Scapegoat

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Realism

"The Other City"
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Editorial Note

This issue arose out of a series of reflections on the contemporary meaning of realism in the representational strategies of the design disciplines. Realism, in this context, departs from the nineteenth century preoccupation with presenting environments and subjects typically excluded from pictorial representation. Today, while the "realistic" is favoured and celebrated in student and professional renderings, it seems closer to a contemporary naturalism, at times verging on mannerism: for instance, impossibly lit buildings at dusk, exaggerated perspectives which amplify the speed toward a vanishing point, or, at its most intense, landscapes populated by ghostly figures simultaneously performing every possible cliché of "leisure." While the "realistic" is a re-curring theme within both design education and professions, there seems to be a lack of realism. This issue attempts to set up a conversation between both terms by bringing together a series of reflections and practices hinged on both contemporary and historical usages of realism, situating conflicting accounts of its meaning side by side.

As professions that create alternative realities, architecture and landscape architecture consistently adopt mixed and ambivalent relations to the real. Every architectural projection is realist in that it relies at base on an understanding of the real in relation to what is possible. There is no way to dissociate the architectural intervention from this inherent realism, but as a practice of changing things, architecture could do well with a more robust investigation of the relationships between its projections and the conditions it both emerges from and enters into. Understanding the differences between these could change the nature of architectural practice. The kinds of questions to keep in mind while doing so are: what reduces reality and what expands it, and what forms of practice are correlated with each of these valences?

If nineteenth-century realism was concerned with the presentation of the everyday conditions of life under early capitalism, this naïve return to things as we see them became the object of early twentieth-century critiques of ideology, which located the real in a critical reappraisal, not of the world of things, but of our beliefs and commitments. In the 1950s, the real was theorized as paradoxically material and immaterial within both psychoanalysis and philosophy: on the one hand as the absent yet visceral substrate of our psychic drive, and on the other as a circuit of becoming, in which the potentiality of memory is as real as the world of matter.[1] These complex formulations persist as points for extension and critique within recent arguments in philosophy that have pushed against the legacy of constructivism (in its various structuralist and post-structuralist formulations) in order to posit the necessity of thinking the real outside or beyond the human. These discourses are beginning to have an impact in architecture and landscape, and this issue of *Scapegoat* constellates some of their key arguments in order to put them in a more direct confrontation with those of the disciplines. Our goal here is not to codify practices and arguments, but to modestly begin a catalogue of precedents, which can only ever be repeated through differentiation.

Realism, most certainly, is opposed to one thing: falsification, or, as Krzysztof Wodiczko puts it, *falsism*. Realism has become an urgent matter for *Scapegoat* because we hear all around us schemes spun in the name of a false measure of reality. In the twilight of neoliberalism we are witness to the apotheosis of an economic logic that batters us with numbers rather than words. We are disciplined by an economy that asks us to face the "reality" of overspending on social programs, education, healthcare, and accept the austerity measures that defend contemporary class relations. For four decades, neoliberal policies have foreclosed the future in the name of a punitive "realism" of the market. Today, as people around the world clamour for a new reality, we hear politicians rail against the idealism of socialism in favour of the tough "realism" of billionaires. In the face of these *falsisms*, this issue presents a sequence of arguments in favour of a paradoxical and situational realism. Learning from these rich contributions, we formulate realism as follows:

1.   Realism is logically paradoxical. This does not mean that realism is illogical, but that it functions according to a logic that is dialectical in form. Its function is always to dismantle the unreal, to illustrate its internal contradictions; what realists hate is the formal logic of sophistry.[2]

2.   Realism affirms subjectively produced objective truths. If realism is a war against lies, then the universal truths it produces are generated and verified through specific situations. This means that the truth is both an event of disclosure, a moment when someone or something says something real, and a question of positionality; only those who are in a position to experience the truth can speak it.[3]

3.   Realism enters the flow of history in order to act on the future. Realism is concerned with history, because realists are interested in making it. This is a question of both stepping out of time by refusing the pseudo-cyclical speed of the present, and of violently disrupting it.[4]

4.   Realism thinks about a world beyond thought. It begins from the premise that there is a universe outside of human agency and develops its ethics and politics from this starting point. Suddenly, the world forces us to think outside our human solipsism, and thought itself is brought to life through this challenge.[5]

5.   Realism sees images for what they are, not for what they represent. The problem is not the fact that there are pictures, but that they are seen primarily as representations, rather than as products of labour and thought. It is not images that are unreal, but their apparent transparency.[6]

