistance in the digital age. This relates to Jürgen Habermas' concept of the public sphere. Providing a platform where private individuals came together as a public in order to discuss and criticize cultural production and political domination, the public sphere 'had to rely on secrecy; its public, even as a public, remained internal.'[46] The call for an absolutely decentralized and horizontal system of information distribution for the sake of democracy, also prevents what Habermas and Deleuze find essential to social disobedience and resistance: the possibility for secrecy and distance from dominant powers. This contradiction will remain unsolved in this chapter, but one suggestion could be the distinction between delinquency and resistance through activism. Digital activism consists of subverting the infrastructure of the Internet for unlimited social outreach and political mobilization, free accessible education, horizontal distribution of otherwise hidden information (it is not necessarily the act of "shutting down the system" and achieving the end of domination).

Refusing protocol, Alexander Galloway suggests, is the act of directing proto-logical technologies, whose distributed structure is indeed empowering, toward what Hans Magnus Enzensberger calls 'an emancipated media.' Emancipated media is created by active social actors rather than passive users.[47]

On digital resistance, Christopher Kelty suggests that what binds

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45 Gilles Deleuze, *Foucault*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press,1986.

46 Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformations of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*, Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1991.

47 Alexander Galloway, *Protocol: How Control Exists After Decentralization*, Cambridge, London: The MIT Press 2004.

geeks together as a public is that they share an imagination on the moral and technical order of the Internet. This moral and technical order projects both on technology (software, hardware, networks and protocols) and on an imagination of the 'proper order of collective and commercial action' (how society and economy should be organized).[48] Recursive publics, he continues, exist independently and critique constituted forms of power (market, corporations, or the state). They aim to change the relations of power and knowledge. What is specific to the geek recursive public is that not only do they argue about technology, they argue through it. They construct the platform that allows their ideals to exist.

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48 Christopher Kelty, *Two Bits: The Cultural Significance of Free Software*, Duke University Press, 2008.

PART 2:
ARCHITECTURE NARRATIVES

29/

THE FUNAMBULIST ATMOSPHERE
BY ANDREAS PHILIPPOPOULOS-MIHALOPOULOS

Funambulist bodies move about, careful not to fall into each other, mindful of the drop below, pulsating along the tension of the ropes beneath. Bodies construct atmosphere on the arch of their movement. Atmosphere constructs bodies between its folds. On one hand are atmospheres of tension or rest, engineered or emergent, promised or promising. On the other hand are bodies of flesh as well as discourse, materialities that keep on fluctuating between the abstract and the concrete, bodies of human tissue, of technology, of animality, vegetable bodies whose roots extend to my feet. Where am I? The installations of Tomas Saraceno can help as a visual aid for what I mean by atmosphere. Constellations of tension, bubbles that burst with an excess of lines, water, vegetation, animality, humanity, and air space are defined by the ethereal claustrophobia of openness, trammeled by lines on which the funambulists of the world circulate. How to get away from the lines, if not on other lines? And then, small deaths along the way: like the realization that the line is one, and however far you walk, you cannot escape it.

Atmosphere is currently trending in architecture. Peter Sloterdijk's work on air, air conditioning and atmoterror has revived the interest in atmosphere by extending it into critical geography, sociology, philosophy, ecology, and so on.[1] Likewise, the work of people like Gernot Böhme (1995) and Hermann Schmitz (1969) on atmospheres is increasingly becoming familiar to the Anglophone world. However, most attempts at understanding atmosphere are phenomenological. Böhme's rather well known definition of atmosphere is no exception, describing it as: "the common reality of the perceiver and the perceived."[2] His attempt at leaving behind the ocularcentrism of architecture urges him to take into consideration moods and emotions. So far so good, but these remain phenomenological: they presuppose a (human) subject and an object, thus resuscitating the

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1 Peter Sloterdijk, *Airquakes: Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 27, 41-57, 2009

2 Gernot Böhme, *Atmosphäre*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1995

Cartesian distinction from which phenomenology has been trying to distance itself, as did the various racial, gender, and sexual perspectives that have the potential of radically affecting the atmosphere.[3] Schmitz's definitional attempt is equally entangled in similar themes. According to him, the affected body is entirely taken over by the atmosphere, becomes totally embedded in it.[4] While this might eventually be the case I think it is important to maintain the relevance of the skin, the unity of difference between the body and the world — the 'monoface surface' as Lyotard puts it — that, without mediating or indeed differentiating, holds together the body and the world. This is because by positing a difference between body and world, and further by allowing one to completely flood the other, one ends up with re-mystifying atmospheres. Ben Anderson's suggestion of atmospheres as "a class of experience that occur[s] before and alongside the formation of subjectivity, across human and non-human materialities, and in between subject and object distinctions" redresses several important problems.[5] However, it remains an in-between of categories that it is imperative to overcome, and that, furthermore, is thought of as an experience, rather than what I would like to suggest: a floating ontology of excess.

I suggest that atmosphere is the excess of affect that holds bodies together. What sounds like a result of concorporeality, however, must be quickly qualified by the asphyxiating circularity whose epistemology reflects its ontology: atmosphere is what emerges when bodies are held together, simultaneously cause and effect. Let's give up on these categories altogether for a second and allow atmosphere to take place in its full excess. Faithful to its etymology as a sphere of steam, atmosphere encircles the body at a high velocity, just as it encircles any epistemological position from which it can be observed, understood, and critiqued. It is Saraceno's rope, one unending line of division and interruption and connection and construction and locking up and opening up. Atmosphere is air, breath, perspiration, humidity, rot, stench. It is here, always here and without temporality. It is what is, in exclusion of every other contingency. It is the absolute solidification of ontology—typically formed by thin air and sweet sounds—and the theological blind spot of epistemology, finally covering the globe. Atmosphere is one, every time once. It is hotel room, concert hall, piazza, demolition, flood, café, boredom, ideology.

Each atmospheric rope is a corridor of compulsion. All bodies are

3 Martina Löw, "The Constitution of Space : The Structuration of Spaces Through the Simultaneity of Effect and Perception," in European Journal of Social Theory, 11, 1, 25-49, 2008

4 Hermann Schmitz, *Der unerschöpfliche Gegenstand: Grundzüge der Philosophie*, Bonn: Bouvier, 1995.

5 Ben Anderson, "Affective Atmospheres," in *Emotion, Space and Society 2* (2009) 77–81.

funambulists, there is no choice. The question is which corridor to resist, how to stop while on one and follow another. At best of times, the question might also be: is this really all there is? But what happens when Truman in his very own show touches the sky? Not much, since atmosphere has preceded him: the body of his boat pierced the body of the sky, a rope extended, a line continued. So what? The end of the film saves the viewer from the tedious repetition of the inside, this time performed outside. The line connecting them revealed the absence of difference between them, or indeed, the paper-thin quality of that ultimate dreamscape, the sky. But all bodies are funambulists, treading carefully on angels' arms, hoping to reach some sort of godly hand. Better keep on walking.

Where is the locus of choice? Behind the hanging drape with the dictator's face in the grand square ushering in an atmosphere of conviction? Underneath the candle, "cozily" lit in a Scandinavian café, a place to hug and consume? On the bottom shelf of the tinned food section at the supermarket, the shelf they do not want you to notice? These are easy tricks and one can learn to apply them. The point is that not all bodies are equal. Some slide effortlessly along, assuming poses of always-already presence, while others hang from the lines by their fingernails. Affects exuded are always affects affected. You can easily bring me round to your atmospheric acrobatics, not because you force me but because you convince me. If I partake of an atmosphere, it means that your affect becomes the lake of slow rotting honey in which I find myself willingly stuck, inanely smiling. This is the excessive nature of atmosphere — always here, yet beyond phenomenological approaches.

The breath of the world is shared amongst the breathers. But each breather stands aside, circulating the air between her and the world in a private communion: "air disrespects borders, yet at the same time is constituted through difference."[6] This is not always a peaceful process. Breathing is a fight for space — space inside the breathing cavities and space outside, amidst the breathing world — and indeed a fight for strength and elemental survival — what Franz Fanon aptly calls "combat breathing."[7] Air's aggregate nature forces one into a distinction that generates singularity. The same applies to space as a whole, earth and water, cities and concert halls, supermarkets and carton boxes. In the whirls of the one atmosphere, a body emplaces itself within the normative force of desire. This is, properly speaking, the "dissection [découpage] into comparable and countable parts" of the skin of the world, the effect that capital has on affect, law has

6 Timothy Choy, *Ecologies of Comparison: An Ethnography of Endangerment in Hong Kong*, Durnham: Duke University Press, 2011

7 Franz Fanon, *Black Skins, White Masks*, trans Charles Lam Markmann, Palladin,1970

on territory, and anticipation of the future has on the earth.[8] This is the *logos* of spatial striation, the rationale and the word that chops up territories and properties, exploding the atmosphere and making it plural.[9]

Therefore, atmosphere might be one, but it can implode along its lines. The multiplicity of internal distinctions within an atmosphere is at work. To go against an atmosphere is always an internal move, causing the atmosphere to speed up its becoming and move to a different configuration of elements. Flocks of affects group bodies together on one side of the line, pushing the conflict-inducing body to the other. Or perhaps move alongside the trouble-maker-turned-hero, pushing the anomic to the other side of the distinction together with the employer/father/authority. Or even have the atmosphere serrated by multiple lines and multiple conflicts, fractions of packs pushing their territory further into each others' bodies. A conflict of atmosphere is still a singular affair, since at every point and at any given space there will always be only one atmosphere. In it, bodies enter and are regulated, meek or questioning but always within it, since they are the ones that generate it. There is no escape from the atmosphere of self.

/// **Published on July 1st 2012**

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8 Jean Francois Lyotard, *Libidinal Economy*, trans. Iain Hamilton Grant, London: Athlone Press, 1993

9 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia 2*, trans. Brian Massumi, London: Continuum, 1986

27/

APIAN SEMANTICS
BY MATTHEW CLEMENTS

/// **1**

Late in the second part of Samuel Beckett's novel, Jacques Moran's thoughts turn to his bees. Having given up his pursuit of Molloy and on the verge of returning home, Moran confesses:

> I often thought of my bees [...] And I thought above all of their dance, for my bees danced oh not as men dance, to amuse themselves, but in a different way. I alone of all mankind knew this, to the best of my belief. I had investigated this phenomenon very fully. The dance was best to be observed among the bees returning to the hive, laden more or less with nectar, and it involved a great variety of figures and rhythms. These evolutions I finally interpreted as a system of signals by means of which incoming bees, satisfied or dissatisfied with their plunder, informed the outgoing bees in what direction to go, and in what not to go. But the outgoing bees danced too. It was no doubt their way of saying I understand, or, Don't worry about me. But away from the hive, and busily at work, the bees did not dance. Here their watchword seemed to be, Every man for himself, assuming bees to be capable of such notions.[1]

This moment marks an ongoing metamorphosis within Moran's character, an evolution of his own. Having murdered a stranger, and lost track of his son, the priggish and scornful Moran – fussing perversely over matters of routine, sanitation, duty – has given way to another – a solitary man wracked with doubt, preoccupied by theological questions, and in thrall of a nature he knows he cannot comprehend. Through the process of this evolution, the beginning – Molloy's beginning as writer and wanderer – is made to once again resonate in the end: the identity of each begins to blur and the twin protagonists converge, as if reciprocally narrating one another's lives. Of course, this change is not absolute; potentially the later Moran already inhabits the earlier, even if initially he does not represent himself as such. A more pressing constant, affecting each, is the bodily existence that Moran — much like Molloy, Murphy, Watt, and the rest – must

1 Samuel Beckett, *Molloy*, trans. Patrick Bowles in collaboration with the author, New York: Grove Press, 1991.

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endure, with its aches, pains, and urges. But for the reader, momentarily at least, a new kind of tenderness is introduced with reference to the bees: "And all during this long journey home, when I racked my mind for a little joy in store, the thought of my bees and their dance was the nearest thing to comfort."[2]

Eventually Moran will discover that, abandoned, his bees have died in his absence, their remains crumbling in his fingers, leaving no more than "[a] little dust of annulets and wings."[3] 'Yes, now I may make and end' Moran decides. There is no redemption in the transformations undergone by Beckett's characters, the reality of loss and degradation is as insurmountable as it is comic, but this is not to say that these voices do not find themselves in the world in different ways. It would be unfortunate, in interpreting Beckett's characters, to make that error — the consequences of which Moran wishes to spare his bees, ascribing to them our own angers, fears, and desires, for the sake of absolution. However, this danger ought not to prevent someone from sharing their interests. Moran's attention to bees is far from trivial. Though mistaken in imagining that he alone has discovered this phenomenon, Moran is right to identify their dance with a system of signals, and also right to surmise that the figures and rhythms of which it consists serve to provide directions to other members of the hive. In the interpretation of this dance, or rather in the recognition of its resistance to interpretation, lies a problem tangled deep in the ancient roots of modernity. What does it mean to possess a language?

/// **2**

Honey bees dance to inform fellow members of a hive of the location of a source of materials vital to the sustenance of a colony. Publishing his *Über die "Sprache" der Bienen* in 1923, it was in the first decades of the twentieth century that the ethologist Karl von Frisch began to make decisive steps towards decoding the foraging dance of bees. However, as von Frisch records in his Nobel Lecture, it was not until twenty years later (not long before Beckett began work on *Molloy*) that he appreciated another fundamental aspect of the dance. Von Frisch distinguished between two categories of dancing behavior: the first, the round dance, invited fellow workers to explore the immediate vicinity of the hive, to gather resources close by; the second, the figure-of-eight tail-wagging dance, sent bees out greater distances, but more than this, its pace contained information about distance, and its orientation relative to the sun conveyed the direction of a food-source. Here, then, was evidence that, however limited, animals other than humans, invertebrates no less, made use of a

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2 Samuel Beckett, *Molloy*, trans. Patrick Bowles in collaboration with the author, New York: Grove Press, 1991.

3 Samuel Beckett, *Molloy*, trans. Patrick Bowles in collaboration with the author, New York: Grove Press, 1991.

symbolic system in order to communicate. The dance of bees may not be equivalent to a fully articulate language, but it does serve to demonstrate that the ecological pressures of natural selection may generate intelligent social interaction, without the need for those substantial brains and nuanced vocalizations that human beings tend to hold dear.

In the years since von Frisch published his research, revelations about the social habits of bees have continued to accumulate. In the 1990s Thomas D. Seely and Wolfgang Kirschner published papers providing evidence that a third category, the tremble dance, served to inhibit the urge of nearby workers to collect more nectar, signaling that the hive as a whole had accrued an excess of resources, and needed to dedicate more time to processing materials. Researchers now believe that both of the dances von Frisch categorized contain information about distance and direction, with the round dance being a truncated version of the waggle dance. Without a doubt, many more intriguing examples of research in this field could be cited, but for now, instead of continuing to catalogue these cases it is worth reflecting on why the collective behavior of bees continues to prove so fascinating. The answer to this question concerns not just the gestural communication employed by bees, but several other aspects of their behavior—what, in our anthropomorphic way, we might identify as their architectural, economic, and, by implication, political activities. Again, the presence of bees in cultural history is extensive. Still, to begin to address this question it will serve my purpose to concentrate on the remarks of one author on this topic: Aristotle.

/// 3

Long before von Frisch began his investigations, it had been observed that bees must employ some system of communication to coordinate their collective behavior. While a food source located nearby a beehive could remain undiscovered for a prolonged period of time, once found, a more distant source would rapidly be visited by many different bees, suggesting that the message must be passed on somehow. Often attributed to Aristotle, this evidence is actually only indirectly implied in the *Historia Animalium* as part of a lengthy discussion of the habits of bees, containing a typical mixture of facts, fictions, and uncertainties, derived from apiculture as well as folklore.[4] Yet Aristotle does make a singularly important reference to bees in another text, in what must be one of the most discussed passages in the history of philosophy.

In his *Politics*, having famously identified man as a *zoon politikon*, Aristotle adds that human beings are necessarily more political than

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4 Aristotle, *The Complete Works of Aristotle: Volumes 1 & 2: Revised Oxford Translation*, edited by Jonathan Barnes, Princeton University Press, 1984.

other gregarious animals, explicitly including bees. Occasionally, this definition of the political is said to include herd animals, and indeed any creature that tends to congregate in groups, but this generalization misses the point, particularly since bees are singled out as being in special need of separation from humans. In the *Historia Animalium* social creatures, in addition to being gregarious, as opposed to solitary, are defined as sharing the same common object. Men, bees, wasps, ants, and cranes are thereby associated, since their behavior is in principle devoted to the creation, preservation, and cultivation of a single communal construct, be it nest, hive, or city.[5] Crucially, the logos possessed by human beings, a word sometimes translated as speech, and sometimes as reason, is to be distinguished from mere voice. Voice, as in the capacity for expressing pain or other emotions, by crying, howling, barking etc., is of course viscerally demonstrated by many different animals, and in certain respects can be taken to epitomize that which Aristotle considered bestial (i.e. the inability to separate emotion and instinct from intelligent thought). Logos, by contrast, denotes a faculty for articulating distinctions. Through logos, not only are pleasure and pain opposed, but the just can be differentiated from the unjust, and the virtuous separated from the sinful, in such a way that the animal impulses of the individual can supposedly be subsumed beneath more abstract conceptualizations of a universal or 'higher' good.

In this sense, the human *polis* is not only divided once, in terms of those who do or do not belong within this domain, but twice, and as such countless more times, via the continuous valuation of those who are already its members. In fact, from the outset Aristotle's *Politics* is predicated on the human capacity to make generalized distinctions. Without offering much in the way of justification, Aristotle can distinguish between the mastery of male citizens and the subservience of slaves, women, and animals, as if this hierarchy were self-evident and indisputable purely on the basis of having already been observed in the original formation of the polis. Through the logos of language, the same teleological and effectively tautological account of natural origins is applied by Aristotle to the family and the state. Accordingly, the foresight and intelligence of a human and inherently masculine mind is opposed to the submission of a passive, feminine, and animal body. Versions of this distinction have survived until the present, as has the equivalent of the Aristotelian claim that, when perfected, the human is potentially the best of all animals. When isolated from the law and the jurisdiction of the nation state, humans are the most savage and unholy of all creatures, somehow more 'animal' than animals themselves.

With this account of the human and the political in mind, it is interest-

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5 Aristotle, *The Complete Works of Aristotle: Volumes 1 & 2: Revised Oxford Translation*, edited by Jonathan Barnes, Princeton University Press, 1984.

ing to consider what Aristotle would have made of twentieth-century observations about the communication of bees. Admittedly, taken in an isolated sense, and on the basis of a comparison with human language, the answer is: likely, not very much. Although bees show signs of symbolic expression — the limitations of their vocabulary, and the fact that the significance of their dances depends on a direct figural relationship with that which it represents — these insects are incapable of making the kinds of generalized distinctions thatAristotle privileges. Bees cannot invent the equivalent of new words with the same sort of flexibility as human beings, nor can they narrate their own history and keep an archive of changes in their language, beyond the record already embedded in their DNA.

Yet, viewed from a different perspective, the eloquent dance of bees does serve to undermine some of the prejudices epitomized by Aristotle's take on the political. After Darwin, in evolutionary terms, what proves important is not just the sophisticated structure of honeybee communication as it currently stands, but the dynamic emergence of this system through a stochastic recursive process. Through gradually enhanced receptivity to initially unplanned and coincidental elements of their environment, along with a reciprocal intensification of particular patterns within the behavior of bees, the round dance, the waggle dance, and the tremble dance must have been selected on the basis of a genetic advantage. As a means of flourishing, contingent and haphazard movements became weighted with exigency, molded through incremental steps so as to chart and bear the legible trace of a colony's local environment. The evolution of bee communication offers a striking example of 'meaning' — for lack of a better word — entering the world, without any precedent other than recurrent iterations of the constrained indeterminacy that underlies biological and ecological development. As such, it provides a useful contrast to the teleological bias of Aristotle, in which the final end of things is necessarily presupposed in their natural origins.

Taking an evolutionary perspective on the genealogy of bees also helps to cast doubt on the Aristotelian claim that language represents the self-evident source of man's intellectual sovereignty. Why, in the first place, should we regard the subjective intentionality and inner-awareness associated with spoken language as the sole paradigm of intelligence? Arguably, Aristotle is especially anxious to distinguish bees, because he realizes that, superficially at least, they may appear more virtuous than human beings. Ostensibly, bees act selflessly on behalf of the group, the hive, and their 'queen,' without the troublesome tendency to deviate from the norm that seems to afflict so many members of human society. What better way to avoid this unfavorable comparison than to deny bees, along with other animals, the capacity to argue their own purpose? Unless we resist the urge to treat individual bees as if they were the equivalent

of human individuals, and recognize that the tensions affecting the inter-relations of these insects developed on a time scale irreducible to our self-conscious introspection, we can disrupt the routine of depriving other beings of the capacity for thought can be disrupted. Thought here, does not stand in for the linear recollection of an isolated monologue. Thought is the capacity, through sustained endeavor, creatively to experiment and engineer, inventing hypotheses, problems and solutions that could not exist without chance and accident in the perpetual ordering and disordering of things.

In his *Insectopedia*, with reference to bees, along with many other insects and invertebrates, the anthropologist Hugh Raffles has persuasively made the same sort of argument that I am attempting to forge here.[6] Rather than starting out from the limitations that we perceive as preventing other creatures from living up to our expectations, why not emphasize, and hence empathize, with those idiosyncratic forms of knowledge and meaning that non-human beings have established in their own right. Precisely in defiance of the kind of inward-looking city-state that Aristotle, for all his brilliance, fails to imagine human beings ever happily escaping, this argument is not merely a matter of observing the spectacle of 'nature' — that mythical domain beyond the boundaries of culture, at once venerated as a lost paradise, and condemned as a site of perpetual conflict. Rather, this argument is political in the fraught sense of unsettling those stubborn boundaries that are persistently understood to demarcate the proper, and the feasible, when it comes to conceiving of the possibilities of living well.

Beckett, as much as any writer, understood that the stuff of thought and language did not amount to an ideal, immaterial evocation of how things ought to be. Thought and language were as fallible, as fleshy, as easily flustered or fumbled as any other aspect of our bodily existence. It is apt, then, that much like von Frisch, Moran can detect a source of sense and significance beyond his own knowledge encrypted in the miniature and mortal bodies of bees.

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/// **Published on May 9th 2012**

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6 Hugh Raffles, *Insectopedia*, New York: Vintage, 2011.

17/

DISOLVING MINDS AND BODIES
BY HIROKO NAKATANI

> The object of the idea constituting a human mind is the corresponding body, or a certain mode of extension that actually exists, and nothing else.[1]

In this short essay, I willconnect scientists from five fields through Spinoza's concept of mind and body in order to reveal the importance of the body, especially in relation to spatial design. Spinoza's philosophy states that body and mind exist in parallel with each other. Spinoza says that without perception through the body there is no mind, and that this limited mind contained in a body, with skin as its boundary, is part of the infinite intellect. In turn, the infinite intellect allows individuals to explore thinking what one experiences with one's body.

Biochemist, Rudolph Schoenheimer (1889-1942) focused on the essential role of the body in providing input for the mind, what he called "dynamic state of body constituents." His experiment consisted in feeding amino acid-marked food to adult mice. After three days, he found that the mice's excretions were almost entirely non-marked materials. The marked materials were found inside the body. What it says is that, very quickly, food became part of mice's body and also that some part of the body became waste. 98% of our body's matter changes in one year. Materially, we are the same as the food we had today, as dynamic as water that travels from the body to the river, to an other animal's body and so on. Our body is continuously changing, dissolving and taking part in the material world. Although there are different scales of time in its process, the principle of continuous flow is the same in the entire living/non-living world, whether at a peak in the desert or in the chair where you are sitting right now. To see it from Spinoza's view, perception through body is an extension of mind. What if we take into account that the mind now keeps changing its components, as an infinite cycle of material recomposes into the infinite intellect?

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1 Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics*, part 2, proposition 11, New York: Penguin Classics, 2005.

What is your brain doing right now while it is reading? Information goes into the brain but doesn't come out. What happens to it? Your behaviors at the moment are probably basic — such as breathing and eye movements — yet, as you are aware, your brain is doing a lot more than that as you read and understand these words.[2]

The constant interaction between outside of our body and its inside is not limited to our material body; it also concerns our mind. In 1992, a group of neurophysiologists including Giacomo Rizzolatti at University of Parma in Italy identified a neuron in monkeys that is activated when they copy some other monkey's and/or people's actions such as holding up a cup. They named it the mirror neuron. The mirror neuron is a series of reactions in our brain and in the brain of some other mammals that copy some other animal's activity both consciously and unconsciously. For example, when the person next to you yawns, you feel like you want to yawn as well. It is said empathy is an example of the mirror neuron's operation. If animals keep copying each other constantly, the border line of one mind starts to disappear and dissolve. Our minds are in a sense a part of the environment, just as our bodies. The body itself is a limited entity if you look at a single moment; however, we keep exchanging our body through time. We have not push the possibilities of our body on a daily basis, as much as I we do with mind. It seems that the body is left in the past, while the mind is subjected to the speed of radical acceleration of connectivity. Nowadays, a voice can reach to the other side of the world as fast as you speak to someone next to you. People share their interests and gather, and copy their minds with or without knowing it. Sometimes, this shapes the world. but what about the body? Why don't we explore alternate conditions of our bodies like we do for our mind?

Here, I would like to introduce three extreme examples of explorations of the limits of the body. The first is a tomato plant that makes me think of hidden potential of a living thing. Shown at the International Exposition, Tsukuba, Japan, in 1985, it was grown from a seed by the botanist Shigeo Nomura. He used no high-tech genetic engineering or chemicals. He simply gave the plant enough water and air. The key was that he did not use soil: his technique consisted in growing tomatoes without allowing them to consume some of the energy they absorb to produce. He let tomatoes' bodies free from stress: this method is called *hyponica*. He said in an interview, "I just helped what tomatoes wants to do." This implies that any living thing has potential that has not quite been exercised yet. Like he brought tomato's hidden potential to life, we might be able to demonstrate our hidden possibility of life into some other ways, by observing our life carefully. There are many things that we have not tried or ques-

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2 Jeff Hawkins, *On Intelligence*, New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2005.

tioned about our environment. Is there anything that we believe is "normal" which is not at all normal?

The second example is complementary in that it shows potential discovered by limiting the environment. Kaspar Hauser, a boy who lived in 1812-1833 Germany, lived in a darkened cell about two meters long, one meter wide, and one and a half meter high with no social contact. When he was found at age 16, he could not speak any language or recognize himself in a mirror. Kaspar could not eat meat, since someone unknown gave him only bread and water throughout his life. On the other hand, his ability of perception was extraordinary compared with human beings who grow up in our environment. He could recognize colors in darkness, and distinguish iron from brass without seeing them. He could also recognize if there is prey in a spider web without looking at it. However, his sharp perception diminished as soon as he got used to living in our environment. Living in a certain way, aren't we ignoring what we could do?

The two previous two examples were about how environment changes body, and next shows how body can acquire new perceptions. We can train ourselves to develop new perceptions. So far, the mirror neuron was identified only for sight and sound; however, it is not difficult to imagine that there exist mirror neurons related to all the other perceptions, especially when we look at Paul Bach-y-Rita's research. Bach-y-Rita (1934-2006) was an American neuroscientist. He made a device for blind people to wear on their tongue. A visual pattern is created through the device, made with thousands of small needles. Capturing this visual information through the device, the subjects were able to see things with their tongue. After some training, they learned to open doors and pick up a glass of water. A very interesting point of this research is the fact that when the subjects were wearing the device, they were using a part of brain that is usually used for seeing things — not functioning in them since they became blind. By using touch, we can develop a part of brain that is used for sight. This reminds me of the artist Shusaku Arakawa, who said that humans have thousands of brains within and outside their bodies.

As we exchange our body as materials, and as we unconsciously exchange the information with others, there is no clear boundary between body and mind. We could be much freer from our body by accelerating its connectivity. Architects did not develop the environment for our body that exchanges as much as the engineers who built the systems and devices that allow us to exchange information between our minds. As Spinoza said, we should never leave our body behind; we need to take our body back, through attempts at new reconfiguration of the body.

04/

THOUGHTS ON META-VIRTUAL SOLIPSISM
BY FREDRIK HELLBERG

INT. LIFE EXTENSION OFFICE - DAY
David Aames and McCabe sit and wait in a warm wood-pan-
eled office, proposals in hand. A glimpse shows words like
're-evolve' and 're-experience', peppered with colorful photos
of simple, life-affirming portraits of everyday life. It's a well-ap-
pointed, well-marketed organization.
McCabe regards David as the victim of a lunatic's scam.
Injustice fuels McCabe.

DEARBORN
The DNA codes of the human body have been broken. Soon,
heart ailments, cancer and so much more will be a thing of the
past. Very simply: your anguish, your discontent... even your
death is no longer necessary in a traditional sense. Whatever
malady hides behind that mask is temporary.

She looks directly at David and it stirs him. McCabe studies her
and the operation. He thirsts for clues. David flips through the
folder—toward the back, a panel of photos of storage tanks.
Lavishly and warmly photographed, just like next year's cars
in a magazine.

DEARBORN
Within an hour of your passing, L.E. will transfer your body to
a vessel where you will be sealed and frozen at 196 degrees
below zero. Power outages, earthquakes... nothing will affect
your suspension-hibernation.

MCCABE
Did you sign this contract, David?

David looks down at the pamphlet, looks up.

DAVID
What's the "Lucid Dream" option?

DEARBORN
Good choice. The Lucid Dream is Life Extension's newest op-
tion. For a little extra, we offer the cryonic union of science and
entertainment.

DEARBORN (continuing)
...but this is a serious business. The Lucid Dream is worth the risk. And what is life, if not the pursuit of a dream? The dream of peace. The dream of achievement. The dream of hearing someone saying these words when they truly mean them.

David is deeply moved as he listens. Somewhere, music begins to play. It is The Beach Boys' "Good Vibrations."

A capture from the script of the meta-moment in Cameron Crowe's 2001 *Vanilla Sky* (remake of Alejandro Amenábar's *Abre Los Ojos,* 1997) when David, the main character, begins to realize that his entire life, as he knows it, is a dream, a virtual world only for him, where he is the only conscious life form. He later learns that the "Lucid Dream" option offered by "Life Extension" is something he himself chose and is now indeed experiencing, at this very moment, as he listens to "Dearborn" explain the procedures and advantages of being mentally removed from your body and placed in a perfect world where everything is exactly the way you want it to be, where your death is erased from your memory and the joys of life are as plentiful as in a happy dream. The problem is that David's Lucid Dream has turned into a nightmare. He later learns that he has been frozen for 150 years and now has the choice to wake up or reboot his dream and start over. His choice is predictable: he jumps off the top of a virtual skyscraper, in order to wake from his nightmare and face the world in the year 2151.

When I first saw this film I was struck by its genius and originality. It hit me on many levels as the most brilliant meta-film I had ever seen. When I was a child, I suffered from Solipsism, which is the philosophical syndrome that only one's own mind is certain to exist. It is an epistemological or ontological position that knowledge of anything outside one's own specific mind is unjustified. The external world and other minds cannot be known and might not exist. I'm not sure where I got it from but I struggled with this idea, which is fairly common among children, and only revisited it after having seen *Vanilla Sky*.

As a child I used to wonder: if I'm the only one who is really here and this is therefore my world, then why is it not exactly the way I want it to be? Or is it indeed the way I want it to be? In *Vanilla Sky*, David's dream is explained by the creator of the technology:

VENTURA
I know. (Continuing)
We erased what really happened from your memory.

VENTURA
And you sculpted your Lucid Dream out of the iconography of your youth.

So David's dream was his own. Exactly the way he wanted it to be. Which, as it turned out, was simply a slightly different version from the life he had lived: a life where he gets the girl, the friends and the jobs. But everything else remained exactly as it was before his dream began: New York City, with all of its shortcomings and all of its greatness, yet none of it "real." All of it associated to his earlier life.

The term for the specific kind of solipsism that David suffered from (or, rather, was exposed to) in *Vanilla Sky* has yet to be coined. The solipsism of my childhood would be categorized as "metaphysical solipsism" by a psychologist, or by my own amateur judgment. It is the "strongest" form of solipsism. Based on a philosophy of subjective idealism, metaphysical solipsists believe that the self is the only existing reality and that all other reality, including the external world and other persons, are representations of that self, and have no independent existence. David's world, or "dream", is then a virtually-constructed Metaphysical Solipsism, since the world outside of his lucid dream is "real." Let's call it Meta-Virtual Solipsism!

Vanilla Sky is not the first, nor the last, Meta-Virtual Solipsistic movie. In the last decades it has become a popular topic in both cinema and literature. I recently revisited Paul Verhoeven's 1990 film *Total Recall* in which the main character (played by Arnold Schwarzenegger) is repeatedly subjected to threats that his world is, in fact, a dream. Both the audience and Arnold's character (Douglas Quaid, or 'Hauser') are told that there is, in fact, a real world they can either choose to enter or deny. Hauser has to trust his instincts, which become painfully obvious to the audience since it is, afterall, an action movie from the 90s. Meta-Virtual Solipsistic narratives in popular cinema and literature are becoming more and more complex, as seen in *Vanilla Sky*, *Inception* and *The Matrix,* to name a few examples. For me, let's say that the recent phenomena of meta-based entertainment constitutes an 'arming' of the mind for an ever-increasing virtual life. MMORPGs (Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Playing Games) may be an even more obvious example in which the virtual world consumes in some cases over 50% of a person's life. These virtual worlds have millions of occupants, so we can now begin to talk about an emigration from the "real" to the virtual. We have yet to witness the first complete emigration. Like those seen in cinema, this one will come. I believe this is what we have been preparing for in games whose narratives take place in virtual worlds, in cinema and in literature. And just like David's, most of these worlds are instantly recognizable. In *Second Life* most avatars looks like Pamela Anderson and Brad Pitt; gestures are standardized; most of the buildings are ordinary suburban houses, their space in the style of doll houses. However, everything in *Second Life* plays a role. How would you communicate with a crystal? No one knows, so most games and movies avoid abstraction. We are entering a world of pure semiotics, where there is only language. And

which language will we speak? One that we know of course!

"Physical forms possess a character only because we ourselves possess a body."[1] According to the Swiss art critic Heinrich Wölfflin (21 June 1864 – 19 July 1945) this is true for everything that we can possibly experience as human beings. The only possible way for us to relate to and understand our environment is by unconsciously describing it in relation to the way our bodies work and function within the world they inhabit. Things like organs, limbs, horizontal and vertical directions, and size are all properties and notions that we ourselves carry in our minds. This would be true of everything from art, sculpture and buildings, to literature, music and machines.

In the virtual realm or in movies, the existence of a "building" or a "person" is purely symbolic. It is a reference to a real world structure, created in a space where none of the utilitarian functions — protection from the elements, air conditioning, seating, etc. — have any relevance. Its symbolic functions bring legibility to what could otherwise be an incomprehensible abstract space. It is similar to the architectural logic of movie sets. Function follows form: the function of a place is unclear unless the building tells you what it is. A door on stage is not so much a functional connection between two spaces as it is a narrative device. What convinces people to engage in online worlds that replicate and follow conventions in an environment where everything would be possible? This effect is an interesting feature of literal virtual worlds like *Second Life* and would not be possible in a purely abstract virtual environment. One would hardly know by intuition what behavior is appropriate in a purely abstract virtual world. Like how to talk to crystals. Wölfflin probably did not have virtual worlds in mind when he wrote his Prolegomena, yet it is still relevant. And we might see our virtual life become more and more abstract. Give Wölfflin an iPad with a futuristic tower-defense game and he would probably faint of mental overload.

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Today, on the verge of 30, I can no longer recreate my childhood's metaphysical solipsism. If I try very hard I can imagine it, but I am now somehow rooted in this body and cannot float with the same ease. Which I am quite pleased with as the syndrome caused me a great deal of paranoia. It took a lot from a 6 year old to fight it off. Instead, I am now massively looking forward to my first truly meta-virtual solipsistic experience! Be it a nightmare, or not.

/// **Published on July 18th 2011**

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1 Heinrich Wöfflin, "Prolegomena to a psychology of architecture," in Mallgrave, Harry Francis, ed., *Empathy, form and space: problems in German aesthetics 1873-1893*, Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, (1994).

21/

OLD MEDIA'S RESSURECTION
BY LINNEA HUSSEIN

In October 2011 The New York Times published an article on the revival of the VHS tape in the horror film genre.[1] What makes these so-called neo-VHS tapes different from their outdated VHS companions is the fact that their role transformed from technical to aesthetic. Entire magazines, such as Lunchmeat and Fangoria, are devoted to the subject of VHS now. For these horror fans, neo-VHS is not preferred for functional reasons, but because the grainy picture quality — the signs of usage that caused DVD and BluRay to replace VHS in the first place — became an indispensable trope for the bad horror film genre. Laura U. Marks (Simon Fraser University) talks about a similar notion of old media recycling when writing about *The Color of Love*:

> It seems that the real erotic activity…is not between the actors but in the game with death taking place on the surface of the film…the film's emulsion flowers and evaporates, giving itself up to bliss and death.[2]

In this sense, the raw material becomes part of the film's scenery. Directors today may make the conscious choice to record something on 16mm, 35mm, video, or digital for stylistic reasons. However, the motion of the material—its decay—as part of the story is hard to capture in the making. This stylistic device needs the death drive to come into play. Bringing back Freud on melancholia, Marks paraphrases him by saying that "the subject never gives up its investment in the lost loved one, and thus becomes incapable of transferring its love to a new object."[3] In other words, melancholia for the lost object prohibits us from accepting the new creation, namely, the transformation of the medium. It is the same melancholia that fosters our urge to preserve documents in archives and the same melancholia that presents us with the paradox of preserving an artifact for the sake of preserving it. If we compare Derrida and Marks, both of them seem to share an ob-

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1 Eric Piepenburg "Like the Zombies, the VHS just won't die," *New York Times Arts & Leisure*, October 26, 2011.

2 Laura U. Marks Touch, *Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 2002.

3. Laura U. Marks Touch, *Sensuous Theory and Multisensory Media*, University of Minnesota Press, Minneapolis, 2002.

session with the humanization of documents and artifacts. The death drive becomes a drive of loss.[4] By projecting the human fear of decay and death onto documents we become obsessed with the conservation of the latter. It is not enough to talk about a discourse, we need to write it down or record it to have proof of its existence; "there is no archive fever without the threat of its death drive, this aggression and destruction drive." However, since we believe in the decay of a document, writing down or recording is not enough: we need to preserve it in the safest possible manner in order to store it for generations to come. It is exactly at this point that the fear of the loss of documents becomes important for digitalization. In our 21st century mind, anything should be saved onto a hard drive in order be preserved safely for all eternity. This "archiviolithic force" is the power behind the establishment of archives, but, similarly, "it will always have been archive-destroying, by silent vocation." My way of understanding the death-drive concept is seeing it as an evolutionary process (assuming we stay in the humanization discourse indirectly proposed by Derrida and Marks). Spoken words need to be written down and stored in an archive forever. In this regard, an archive becomes a graveyard for the conservation of knowledge, which automatically leads us to the next paradox: "The archive always works against itself."[5]

To save an artifact's "life," it needs to be stored in an archive. We must not restore it, as it would take away its original authenticity; its documentation of the time it derives from. It needs to "sit" there to be at its place of fulfillment. The moment we check the artifact out, it becomes part of the living world again, its meaning might be transformed through new research methods. A new interpretation might result in a new classification for the document. Derrida labels this phenomenon "le mal d'archive."[6]

Similarly to the VHS tape, the audiocassette has been phased out and put on the shelves of personal archives for several years if not decades now. As handy and affordable as the cassette recorder, the Walkman, or the dictation machine once were, they seemed to be unable to sustain the test of time and survive in a world that is obsessed with digitalizing matter for eternity. The tape, whether in audio or video form, came with an expiration date due to its decay-able and sensitive fabric, dying bit by bit every time its user enjoyed it. The squeaky sound of music recorded on an old audiocassette has not quite yet made a comeback or saved its medium through aesthetics like the grainy picture quality of the VHS tape or the static sound of a vinyl recording.

4 Jacques Derrida *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, translated by Eric Prenowitz, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago (1995).

5 Jacques Derrida *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, translated by Eric Prenowitz, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago (1995).

6 Jacques Derrida *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, translated by Eric Prenowitz, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago (1995).

What I am asking in this paper is, what happens when we preserve a dying medium with the help of a stable (most likely digital) one? In the two examples of hybrid narratives I chose for this experiment, it is the audiocassette that links the protagonists back to the 'real world' and therewith funambuls on the line between documentary and fiction.

The first one, Merzak Allouache's *Omar Gatlato* (Algeria, 1977) was made during the heyday of the audiocassette. The story takes place in post-independence Algiers. Our protagonist Omar "virility & machismo" Gatlato is part of the younger generation that, while born into an independent Algeria, is now facing the tumult among Algerians themselves. While his father's generation fought the French with all its power, his generation is unsure of what to do with the country they now call their own. Omar suffers from the same existential identity crisis as his nation. The film tells the story of coming-of-age in a culture that does not allow a young man to socialize with the opposite sex. Omar is bored with the routine of his life, his job as a jewelry dealer, and obsessed with the mystery of the female sex. He speaks directly to the camera, so the audience learns about his world view, the position of men he envisions (pride and dignity, living up to his nickname Gatlato) and his love for Hindu music. Privacy does not exist in his life: he shares a room with his divorced sister and her kids in his parents' apartment. He is trapped in an all male environment whether at home, at his workplace, or out in the city, and he cannot escape living in a society where gender segregation forbids him to mingle with women outside of his family. A sense of privacy can only be achieved when listening to his Walkman or talking on the phone. One day, his mini cassette recorder is stolen and Omar asks a friend to find him a new one. When he finally gets hold of a used recorder, he is surprised to find an audiotape with a female voice diary inside the machine. The female voice makes him aware of what he is missing in his otherwise homo-social life. He immediately falls in love with the speaker and is determined to meet her—only to be unable to actually confront her once she becomes real and is waiting for him on the other side of the street. He flees in distress and the film ends, leaving us with the same dissatisfaction of love.

The film utilizes the audiocassette as well as audio from phone calls to channel Omar's feelings, which would be unimaginable to express face to face or on camera. Thus, the affordable audio of the cassette is preserved via the film through its inclusion in the diegesis. In other words, the "unrepresentable" or "invisible" aspects of women in Omar's life are made presentable and visible with the help of another invisible component, namely, the audio of the cassettes. Another, maybe more vivid example of recycling old media is Pietro Marcello's *La Bocca Del Lupo* (Italy 2009). Both films — as different as their stories seem at first sight — work well in connection with each other, given that both films deal with characters caught in an all-male en-

vironment, either by culture or by the nature of a prison, and audio cassettes are used to bridge the gap to the female sex. *La Bocca del Lupo* documents the love story of Mary Monaco and Vincenzo "Enzo" Motta, who met in the 1970s in a Genoa prison. Mary, born a man, suffered from the harsh reality of being transgender in a prison environment, in addition to various years of heroin addiction. Despite crimes, addiction, and prison walls that kept them apart for over 20 years, the couple managed to keep their relationship going with the help of the audiocassettes they sent to each other to bridge Mary's illiteracy.

The film uses old 16mm footage of the actual couple in their hometown, mixed with newly shot 16mm footage of their surroundings. On the soundtrack we hear their audiotapes expressing each other's thoughts, memories, and feelings. Towards the end of the film, interviews with them united as a couple in their modest apartment are added to the overall cinematic collage that reflects their relationship and helps the audience to put together the narrative puzzle that is their story. The tapes that were once functioning as an affordable and efficient tool to communicate with each other, are now used to communicate their story to the audience. In other words, the recipient of the audio has use the changed. While the director might have chosen to use contemporary interviews with the couple to tell the story, he chose instead to use the tapes to recreate in the imagination the authenticity of a time that has passed. The story that was once told through the audiotapes' own homogenous temporality — the story told at the time Mary and Enzo recorded their messages —has now been disrupted. A new temporality and a new narrative, that of the documentary film that already knows the outcome of their love story, is created. Paradoxically, this new, recycled creation uses the same tapes that gave its story authenticity to form the present narrative of the couple; tapes that were recorded in the past but point to a present they could have never known.

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This leads us to the question: is a recycled medium still the same after it has been stripped of its original power? The mini-cassette recorder we see in Omar Gatlato, as well as the tapes we hear on the soundtrack of *La Bocca del Lupo,* are just props. The audio is not played from a cassette player, we hear it channeled through the soundtrack on a digital DVD copy. As mentioned earlier in this essay, the resurrection of old media seems to revolve around the style, aesthetics, and reputation of a medium, rather than its actual function. For the future, it will be interesting to see if we will define a submode of the audio cassette film, and what genre will precipitate its resurrection, the same way that the videotape's comeback seems to have been brought about by the horror genre.

01/

CINEMATIC CATALYSTS:
CONTEMPT+
CASA MALAPARTE
BY DANIELLE WILLEMS

There is no question that at this point in time we view the world through the cinematic lens. The way we move and perceive space, time and the landscape is most certainly through this lens. How can this method be harnessed to become a methodology that is generative rather than just representational? Can this method be developed through a narrative feeding back onto the form expanding and creating space and time around the sequence of events? This case study of Casa Malaparte has its own interesting story as well as the many events and narratives that weave themselves through and around this space. The film *Le Mépris* (*Contempt*) produced in 1963 is certainly one of Godard's most seductive productions. The main event or catalyzing moment between the two characters in the film is solidified through the formal performance of the architecture of Casa Malaparte. This catalyzing moment will become the focus of this essay, and will attempt to investigate the series of memories surrounding and forming this exceptional house.

Beginning with a writer, the question arises; can memory, material and vernacular craftsmanship produce one of the most revered forms of rationalist architecture? The moment of conception for the narrative of Curzio Malaparte's house took place well before construction began in 1937, on the island of Capri, and began with a single memory that would become the predominant generative component of its becoming. Encapsulating this memory was a character that operated within clashing edges in life, literature, politics and culture. His bold, outspoken methodology caused him to spend most of his life either in prison or exiled. These events in his life become very relevant to the formation of Casa Malaparte, because they contain the cognition of the spatial manifestations of the house as they related to past environments, forms and spaces. One of the main points of contention surrounding the creation of the house emerged intensely between the two protagonists, the architect Adalberto Liberia and the owner Curzio Malaparte. Mardia Talamona has produced

extensive research on the dialogue between the two characters. Prior to her research, most of the writing on the house's history had been speculative and did not capture the true narrative. She writes, "Prior research… yields what one wishes to see in the house instead of yielding what the house really represented. Excessive emphasis has been placed on the "modern" image of the house, while its vernacular value — that of a building being invented day by day following the 'expertise' of a local master builder — has been ignored."[1] The house's exceptional sensitivity to the landscape and contradictory boldness makes it very easy for architectural critics to delineate this house as a product of the architect Libera, who at that time was perceived as a prominent figure in the Italian Realist movement.

Villa Malaparte in Capri (Photograph by Peter Schüle 2006)

Talamona traces the volatile relationship between these two characters through a series of letters, which index an exchange that concluded before the house began construction. This predominant memory that lead to the conception and spatial creation of the house for Malaparte was imprinted while he was imprisoned in Lampari and visited the church Annunziata. The central element of the stairs can be traced back to the cognition of this church, in which this process begins to notate the generative translation potential of deeply-embedded memories. This is further solidified when Malaparte states, "it became clear to me from the beginning that not only the outline of the house, its architecture, but also the building materials, had to fit that

1 Marida Talamona, *Casa Malaparte*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992.

wild and delicate landscape. I was the first to build such a house, and it was with reverential trepidation that I set myself to the task, helped not by architects or engineers, but by a simple master builder…For months and months, teams of masons worked on that farthest balcony of Capri, until the house began slowly to emerge from the rock to which it was married, and as it took shape, it revealed itself as the most daring and intelligent and modern house in Capri."[2]

What becomes even more incredible is the transformation of the house during the process of construction, manifest through Curzio and the master craftsman/builder, Adolfo Amitriano, working together on the site. The roofscape becomes the register of experimentation, as the form of the house progresses through several iterations. There was, at one point in its formation, an entrance piercing through the center of the exterior stair and roof, which was later filled in. As a methodology for creating space this process, the ever-evolving form, is progressive. Curzio's larger narrative — operating on the margins, being imprisoned and exiled, his memories of redemption—all permeate the formation of this house. It is isolated from the rest of civilization and has the emotive qualities of a prison and a church, drifting in the shifting, expansive seascape. This narrative generated a form full of contradictions and exceptional experiences, which continues to inspire. "Casa Come Me – A house like me" 1938-present.

Continuing with the filmmaker, the question is: can cinema — the act of seeing and the cinematic event — be used as a generative method of creating space and form? Through the development of a methodology of digesting all previous cinematic manifestations, Jean-Luc Godard weaves cinema itself as an extreme focal point of investigation. This methodological exploration expands in the film *Le Mepris*, where the narrative traces a film being produced within a film. The formal diagram of the film also mirrors the narrative of the film the *Story of the Odyssey*. "*Contempt* marked the first time that Godard went beyond the jolie-laide poetry of cities and revealed his romantic, un-ironic love of landscapes."[3] The catalyzing moment in this film involves the divergence of the two main characters' relationship. The staircase on the roof becomes the stage of this unraveling event. The characters trace the thresholds of the roof and call into the landscape, only to be confronted with their own edges and boundaries. This event is facilitated through the form and space of Casa Malaparte and in many ways the house becomes an expression of their relationship, which is both sacred and profane, as a temple and a prison.

The degree to which Godard as a filmmaker understood the house

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2 *Ritratto di Pietra* (stone portrait) by Curzio Malaparte, 1940

3 Philip Lopate, *Totally, Tenderly, Tragically*, New York: Anchor Books, 1998.

becomes clear as he weaves a new narrative through and around the profound consciousness with which it was created. In the film this is perceived in moments when Paul (Michel Piccoli) traces with his gestures the remnants of the previous iteration of the stair that was later filled in. This is also shown as Camille (Brigitte Bardot) is looking from her prison-like window up to her husband on the roof. Godard has created a new concept of the house, using the gestures in the sequence of cinematic events to create plasticity within form. This concept of indexing layered narrative is not found in conventional architectural representation, but it has the generative potential to become a proposition and a gateway to the complex relationships between space and narrative, forms and events.

Allowing the written word to manifest form becomes the craftsmanship of cinema, which is very similar to the process of allowing the diagram to manifest architectural space. The critical moment is giving the narrative a physical entity or space, to take it from concept to form. The sequence of images then construct a reality, instead of reducing images to an illustrative/representational role. Rather, something "other" can occur beyond the dialectic, thus allowing the narrative to develop in a neutral and pure space where the form can emerge unimpeded by the dialectic. Images, then, become performative, and within this act of displacement, they become generative.

Casa Malaparte, part memory, part fiction, is the narrative solidification and personification of the famed writer and artist Curzio Malaparte. It is a vernacular Zeitgeist realized with the help of a master craftsman. The merging of the cinematic with the production and design of space has the potential to yield the formal plasticity and the defining momentum of our time. Beyond the theater perspective, the static view of movement, the generative potential of cinematic perspective and the moment image, where time and space are plastic, there is the potential to create novel forms.

16/

OFF THE GRID.
LEFT OUT AND OVER
BY CARL DOUGLAS

/// Infrastructure

In James Graham Ballard's novella *Concrete Island*, architect Robert Maitland crashes his Jaguar over a motorway embankment onto a traffic island, a thin triangle of waste ground two hundred meters long.[1] Here, in a parody of Robinson Crusoe, he finds himself marooned:

> His jacket and trousers were stained with sweat, mud and engine grease. Few drivers, even if they did notice him, would be eager to give him a lift. Besides, it would be almost impossible to slow down here and stop. The pressure of the following traffic, free at last from the long tail-backs that always blocked the Westway interchange during the rush hour, forced them on relentlessly.[2]

The fast-flowing arms of the motorway continue to operate perfectly, ensuring the rapid movement of bodies and objects; but their operation is inaccessible to Maitland. Immobilized by the infrastructure of mobility, he has not simply exited urban life, he has slipped off the grid while remaining firmly within its network of effects.

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It is useful to distinguish between the idea of space as a container, and the idea of space as connection. In a threshold space, things, effects, and events are contained or exteriorized; in a transformational space, they are transmitted. Harry Beck's seminal map of the London Underground (1931) locates stations according to their topological relationship and their connections to one other, not their geographical position. For someone traversing the network, it is more important to know which connections are available at any given point and where transfers need to be made, than to know distances

1 James Graham Ballard, *Concrete Island*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1974.

2 James Graham Ballard, *Concrete Island*. London: Jonathan Cape, 1974.

travelled or which stretches of track are underground and which are in the open air. Containment is secondary to connection. To pass outside in threshold space is to cross a line demarcating an interior, whether by choice, accident, or involuntary ejection. In transformational space, however, there is no strict exterior, only degrees of connection. Charing Cross, on Beck's map, differs from Edgeware not because it is a more capacious station, with better amenities and more platforms, but because it has greater connectivity.

Similarly, a motorway folds the city, creating points of accelerated connection and compressing distance. It cuts through the city like a street, but unlike a street, access can only be gained at certain strategic points where there are on-ramps. These short circuits modify the connectivity of the street-grid, and vary the ability of certain types of effects to propagate through the city. An accident at one point of the network can create congestion at another point. A business might choose to locate itself close to an on-ramp in order to facilitate rapid transmission of its goods. From the perspective of an urban inhabitant, the motorway is normally considered as a space of pure connection, barring an accident such as Maitland's. In the spatial operation of the motorway, the question of interiority is secondary, even problematic, compared to questions of access and the types of effect that thereby propagate.

So long as I am carrying a working phone, I have access to a cell-phone network, and can have remote effects through it. If my phone stops working, however, being 'within' the area of coverage is of no use to me. Without access, I am off the grid. From the point of view of a threshold spatiality, I could be said to be in the network, but without a connection or the capacity to have effects on other elements of the network, this would be a hollow claim: the dialectic of exteriority / interiority can have little to say about my situation.

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In the twentieth century, infrastructures became key determinants of urban form, and consequently of spatial experience and politics. In directing design attention to this cultural condition, an understanding of the nondialectical and transformational space of networks is necessary.

/// Failure

Pierre Bélanger suggests that infrastructure "remains largely invisible until the precise moment at which it breaks down or fails."[3] This paper began with a moment of infrastructural failure: Maitland's Jaguar crashing through a barrier, and Maitland falling off the grid. He

3 Pierre Bélanger, *Landscape Infrastructure: Emerging Practices, Paradigms & Technologies Reshaping the Contemporary Urban Landscape.* [DVD]. Toronto: University of Toronto, 2008.

suddenly experiences the motorway as an explicit object whereas previously it had functioned transparently.

In Heidegger, we find an attribution of existential significance to the interchange between the visible and invisible aspects of an entity foregrounded by failure. He posits the way a tool withdraws into invisibility through use, but erupts into consciousness once it fails.[4] A hammer in use is not a subject of explicit awareness, but is simply relied upon for some end: perhaps building a boat or re-attaching the legs of a stool. As the hammer disappears into its operation, it becomes more fully itself:

> [T]he less we just stare at the hammer-Thing, and the more we seize hold of it and use it, the more primordial does our relationship to it become, and the more unveiledly is it encountered as that which it is—as equipment.[5]

The being of the tool is disclosed most fully not through analysis or study, but through its performance. In this situation, Heidegger says the hammer is "ready-at-hand." When the hammer breaks, however, and the carpenter is left staring blankly at the now-ineffective implement, the hammer erupts suddenly into awareness in the mode of "presence-to-hand." Readiness-at-hand and presence-to-hand are not separate kinds of objects, but as Boedeker puts it, "two modes of the how-being of intraworldly entities."[6] In use, the tool refers on to the task at hand, and when its use is interrupted, this reference is disturbed.

Graham Harman argues controversially that Heidegger's insight is not limited to human encounters with objects — even if Heidegger himself believed this to be the case.[7] He believes that withdrawal through reference and presence-to-hand through encounter is part of the structure of all entities. Paper, for example, encounters the knife as knife in some sense at least, even given the obvious fact that the paper does not have consciousness of the knife, because it clearly does not encounter it as a pebble or drop saw. Each particular encounter is a moment of presence-to-hand, behind which both the thing encountered and the encounterer withdraw into the execution of their own being as part of the total in its "equipmental totality" or "referential contexture."[8]

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4 Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson, trans. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1962.

5 Ibid.

6 Hubert Dreyfus and Mark Wrathall, *A companion to Heidegger*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005.

7 Graham Harman, *Tool-being*. Chicago: Open Court, 2006.

8 Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* J. Macquarrie & E. Robinson, trans. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1962, and Hubert Dreyfus and Mark Wrathall, *A*

As revealed in Maitland's encounter, the motorway as a seamless cultural system is broken and there is exposure of "a vast environmental backdrop supporting the thin and volatile layer of our explicit activities."[9] But the motorway exceeds this encounter: other road users successfully navigate its lanes, and homeless people sleep under its bridges. If we follow Harman's expansion of the scope of Heidegger's terms to encompass non-human encounters, we could also count the rain running off it, birds perching on its lighting masts, and carbon monoxide being released into the atmosphere. Maitland's experience is one moment of presence-to-hand, but in each of these encounters there is a form of presence-to-hand, and behind them all is a withdrawal into the performative being of readiness-at-hand. Withdrawal could be seen as the hyperobjectivity of all objects: the movement by which they exceed any single encounter and remain always open to others. Presence-to-hand is bounded by the horizon of a particular encounter, but withdrawing beyond this horizon is an infinitely connected equipmental totality.

/// **Off the grid**

When Maitland falls off the grid, he does not fall outside. Ballard calls into question the applicability of a threshold spatiality to the network by placing Maitland in an ambiguous position: simultaneously outside and pocketed. The bursting of a tire triggers a reconfiguration of a network of elements in which Maitland finds himself even more deeply enmeshed. As the narrative unfolds it becomes evident that Maitland's alienation is not strictly an incarceration or exile, but a personal failure to connect: there is a phone, but he cannot get to it; a car stops for him, but he waves it on aggressively.

Following this argument, 'outside' pertains to threshold space, but 'off the grid' pertains to transformational space. When we fall off the grid, we do not escape it by exiting across any absolute horizon or threshold. We remain engaged in the grid's network of effects, even if those effects are indirect, remote, or weak. Off the grid is a position that exposes or engages these secondary effects that are masked by the horizons of specific encounters. As Maitland speeds along the motorway, his encounter is specific and bounded. Withdrawn over the horizons of this encounter, however, are a vast network of referrals — things operating or performing relations — that are exposed at the moment of his stranding. In siting ourselves off the grid, we encounter hitherto withdrawn aspects of the grid, but not from the perspective of a disengaged observer. Off the grid describes this state of being alongside, encountering obliquely something that had been operating previously in a transparent way. This perspective

companion to Heidegger. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2005.

9 Graham Harman, *Tool-being*. Chicago: Open Court, 2006.

reveals potently the ontological shifts implicit in a transformational concept of space. From off the grid, I encounter my own connections in ways I had previously been unaware. My shift in perspective unveils the world as a referential contexture.

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03/

TRANSCENDENT DELUSION OR; THE DANGEROUS FREE SPACES OF PHILLIP K. DICK
BY MARTIN BYRNE

(Solo queda / el desierto).[1]

You find yourself walking through a long dusty corridor in a dank building sometime in the late afternoon. The doors to nearly every room have long since fallen in, letting pale shafts of light mingle with dust and paper; assorted debris whirls about in lazy semi-circles as you pass quietly by. There are no lights apart from the fading sun; there is no sound except for the slow pacing of your own feet and the idle mixed thoughts that bounce from left to right in your head. The further you walk down the corridor, the more overwhelming your sense of isolation becomes. Through each doorway you see rooms that have been long forgotten — weeds sprouting from moldy ephemera in the foreground and a long view out of the broken floor-to-ceiling windows beyond. Each frame you pass in steady syncopation offers a glimpse of what seems to be an encroaching desert. Shifting piles of dust cover in fits and starts the remains of a world that you never found entirely familiar to begin with.

How do you feel?

If you at all feel anxious, dirty, or alone, it might be wise for you to stop reading now. "And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider well the lilies of the field, how they grow."[2] Or, I should say, in the Phillip K. Dick universe: 'And why are you anxious about architecture? Consider the *kipple* of the world, how it spreads.' For therein lies your salvation. Also, before I continue, if you have not read *Martian Time-Slip* or *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, I suggest you stop whatever you're doing and go read these novels. Simultaneously,

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1 Fredercio Garcia Lorca, *And Then, from Poem of the Deep Song,* San Francisco: City Lights Publishers, 2001.

2 Matthew 6:28

multiple times in a row.[3]

Now, over the course of the varied and illuminated career of science fiction writer Phillip K Dick, we follow the author and his hapless characters through a veritable labyrinth of shifting worlds, be they physical or mental, most in some stage of degradation and decrepitude, perhaps in some way similar to the scene described above. Often within these worlds, Dick wields his God-given-right-to-naming through the creation of a few choice words that might describe these decaying worlds and all their subtle majesty. The two neologisms that seem to have the most potential are *kipple* and *gubble*, which vaguely signify physical shifts and mental shifts, respectively. It is my contention that the author uses these two terms with a secondary, perhaps unintentional, function within his narratives. Dick's complimentary concepts of *kipple* and *gubble* are both the devices and scenarios with which and in which his characters find solace and transcendence from their increasingly apathetic environments. The characters exist within fundamentally unbalanced societies that they manage to escape by occupying the spaces and mentalities of *kipple* and *gubble*.

First, both *kipple* and *gubble* are functions that involve members of society who are cast-off, forgotten, or otherwise undesirable. *Kipple* occupies the physical domain of the chickenheads, antheads, other pea-brained humans, and, of course, the fleeing androids in *Do Androids* — and it is perpetually encroaching. *Gubble* is the mental space of the autistic and the physical space of the Bleekman (Martians) in *Martian Time-Slip*. What is interesting to note is that these people and environments have been deemed inherently incompatible with the rest of society, and yet it is here that they either induce or are indicative of moments of transcendence for the protagonists. Take for example the case of JR Isidore, the golden-hearted chickenhead who first introduces us to kipple in *Do Androids*. Living nearly in "the wastes," JR finds himself almost entirely alone in an abandoned *conapt* [a neologism of lesser strength] where *kipple* encroaches from all sides. This is also the place where he happens, astoundingly, to find a live spider, eking out a living on Dick-knows-what. Combine this awe-inspiring and unfathomably rare occurrence with Rick Deckard's discovery of a 'Toad (Bufonidae), all varieties.......E.' (E for extinct) in the desert as he is contemplating suicide, and you have twice witnessed the strongest of many other subtle experiences these characters are allowed to have precisely in a space that is dismissed by their society proper as being a wasteland. These kinds of characters are written off as delusional, the spaces they inhabit are alien and hostile, and yet they happen across transcendence that other characters crave but never find. It is also interesting to note that

3 Phillip K. Dick, *Martian Time-Slip*, New York: Random House, 1995, and Philip K. Dick, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, New York: Del Rey, 1996.

the characters that Dick highlights as insatiate are often the wives of the protagonists. In *Do Androids* Deckard's wife often considers suicide and has a troubled relationship with her mood organ while in *Martian*, Bohlen's wife is addicted to *Phenobarbitals* and views her world through a perpetually glassy-eyed haze.

Now, when dealing with transcendence, one cannot forget the figure of Wilbur Mercer (who was egregiously omitted from the film adaptation.) Wilbur Mercer is the figure-head of the spiritual movement in *Do Androids*, and is accessed through an 'empathy box.' What we find intriguing about this motif is that the mood organ transports the users via hologram of some sort into what the society inherently fears: the desert, the wasteland, the place where *kipple* has taken over entirely. It is within this space, the desert, the *kipple-space*, that they seek to be one with each other. It is here that they deactivate their robotic, mood-organ-dictated "feelings" and open themselves to true empathy and their own deep humanity once more. The irony that robots are being hunted for being 'too human' is as palpable as ersatz sheep's wool, which is to say 'exceedingly so.'

Beyond this, we enter the world of *gubbish*. Here we can begin to see the confluence of architecture and mental deviance, and how Dick often aligns the two. What is interesting in this analysis is that the persons involved with the architectural and mental deviations are children, but that is for another time perhaps. In *Martian Time-Slip*, there are two children who occupy the two poles of a diagnostic society; one is the protagonist's son, David, and the other is the neighbors' son, Manfred. David is perfectly adjusted to being brought up on Mars, according to the colony's conceptions of being well-adjusted. (His own mother claims that he was "trained to say no," and that he was at the top of his school class. Not a positive distinction. We later learn that the schooling system trains the children to be followers, repeating canned answers with no chance for variation or digression. Remind you of anything?) Manfred, however, is autistic and cannot become a 'functioning member of society.' Additionally, each boy is represented by a certain architecture; David, the public school, and Manfred, the desert. The public school, as described in the thoughts of the protagonist:

> It was a battle, Jack realized between the composite psyche of the school and the individual psyches of the children, and the former held all the key cards. A child who did not properly respond was assumed to be autistic – that is, oriented according to a subjective factor that took precedence over his sense of objective reality. And that child wound up by being expelled from the school; he went, after that, to another school entirely, one designed to rehabilitate him: he went to Camp Ben-Gurion. He could not be taught; he could only be dealt with as ill.[4]

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4 Phillip K. Dick, *Martian Time-Slip*, New York: Random House, 1995.

We learn that these two children are also indicative of the two types of people who populate the Martian colonies. You are either a complete neurotic, which is accepted as normal and subsequently heavily medicated with all manner of phenobarbitals and Dexamye [recall Bohlen's wife]. Or you are of a 'schizoid temperament,' and shipped off to a 'camp' in *New Israel* to be 'dealt with.' At the climax of the book, these two conditions are brought together when the protagonist begins to experience his previously suppressed schizophrenic episodes in concert with Manfred within the public school, within the architecture of the opposite mentality. These two mentalities collide and cause Bohlen's world to devolve into gubbish talk and gubbled environments, where bones burst through skin and buildings reach out to cut you, while Manfred's world blossoms in the slow graceful movement of the Bleekman, with whom he can now miraculously converse telepathically. Previously, Manfred was only vaguely aware of the humans he was surrounded by daily, in an environment that he consistently described as sharp and hostile, in his quiet narration. And throughout all of this, Manfred intermittently experiences time-slips where he is forced to witness a potential future of his; he is trapped in a decaying retirement home while attached to an unholy array of machinery that keeps him alive in a state of deranged torture.

In Dick's masterful resolution, we find the characters confronting all of these mental deviations on sacred Bleekman ground in a shallow cave in the bleak Martian desert, affectionately known as *Dirty Knobby*. Again, it is here in the inhospitable, entirely alien, and patently dangerous desert that Manfred's consciousness comes into conflict with the symbol of extreme neuroses, one Arnie Kott, and achieves a sort of transcendence after which Manfred is able to communicate and eventually live with the Bleekman permanently. His terrifying visions of the future decaying building transform into a pleasant life of wandering in the desert (and smoking cigarettes) with the Bleekman. It seems as though his immersion the *gubbish* world was only achievable through his schizoid temperament through which he was able to escape a neurotic society to find solace in the desert.

> Perhaps, for the first time in his life, the boy was in a situation to which he might make an adjustment; he might, with the wild Bleekman, discern a style of living which was genuinely his and not a pallid, tormented reflection of the lives of those around him, beings who were innately different from him and whom he could never resemble, no matter how hard he tried.[5]

We should all be so lucky. *Folie à plusieurs*, I suppose?
Now how do you feel?

5 Phillip K. Dick, *Martian Time-Slip*, New York: Random House, 1995.

15/

THE POSSIBLE WORLDS
OF ARCHITECTURE
BY CLAIRE JAMIESON

A hand rests for a moment on a parapet above the central courtyard, traces the curve of a thin metal banister that spirals deep inside the main block, and holds back the branches covering the entrance to an outlying building. Heavy boots kick aside plaster and glass to test floorboards in the half dark, and the place starts to reveal itself to a new and fearless gaze.[1]

/// Telling stories

We are natural storytellers. It is highly likely that our storytelling abilities evolved with language and human culture, and that there is something in our very nature that compels us to communicate using stories.[2] Some have even gone so far as to suggest that language evolved as a response to the need to tell stories.[3] The justification for this lies in the notion that a story or narrative is, in essence, a construction of the mind, and thus requires the complex qualities of language to communicate it — being that it is not sensory. But what constitutes a story, and what gives language primacy over other modes of representation, such as the visual, in communicating them?

The largely agreed definition of a story is that of a "mental image" with four key constituents.[4] Firstly, it must have a spatial constituent: a setting inhabited by people (or creatures) and things, in other words, a 'world.' Secondly, it must have a temporal constituent, so that the 'world' undergoes changes, with events occurring to cause them. The third constituent is mental, the inhabitants of the 'world'

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1 Brian Dillon, *Sanctuary*, Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2011, 14.

2 Though not proven, this is discussed in: Ryan, Marie-Laure: *Narration in Various Media*, Paragraph 23. In: Hühn, Peter et al. (eds.): *The Living Handbook of Narratology*, Hamburg: Hamburg University Press.

3 Mark Turner, *The Literary Mind*, New York: Oxford UP, 1996.

4 Marie-Laure Ryan, "Toward a Definition of Narrative*,"* in D. Herman (ed). *The Cambridge Companion to Narrative*, Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2007, 22–35.

must have a mental consciousness and react to those changes and events. Finally, a story must have a formal or pragmatic constituent, that is to say closure and meaningfulness (though this is a rather modernist requirement). Of these four constituents, it is the temporal and mental that pose the most problems to visual modes of representation. After all, an image can very well depict a spatial setting and convey meaning, but when it comes to the causal aspect of temporality, and the mental expression of emotions and intents, it can fall short to language.

For a form of production such as architecture, which deals first and foremost in the image, communicating a complex narrative through its traditional modes of representation can prove problematic. For Lefebvre, the image quite literally "kills" the imagination, reducing the richness of lived experience to the fetish of the one-liner.[5] It could certainly be said that the traditional architectural drawing struggles to communicate phenomenological intelligence. After all, its mainstay is to prevent misunderstanding and inhibit dual readings. Indeed, Walter Benjamin identifies the essential characteristic of an architectural drawing, noting: "…it does not take a pictorial detour."[6] Equally, the three-dimensional renderings of the 21st century depict an environment so flawless and seemingly real, that little interpretation is possible, or perhaps desired. It seems that the visual can suffer from the inability to provide what literary theorists call "gaps," the unwritten spaces of the text which allow the readers to exercise their own imaginations by filling in the gaps.[7] A visual representation can be guilty of giving the viewer too much information, shutting down the imagination's ability to conjure a more elaborate narrative.

If we are to believe that "[t]he real craftsmanship in architecture is the crafting of a good story…", might the architect look towards the literary to evoke unfolding spatial narratives and "furnished" worlds?[8]

/// The Fictive

The fictional world of the text has a peculiar relationship with the actual world. Paradoxically, it is able to delve deeply into the reality of spaces and places, exposing the contradictory, the complicated, the emotional and the lived quality of space. In this sense, the unreal provides a means to better understand the real, or perhaps the po-

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5 Neil Leach, *Rethinking architecture: a reader in cultural theory*, London: Routledge, 1998, 138.

6 Walter Benjamin, *Rigorous Study of Art*, October, Vol. 47, 1988.

7 David Herman, Manfred Jahn, and Marie-Laure Ryan, "Possible-Worlds Theory," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory*, 1st ed. Routledge, 2005.

8 Mark Wigley, *Story-Time*, Assemblage, no. 27, 1995, 81-94, and Umberto Eco, *The Limits of Interpretation*, Indiana University Press, 1990.

tential of the real. Literary fictional narratives move us from projecting measurable and predictable requirements, to imagining an infinity of possible worlds.

Possible-worlds semantics goes some way to describe the complex position of the fictional text within the actual world, providing a framework to analyze the diverse relationships fiction has with reality. This frame of thinking considers the fictional worlds of literature to be "sovereign realms of possibilia," — that is, worlds in their own rights, with their own sets of rules and laws of reality.[9] The model also asserts that all possible worlds are of the same ontological nature, so fictional entities such as characters, places, things, and events, can coexist and interact. But possible worlds are not just flights of fancy or stories told for entertainment. At their very core, they are constructs for thought and discourse — they are testing grounds for ideas, wishes and fantasies:

> We explore the plurality of possibilia to find out a suitable model for realia.[10]

/// Architectural fiction

In the possible-world of Brian Dillon's *Sanctuary*, Cardross Seminary in Glasgow, Scotland is a character to be interacted with, blending our perceptions of the place with the people and memories whose narratives are enacted through it:

> She rises to her feet, crying, and makes her way back through the spectral doorway, and into the spiral staircase. The steps are now slick with rain; a fine mist has begun to fall on the seminary, and at the bottom of the stairs she turns towards the solidity of the main block once more.[11]

The novella's narrative centers around the real, and ruined, seminary – a strangely enigmatic figure who becomes at once a setting for action, and symbolic of the differing vital force driving the two central characters. An unnamed woman, whose debilitating migraines seem echoed in the crumbling and wild evocation of decay, is desperately searching for her missing lover, hopelessly trying to make sense of the fragments left in his wake:

> It is unclear what relationship this curve, as it tightens towards the interior, bears to the tower-like structure she encountered outside. For the

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9 Marie-Laure Ryan, "Possible Worlds and Accessibility Relations: A Semantic Typology of Fiction," in *Poetics Today 12, no.3*, October 1, 1991, 553-576.

10 Umberto Eco, *The Limits of Interpretation*, Indiana University Press, 1990.

11 Brian Dillon, *Sanctuary*, Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2011, 72.

first time, she begins to feel properly afraid in the vast and thus far silent complex, where she knows he has been. She looks back towards the southern end of the building, which the sun has so penetrated that what is left of wooden fixtures now glows fiercely, and thin streaks of yellow and orange have begun to rake the filthy floor.[12]

He is described as an uninhibited and wandering artist, full of "awkwardness and curiosity," while she pursues control and meaning, he yearns for the opposite, the indeterminate…the fluke:[13]

> …much of his time was spent trying to corral the mental and physical space in which these oblique and happenstance turns might take place. This is what he thought he had found at the seminary. He wanted to explore the gaps in the stories of this place and others like it, the things glimpsed out of the corner of one's eye while looking head-on at the object itself.[14]

This extract not only serves to describe a character, but also suggests something about the nature of stories and the literary gaps mentioned earlier. The narratives he (and we) seeks are not those found by full-frontal representations of buildings, of unambiguous images that have filled in all the gaps – but are found through modes of exploration such as the literary text, which allow us to look "…out of the corner of one's eye…"[15]

A gap in *Sanctuary*'s narrative is the missing man himself. Though not present in the text as a voice, he is still somehow vitally present in the extended descriptions of the ruins that punctuate the text throughout the novella. These evocations, combined with the female character's memories of him, project a sense of him in the imagination of the reader in a way more vital than if he had been given a voice. The building is far more than a setting in this sense, and transforms the text into what one could consider an architectural (or architecture) fiction:

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> Instead of hidden spaces, the thicknesses of walls and beams and pillars appear themselves to possess a blind and solid inside, where nonetheless a kind of action is taking place. Tiny voids swell and contract like the minute chambers of lungs.[16]

This might be a way of writing with, by, or through a building, which attempts to delve beyond the traditional relationship between setting, characters and narrative to one more akin to reality, where the

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12 Brian Dillon, *Sanctuary*, Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2011, 27-28.

13 Brian Dillon, *Sanctuary*, Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2011, 41.

14 Brian Dillon, *Sanctuary*, Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2011, 42.

15 Brian Dillon, *Sanctuary*, Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2011, 42.

16 Brian Dillon, *Sanctuary*, Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2011, 54.

boundaries between these entities are blurred and overlapping. A building cannot be characterized fully without the stories, memories and lives whose fragments are embedded within them. A fiction such as *Sanctuary* which constructs such a world allows the readers to make the spaces of the text part of their own realities, thus appropriating and discovering it in the same way they would the actual world.

The possible worlds of the literary architectural narrative suggest a way of enriching and challenging how we think about and make architecture. Fictional writing and associated narrative techniques might be effectively embedded in architectural production to enable architects to propose spatial solutions that are suggestive of a richer social, emotional and experiential occupation:

> But while daylight discovers the intricacies of the seminary complex, the sheltered interior of the sanctuary spiral will stay cold and gray. Not until the sun has reached its highest point will light fall into the well that the curved walls describe around the concrete altar and the weeds that spring up at its base. At length, all shadows vanish from the open interior of the tower's summit save for a cool lozenge of darkness here in the lee of the altar.[17]

/// **Published on November 15th 2011**

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17 Brian Dillon, *Sanctuary*, Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2011, 90.

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PET ARCHITECTURE: HUMAN'S BEST FRIEND
BY CARLA LEITÃO

Characters like *Animal* from the Muppet show (a creation by Jim Henson) are often illustrations through which we can talk about the qualities of the wild, the feral and the natural, in contrast to that which is artificial or built, the man-made. This article, however, would like to focus on the chain.

'Animal,' the character, offers the comic emerging out of the usual play between sophistication and calling, which can define the figure of the invited wild. The sophistication of the chained animal (who is a great musician) plays with the figure of drummers and their often cliched position in a band—there are jokes in the music world that refer to the drummer as that member who can have less 'musical education' than the other players (unfair, surely). Obsession with playing often puts Animal in trances that ultimately reveal all dimensions at once, including narratives that are confusing about their actual species—quite often that Animal's solos end up with two mental health nurses catching him with a butterfly net to take him off stage, and suggestively, to some kind of 'other place.' Animal, however, is glad to be in his chain and this way be able to play the drums in the companion of the other 'more human' animals. The unused chain, surely, contains a wilder Animal than his behavior can ever become.

A few years ago in a couple of lectures at the European Graduate School, Donna Haraway introduced her delivery with a cartoon involving a supposed American Association of Lapdogs looking nervously at a slideshow pointing at their imminent enemy: the *Laptop*.[1] Furthermore, in a brief investigation into a rough description of a pet's (condition of) unconditional love, Haraway recalled the descriptions made exemplarily by an anonymous pet owner, and in contrast to the owner's description, classified them as 'gestures of submission' and briefly remarked upon the fact that these have a problematic relationship with the ambiguous figure of belonging, often present in

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1 Donna Haraway, Video Recordings at European Graduate School *Cyborgs. Dogs and Companion Species* Seminar Class, 2000.

what we vaguely call love. The vast contribution made by Haraway to various fields and to theories of cognition has opened perspectives on the relationships between species.[2]

Deeply influenced by and influencing cybernetic theory, Haraway's insights are especially provoking in the places where difficult questions of ownership arise — the ways in which animals have co-evolved with humans by becoming pets. Haraway uses the term 'companion species', which alludes to the multiple dimensionality of ownership, and refers to the ways in which these companions have often enacted extensions of the human body itself, through their roles in space exploration or medical investigation.

Let's examine stories by several authors who have explored pet characters and their varying degrees of dependency, submission and utilitarianism. Some of the most extreme examples belong to the domain of sci-fi or certain types of magical realism. In "*Cães Marinheiros*" by Herberto Helder, we are presented a scenario where a couple of dogs own a sailor, and where the latter, obviously, can't stand to live far away from the sea.[3] Regardless of the care and cherishing by the dogs for their sailor, they cannot avoid its 'dogly' sickness (in this case a melancholia, an obsession and longing for the sea which manifests as 'dog distemper'), which ultimately kills him. Here, the sea provides resistance — the calling, which confers on the sailor his (fatal) quota of wilderness — to his tamed persona.

Back in 1965, Frank Herbert (author of the famous *Dune*) published a series of short stories which are clear precedents of Pet Architecture.[4] The chairdogs in *The Tactful Saboteur* and *Whipping Star* are the pinnacle of ergonomic seating: a chair that truly fits the user.[5] The use of this chair implies a taming or petting by the user for adjustment, while the semi-sentient animality of the furniture senses moods and more subtle triggers that allow final accommodation to (literally) take place. Oftentimes, these chairdogs would take a more forceful attitude — as if real friends or neighborly spas — through recourse to small tricks to slowly massage a stubborn owner-user into relax mode.

In *WE3*, a graphic novel by Grant Morrison and Frank Quitely, the future of military weaponry includes the cybernetic extension of highly

2 See "A Cyborg Manifesto: Science, Technology, and Socialist-Feminism in the Late Twentieth Century," in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*, Routledge, and London: Free Association Books, 1991; *When Species Meet*, University of Minnesota Press, 2008.

3 Herberto Helder, *Cães Marinheiros* in Os Passos em Volta 10th Edition, Assírio&Alvim, 2009.

4 Frank Herbert, *Dune*, New York: Ace, 1990.

5 Frank Herbert, *Whipping Star* (1970), G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York: "The Tactful Saboteur", in *Galaxy Science Fiction Magazine*,1964.

submissive animals.[6] Three pets, a dog, a cat and a rabbit, constitute a sole task force which combines overdoses of the forces of heavy artillery and military perceptive apparatus with the force of submissive bonding. In *WE3*, the 'Three Musketeers' type unity between pets, of different species that would otherwise be confrontational, is only surpassed by its markers of companionship to humans: their initial tamed resistance to hurting humans in general and their unshaken nostalgia for home and their owner (a military lab technician).

In *Animal'z* by Enki Bilal, (not-so-sure-anymore-they-are-) humans co-opt discardable animal personas to better navigate the leftover environments and characters of a (by now familiar) post-and-enduring-climatic catastrophe, navigated by disarrayed, disorganized humans searching for potable water across pirated and unreliable transportation networks.[7] And there is good news for fanboiz: Bilal's fantastic tale and imagery does not refuse descent into the occasional 'scientist-with-the-fantastic-high-tech weapon/artifact/serum/box' narrative, with vampire-type underground societies and rituals.

Alongside *Animal'z*' high-tech insect and lobster companions, humans oscillate more than metaphorically between their frail, limited and degrading human bodies, and the environmental and navigational adequacies of their synthesized or artificial animal bodies – into and out of which they can slip, as garments. The alternation between the two bodies in *Animal'z* is not clear-cut, becoming more of a progressive merging into one of the species, which ultimately renders immortality as a irreversible fusion or submission with the (advanced) wild (speciation).

The hilarious short-story *Rogue Farm* by Charles Stross brings up a 2060s scenario where self-growing farms wander around, squatting other pieces of land while growing to become their own, on their way to achieving extra-planetary expansion, rejected by lingering humans as if stray dogs, including by their (humans) authentic-but-by-now-speaking companion dogs.[8]

In *The Wind-up Girl* by Paolo Bacigalupi, 'New People' are advanced robotic gear, bred in Japan, who have been developed with special 'dog-like' gene enhancement and rigorous training, to be destined to please and find pleasure on obeying….[9] In the last few years, we have seen not only an exploration and inquiry into biological behavior in the art and design disciplines, but infiltrations into pet territory are popping up.

6 Grant Morrison and Frank Quitely, *We3*, DC Comics-Vertigo, 2004.

7 Enki Bilal, *Animal'z* Casterman Publishing, Inc, France, 2009.

8 Charles Stross, *"Rogue Farm" in Wireless: The Essential Charles Stross*, New York: Ace, 2009.

9 Paolo Bacigalupi, *The Windup Girl*, Night Shade Books, 2009.

In the Animal Architecture Competition Awards the tamed animal is easily taken for granted in projects which revere the productive/production character of farms and take it to the next level of safe robotics — tamed not to harm — or the expected subservience of reward training in our dealings with other species.[10] Some examples of prize-winning projects include the restoration of bee colonies via large apiaries cross-programmed with educational elements; or new scaled-up robotic chickens and bulls ('Animal Farmatures') in new hyper-fake compounds that bump *Farmland World* to the next level of possible mixes between agro-tourism-spa for distressed urban dwellers. The different entries to this provocative competition show a consistent drive toward enough measures of control- present in taming practices and tested design strategies- which would allow multiple species to exist in a forged, new-found ecological encounter.

The optimism emerging out of the integrated non-collage character of many of the (competition) renderings is beyond ironic — it swims easily in the sea of behavior driven happiness. The biological-computational, confused by the distinction between analogical model and matter-itself, does not account for error but focuses on the intersection possibilities, on the clean section provided by years now of consistent training of agent-based design in design disciplines, and its search for richer micro-scalar possibilities in the formulation of matter and form. Design practice, by frequently dealing with so-called 'stupid' agents in computational models that render biological behavior and intelligence as a scale transition problem between units and populations, has highlighted two different attitudes that reflect the still prevalent incomprehensibility and incommunicability across species. On the one hand, the focus on the potential of micro-processes (rather than the large bodies we can recall as 'animals' or 'plants', etc.) produces the study of behaviors disentangled from the unknown of faults and creases in the real, whether living or inert. This produces a model for operation without models, which is largely uninterested in the actualized bodies of the present, insofar as it relates to them on a sub-level. Whatever the consequences of this may be. On the other hand, the incomprehensibility of matter's ways produces 'tip-toe' or 'walking-on-egg-shell' approaches: the merging of urbanity between human and animal swarms often is dealt with by prototypical solutions of safe modes of encounter and keeping-at-a-distance, with a healthy dose of optimistic thinking. Ecological theory is strongly based on its understanding of comfort niches for and

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10 Animal Architecture Awards was an ideas competition organized and promoted by online site named 'Animal Architecture' whose agenda states: "Animal Architecture is an ongoing investigation into the performative role of biology in design. The project operates on the edge between humans and our surrounding "others" — illuminating alternative ways of living with nonhuman animals, discussing cross-species collaborations, and defining new frameworks through which to discuss biologic design."

across species, and aware of how much less predictable things are when real adaptation has to occur at faster speeds. It is no surprise therefore that desires for a 'sustainable' mixing of urban humans with other species counterparts deals with a great number of already tested solutions and prototypical units, distance security ratios, and 'hide-and-seek' distribution typologies. These allow co-presence but not cohabitation to rule the 'merging process.'

Manuel De Landa's "Building with Bone and Muscle" distinguishes biomimicry from the interaction with biological systems as construction materials.[11] In this text, De Landa articulates differences between thought processes that require particular scientific and language operators, versus only abstract operators. By studying biological processes' sub-level operators, abstract operations can be described in an analogical fashion. This model becomes accessible to designers across many disciplines, by studying vertebrates as load-bearing structures, for example. When, however, biological systems are directly engaged, specific language and equipment need to be tackled suggesting that interdisciplinary effort might be at stake, such as the example of the coupling of spider silk and goat milk to produce an extremely strong material, potentially rival to steel. As well, an ethical dimension is more clearly manifest in the second example than in the first, though this might be just a question of time.

Karl Steel, in his article "How to Make a Human," articulates Derrida's investigations on the animal and the way in which the subjugation of the animal has played a role in human self-conception, in particular under the influence of the Christian Middle Ages.[12] The assertion of human category seems to have often grounded itself in the domination of the animal including the implicit (and more powerful, perhaps) acknowledgement of the 'animal within.' In a recent chat with Karl Steel, he called my attention to Derrida's interest in the expression 'l'animot' (the true form of which is l'animaux') in comparison to *Animal'z* of Enki Bilal. Derrida reminds his audience of the paradoxical phonetic voicing of a word in the plural (animaux/animals). While starting with the real grammatical form of the singular (l') it is therefore able to with one word (l'animaux, which sounds like l'animot, which means 'animals-word') to set all animals in the other side of the divide – as 'a bêtise' or stupidity.

Katherine Hayles, in *How we Became Post-Human*, proposes thinking of cyborgs in the context of a reflection on our several technological extensions and projections, ways in which information and communication technologies as well as medical and perception de-

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11 Manuel de Landa, "Building with Bone and Muscle," Matter Matters, *Domus 884*, 2005.

12 Karl Steel, "How to Make a Human," in *Exemplaria magazine, vol. 20*, 2008.

vices, among others, have extended our virtual spheres well beyond our bodies.[13] Katherine Hayles focuses on the potential qualifiers of this condition, by pinning down information and its embodiment and the outcomes of the disembodiment of information. Moreover it is argued here that when information is disembodied and circulates across different material forms, the world (or cosmos) becomes no more characterized by that which is or isn't (presence and absence) but through the feedback loops between pattern and randomness, and other figures of information and communication theory, such as channels and signal/noise. This in its turn can potentially produce an altogether, perhaps new, kind of subjectivity. Subjectivity is at the core of all discussions on the constitution of self and by correlation discussions of intelligence as well as conscience.

Questions of submission always concern Design, and in particular Architecture. We remember them quite well: material submitting to form, form rarely submitting to concept but being dominated by desire, everything submitting to real program (but often not the named one) and real program challenged only by true change. A common expectation in the future of technology is the progressive incorporation of mechanisms of independence in the structure of mechanic or artificial structures. Independence substitutes the automatic in that it supposedly recreates some level of intelligence that keeps the automatic running without controlling it, a notch up in the hands-off loved by real control freaks which, superseding human error, aims at being increasingly nearer to the real feedback loop which happens outside… in the 'real world.' The soft contradiction between this desire and the supposed harmony of the real is the reality of the most cherished absent component in feedback loops': the chain, or the leash.

Catherine Ingraham's *Architecture, Animal, Human: the Asymmetrical Condition* highlights the difficulty of designing architecture with and/ or from a perspective which truly includes the biological in an intelligent manner, by providing a historical perspective of the discipline and its attempts to entangle animal subjectivity and architecture.[14] As well, the inquiry assesses several contemporary tendencies in architectural design, including initial investigations in the 90's into a potential liveliness of form and referring to the more contemporary ones, from the last decade, those that come from a renewed interest in the digital processes of form generation informed by computational biology theories and their interest in new forms of 'intelligence.'

However, it is the first distinction made by Ingraham that we might start reconsidering, the distinction of living and non-living matter and

13 Katherine Hayles, *How We Became Post-Huma*n, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.

14 Catherine Ingraham, *Architecture, Animal, Human: The Asymmetrical Condition*, New York: Routledge, 2006.

their main morphological differences, presented by their molecular crystal types (symmetrical or asymmetrical).

It might be productive as a thought-experiment to entertain that this might be perhaps the place where we all sustain a 'stone' (pun intended) in our way of thinking about these relationships, a possibly reductive attitude on our part in even excluding inanimate matter from the discussion of animality or the ethical dimensions associated with it; however, I stay clear from shinto practices while considering here that we do design differently when taking into account water's truly aggregate form and force when accounting for its mobilizing (and immobilizing) capacity. And even the Stoics softly declared that even in animals there are souls, and death is to be seen as no more than a continuation of the processes of nature… It might be that a shifting vision centered on ecological figures and our increasing capacity to see into 'black boxes' and unpack their processes might provide a new set of lenses for understanding the presence and role of bodies we usually do not see as such, and which might be, as well, the object and subject of 'animate' consideration. Ethics and aesthetics are indeed disciplines in need of some reshaping for their role in the potential of abstract thought-processes.

Some of the possible futures we can imagine in the agenda of developable technologies are indeed increasing liveliness of the fabrics we deal with as the envelopes and supports for our actions. All that is now conventionally inert, building materials and structures, garments, gadgets, is prey (or perhaps 'leashable') to the desire for increasing optimization and, potentially as consequence, graspable companionship, a property that can be discovered, co-opted, or manufactured. When Media enters or co-opts Material or Matter, we might find new filters around 'seeing' which emerge from the definition of liveliness, and with that of the tamable.

Some of the most intense criticism of the future of nanotechnology comes from abstract thought-experiments around the premise of replication of new intelligences. The investigations and proposals in nanotechnology by Dr. K. Eric Drexler focus on the process of building materials at a molecular level, which implies concepts of self-replication, or growth, needed to create reasonable speeds of development (given the small scale).[15]

The discussion around mechanical and non-mechanical paradigms for reproduction of materials not only is at the center of discussions of feasibility but also raises several red flags around the problem of control and 'grey-goo'/'earth-self-consumption' scenarios. Arguably, control can be established by assembly of 'lock' and 'matching key'

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15 See K. Eric Drexler, *Engines of Creation: The Coming Era of Nano-technology,* New York: Anchor, 1986.

typologies, which is designed to stall growth in specific directions or drive growth away from them. However, what we know better about nature are the modes through which adaptation is still a process of which our knowledge has great gaps.

As a consequence, the 'end-statement' in programming closes the edges of error and the self-looping crash, but is increasingly less desirable in hardware co-opted projective realities that attempt to deal with increasingly more variables as we include larger scale awareness and smaller scale connectivity. Open-source is not anymore a figure of freedom across software platforms and knowledge distribution, it is an ethical stance on the connectivity between platforms and entities. The problematic is no longer the naming of a body but a philosophical and ethical one of domination and submission of the difficult balance between the free reign of potentiality, and reality's self-destruction.

But how deep lies our relationship with the concept of 'pet'? Slavoj Zizek, in the "The Antinomy of Cyberspace Reason" describes gameplay with 'tamagotchi', claiming that its uncanny quality arises from "the fact that we treat a virtual nonentity as an entity."[16] Zizek proposes that perhaps the play is indicative of this question: "if there is effectively no one out there, behind the screen, what if the same goes for myself? What if the 'I', my self-awareness, is also merely a superficial 'screen' behind which there is only a 'blind' complex neuronal circuit?" And Zizek asks whether this is perhaps because of the uncanny character (fear?) of the common term "'intellectual intuition', the closure of the gap that separates (passive) intuition and (active) production, i.e. the intuition which immediately generates the object it perceives, the capacity hitherto reserved for the infinite divine mind." The more we as designers look into biological processes, the more we stare into the abyss of cybernetics, while seated comfortably on the back of a tamed and leashed dragon. The leash is a contract rarely signed by both parties – and extends into the realm of the arbitrariness of social conventions, and the violence of educational endeavors. As well, across history, it has bound members within same species – including our own.

The heart of the matter is that cybernetics has an implicit interest in those mechanisms which create/develop/evolve intelligence while not providing a teleological narrative of where that intelligence can or cannot go. The design disciplines are often concerned with protocol, making sure behavior happens, and sometimes this means avoiding certain emergent intelligences. Gregory Bateson's example of a man cutting a tree with an axe proposes that a unit of information exists only as the "difference that makes a difference," the degree of differ-

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16 Slavoj Zizek, *The Antinomy of Cyberspace Reason* in *On Belief*, New York: Routledge, 2001.

ence registered within and between entities.[17] The components and edges or boundaries of the system, retina of the man, face of the tree, neural messages, face of the axe, velocity of the axe, are not as important as the slight changes they obtain based on the actuating relationship they are engaged in, such as slight changes produced in the axe direction or its the sharpness of its blade, and how these produced a circuit. To understand what is happening, Bateson says, one has to understand the "completed circuit of information flows" as an "elementary cybernetic thought." This is the "transform of differences traveling in a circuit", implying a "total information-processing, trial-and-error completing unit."

The difference between *practice* and *protocol* is that the first (practice) values the incorporation of knowledge with a necessary simultaneous calibration and dramatic change of behavior. And an open-ended result. Protocol is often an overseeing force that stands as a virtual link between a body and its available future: a leash that firmly grounds the future on a recent past. Scale matters much in this discussion: the lower the level protocol gets set in, the nearer you are to the concept of practice, as it happens in what we know of the small scales of biology. But it is a game of infinite nearness. The protocol of random variation present in nature seems to play 'rounds'(pun intended) out of this scale possibility.

An example of global collective fear regarding the absence of a leash is of course the common fear of nuclear energy: the potency brought by real feedback loops, the designing of which contains an unleashing. The real practice of practice would mean the active (again, practice) reincorporation, and embodiment, of information. And it would mean leaving open the matter within which it manifests its fluctuating corporeality. Is it perhaps time to start studying the mechanisms of a desirable submission?

Let's stop here.

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17 Gregory Bateson, *Steps to an Ecology of the Mind*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

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BREAD AND CIRCUS: AGORAE VS ARENAS
BY EDUARDO MCINTOSH

/// Some Anecdotes

The aim of any piece of writing is almost always to be read by as many people as possible, to be an instrument to spread an idea. Nevertheless, since the times we live in influence us to disregard anything that doesn't offer a good rate of effort/reward form the onset, I will start this piece by telling a little bit of academic related gossip, as sometimes it seems like the trivial is for some of us the most significant.

Not so long ago I was generously offered the opportunity to help instruct a unit at one of the most relevant schools of architecture in the world. Even though my role was only that of teaching digital (Maya, Grasshopper) and electronic (Arduino) techniques, I felt really positive about being involved with an institution of such renown. To cut the story short, after a full academic year of heart-breaking lack of direction, architectural knowledge and all-around educational skill from the part of the tutors, on the last private review prior to the finals, the unit master said in a desperate tone to myself in front of the students: "Ed, please teach the students how to blur their images in Photoshop, as the majority of them do not have anything resembling a project, so just take a site, put a volume and blur the image!" All this after nine painful months of stumbling around trying to teach them this-and-that technique at the ever-changing whim of the tutor, who, by the way, is now lecturing in every symposium ranging from 'green-architecture,' to digital design techniques, computer-aided manufacturing and whatever seems to be the flavour of the day.

At that point, and after running my own unit for three years at another university, a strong sense of anxiety about the current state of architectural education arose in me. As I don't think this tragic-comic condition of shallowness and depletion is limited to academia or architecture, I will try to use this essay to elaborate on some ideas that will tend to be more related to sociopolitical and economic circumstances. The above story about the 'blurring of images' perfectly

describes the scenario — again not only within architecture or architectural education, but in every aspect of our lives — in which I think we currently live. A modus operandi where quick entertainment, smoke and mirrors, images and puppet shows, like the ones Plato described long ago, are preferred to the 'evil' of effort, close reading, dedication and substance. As Diesel says: "be stupid!"

/// Agorae vs. Arenas

The main preoccupation of this essay is the choice we face on a daily basis between being distracted by the constant puppet shows fed to us from every direction, versus being focused and engaging in discussions regarding the true affairs that surround us. But more importantly, as architects, how can we use architectural production to correct this lack of engagement and disinterest for civic duty?

"Bread and circus" is a term that refers to the practice of the ruling class during the decline of the Roman Empire, to sedate and appease the population by offering them the blood-filled spectacle of the games, distracting them from the important political issues going on at the time. The architectural representation, container, and physical enabler of this condition was, of course, the Coliseum in Rome. Thus, it could be argued that the Coliseum was a magnificent work of engineering and architecture whose main purpose was to create a distraction at an urban scale that allowed the elite of Rome to do as they pleased, uncontested by the population. In stark contrast, the Greek agora would be what this essay is advocating for in terms of an architectural device that encourages discussion about key issues of our society between us all. Nevertheless, these two typologies are not meant to be taken literally or narrowly, they just serve for now as historical precedents that prove that architectural production can be used to affect and, to a certain degree, even to control the course and development of society. Moreover, these two politically opposed typological examples might help us define two caricatures of extreme characters within the architectural milieu: The 'cool kids' and the grumpy outcasts.

/// Virtual Reality / Real Virtuality and Obscurantism

Ever since the inevitable rise in prominence and pervasive presence of digital tools in our profession, digitalism has become the number one life raft for the lazy cool kids. See, the cool kids — some of them old enough to have grandkids — learn from early on that the best way to get some sort of recognition amongst their peers *without* actually designing a thing is to resort to the use of terms and positions that are obscure to their fellow architects. Therefore, we are witnesses today of the weird phenomenon within our profession of trying to come up every Monday morning with a new architectural theory based on subjects as diverse as biomimicry, genetic algorithms,

parametrics, topology, etc. Digital techniques, with a few key strokes, help to create a smoke curtain for the charlatans to hide behind, while they spew the few technical-jargon terms they have memorized from Wikipedia or Wolfram's math. I suspect that the emulation of biological systems to find architectural solutions (biomimicry) is a millennia-old architectural approach, so why all the buzz now? Aren't genetic algorithms rule-based systems which, at their core, operate in the same way any architect would, now or 10,000 years ago, by following rules? Doesn't 'parametric' refer to an organizational model that keeps the relations of parts within a system constant, independent of the fluctuation of input parameters? Isn't that basically the same way that every piece of architecture, to different degrees, has been conceived since time immemorial? For those needing a literal, clear graphic example, please see the dome of the church of San Carlo Alle Quattro Fontane. In essence, are we not wasting our time (especially in the formation of new architects during their academic years) by re-inventing the wheel, instead of talking more about the truly constituent elements of an architectural piece, namely: space, structure, tectonics, materiality and programme, and especially the interrelations and cross referencing of these constituent elements?

Now, some cool kids will argue in their defence that they are being 'experimental': they are one day engaged in 'digital form finding' (playing with Maya, Processing, or Grasshopper), then the next on computer-aided manufacturing or 'fabricating', and after that they are creating a responsive system with sensors and actuators. The sad but very telling case is that after more than two decades of excuses, the best results of these experimental endeavours are merely cladding systems, or in the most ambitious and resource-burning publicity-stunt efforts, lumps of self-referential ectoplasm that have a spectral shallowness to them. After all these years, and all the exciting pseudo-scientific sorcery being thrown around, it seems that still the level of architectural accomplishment of the vast majority of recent works pales in comparison to what Wright, Le Corbusier, Khan, Scarpa, Utzon, and others did years ago. Does this mean that the more resources we have the worse architects we become? Or does it mean that, as with the slaves being butchered in the Coliseum, all these biomimetics, genetics, parametrics, and other magic potions are just distractions? And that we should try to be more like the grumpy kids, and not be so preoccupied about trying to be perceived as cool, but rather be more like the old Greeks at the Agora and really engage in an elucidating discussion about our projects? On a side note to these last paragraphs, there might be the need to propose a split in terms of architectural goals and production, based on the chosen realm of deployment, yielding architecture "to be built," and architecture "not meant to be built," namely, virtual architecture. Nevertheless, even virtual architecture deserves to be constructed by the interactions and cross dialogue of architecture's

constituent elements: space, structure, tectonics, materiality and programme since, unlike biomimetics, parametrics, genetics et al. these are the building blocks of an architectural concept.

/// A Mirror of Society

But let us not be concerned with architects too much, especially when there are people around the world suffering unimaginable pain, when the financial gap between the wealthy and the poor grows every day and social injustice runs rampant without the vast majority of us giving a damn. At the end of the day, what can architecture do against the new feudal lords that govern our governors (Monsanto, Halliburton, JP Morgan, Goldman Sachs, etc.)? Not much, truly. But, it's interesting to draw a parallel between the Roman Circus of current architectural practice and the Roman Circus which is our everyday life. To illustrate this point, let me finish with another anecdote: a couple of days ago, during a chat amongst colleagues, one of my coworkers mentioned that he had read that Libyan expats had offered a bounty for Colonel Gadhafi's head. He then asked to us all if this was 'legal,', to which I replied, sarcastically: "of course it is legal, if you are a tyrant who's not from the 'West.' If you are a tyrant from the West, then no, this would be blasphemous." As the discussion got more heated, and people in the group were expressing their feeling that putting money on someone's head is an inhuman act, not matter whose head it is, I reminded them about the recent assassination of Osama Bin Laden. At this point the Agora was starting to be filled with the beginnings of an interesting exchange of ideas on the subject, until another colleague silenced us all and broke up our discussion by saying: "even more importantly, is it true Steve Jobs stepped down from Apple?" Bye, bye, agora. Hello, circus!

/// **Published on August 29th 2011**

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MOTION ARCHITECTURE
BY OLIVIU LUGOJAN-GHENCIU

Analyzing Eadweard Muybridge's work and Vladimir Veličković's painted motion studies would offer a too-easy way to find a relationship between the still objects of architecture and the dynamics of motion. Jean-Luc Godard is also waiting to be taken apart from this perspective, just as is Bruno Zevi's idea of archiving space through cinematographic methods. Rem Koolhaas is known for his transition from film to architecture.

Why is there such a brotherhood between film and architecture? Maybe it is because they share the common idea of assembling building blocks in order to build something that is more than just the sum of its elements. The concept to be proposed has little to do with these remarkable people and their studies, but builds upon their experience. What I am interested in is not the cinematographic expression, but a fourth dimension added by motion in graphics and how movement can further an architectural product.

Motion graphics and animation have commonly found their way in architecture as a means to display concepts: as animated diagrams. They have been, in short, simple extensions of pen and paper, not a vehicle to create architectural expression in themselves. Yet, animation has so much to offer in terms of storytelling, editing and spatial representation. It might use a similar language to that of film, but it is compelling in a different way, and has a good chance of becoming space by itself. Animation can be used as an architectural process, a carrier of arguments, a research tool, or a method of interrogation. By the melange of animated images, of graphic elements that unfold in time, of tiny little elements, each with its own dynamic and its own relation to the others, a new way of space interrogation is created. We can already imagine a dizzying experience. One might start to feel as in a disorienting space.

This feeling is very much the essence of our centrifugal times. Contemporaneity is characterized by total and constant motion. Our lives are flashes of fast-changing social movements and over-accelerated technological developments. We end up discovering that not only is the universe expanding, but also that its expansion is accelerating.

Now, how is this possible? In this context, architecture must adapt itself, and animation provides the tools to do just that. The present has always been about adaptation, the 'now' has always been about dealing with the 'then.' "The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present." Sounds familiar, does it not? Well, Abraham Lincoln said it in 1862.

Motion is a tool to bridge the 'then' and 'now.' But first...

In the creative process, we start with a two-dimensional drawing, while exploring the infinite possibilities the promise of our ideas might hold. The desire to explore leads us to adding the third dimension, so we can dive deep into our creative imagination. Modeling and rendering are tools that help us add that perceptible and representational dimension. Volume makes the drawings seem real. At this stage, the representation reveals new relations between its elements. But still, it lacks development on the time axis.

Working on computers has already enabled us to travel through time. We are so used to undo and redo that we miss this obvious feature in our real lives. This process of virtual time travel is of huge value while we explore our creative selves and create tangible representations of it. The abstract world of contemporary creation is one of file versioning, time machines, screen captures and literally turning out work upside down. By this process we start baking time.

Volume adds perspective, but it is time that adds context to it. And this is where motion starts playing the lead part. Our arsenal of tools is greatly enriched by the use of keyframes. The 4th dimension (video, film, animation and motion-graphics) becomes a specific way of mapping our studies of time travel through our drawings. It is the one precise tool for navigating through the unseen, manipulating and operating the invisible. This invisible world is where acceleration nests, making motion studies our only tool of mapping it. Even in our visible world, we are in perpetual motion and can witness the constant interaction with the environment from nano to cosmic scale. We now have the knowledge of observing this surrounding environment interacting with itself on different, constantly changing layers. We can try traveling slow or fast in order to perceive the same space in many ways.

To analyze all these complex dynamic relations we froze time to gather observations and measure parameters, as if that one moment in time would ever repeat itself exactly the same way. We naively believed that and resting on the shoulders of highly-developed digital processing power we can gather more and more parameters and analyze and compare them over and over again... and get a different result than the eye-catching dystopian outcome where machines speak by themselves.

We have created a technological orgy where we can record dynamic and live sensorial parameters and RSS feeds have become socio-political sensors. In the mean time, we are past the phase of analyzing the behavior of these parameters in motion. From this popcorn-accompanied visual delirium, something remarkable has emerged: a motion based interrogation process. A romantic tool with a chaotic open structure that lacks methodology and encourages perception and intuition as investigation tools of time, motion and space. The resulting expression is rather poetic. Intuition, due to its multiple and simultaneous synaptic connections could be seen as an infinite multicore processor that generates unlimited artistic methods of emotional expression. It is an open process with exquisite biological power that could handle the nature that it is part of.

Motion graphics, animation and such will always bring our intuition as a tool to life. Whatever expression we convey by live feeds, we receive an immediate sensorial feedback. A moving piece of work gives us the opportunity to interrogate, operate or respond in real time, in synchronicity with the surrounding rhythms and conditions.

Animation in architecture should not be just a conveyor belt for other media and forms of expression. Motion offers a limitless method of questioning space and time, and of exploring the emotions these can activate. It is a way to ask the same question again and not find the same answer; a tool that opens the opportunity of lighting up the invisible world where acceleration nests.

The world where this forth dimension is added to architecture can be encompassed in the circle defined by motion and space. We can choose to explore at extreme speed or at no speed. Flying an airplane can be a method of choreographing motion and sketching in space and time, just like standing still is a method of observing time. Both extremes look at the same world from different perspectives. The linear predictable scenarios and design methodologies are pushed aside in favor of a pointcloud-like method of interrogating the spatial characteristics. We have interactive movies, games and multitouch technologies as methods of experiencing multiple scenarios. Shaped the social typology, space design is being pushed towards a more dynamic contextual adaptation. Space now becomes temporary and has an adaptive nature.

Motion is the element to help architecture bring needed dynamics into the spaces of 'now.' Spaces built for motion. Spaces for people whose concept of home has changed a lot in recent times. People who have lost their attachment to "the place called home," a place we can relate to, a fixed point in time and space, a place that does not change. But all the knowledge and science that surround us make us believe less and less in this fixed point.

Yet, what is it that people relate to? What is their "new fixed point," now that they don't have a fixed point to relate to? It might just be the motion vectors of our lives. The technological, cultural and social acceleration is becoming *the* reference point. One could say movement is the new fixed point.

These concepts could be embedded into architecture itself, into space and living spaces design: let us imagine a cradle that sets the pace for everything in our home. Seasons would influence the colors of our living environment, all having rhythm as a central reference. Home becoming a motion pattern, driven by the rhythm of our existence. The sailor gets seasick when he steps ashore just as we get seasick when on a boat. Travel too far and suffer from jet lag. We are conditioned by the rhythm of our life.

Drawing means "leaving a trace." One must be aware of the rhythms and translate them intuitively into motion architecture. We, as architects of tomorrow, cannot ignore the dynamic cycles that surround us. And we have the tools and knowledge to respond with. We should be jet pilots and race drivers rolling through our surroundings.

/// **Published on October 18th 2011**

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FIBROUS ASSEMBLAGES AND BEHAVIORAL COMPOSITES
BY ROLAND SNOOKS

The emergence of complexity theory has shifted the conceptualization of form from the macro scale to a concern for the operation of the complex systems that underlie formation. It is from the micro-scale local interactions of complex systems that behavioral strategies for the generation of composite materials have emerged, strategies where architectural form, structure and ornament emerge from the design of material behavior, specifically the design of behavior within composite materials.

The inherently organizational understanding of form offered by complexity theory has been the basis for Kokkugia's development of behavioral design methodologies. This behavioral approach draws from the logic of swarm intelligence and operates through the self-organization of multi-agent systems. These methodologies operate by encoding simple architectural decisions within a distributed system of autonomous computational agents. It is the interaction of these local decisions that self-organizes design intention, giving rise to a form of collective intelligence and emergent behavior at the global scale. Behavioral design methodologies represent a shift from 'form being imposed upon matter' to 'form emerging from the interaction of localized entities within a complex system.'

Designing through non-linear behavioral systems challenges the hierarchies that are embedded within design processes and the architecture that emerges from these methodologies. These non-linear strategies have radical implications for the generation of architectural form, structure and tectonics. The distributed non-linear operation of swarm systems intrinsically resists the discrete articulation of hierarchies such as those within Modern architecture and contemporary parametric component logic. This is indicative of a larger contemporary shift from a reductive approach to an understanding of complex phenomena. The bottom up nature of swarm systems refocuses tectonic concerns on the assemblage at the micro scale, enabling

a synthetic approach to designing across scales, from macro-form to composite material. Rather than the detail being understood as a finer resolution of the whole, it is the behavioral interaction at the micro-scale that becomes a generator of macro-level form and organization. This is a polyscalar approach in which organizational logic is self-similar and independent of sequential relationships.

The non-linear operation of behavioral formation enables architectural systems to operate within an ecology of interactions, rather than as a sequential hierarchy. A potent example is the relationship of structure and ornament. Rather than consider ornament to follow or be subservient to structure, this relationship can be recast in terms of mutual influence; structure informs ornament while ornament informs structure. This enables structure and ornament to operate as behaviors within a single body of material, rather than existing as discrete elements or geometries. The integration of structure and ornament within a single material has always been present within architecture, the nature of which has shifted significantly through architectural periods such as Gothic, Baroque or Rococo. However, inherent within these movements or categorizations is the subservient nature of ornament.

To posit structure and ornament as systems of behavior is to consider their underlying rules at the micro-level. So while structural and ornamental behaviors operate at the same micro-scale, the nature of these behaviors may be vastly different. Possible structural behaviors include bundling of fibers, weaving of elements, separation of strands to develop structural depth, or matting of elements into shell structures. Ornamental behaviors operate with a more gestural intent, generating intricate and expressive affects. The interaction of structural and ornamental behaviors can operate either through the interaction of two discrete populations of agents (one structural and one ornamental) operating within an ecology, or a single population that is capable of local differentiation — contextually sensitive rules that shift between structure and ornament depending on local conditions.

With the invention of technologies such as the electron microscope, our understanding of matter has shifted from assumptions regarding the monolithic nature of material to that of material as the accretion of high populations of micro-fibers—or fibrous assemblages. The micro-behavior of multi-agent systems enables architectural matter to be considered and designed in similar ways. If systems of behavioral formation focus design decisions and matter at the smallest scale, a critical decision is the scale of generative architectural design strategies. If modernity was focused on the assemblage of discrete mass-standardized elements (steel section beams, mullions, glazing units, prefabricated concrete panels, etc), a design process focused on

fibrous assemblages would have to consider the individual element to be at the sub material level – or at least at the level of the elements that assemble into composite materials. The logical extension of behavioral formation, beyond the agency of geometry (strands, components, surfaces) or the agency of architectural elements (bricks, beams), is to consider the agency of matter.
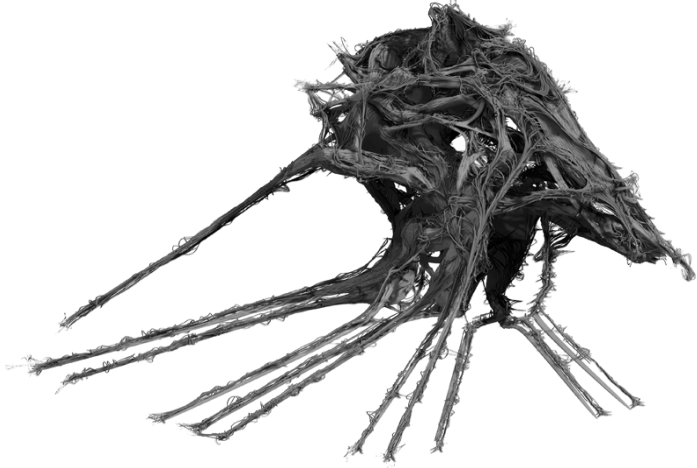
Prairie House – Fibrous strand chunk / Kokkugia - Roland Snooks with Texas A&M

Within fibrous assemblages and their fabrication as composite materials, the role of geometry is not discrete or reducible. Instead, geometry negotiates complex behaviors such as structure and ornament. Generating emergent characteristics that shift throughout the geometry as the negotiation of structural and ornamental behaviors change locally. The fibrous assemblages of behavioral composites compress tectonic hierarchies, a shift from discrete tectonic elements to highly differentiated continuous matter.

Fibrous assemblages are structurally non-linear. Rather than defined by *a priori* hierarchies of primary, secondary and tertiary elements, hierarchies emerge from within the non-linear operation of fibrous assemblages as variation in intensity, capacity and density. The blurring between systems, such as structure and ornament, extends to a blurring of classification of geometry. Composite fibrous assemblages resist being categorized as either surfaces or strands. Strands within fibrous assemblages bundle and weave to form surfaces, while surfaces delaminate into strands. This blurriness is in contrast to the discrete articulation of structure and cladding that has emerged from the mass standardization of modernism. Within these composite fibrous assemblages there is no distinction between skin and structure, instead every fiber operates structurally within a redundant, highly ornamental assemblage.

An argument, and indeed motivation, for composite fiber construction is frequently premised on the desire for structural performance. However, what is posited here is not based on the desire for efficiency or performative criteria, instead it is the ability of composites to negotiate different behaviors within a continuous whole and the expressive nature of these assemblages that is of interest.

This is not to suggest that the performance of fibrous assemblages is not of interest. To the contrary, structural behavior of multi-agent systems is part of an ongoing research agenda at Kokkugia.[1] However the argument here is that structure, and any other quantifiable criteria, are not the driver of formation, but merely principles that condition design behaviors. Likewise, material behavior can be considered an input, but not a principal generator of formation. The ability to encode material agency within strands enable both subjective design behaviors and material constraints to be encoded. The flexibility and elasticity of material can be encoded within behavioral models. The interaction of these parameters with more esoteric design behaviors enables a highly volatile generative process that simultaneously responds to the behavior of material.

While the algorithmic tools for generating fibrous assemblages are becoming increasingly sophisticated, the tools for the fabrication of fibrous composites are still largely emerging. Sophisticated robotic fiber placement techniques are being utilized within the aerospace and yachting industries. However these techniques are primarily geared to creating relatively uniform surfaces, as opposed to the complex and intricate order of the fibrous assemblages posited here.

The design of behavioral composites offers significant aesthetic, conceptual and fabrication implications. High-population agent models that operate at a sub-material level generate intensive formations and patterns that blur the distinction between performance and aesthetic excess. Behavioral composites dissolve tectonic hierarchies in generating a continuous and irreducible complex assemblage.

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/// **Published on April 20th 2012**

1 An articulation of this research and an argument for behavioral structural formation is made within the article, *volatile formation* published in Log 25, *Reclaim Resi[lience]stance*, edited by Francois Roche (2012).

07/

UNFOLDING AZADI TOWER: READING PERSIAN FOLDS THROUGH DELEUZE
BY BIAYNA BOGOSIAN

Sometimes the veins in marble are the pleats of matter that surround living beings held in the mass, such that the marble tile resembles a rippling lake that teems with fish. Sometimes the veins are innate ideas in the soul, like twisted figures or powerful statues caught in the block of marble. Matter is marbled, of two different styles.[1]

The Azadi Tower (Freedom Tower) is the gateway to Tehran. This 50-m tall tower is located in the heart of the 15,000-sqm Azadi Square (Freedom Square) and has been the center of many cultural and political revolutions since its completion in 1971. The architecture of the tower is influenced by both pre-Islamic Persian architecture of materiality and Islamic architecture of geometry. The significance of the Azadi tower is not only in its sociopolitical presence, but also in the fact that it is one of the world's first structures that incorporated computation in the design, analysis, and materialization processes. From 1966-1971 the monument was constructed with 25,000 unique white marble pieces. The customized geometry of each marble unit was computed using a structural analysis program and carved using a combination of manual and automated techniques.

Gilles Deleuze in *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, acknowledges other kinds of folds from the East, Greek, Roman, to Classical folds; however, Deleuze believes only the Baroque trait "twists and turns its folds, pushing them to infinity, fold over fold, one upon the other… oscillating between the pleats of matter and the folds in the soul."[2] However, the Azadi Tower complex is an anomaly to Deleuze's argument in a sense that it embodies the notion of an infinite vector of movement inspired by Islamic architecture (folds in the soul), but

1 Gilles Deleuze. *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. University of Minnesota Press, 1992, 4.

2 Gilles Deleuze. *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. University of Minnesota Press, 1992, 3.

also reintroduces traditional Persian ideas of materiality in the construction of this monument (folds in matter). Therefore, if the Deleuzian world is interpreted as a body of infinite folds and surfaces that twist and weave through compressed time and space, the Azadi monument is composed of the same underlying behaviors.

Every culture and religion has its own particular understanding of the relationship between the divine and the world. This implies a certain manner of unfolding, which informs theology, art and architecture. The term fold in ancient Persian culture and language is often synonymous with the definition of edges of a polygon. For instance, an octagon shape is referred to as an eight-folded geometry and the interior of the polygon is called the body of the geometry. Thus, the notion of folds in Persian architecture emphasizes the significance of space dividing edges of the tessellated geometry. The main trait of traditional Persian architecture is based on creating an earthly paradise through a series of subdivided gardens, water canals, and indoor and outdoor rooms. Thus, the geometric folds become the defining boundaries for enfolding material differentiations. This garden design philosophy called Chahar Bagh (four gardens) has influenced the designs of gardens from Taj-Mahal to Alhambra and beyond. However, with the introduction of Islamic culture in the 8th century, the notion of material articulation in Persian architecture was overwritten with the use of more complex geometric tiling compositions of quasicrystalline patterns. A quasicrystal formation is based on the arrangement of a set of polygons (often five- to twelve-sided) to create complex tiling patterns. This application of pattern intensity is rooted in the Islamic belief of transfiguration and transformation as an essential part of material life. The application of quasicrystal patterns, whether as an architectural style, textile design or calligraphy, becomes a way of representing the world around as less substantial and articulated. Thus, the pattern becomes a tool for de-materialization of architecture. The scale differentiation of monocentric quasicrystal patterns, either as two-dimensional tiling units or three-dimensional muqarnas, introduces a forced perceptual trajectory for the visitors. The focal point of pattern deformation creates a sensation of lightness in the ceiling of the space and creates the idea of arriving from geometric multiplicity to formal unity to reinforce the notion of infinity in the space.

A Deleuzian might object that Islamic influenced art and architecture cannot be a playing field for real creativity, because its purpose is to direct the worshipper toward God. However, one can argue that Deleuze's notion of the folds in the soul, inspired by Gottfried Leibniz's theories of Monads as centers of force, are based on the idea that a fold is always influenced by a force and is constantly imposing force onto its neighboring folds. Deleuze claims that, "the world must be placed in the subject in order that the subject can be for the world.
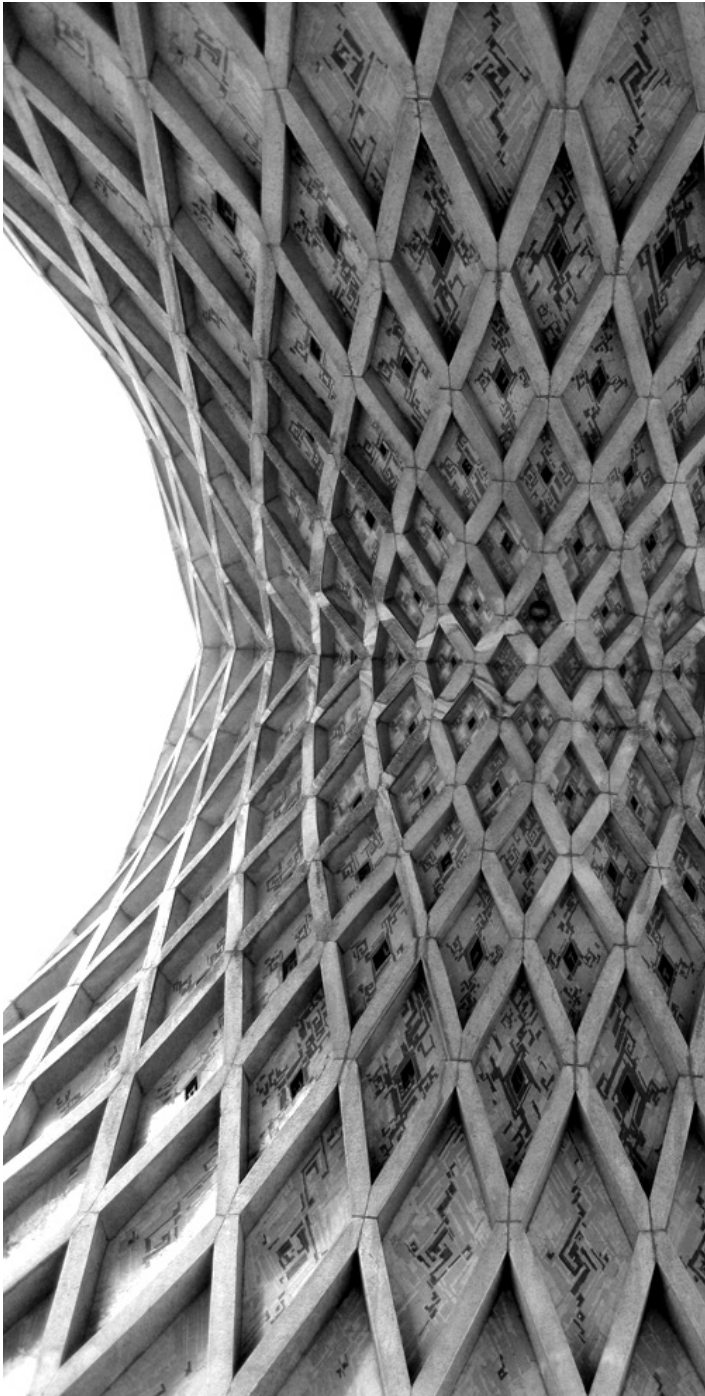
This is the torsion that constitutes the fold of the world and of the soul."[3] Therefore, one can argue that the same described force interplay between any subject and its immediate world, also applies to the relationship between an elaborate quasicrystalline muqarna and an observer. This force interchange allows subjective interpretation, encourages endless curiosity, and creates a perceptual and contemplative venture into the infinite for the person experiencing the space.

Azadi Tower in Tehran

The inspiration for the Azadi Tower complex were the stalactite-shaped muqarnas of the 17th-century Sheikh Lotf Allah Mosque in Isfahan region of Iran. The architect of the complex, Hossein Amanat, was a 24-year-old graduate of Tehran University when he won the competition for designing a monumental tower complex in commemoration of the 2,500th anniversary of the Persian Empire.[4] Like many architects in the 1960s, Amanat was interested in the structural performance of geometric modules. He combined the organizational logic of monocentric Islamic patterns with the long-forgotten traditional Persian architecture of substantial mass and articulated landscaping divisions. Thus, the architecture of Azadi tower complex was as much about its heritage as it was about its fabrication techniques and the future vision of the city.

The fold in matter, Deleuze states that "A body has a degree of hardness as well as a degree of fluidity, or that it is essentially elastic, the

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3 Gilles Deleuze. *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. University of Minnesota Press, 1992, 26.

4 See BBC Interview with Hossein Amanat: *The man behind Tehran's Freedom Monument*. July 8, 2009.

elastic force of bodies being the expression of the active compressive force exerted on matter."[5]

The design of the macro landscape pattern of the Azadi complex was influenced by the surrounding circulation arteries of the existing urban context. These circulation trajectories, much like a ripple effect, continued towards the center of the complex to become the micro scale differentiation and articulation of the marble blocks on the body of the tower. Although, over 8,000 blocks of 6 cubic meter marbles were utilized in the fabrication process, the continuity achieved by careful computation of each marble block, has given the tower the nickname of 'the tower of draped silk' among civilians. The Azadi tower complex, Tehran's main landmark, houses a national heritage museum, multiple galleries, libraries and shops that are nested in multiple levels throughout the tower. However, all main entrances are recessed underground, to enhance the monumentality of the tower. The articulation of exterior customized marble units translates to fluid concrete forms that create the interior shell of the tower. The transition of the Azadi tower's exterior folds to the interior folds is much like Deleuze's description of a Baroque costume: "fold in matter is broad, in distending waves, billowing and flaring, surrounding the body with its independent folds, ever-multiplying, never betraying those of the body beneath."[6]

Now, over four decades from the completion of the Azadi complex, an architecture that was once designed with the most utopian vision of enfolding a nation's cultures, politics, and architectural styles into one architectural body has witnessed many gruesome revolutions and manifestations, ironically with regards to its name.. Deleuze argues that folding is, after all, political, in the sense that theories of curvature, movement, and point of view cannot be localized. Perhaps, like the continuous folds of its geometric body, it is in the constant process of becoming and revolution of its hosting ground that the Azadi tower, now more than ever, embodies unity and continuity with its nation.

/// **Published on August 9th 2011**

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5 Gilles Deleuze. *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. University of Minnesota Press, 1992, 6.

6 Gilles Deleuze. *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*. University of Minnesota Press, 1992, 121.

18/

TWIN (TECHNOLOGY/ART INDUCED) ARCHITECTURAL DAYDREAMS
BY ESTHER SZE-WING CHEUNG

/// Induction #1 – Strangle Poise Lamp

On a sunny September afternoon, I found myself fighting through crowds of metropolitan art-goers, hipster-technologists and pro-longed-adolescent-adults, grazing amusedly in a tall, open, window-less room at the MOMA's *Talk to Me* exhibition, amidst an assortment of flat screen monitors, tastefully-colored infographics, blinking LEDs and beeping.[1] Halfway through my procession through this spectacle, I circled back to the room center and found myself curiously face-to-face with a seemingly unremarkable floor lamp, except for an unusual spongy beige section on the lamp-neck. A parody on the classic British Anglepoise Lamp, this piece humorously titled Strangle Poise Lamp, was designed to be strangled to death. To turn off the lamp, one must wrap their hands around the spongy beige neck and squeeze out its metaphorical life, slowly dimming the light until both object and human are literally in the dark. Designed by James Chambers, the Strangle Poise Lamp is part of a line of aggression-absorbing products intended to provide safe ways to live out fantasies planted into our minds by violent films.

Pondering this dark-humored piece and faced with my own perhaps naïve image of robots as helpful companions, I was reminded of Nicholas Negroponte's ethical robot in *Architecture Machine : Toward a More Human Architecture*.[2] The ethical robot, in this particular robot-architecture fantasy, serves as the mechanism closing the "gap that exists between the scale of the mass and the scale of the individual, the scale of the city and the scale of the room."[3] Ethical

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1 *Talk To Me*, Museum of Modern Art, New York, July 24, to November 7, 2011.

2 Nicholas Negroponte, *The Architecture Machine : Toward a More Human Environment,* Cambridge: MIT Press, 1970.

3 Nicholas Negroponte, *The Architecture Machine : Toward a More Human Environment,* Cambridge: MIT Press, 1970.

robots customize details such as heating, lighting, furniture and wall configuration to suit individual needs while simultaneously accommodating the collective energy, space, and infrastructural needs of the city. Negroponte calls this vision "environmental humanism" which he describes as "attainable in cooperation with machines that have been thought to be inhuman devices but in fact are devices that can respond intelligently to the tiny, individual constantly changing bits of information that reflect the identity of each urbanite as well as

Strangle Poise Lamp by James Chamberts (2010)

I began to imagine a version of Negroponte's environmental humanism sprinkled with the violence-absorbing functions of the Strangle Poise Lamp. What if walls were designed to scream when punched, highway barriers to be crashed into, and light switches to be slapped in the face? Inversely, what if sofas were designed to purr when stroked, doors were to give hugs, light switches to be tenderly caressed? Could this personification of architecture through robotics provide a positive therapeutic effect on its inhabitants? Could it be used to elicit actions that would placate aggression? Or act as training devices for showing affection? Or would it create a dystopia where violent behavior is ever-escalating? Where machine environments fuel individual aggression by providing a platforms for playing out destructive fantasies?

As this daydream receded, I found myself standing there facing the Strangle Poise Lamp and became filled with an overwhelming desire

4 Nicholas Negroponte, *The Architecture Machine : Toward a More Human Environment,* Cambridge: MIT Press, 1970.

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to reach out and strangle it. Disappointingly, as interaction with the "interactive art pieces" was prohibited, I cannot report on whether strangling the lamp fueled or placated my aggression. Nonetheless, whether therapeutic or dystopic, I was impressed with the lamp's ability to induce in me a desire to perform not only a specific action, but a specific symbolic action (the metaphorical strangle) that through representation takes on greater meaning than just squeezing a piece of sponge. This personal but hard evidence – that programmed behaviors in inanimate objects can induce the human performance of symbolic actions – coupled with the possibility of a future with an increasing number of robotically-controlled environments, served as a note-to-self that careful consideration of metaphor during the implementation of technology is a good starting point to avoiding potential dystopia.

Object Breast Cancer by Caraballo-Farman, 2011

On a sunny afternoon in July, I found myself in a dark back room at Eyebeam Art and Technology Center, hunched over an old 3D printer under a staircase, casually making conversation with a talkative technician while troubleshooting plastic cartridge problems. Trying to entertain myself as he worked, I began poking my way through a box of abandoned 3D prints, mostly robot figurines, broken spaceships and random examples of Euclidean geometry, while he began listing in detail the various things people had printed in the past. As I put down the box, he announced, as if delivering a punch line, "…and the last artist who used this 3D printer was a cancer patient. She and her husband printed tumors based on MRI scans and made them into jewelry." That evening, I proceeded to search the internet for this project; my first glimpse of the shiny golden tumor replica on the *Object Breast Cancer* website by artist duo caraballo-farman, truly stunned me.[5] The delicate necklaces, charms, pendants, desktop

5 Leonor Caraballo and Abou Farman, *Object Breast Cancer,* 2011.

objects and worry beads, intended to be a "direct and innovative way of confronting the aftermath of a disease" were made to reflect the artists' belief that "representations can have powerful psychological and social effects."[6] Developed with the assistance of radiologists at Weill Cornell and NYU Langone Medical Center, these beautiful objects serve a dual purpose of "facilitating dialogue and bringing attention to the importance of medical imaging and early detection."[7]

As I clicked through the various amulet materials – gold-plated, silver, black rhodium – admiring the complexity of the biomorphic contours, I couldn't help but notice its shocking resemblance in form to the urban visionary project titled *I've Heard About (a fat, flat growing urban experiment)* by the architecture firm R&Sie(n). *I've Heard About* is a city-scale expression of an "ever-emerging shifting and above all fragile sociality" described by R&Sie(n) as follows:

> *I've Heard About* is an urban structure made quite literally of contingent secretions. Its architecture is based on the principles of random growth and permanent incompletion. It develops by successive scenarios, without planning and without the authority of a pre-established plan. Its physical composition renders the community's political structure visible.[8]

Unlike *Object Breast Cancer* which determines its shape through the use of medical scanning technology, the constantly changing form of *I've Heard About* is generated through "growth scripts, open algorithms, that remain permeable not only to human expressions… but also to the most discrete data."[9] Designed to be built through a speculative computer-driven construction method called Contour Crafting — a mega-scale 3D printer based on the technology invented by Behrokh Khoshnevis — *I've Heard About* remains in a constant state of transformation through growth and necrosis:

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> Growth is based on negotiations between neighbours and other residents, and at the same time subjected to collective constraints (accessibility and structural contradictions). Section by section, the raw materials of the habitats undergo necrosis every ten years to avoid an overly permanent occupation and attendant sense of individual ownership.[10]

I begin to imagine a version of *I've Heard About* infused with the so-

6 Leonor Caraballo and Abou Farman, *Object Breast Cancer,* 2011.

7 Leonor Caraballo and Abou Farman, *Object Breast Cancer,* 2011.

8 *I've Heard About (a fat, flat growing urban experiment),* Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Couvent des Cordeliers, July 7, to October 9, 2005.

9 *I've Heard About (a fat, flat growing urban experiment),* Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Couvent des Cordeliers, July 7, to October 9, 2005.

10 *I've Heard About (a fat, flat growing urban experiment),* Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Couvent des Cordeliers, July 7, to October 9, 2005.

phisticated scanning technology used in *Object Breast Cancer*. What if the curve of a chaise longue was based on the actual contour of a lover's body? What if a doorknob was based on the precise curves of a deceased family member's hand? What if a window was in the precise shape of a snowflake that fell on the day one's child was born? What if the architecture of the *Breast Cancer Coalition* was an inhabitable version of an *Object Breast Cancer* tumor? What if the places we live were built from 3D printed collages of scans of things that are meaningful to us, visible and invisible, frozen in time? Would these inhabitable three-dimensional photographs, these architecture-sized snapshots of constant change have a positive therapeutic effect on its occupants? Would they induce moments of meaningful reflection? Would these moments help us come to terms with our existence? Or would they trap us in our own nostalgia and sentimentality?

As this daydream receded, scrolling through the *Object Breast Cancer* amulets I thought about my mother who is a recovered breast cancer survivor. Looking at the gold amulet on the screen, I was reminded of the importance of never taking for granted the time we have to be alive. The capacity of this metallic coral to have induced in me this reminder was compelling evidence that technological process (in this case, the process of precision scanning and rapid prototyping) can be an extremely effective conduit for transferring the meaning embodied in the original to the replica. In context of the possibility of a 3D printed future city like *I've Heard About*, ever-changing in constant growth and necrosis, it became clear to me that there likely would be some things worth scanning and some things not, some things worth printing to last a year and some things worth printing to last 1000 years. This served as a note-to-self that to avoid nostalgic traps, careful consideration must be exercised in determining what is meaningful enough to (so to speak) set in stone.

/// **Published on January 17th 2012**

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DIY BIOPOLITICS: THE DEREGULATED SELF
BY RUSSELL HUGUES

Shuzaku Arakawa's early paintings (1961-73) (many of which were produced with Madeline Gins, though she took no authorial credit for them) represent what appear to be semi-finished sketches that sometimes look like technical drawings against backgrounds of white and varying shades of brown. The purpose of these two-dimensional representations is to signify 'blankness' as a "neutral positing", in the sense that blank is a 'holding open' of the compulsion toward the standard artistic practice of conceptual and cognitive colonization toward a predetermined end.[1] As they state: "it is what is there but undifferentiated, so it is nothing … It is what fills emptiness."[2] Another way of understanding blank is through the French *blanc*, meaning white, which is, of course, the congealing of all the colors in the spectrum (as opposed to black, the absence of color). In this sense, blank (or *blanc*) is overabundance, the reservoir of potentiality from which anything can come forth. The concept of blank draws our attention to the multiple points of interpretation contained within open-endedness, as opposed to the definitive teleological fixity for which strives much (not all) creative practice. The visual argument in these artworks is that painting as an activity abstracts from nature, narrowing down and essentializing experience. Abstract thought is the frame that apprehends the open-endedness of meaning, defining and positioning a text in exclusive, unequivocal terms. In this respect, much of Arakawa's early work remains untitled (acting as the actual title of the work), which itself is an act of resistance to the etymological determinism that comes with labels that posit in explicit terms what it is we are meant to understand and experience from artistic productions.

Arakawa's paintings function as possibilities for reconstruction, involving "not so much the play of sensibilities as they do the experi-

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1 Shusaku Arakawa and Madeline Gins, *Reversible Destiny: We Have Decided Not to Die*. New York: Abrams Inc, 1997.

2 Shusaku Arakawa and Madeline Gins, *Reversible Destiny: We Have Decided Not to Die*. New York: Abrams Inc, 1997.

ence of reflection."[3] In this way Arakawa (and Gins) want to problematize how we "speak and enquire about what we hold as knowledge, especially visual knowledge."[4] The blankness that is produced in these works is not so much about nothing or non-sense, as it is about the 'charged potentiality' that becomes apparent when our intentions of the way we read texts are questioned, confused and disorientated.

A central key to Arakawa's work (and the subsequent architectural productions that operate along similar lines), is the frustration of the expectation of predetermination in the consumption of texts, which forces into play a series of openings between the text and our cognition of it. In this sense blank operates as a middle way or *entredeaux*, an opening of the circular loop between experience and reflection. Crucially, Arakawa (and Gins) paintings do not so much conflate painting and experience, or operate in the gap between them, as respond to their dynamic reciprocity.

As a device for short-circuiting cognitive and conceptual processes, Arakawa (and Gins) use of blankness is the platform from which the possibility for cognitive and conceptual liberation is launched. But as you may have noted in this last sentence, these two-dimensional representations are specific to a liberation predicated on visual experience alone. Though Arakawa (and Gins) larger canvases do engage the body to a degree (some experience a feeling of vertigo standing before the larger canvasses), it is from this need to concentrate on the body, to target its receptive centers in their entirety (as the 'bottom up' spontaneously emergent cognitive hypothesis, the theory that transformative cognitive potential is accessed by targeting the body's sensorium in its entirety, dictates), that the two dimensional artist and his poetic partner turn to architecture.

By translating these principles from two to three dimensions, Arakawa and Gins' theoretical trajectory works toward a more comprehensive engagement of the cognized body within a tactile, tangibly embedded, 'sensorially' charged space. In this sense, architecture that is what they call 'tactically posed' architecture challenges, interrogates, frustrates and disrupts the predetermined, habitual, sedentary practices of modern living, destabilizing and de-habituating the teleologically driven end points that govern it.

To illustrate this point architecturally, a good place to start is to consider what is actually wrong with normative architectural practice. Theorists including Bergson, Poincaré and Rosenberg that argue human cognitive freedom was lost with the imposition of a Newtonian

3 Adcock, Craig, *The Meaning of Blank in Arakawa's Early Work. Interfaces*: Image, Text, Language, 1(21-22), 2003. 203-215.

4 Shusaku Arakawa and Madeline Gins, *Reversible Destiny: We Have Decided Not to Die*. New York: Abrams Inc, 1997.

grid of time and space onto experience.[5] This occurred with the appearance of technologies of clock time and calculus utilized by governments to regulate and control human and social behavior. Such a condition extends to the domain of architecture, in particular contemporary architecture, which Arakawa and Gins argue ignores much of its primary function, to be first and foremost at the service of the body. Contemporary architecture is "insufficiently procedural," that is, it is 'comfort' architecture that presupposes identity and fails to ask much of the body (the embodied mind).[6] Still laden with the latent architectural heritage of buildings as monuments or mausoleums, as 'tombs for the dead', much of popular contemporary architecture abstracts, and thus detracts, from the open-ended potential claimed in the embodied mind hypothesis, once again narrowing down and essentializing experience. Philosopher Joel Robinson makes a poignant observation of contemporary architectural practice in this regard:

> Investing spaces with architectural procedures for asking how we constitute ourselves in the world, Arakawa and Gins' architecture aims to empower us to stretch the limits of sensorial plasticity. Their work thus stands in opposition to smart homes that, as second skins that are becoming increasingly self-regulating and interactive, make their user inhabitants proportionately dumber. It also stands in contrast to those coffins (as Gibson calls them in Neuromancer) that numb the senses to everyday dwelling, and against the celebration of virtual architectures and obsolescent bodies … theirs is a tool for reconfiguring … reforming … and reengineering.[7]

The smart home, through the satiation of pleasure and comfort, through solving every dimension of experience to create a problem-free mode of living, kneads and coaxes the user inhabitant into a numbed state, an architecture that Jean Baudrillard in a different context (consumer society) calls an environment of "seduction" and sedation that domesticates and sublimates its user inhabitants into becoming just another object for consumption (1988). In this way, standard architectural practice is not dissimilar from the model of "learned helplessness" as it is understood in behavioral psychology.[8] Arakawa and Gins' surrounds work as the antithesis to this kind of architectural logic. Through the deployment of procedural tools that

5 Martin Rosenberg, "Constructing Autopoiesis: The Architectural Body in the Light of Contemporary Cognitive Science," in *Interfaces: Image, Text, Language. 1(21-22)*, 2003, 171-189.

6 Madeline Gins and Shusaku Arakawa, *Architectural Body.* Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2002.

7 Joel Robinson, "From Clockwork Bodies to Reversible Destinies (On the Architectural Experiments of Arakawa and Gins)," *Art Papers, 29(2),* 2005, 34-39.

8 Martin Seligman, *Helplessness: On Depression, Development and Death*. San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1975.

confuse, disorientate and question the body's relationship to its sur-
rounds, their spaces produce effects that are tentative and highly
uncertain, inducing a sense of open-ended possibility that works to
resist all compulsions toward habit, routine, acceptance, inevitability,
and any other kind of corporeal or conceptual predetermination.

Drawing on metaphorical descriptions of the way the architecture
can bring a greater intimacy between humans and their environment,
Arakawa and Gins employ the example of the snail to illustrate the
way architecture can increase its proximity to the body, so that to
wear it is like dressing oneself in a second, third, fourth, and count-
ing, skin. A more accessible way of understanding the nature of this
intimate structural coupling between an organism and its environ-
ment is through Andy Clarke's description of the fluid dynamics of
certain fish. In his book *Being There: Putting Brain, Body and World
Together Again*, Clarke uses the 'Tale of the Tuna' to describe the
way some fish appear to defy the laws of physics in their capacity
for propulsion and maneuverability.[9] The argument begins with the
paradox that dolphins are simply not strong enough to propel them-
selves at the speeds at which they do. According to the Triantafyllou
brothers, the extraordinary swimming efficiency of certain fish is due
to an "evolved capacity to exploit and create additional forces of ki-
netic energy in the watery environment. Such fishes, it seems, exploit
aquatic swirls, eddies, vortices and pressure gradients, in turn using
them to support speedy and agile behavior."[10]

Here, the organism in question has such a sophisticated evolutionary
intimacy with the environment that produces it that its capacity for
swimming defies the 'laws' of its perceived biomechanical limitation.
This talent is predicated on its tentative 'at the ready' monitoring and
massaging of the fluid dynamics at any given time, that changes
with each redistribution of time and space in accordance with every
new set of parameters that define its situation. Responding to minute
changes as they happen, summoning all it can in the cognizing of
each specific point in time without the encumbering 'guidance' of
teleologically-determined end points (the abstracted 'human' goals
of reflection severed from experience), is what Arakawa and Gins are
suggesting we do via the construction of architectural procedures
tailored specifically to such biomechanical 'law,' defying possibilities
inherent within the dormant cognitive potentials of the body.

This raises the essential point to be made with respect to the heuris-
tic trajectory of Arakawa and Gins and the foundational assumptions
of the discipline of cognitive science. In the opening lines of *Architec-*

9 Andy Clarke, *Being There: Putting Brain, Body and World Together
Again*. Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1998.

10 Andy Clarke, *Being There: Putting Brain, Body and World Together
Again*. Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1998.

tural Body, Gins and Arakawa state the need to recognize ourselves (and the species from which we emanate) as "puzzle creatures":

> Who or what are we as this species? Puzzle creatures to our-
> selves, we are visitations of inexplicability … We must surely go
> to all possible lengths to find out what we exist in regard to.[11]

Contrary to the common practice of solving this ontological mystery in concrete terms, Arakawa and Gins do not seek to redress it by positing an abstract scheme or knowledge with which to overcome and 'know' it; rather, it is the very uncertainty of our being that Arakawa and Gins embrace as the definitive guiding principle for an architecture that must avoid stasis and the teleological determinisms that encumber it, if our being is to engage experience as it happens and yield the dynamic cognitive potential contained therein. Resonating with the findings of cybernetic information theory, principally the research of Norbert Weiner, Arakawa and Gins' architectural procedures, predicated as they are on the notion that the species is a "puzzle creature" to itself, recasts their vision for the species from this contradictory 'platform' of uncertainty. For cognitive science practitioners, Arakawa and Gins' architectural and heuristic practice is thus vital, if not indispensable, to the ability to renegotiate and recast cognitive bodies toward the transformative potentials contained within the emergent cognitive hypothesis.

/// **Published on October 20th 2012**

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11 Madeline Gins and Shusaku Arakawa, *Architectural Body.* Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2002.

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TWO QUESTIONS
FOR SEHER SHAH
BY ALEXIS BHAGAT

In her drawings, artist Seher Shah explores the forms of Modernist abstract architecture with a sensibility that is both nostalgic and critical. She employs basic elements of architectural drawing—the column, the grid, the wall—to fantastically render the ruins of imposition.

In her 2011 exhibition, *Object Anxiety*, Shah stripped Le Corbusier's *Unité d'Habitation* of height, weight and mass, turning it on its side to create a plane. Her new series of drawings, presented in the exhibition *Brute Ornament*, zooms in on this plane and manipulates its form in a series of further deconstructions of *Unité d'Habitation*.[1]

/// (1) What is Object Anxiety?

I know what these two words mean separately, but I can't get a definition when I add them together. I assume that by "object" you mean "a thing we are thinking about," or "that to which thought is directed," and not "to raise a point in opposition." But what becomes of it when you pair it with "anxiety?" Anxiety, being a state of mind, a feeling of distress, can only belong to the subject: the agent that thinks about the object. Is this a concept that you would like others to use? Or is this just word-play, a difficult combination of terms to remind us that the object is also a subject?

Looking at *Object Relic* with *Object Anxiety* in mind, I can't help but identify with the building and behold a dark fantasy: stripped of the pride it once exhibited in proposal drawings and debut photos, it is now terrified to find itself without structure, nothing but a facade, about to be sliced in half by piece of black paper, the anti-matter of the white-paper on which it was born. A perpendicular plane from a parallel universe, rushing into the object's world with everything that was unknown, unexpected and unrecognized during conception.

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1 Kamrooz Aram and Seher Shah, *Brute Ornament*, exhibition curated by Murtaza Vali, Green Art Gallery, Dubai, March 19, 2012 to May 5, 2012.

/// (2) What does it mean to draw like an architect when architects no longer draw?

I know I must qualify the question because, Seher, you will say that I'm exaggerating, that architects still draw, they always draw. The simple truth is that drawing on paper is no longer part of the order of the world. Do you accept that fact? Do you accept that drawing by hand has been demoted to become a minor part of the tradition, like a carved vegetal ornament?
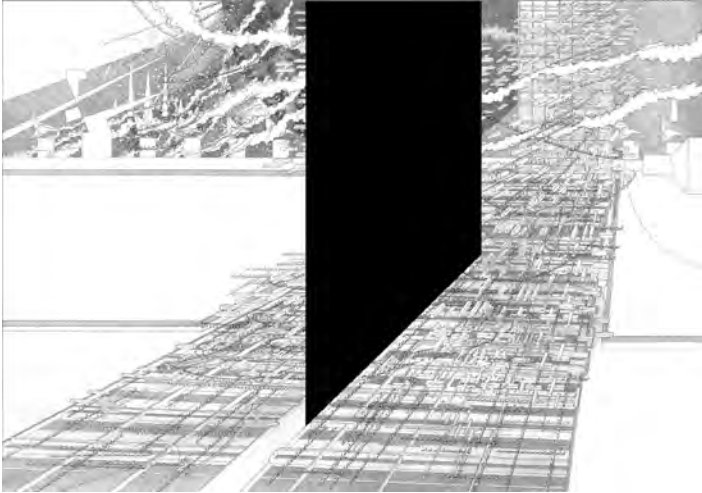
Seher Shah, *Object Relic (Unité d'Habitation)*, 2011

I am certainly not exaggerating. Consider, for the sake of comparison, Friedrich Kittler's exaggerated argument that words on a screen are not even "writing:"

> The last historical act of writing may well have been the moment when, in the early seventies, Intel engineers laid out some dozen square meters of blueprint paper (64 square meters, in the case of the later 8086) in order to design the hardware architecture of their first integrated microprocessor. This manual layout of two thousand transistors and their interconnections was then miniaturized to the size of an actual chip, and, by electro-optical machines, written into silicon layers.[2]

Kittler's hypothesized termination is the death of a great old tree of meaning where "writing" includes all varieties of mark-making by the human hand, be it symbols, letters, glyphs or lines sketched ("quickly outlined") or drawn ("pulled-along, pulled-out"). This "end of writing," which perhaps more accurately marks the end of the Gutenberg Age, announces a new future for "drawing," albeit with the mouse, sensor

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2 Friedrich Kittler, "There is No Software," ctheory.net 10/18/1995

pad, digital pen, trackball, finger.

Drawing on paper, professionally, is over in our century. The origin of every drawing has become a model, held within a computer. John Walker, the founder of AutoDesk, summed it up succinctly at the opening ceremony of their Swiss office in 1991:

> In 1982, Autodesk undertook the challenge of placing computer aided design in the hands of every engineer, every architect, every draftsman, surveyor, and designer in the world. The story of Autodesk is the story of our progress, to date, in achieving that goal. What we do at Autodesk is so simple to understand and so easy to explain that sometimes it goes past so quickly people don't comprehend. Autodesk products build computer models of real-world objects, then manipulate them in various ways. […] The past two decades have witnessed the digitalization of one aspect of technology after another. The word processor digitalized the typewriter. The compact disc digitalized the phonograph. The facsimile machine is digitalizing the mail. Within the next few years photography, radio, and television will be digitalized. Autodesk is engaged in digitalizing the world of design, engineering, and manufacturing. To do this, we develop tools to create, inside the computer, faithful models of the objects that designers conceive. Our products are the link between the designer's mind and the memory of the computer. Once a model is built, we can use the computer to prepare drawings for a machinist or construction worker. We can analyse the design, inside the computer, calculating weight and strength, permitting the designer to explore alternatives before the object is manufactured.[3]

John Walker and his cohorts at Autodesk did not push the drafting tables into the dumpsters, just as CIAM did not destroy the guilds of the preindustrial West. "The collapse of the class of skilled craftsmen is an established fact," CIAM said at the outset of the 20th century, and so goes hand-drafting at the century's end. The practice of architecture was once an essential aspect of the grand century for paper that saw ancient forests plundered from Cascadia to Brazil to Borneo, while new forests grew in the interstices of American Industry and the ruins of the Great War in Europe, waiting for their planned day to be cut down and shredded to pulp. CIAM's call for "outmoded conceptions connected with the class of craftsmen" to be abandoned implied that the privilege of the design profession would be enhanced. New! Rational! Forms! for the Machine Age were designed on paper, tested on paper and transmitted to the factory on paper. Skyscrapers and office towers were designed on paper and communicated in so many detailed construction documents to their builders. Lewis Mumford likened the office buildings of the 20th century to "enormous human filing cabinets," ant-farms for a class of

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3 John Walker, speech at Autodesk Neuchâtel office (11/13/1991).

people who were once jokingly referred to as "pencil-pushers," who moved in and through a world of paper, drawings and type. Men and women who sat at desks where they drew and wrote, storing their pieces of paper in flat files, file cabinets and card drawers. Our new century scarcely remembers the standing armies once assembled simply to pencil in colors and affix Letraset. And we can no longer imagine how papers once flew "at the speed of air" from skyscraper to skyscraper through pneumatic tubes.

Maybe now you are more certain that I am exaggerating? Well, let me explain my question a little bit further: perhaps then you'll answer, at least as a thought experiment?

I am wondering what happens to architectural drawing when it is divorced from architecture, when the art of two-dimensional representation of a building on a plane (is there a short name for that?) is divorced from the art-science of design of structures. With increasing pace since the end of the Second World War, the computer has driven the hand from a broad range of human endeavors.[4] For some perspective, consider cartography, another practice of drawing effected by digitization. Geographic Information Systems, or G.I.S., first appeared in the 1960s, coordinating the science of geography with statistical analysis and database management. G.I.S. began as a form of data-coordination and crunching, but soon enough led to the coupling of geography with CAD and computer-graphic visualization, making possible the production of maps from computer models. This decoupled geography from the art of cartography. In the 1980s, while techniques of visualization were taking shape, digitalization drastically simplified what maps were and what cartographers did to their most elemental levels. While cartographers and computer programmers refined conventions for communicating GIS data, the art of cartography atrophied under the restraint of convention and the banishment of the hand. This period was summed up by Brian Harley in 1989: "I believe a major roadblock to understanding is that we still accept the uncritically broad consensus, with relatively few dissenting voices, of what cartographers tell us maps are supposed to be."[5]

By the early 21st century, conventions had been established and graphic visualization had capabilities unimaginable in the 1980s. The art of cartography could be reunited, in the digital domain, with the science of geography. But the divorce had changed them both. Cartography had, as Mark Monmonier once put it in a panel discussion, "lost its art." And that art of making meaningful pictures of the world

4 Tangentially: iPhones are still made by hand! So the elimination of handiwork is admittedly incomplete.

5 Brian Harley, in Jeremy Crampton, *Mapping: a critical introduction to cartography and GIS*, John Wiley and Sons, 2010.

had been picked up by artists, untrained in the conventions of geography, growing into the boom of cartographic art that we have seen these past 10 years.

Architecture must have gone through similar shocks in the shift to computer-based production, but upon examination I do not see analogous results. Artists, rather than picking up architectural drawing, have seized upon the forming aspect of architecture: temporary structures, ubiquitous site, the whole tradition of installation. As Hundertwasser said, "Architecture was the aim the whole time." It is easy to miss this because the shift of practice from two-dimensional representation to the formation of space itself was so broad and generalized.

Which leads to this question for you, Seher Shah. You draw. You draw like architects used to draw, repurposing visual convention for your own interrogation of the tradition. And I haven't seen anyone else draw quite like this. So I wonder what it means, for you.

I look forward to your reply.

/// Published on February 16th 2012

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THE GROUNDBREAKING CLARITY OF RYAN AND TREVOR OAKES
BY EVE BAILEY

Identical twins Ryan and Trevor Oakes have created an innovative method of depicting the world before us that constitutes a key advancement in the representation of visual reality. Their discovery is the synthesis of reciprocal intuitions, observations and experiments generated by their ongoing dialog about perception — about "seeing with two eyes." They have been reexamining the knowledge that our experience of the world is binocular and as if we were at the center of a giant perceptual sphere. They came to realize it would be more appropriate to draw on a spherical surface rather than a flat sheet of paper, and found a way of tracing the world directly onto the curved paper without digital intervention, mathematical calculations or drafting tools. The result is the visual and physical experience of a seamless and organic rendering, with no beginning and no end, that does not fail to remind me of Frederick Kiesler's original concepts in his project of the Endless House, "endless like the human body." The fascinating part of Ryan and Trevor's pioneering system is, as art historian Jonathan Crary articulates it, "that they have reintroduced the corporal features of human vision in perspective techniques that had been edited out of our conventional monocular models of representation where the world is presented as if all parts of it were seen with a uniform clarity when in fact the illusion we have of a clear world is obtained by our eyes darting around producing a synthetic image of an overall clarity."

The Oakes designed a spherical easel that can hold a concave piece of paper, and added to it a gyroscopic head stabilizer oriented around one of the artist's eyes, in order to keep the vantage point consistent and the head steady for the duration of the drawing. The first easel was built in 2004, and is being constantly altered and improved as Ryan and Trevor refine their binocular tracing principle. The method consists in focusing both eyes on the objects to be represented in the distance, with the paper interrupting the vision's natural course. Each retina then perceives a separate image of the surface, resulting

in two distinct images that are not aligned, thus creating an optically-transparent double image. The artist appears to be able to see the scene through the paper and is able to guide the pencil tip over the real objects in the distance and render a scaled drawing onto the actual curved surface. One can only render the very edge of the paper, one margin at a time, because the area turning transparent can only be as wide as the distance between the eyes. It is fairly easy to add or cut out a slice of the rendering and reconstitute the whole image after all slices have been marked. The resulting drawings look continuous — as if "lifted from life" — thanks to the infinity of vanishing points that replicate the way rays of light propagate through space into one's eye.


Ryan Oakes and Trevor Oakes, *Concave Easel*, 2004

The system wasn't, of course, conceptualized at once. What is striking to me is the brothers' line of reasoning, combining intuitive anticipations and analytic rigor throughout. The method was not intended, but rather came out of an ongoing conversation about features of their vision and their visual field, and out of a genuine inclination to try to understand how they perceived the world around them. It is very interesting to review their seemingly disparate realizations, and to discover how each step gradually led to the conceptualization of the technique as it exists now. Every single doodle and note that might have been considered benign by a singleton became a terrain of exploration for the twins.

They came to realize that we all see a profile image of our nose from the left and right eye at all times. "So what?" Well, after repeatedly noticing shapes that could be an incarnation of their nose in the bot-

tom left corner of their own abstract paintings - and potentially in well known artists' work such as Matisse or Rembrandt, they decided it was worth investigating. They went on drawing their respective left and right nose profiles pointing a laser beam from their nose onto a sheet of paper while the other would mark down every single laser dot that shaped the profiles. They eventually deducted that only in the central zone can both eyes see the world at once — reinforcing the fact that in their present technique, the paper can only become transparent for an amount of space that is equal to the distance between our eyes — and that on either side of that zone you only have a monocular view of the world, in fact, quite reduced by the protuberance of the nose.

In addition to these perceptual conversations, they were simultaneously building (apparently unrelated) sculptures that would ultimately inform them about the nature of light and guide their thinking towards a more scientific arena. Trevor decided to work with matchsticks because of their inherent formal quality: one end is a small square and the other a larger circular tip. He was interested in how a form emerges from and relates to the modular component by which it is generated. He first stacked them in rows and obtained a square portion of a dome that subsequently prompted him to work on a full hemisphere where the matches are stacked in rings. The brothers reflected upon the latter structure and found that one of the entities in nature that shares the same spatial properties — a bunch of rays perpendicular to a sphere — is dispersing light emitted from a point source.
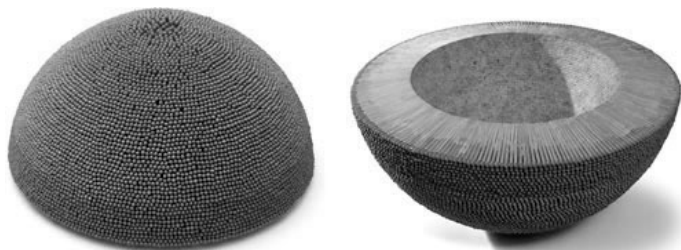
Ryan Oakes and Trevor Oakes, *Matchstick Dome 1 & 2*

It reminded them of the spherical nature of our vision, as opposed to the idea of a flat plane, as if looking through a window. In order to demonstrate the concept, the brothers built a checkered structure made of corrugated cardboard modules like key stones that propagate over a curvature horizontally, vertically and diagonally. As the viewers direct their eyes to the center point of the installation, they can see through all the corrugation at the same time. It looks like the structure is disintegrating, consequently highlighting that we look at the world from the center point of a sphere. Another phenomenon that the twins identified and examined is the reflection of themselves

and the entire gallery space behind them into 1/4 inch tacks that were holding drawings in an exhibition. It implied that a light ray from every point in the room was traveling to the locations of each tiny tack. The Oakes deducted that the behavior of light is more complex than one can actually see, with rays going in every single direction. The pivotal notion that bound the whole process together is also the crudest. The brothers:

> It happened in Central Park as we were zoning out and trying to decide what to draw. If you let your eyes shift to the leaves on the ground that are behind the sketch pad and didn't focus on the pad itself, that pad would shift over into this double ghost-like image. And all of a sudden the leaves on the ground could be seen through the paper. That was quite an interesting jump. We quickly realized that – say the tiles in Union Square and their sense of diminishing, of shrinking in size as they receded from you could be captured in close accuracy with what your eyes see without any sort of mathematical calculations or geometrical rules. We also quickly realized than applying that method onto a flat piece of paper was not adequate. Your eyes need to be very stable in relation to the paper pad that in turn also needs to be very stable, and in that fixed relationship, the vantage point would be closer to the paper's center than to its corners, so objects would appear to balloon in size as they move towards the corners. To overcome that, it meant that we needed to construct a spherical easel to support spherical paper.

It might have been difficult for an investigator of visual phenomena to have come to such a creative solution, as specialists are often attached to the technological dimension of the field they study. Certainly, two of the reasons why Ryan and Trevor were able to link and interconnect their structures and experiences in a meaningful way were a general approach and the physicality of their research. Their sense of wonder and continuing assessments are also fundamental attributes of the success of their endeavor.

As I could not stop thinking about the continuous quality of their spherical drawings and relating them to the continuous and curved shapes of the Endless House project, I started researching about architect and artist Frederick Kiesler, who directed the Laboratory for Design Correlation in the Department of Architecture at Columbia University from 1937 to 1943. Though his ideas were visionary, he did not leave any significant designs or structures behind. Going through the catalog of "Co-Realities," an exhibition of a selection of Kiesler's drawings organized by the Drawing Center in Manhattan in 2008, I remembered two fantastic sketches where he attempts to represent the way we see, stressing simultaneity and transparency, where the perceiving subject sees through solid forms or through what appears to be layers of time and space. He would have been undoubtedly thrilled by Ryan and Trevor's discovery as they, in many ways, fol-

low in his conceptual footsteps and unknowingly replicate working method; this time, however, with a concrete outcome.

Frederick Kiesler claimed to have worked on only one project, "one basic idea" all his life: the endless. He was looking for ways to express (and raise awareness of) a sense of continuity between man, nature and technology. He articulated all his ideas within one major concept he called "correalism," a complex and idiosyncratic system of thoughts around the notion of "correlation," essentially, any meaningful relationship between ideas, objects, persons, or spaces. For Kiesler, "an object doesn't live until it correlates," and the investigation of correlation is necessarily the task of artists who wish to reveal the ways humans relate to the world and to each other. He implemented techniques of experimentation and intuition from the Surrealists', with whom he extensively collaborated. He also drew the examination of sensory perception and dreams in his multidisciplinary practice. In his laboratory, sketches and doodles obtained while letting the mind wonder were used to solve problems of design, architecture or philosophy.

The Oakes and I met on two occasions: during their residency at the Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center (EMPAC) in Troy, and in their new studio in Manhattan. In both instances, there was a corner of the room dedicated to sketches and doodles, including a series of tiny sculptures made out of twirled colorful anodized aluminum wire, inspired by string theory. Ryan and Trevor's practice is composed of three major sequential steps: sketching and doodling to unleash unconscious elements caught in the mind, reflecting on these improvisations to see what kind of structures they suggest, and ordering all the elements into meaningful objects in order to build on them. Last but not least, they do it all in reverse, and start again in a constant back and forth, simultaneously completing pieces that inform one another.

I particularly love the story behind Trevor's matchsticks project. He started arranging the matches in rows as tightly as possible, obtaining a small portion of a sphere. Because of the intrinsic spherical nature of the result, he assumed he would be able to build a hemisphere with the same technique. Sticking to the constraint that each match should be laid as closely as possible to the next, he went on building the form ring after ring. Only, the shape started to evolve into a sort of spiral instead of a dome.

> The sphere was what we predicted would happen. [..] But as the sphere was being built, when about two inches of it had been constructed, Trevor realized that the matches wanted to stray. [...] He wasn't so happy with this because he wanted the sphere. He had predicted to make a sphere. He figured out why and what was going on. He figured out how to tweak it to

make it do what he wanted. […] The discrepancy is that you have a sphere on one end and a square on the other end that are bound to the same unit and that are being packed as close as possibly to their adjacent neighbors in three directions. [...] As it goes up to a 90 degree angle, you are packing these units onto a pitched surface. That's were some tension starts to be introduced into the form. [...] The circles are holding steady while the squares are pushing each other apart. You have these opposing forces on the outer surface and the inner surface of what is building the structure. And that causes it to rip into the seashell spiral. [...] Trevor just spaced out the heads a little bit to solve the problem for the sphere. He had the center of the object indicated and sighted down (like an arrow) each match-stick and aimed it at the center to put in the appropriate amount of space for each head. Just by eye.

The dome shape has already played a major role in their ren-dering method but the brothers have yet to "correlate", or in other words, find a significance for the various spiral shapes waiting in the studio, although they are already thinking it might lead them – years down the road – to design a "piece of archi-tecture," or a "dwelling of some sort" that would "interface with rain and wind currents in an innovative way."

Ryan talks about synchronization rather than correlation. On his brother's spiral structure: "If you took a block of clay and sculpted a spiral, you would probably not end up with that organic result. The shape here is a more complex form, and you can grow it with these matchsticks in a way that is synchronized and somewhat elegant." Ryan stresses the importance of the parameters that will determine a body of work and the significance of sticking to those parameters throughout the making of a piece. "The more you can hold yourself accountable to follow certain rules, you will find yourself in a terri-tory that is much more elaborate than you would have somewhat consciously conceived of." Ryan consistently chooses a strict set of rules in order to justify the creation of a work, so that the piece will be synchronized in accordance with those rules. In his blue paint-ings, he defined four "differentials:" color (blue), value (adding white gradually), paper (medium grey) and a brush (made by himself). He simply rolls the brush, line after line, changing the pitch of the stick in relationship to the paper, thus creating traces with a scale shift. It starts parallel (large traces) and ends up perpendicular (smaller traces), accomplishing a full 90 degree angle, like in Trevor's match-stick dome. Taking into consideration the fragility of the large pieces of paper he was drawing on, he thought it would be interesting to test the structure and work with the materiality of the paper itself. So the body of work that followed is a series of square pieces of blue and white paper that have been severely distressed, to "unify them." He applied forces to each piece as a means to "make every square cen-timeter on the surface be related to every other square centimeter. It could continue to expand beyond the paper. It is more of a single

thought than a series of thoughts. It's not like a story line, thinking through a beginning, a middle and an end. It's implied onto the surface and hopefully the whole thing is synchronized." He named the series *Unified Fields*.

Trevor is very intuitive and leads the spatial and three-dimensional thinking. In another body of work, Trevor made pipe cleaner weavings that, although he didn't realize it at the time he was making them, follow the principles of hyperbolic geometry. Ryan is rational and deductive, and is able to unify their thoughts: "Even if I am executing the body of work, or Trevor is executing the body of work, our dialog is informing the direction." Talking about the perspective work: "Here, the apparent arbitrariness (of marking the surface) is in fact justified, because it is derived directly from this mental cognition of sight. Even though it is a traditional pen making marks *via* a hand *via* a brain that is telling the hand where to go, it's taking its cues directly from sight — which is to say directly from the brain calculating the electric signals that come into the retina." Ryan and Trevor Oakes' technique brings to mind the physicality of seeing, and tells us that in the three-dimensional space in front of us only one point can be perfectly aligned in the visual cortex, everything else progressively splits into a double image. In fact, the illusion we have of a clear world is obtained by our eyes darting to and fro at single focused points, producing a synthetic image of an overall clarity.

> We became fascinated with that point and started looking for references to it in art history. We found two. The first one was from Lawrence Weschler's book in a paragraph about Robert Irwin who was talking about placing a black dot on a piece of glass and looking past the glass to split the black dot into a double image that allowed him to focus simultaneously on the foreground of the dot and the background – of what was behind the dot. The other reference we found was in cave paintings. In cave paintings foreground objects might have been represented in double […] drawn identically side by side, and it seems as though they are using that phenomenon to represent foreground space and then objects in the background were only drawn once. After seeing that, it would make sense that in a world before straight line architecture – when you are still attempting to illustrate depth but maybe hadn't latched on to the notion of that space appearing to shrink in size as it recedes from you – that noticing the double image, the split image that happens on a foreground object when you look past it in the distance could also be a visual feature that could be used as a candidate to represent the foreground.

It just leaves me wondering how many more subjects the Oakes brothers might be able to clarify for us in their life-time.

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WOULD HAVE BEEN...
AN INVENTORY
BY CAMILLE LACADÉE

a dark laterite monolith near a library

thirty days / twenty-nine people of diverse nationalities and age still to be confirmed
an old man collecting books
a library counting exactly seventy thousand books in thirty-six different languages / some unknown languages
twenty-nine return tickets
forty chairs and twenty tables poorly made of recycled pine wood
a twenty-one point one megapixels full frame complementary metal-oxide-semiconductor digital single-lens reflex camera body with two flash cards of thirty-two gigabits and two batteries / a lens with bellows mechanism specially customized for this body / a good tripod with film head
a light-emitting diode camera yellow to white light / a cheap tripod for the light
a five in one foldable elliptic white and silver reflector
a short shotgun condenser microphone with cable and a smaller stereo condenser microphone / a twenty-four bits uncompressed and built-in stereo microphones sound recorder with four different waveform audio file format modes
an acoustically transparent synthetic fur material with soft long hairs

twenty electrical adapters for plug types A B D G M into outlet types C E F L
an A3 borderless inkjet printer with refill cartridges / four bottles of ink to refill the cartridges
a three terabits external hard-drive
five six-outlet power strips / two or three retractable extension cord reels
twelve universal serial bus internet keys to share / thirty pens and pencils / five hundred sheets of A3 copy paper

another light-emitting diode camera light and another cheap tripod
three vans of twelve people each, a bicycle inside one and a surfboard on top

but…..

a guesthouse with ten rooms and ten cottages for two people each /
two rooms with an extra bed
a noxious dining place
two loyal dogs

a family of three and a care-taker living in the library
an engineer then another one
two hundred corners of A3 copy paper sheets eaten by one of the
loyal dogs
a contractor then another one / a wooden board Ganesha painting to
bring good luck
two men and three women chopping bushes and cactuses around
the monolith
one rented gasoline generator set of ten kilowatt
eleven metallic electric fans
twenty litres of gasoline

three women and two men excavating seven cubic metres of soft lat-
erite around the monolith
seventy steel tubes of length six meters and diameter four centimetres
cut into thirty-five tubes of four meters length and thirty-five of three
and seventy of two and thirty five of one
three hundred twenty chocolate hazelnut spread pancakes with ma-
sala tea
twenty yoga mats
one hundred and forty perforations on the monolith
six hundred rough laterite blocks of twenty by twenty by forty centi-
metres
six hundred metal rods / three tape-measurers /one kilogram of black
pigment
twenty litres of gasoline

but…..

a set of speakers eaten overnight perhaps by one of the loyal dogs
perhaps by a monkey
one hundred kilogram of bitumen
two hundred pillar white candles of twenty grams melted at seventy
degrees
an office of complaints / three complaints registered

another cheap tripod / a moka pot from New York City / a set of mid-
range loudspeakers with defective two round pin plug
three hundred twenty muesli fruits bowls with masala tea
six hundred six millimetres perforations of the steel tubes
twenty litres of gasoline

a sexual assault and two hours at the police station

two hundred fifty grams of cotton to make clouds / twelve hours of surf classes / an untimely departure
six hundred laterite components carved in shark fin shape of three different sizes
ten frogs for the bleeding drawing night scene take one / four other frogs for the take two
fifteen sky lanterns ascending together and forming the Aries constellation

but….

a program director's inopportune visit with one of her boys
seventy five litres of water-based black paint
one hundred villagers in the rain
twenty litres of gasoline

twenty-five non-waterproof raincoats / three surf boards on location
several packs of cigarettes smelling like fish abandoned on a table
thirty black Acetoxy silicon sealant tubes for nothing
six hundred domestic phone calls
twenty litres of gasoline

two hundred glass components travelling a thousand eight hundred kilometres by airplane then truck
three hundred and twenty sunny side eggs swallowed with instant coffee
forty litres of oil black paint / ten extra brushes / two hundred small plastic cups
seven hundred fifty litres of beer containing glycerol and six to eight percent of alcohol
two hundred and ten rickshaw journeys
eighteen hours of yoga classes
twenty litres of gasoline
but…

five bottles of blend based on neutral spirits distilled from fermented molasses
twenty-one early departures

a credit card suddenly blocked / two thousand four hundred plastic bottles of one and a half litres of water
four hundred ninety-five thousand litres of pure oxygen / five hundred chickens / a dismissal / two vegetarians
a one terabit external hard-drive bought in last-minute emergency / one thousand five hundred euros in blackmail
four hundred and twenty-three millimetres of rain representing a deficit of fifty-seven percent from usual reports

a longing for Verrucaria nigrescens to take over
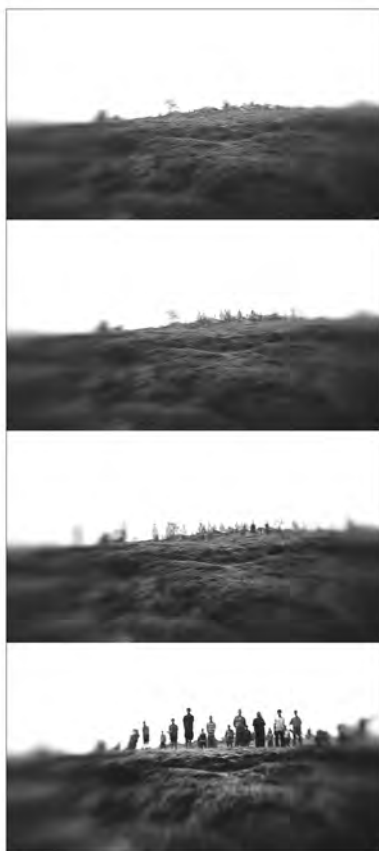
/// **Film synopsis**

In a sacred Hindu village lost in the jungle, a self-made erudite brahmin dedicates his life to the creation of a unique library on philosophy, theology, psychology, world literature…
… And finally finds himself violently rejected by the villagers.

Inspired by a true local story from Gokarna (Karnataka, India), the fiction evolves around the discovery of an enlightening sign, which will guide the old man through the conception of a catcher of self-complaints – called Devil Trap and manifesting the work of his entire life – following the scriptures of the Bhagavad Gita in an attempt at mediation between paganism and philosophy, between the villagers and himself…

/// **About ZshellTER project**

"A mind illusion's fab for a ritual's report"
 The movie title: "… Would Have Been My Last Complaint"
 The shell-ter title: "Devil Trap"

Creative team
Scenario, production, Camille Lacadée (movie), Francois Roche (shelter) / [elf/bʌt/c]
Design process, Computation, Ezio Blasetti
Robotic Design, Special effects, Stephan Henrich
Sound design, Myrtille Fakhreddine (braïbraï), Devin Jernigan
Computation, fabrication, construction, Mark-Henry Jean Decrausaz, Cameron David Newnham, Mark Kowalyov, Peeraya Suphasidh
Camera, Suthiwat Yanawiboot
Storyboard, Pim Jular
Model & props, Pajareeya Suriwong, Nichapatara Swangdecharux
Machinism special design, Cheng Yu Ling
Shooting schedule & organization, Wachira Leangtanom
Making-of, Danielle Willems, Pantira Unarat
Historical research assistant, Natreeya Kraichitti
Community negotiation assistant, Lila Tedesco
Production assistants, Arisa Juengsophonvitavas, Papat Jinaphun, Javed Godkin Paul de Costa, Nicha Laptaveepanya, Nuthapong Jiratiticharoen, Benjawan Lamsa-ard, Tachapol Danaboonchai, Suthata Jiranuntarat, Yanisa Chumpolphaisal, Jenwit Narukatphichai, Permpoon Rojanasakul
Acknowledgements, Sri Ganapati Vedeshwar (Study Circle Library), Elias Tabet (Pandrata Circle), Sanjeen SingPawat, Gwyl Jahn
Construction, Manjunath & Co, Engineer, Ravi N.Pattegar, Civil Engineer Contractor

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/// **Published on July 24th 2012**

APPENDIX/

PRESENTATION OF
THE CONTRIBUTORS

LUCY FINCHETT-MADDOCK enjoys thoughts on law, resistance, energy, matter, flows, cuts, order and disorder, culminating in a legal or political aesthetic (who knows which?) of Benjamin's ragpickers, Burroughsian time drawls and alternative property dilations.

DANIEL FERNÁNDEZ PASCUAL is interested in simple food. Not only because food shapes markets, and markets shape flows of capital, and capital shapes territories, futures and speculation; but also because territories shape governmentality, and governmentality shapes sovereignty, and sovereignty ultimately constructs living space. If space shapes human bodies, I do believe bodies may also have the power to affect contested laws.

ETHEL BARAONA POHL likes to smell books. She doesn't like vanilla ice cream…but those grassy notes with a tang of acids with hint of vanilla and mustiness are irresistible for her. Since childhood she has been smelling printed pages. Now she is also convinced that networked words have quantum scents that we all are now learning to appreciate.

Never lend a book to **CÉSAR REYES NÁJERA**. When he was a child his father once told him that one is a fool who lend a book but even sillier to give it back. One day his friends stopped lending books to him… so he had to start publishing them.

MICHAEL BADU is a UK trained architect who sees himself in the continental tradition of practitioners who are not required to engage in independent research in order to engage with architectural theory/commentary. Although he acknowledges the importance of academia, he rejects the notion that architectural theory is the sole preserve of academics and believes that the knowledge gleaned by architects from the 'coalface' of practice is just as important as that gained from academic research for both the theoretical and artistic progress of the discipline. He asserts that like religion, architecture is an art that, although sometimes nourished by theory, can only succeed empirically and it is from this standpoint that he wrote his piece for this publication.

MARIABRUNA FABRIZI is interested in the way the built environment is shaped by the interaction between people and the forms they inhabit. The study of ordinary structures, the everyday environment, the common space, lay the foundation for her approach to professional intervention.

FOSCO LUCARELLI is an architect interested in the collisions between themes of architecture, politics, media and culture. As a professional, he recurrently investigates the discrepancies and contradictions between architectural theory and practice.

CAROLINE FILICE SMITH works with yet-to-be obsolete Athletics/tangential manipulations of marginal checkpoints: psychologically disciplined, physically manifesting, or otherwise. Caroline Filice Smith moves. Frequently, and with varying degrees of rhythm.

GREG BARTON is both captivated and terrified by capital, cartography and the built environment. Recent areas of research include globalization ethics, experimental geography and nuclear architecture. In general, he engages the archival but prefers the anecdotal.

MARYAM MONALISA GHARAVI cares about the unknown knowns, the known unknowns, and the unknown unknowns (often in that order), and within those hierarchies of knowledge, the seeable order of things.

NIKOLAS PATSOPOULOS: The air that we breathe, the gas of our lives and the spark of the struggle; the fire that keeps me alive. This is my human condition, not much of a bio but very much of a *bios* (Greek for way of life).

ZAYD SIFRI is interested in exploring the dynamics of building a grassroots internationalist politics. His primary regions of focus are the Middle East and Africa. Outside of writing and journalism Zayd currently works in adult education. He also likes to cook dinner for friends and loved ones.

LIDUAM PONG is interested in labyrinths and their working documents, investigating their false doors, oblique mirrors and elucidating threads. She can be obsessive about small increments in the arrangement of lines and words.

RAJA SHEHADEH is interested in bringing out the facts about life under occupation. He hopes that in doing so he would help further the cause of justice. In some of his writing he has also tried to imagine a different future for the Middle East region with the hope of inspiring change.

SADIA SHIRAZI thinks and writes about the expanded fields of art, architecture and urbanism. Cities are of particular interest, as are their specters, and the way in which land and the stories about land are not easily aligned. She is also investigating the space of exhibitions and curates shows about artistic production, technologies of display, and exhibition practices.

In response to a pervasive culture of fear, secrecy and constitutional sabotage, **BRYAN FINOKI** confronts what he calls the "sub-architectural" dimensions of militarism and incarceration to further expose corruption's refuge and the contesting forces that together shape the built environment. Using architecture and geography as a prism through which to interrogate the design and political production of space, his writing is a definition of military urbanism that expands our understanding of the everyday violence of the global city's creeping securitization. If Empire is a hidden landscape then Bryan's documentation not only helps to reveal it, but also shows an immense counter-landscape that is emerging in its fissures and shadow.

Modernity didn't happen overnight. As an historian of Renaissance architecture and urbanism, **MORGAN NG** sees the contemporary moment as embedded within long-term processes of cultural, social and technological change. By engaging with the past, the discipline of architecture, he believes, can overcome its historical amnesia, an amnesia that is part of modernity's founding myth.

NORA AKAWI believes that the most engaging stories are those which draw an ungraspable experience, an impossible tale. If the city's role were to tell a story, it must acknowledge the impossibility of a continuous seamless flow. The process of shaping and re-shaping the city must be as fragmented, interrupted and conflicted as its publics. As the site for the publics' voices to be heard, the city is not a stage for consensus to reign, but one that should be continuously formed and transformed by conflict and disagreement. Dedicated to an uncertain, often disappearing and constantly torn path towards a career in architecture, Nora attempts to approach the field with the public archive as a starting point (the process of its aggregation, interpretation and dissemination), and from there drawing tools for mapping, planning and design within spaces of conflict.

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ANDREAS PHILIPPOPOULOS-MIHALOPOULOS tries to disengage himself from his name and claim his body. This has proven hard, not least because the name is terribly long and tends to wrap itself around his body. He is regularly sighted funambulising between disciplines, but he cannot forget the law.

MATTHEW CLEMENTS is in precarious pursuit of abducted thought, seeking to salvage some sense along the way. His latest research

project comparing the aesthetics and ecologies of Jakob von Uexküll and Charles Santiago Sanders Peirce, begins with Mario Merz's 8-5-3, and ends with a labyrinthine answer to the riddle of the sphinx.

This aggregation of material mostly consists of materials from the North East coast of the North American continent for the past several years, and it calls itself **HIROKO NAKATANI**. Hiroko was given her life, which maintains her aggregation until today in the Far East of the earth. Hiroko likes to leave her footprint on architecture and science. She likes to teach herself and believes that summer starts on December 21st.

FREDRIK HELLBERG is a quack psychologist and architect on a mission to discover links between shopping malls, computer games, role playing, iconography and the universe. He is currently teaching in Bangkok where his expedition is slowly materialising both physically, virtually and intellectually.

LINNÉA HUSSEIN is interested in anything Other seen or not seen on screen. Seeing film as an excavation site for culture's roots as well as her personal identity quest, findings and analyses direct her ways into any place from maps of early non-fiction colonial imaginations, to German and Middle Eastern nationalisms or the lack thereof, to cinematic conventions of endoscopies.

DANIELLE WILLEMS is fascinated with the limitless space within the threshold between the moving image and architecture. This strange and unquantifiable interaction holds the potential to realize many possible futures along with the potential to reveal novel spatial environments. The focus of her research are material manifestations of these invisible narratives, which are generative intensities waiting to be discovered.

CARL DOUGLAS thinks about public space and distributed agency. At the moment, he is making unsolicited design projects for a difficult part of his own city, Auckland, New Zealand. To address infrastructure is to encounter the city in operation, what Ingold calls a "taskscape", not just a formal problem. New infrastructures are potentially transformative for how the city is practiced.

MARTIN BYRNE spends an inordinate amount of time reading science fiction comics as an antidote to reality. This seems to stem from his belief that science fiction is more indicative of our present (as well as our future) than most other mediums. As a matter of fact, he believes that all good architecture is science fiction and all good science fiction is architecture; which is to say, messy, unpredictable and frequently confusing. Also, like Orwell, he is quite fond of 'Victory Gin.'

CLAIRE JAMIESON's focus is on fictional and narrative techniques in architecture: drawing on literary theory and narratology to question how diverse narrative practices could enrich and challenge how we think about and make architecture. From the textual to the visual, Claire's interest is in works that imagine fictional worlds whose articulation of space goes beyond the requirements of mise-en-scène or setting.

CARLA LEITÃO is an architect, writer and professor in New York and Lisbon. Her research includes the impact and influence of concepts of ubiquity, media and advanced material sensitivity on architecture and urban design.

EDUARDO MCINTOSH is interested in patterns. He believes geography, history, society, geology, astronomy, physics, 'the real', 'the vistual', economy, love, war...everything can be unified into the same pattern language....its just a question of scale...what is the relation between the pattern being observed and the observer. He is also extremely grumpy and bitchy when he is at his best.

Animative processes, tribal synthetism, clandestine pixel hunts, migrating carbon fibres, digital beards, error huts, herding robots, glitching myths & nomad tweets. These are a few of the topics that define **OLIVIU LUGOJAN-GHENCIU**'s take on architecture.

ROLAND SNOOKS is a director of Kokkugia - an architecture practice exploring complex processes of formation. Roland has a particular obsession with swarm intelligence and designing through multi-agent algorithms.

BIAYNA BOGOSIAN is interested in highly localized materialization processes that respond to data patterns. Focusing on the topics of geometric complexity, performance feedback and fabrication economy, she is researching various physical and non-physical input parameters as a way of adding information resolution to different forms of physical outputs.

ESTHER SZE-WING CHEUNG believes that technology is an instrument for infusing meaning into design. She operates in the "light gray of today," between Peter Eisenman's "deep structure" (of which a thousand iterations can now be computed within seconds) and Robert Venturi's "plea for symbolism" (now answered by Time Square's hundreds of flashing billboards). Because maximum efficiency has become a tangible and solvable equation, Esther Sze-Wing Cheung envisions designers as employers of intuition, collaborating with machines toward an architecture of humanness and culture.

RUSSELL HUGHES regularly visits the future and reports back as to how we can do it better. His day job is in the discipline of architecture, which he uses as a scaffold on which to frame the symbiosis of information, computation and the molecular. In his spare time he likes to explode the given.

EVE BAILEY is a sculptor whose work focuses on the concepts of balance and coordination. She sees the body as a perceiving mechanical structure and is profoundly interested in how physical awareness fosters creativity. She builds kinetic devices and ergonomic sculptures that serve to express the elegance of a gesture, a finite moment of equilibrium, combining her love for architecture and dance into a single body of work that speaks to our environment and our human potential.

CAMILLE LACADÉE loves how movies can compose, perhaps impose narratives and identities to places, structures, buildings, fabrications (psycho/physical) as well as invent/recover the multiple persona of 'individuals.' Now working the land between architecture and film, she recently opened an institute for contingent scenario with François Roche in Bangkok.

SEHER SHAH is interested in the ambiguous relationship of objects and landscapes. She uses the basic elements of architecture such as the wall, the grid and the column to examine various formal and visceral qualities of particular moments in architectural history. She focuses on historical and personal iconographies of constructed landscapes, the X-large or mammoth sized object, erasure, Corbusier and courtyards, which she explores through drawings, prints, photographs and sculptural objects.

LÉOPOLD LAMBERT does not read books on architecture much; he prefers literature, philosophy, history or simply going to cinema. He enjoys traveling and has thus has been consecutively called a "provincial," a Parisian, Hong Konger, Mumbaier and New Yorker. He is very grateful and happy to have many talented friends around the world who enthusiastically accepted to write for this series/book.
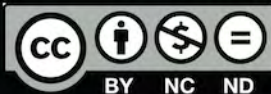
THE FUNAMBULIST is a blog written and edited by Léopold Lambert since 2007. It approaches architecture through its political and narrative implications, borrowing concepts from other disciplines. In 2013, The Funambulist, Punctum Books and the Center for Transformative Media Parsons The New School for Design published the first volumes of *The Funambulist Pamphlets*, a series of small books collecting articles written on the blog, organized by themes: Spinoza, Foucault, Deleuze, Legal Theory, Occupy Wall Street, Palestine, Cruel Designs, Arakawa + Madeline Gins, Science Fiction, Literature, Cinema & Weaponized Architecture.

THE CENTER FOR TRANSFORMATIVE MEDIA, Parsons The New School for Design is a transdisciplinary media research initiative bridging design and the social sciences, and dedicated to the exploration of the transformative potential of emerging technologies upon the foundational practices of everyday life across a range of settings.

PUNCTUM BOOKS are spontaneous acts of scholarly combustion is an open-access and print-on-demand independent publisher dedicated to radically creative modes of intellectual inquiry and writing across a whimsical para-humanities assemblage. punctum books seeks to curate the open spaces of writing or writing-as-opening, the crucial tiny portals on whose capacious thresholds all writing properly and improperly takes place. Pricking, puncturing, perforating = publishing in the mode of an unconditional hospitality and friendship, making space for what Eve Sedgwick called "queer little gods" – the "ontologically intermediate and teratological figures" of y/our thought. They seek to pierce and disturb the wednesdayish, business-as-usual protocols of both the generic university studium and its individual cells or holding tanks. They also take in strays.