6.   Realism understands the world without objects. Realists are interested in a world that does not respect the rigid separations and hierarchies that we impose on objects or images, in order to pull them out of the complex simultaneity of time. In place of object fetishism, realists try to see the relations between things.[7]

Notes

1. See Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book 1: Freud's Papers on Technique 1953-1954*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans. John Forrester (New York/London: W.W. Norton and Co., 1991), and Gilles Deleuze, "Bergson, 1859-1941," and "Bergson's Conception of Difference" in *Desert Islands and Other Texts, 1953-1974*, ed. David Lapoujade (Los Angeles/New York: Semiotext(e), 2004), 22-51. These last two were workshoped as talks as early as 1954, and published in 1956.

2. See Boris Groys, *The Communist Postscript* (London/New York: Verso, 2009), and Mary Lou Lobsinger, "The Antinomies of Realism: Postwar Italian Housing Projects," pages 36-39 in this issue.

3. See our conversation with Krzysztof Wodiczko, "Realism as a Course of Life," on page 8 in this issue.

4. For a discussion of the relation between realism and time, see Jason E. Smith, "Occupy, the Time of Riots, and the Real Movement of History," on page 20, and Erik Bordeleau, "Jia Zhangke's *Still Life*: Destruction as Intercession," on pages 26-29 in this issue.

5. See Thomas Nail's review of *The Speculative Turn: Continental Materialism and Realism*, on page 40, and Mahsa Majidian, "A Forensic Investigation of the Objective Reassembly of the Public," on pages 21, 22, 35, 43, and 44 in this issue.

6. See Pier Vittorio Aureli, "Manet: Images for a World Without People," on pages 10-11, and our conversation with Jesse Boon, "Echos, Mirrors, and Ghosts," on page 12 in this issue.

7. See our conversation with Elitza Dulguerova, "Objectless in Vitebsk: Reflections on Kazimir Malevich, Architecture, and Representation," on pages 24-25 in this issue.

A Short History of Kettling
by Scott Sørli

Police Kettling is a recent cultural-spatial phenomenon in which the police use a line of their bodies as a cordon to encircle and hold in place up to several hundred (or more) people over an extended duration of time. The earliest well-documented police kettle occurred only 25 years ago. Since then, the spatial strategy of the police kettle has developed variations, including a compressive form (called a hyper-kettle), a mobile form (wander kettle), and a form where water is used as a barrier without appearing to be one (bridge kettle). Many of the material qualities of the kettle boundary are also developing quickly, in parallel with technological advancements (surveillance, weaponry, tactical training, and so on).

Police kettles generate intense experience through the precise deployment of atmospheric and phenomenological techniques. Once a police kettle is in place, the performance begins: the sun goes down and it gets dark, temperatures fall and it gets cold, relative humidity rises, moisture condenses, and it often rains. The atmosphere—our medium of occupation and existence—is regularly augmented with tear gas, pepper spray, and electrical shocks. At a lower level, the biological organism experiences discomfort through the enforced prohibition of drinking water, consuming food or excreting waste.

Special black costumes detailed to suppress individuality are worn by the police, who, with their backlighting and sound effects, are perceived as a mass. This mass, while less tidy than the Tiller Girls' dance formations or North Korea's Mass Games, is equally aesthetic.

The negative emotions of those kettled include anger, fear, anxiety, dread, and despair; also, because of its indiscriminate nature, police kettling is an example of collective punishment. As the implementation of economic austerity programs continues by political-corporate elites, such repressive techniques deploying the aesthetic transmission of affect are expected not only to increase, but also mutate and intensify. As Benjamin writes in his famous Artwork essay, these "efforts to aestheticize politics culminate in one point. That one point is war."[1]

1 The contemporary practice of kettling can be traced back to the military strategy of encirclement, whereby troops are arranged to surround and isolate an enemy force. It is an ancient practice, dating back at least two and a half millennia to the Battle of Thermopylae, which occurred in the late summer of 480 B.C. Duration is the temporal constituent of encirclement that permits the delivery of supply depletion. Disregard for civilian casualties is another constituent of encirclement. The historically more recent Battle of Stalingrad, for example, lasted from 23 August 1942 until 2 February 1943, and resulted in nearly two million deaths due to hunger and exposure, as well as the more conventional technological means (which will be useful for our etymology) is *kesselschlact*, literally 'cauldron battle.'

2 The earliest well-documented police kettle occurred in Hamburg on 8 June 1986 to over 800 people, and lasted up to 13 hours. Despite repeated requests, no washroom breaks during the entire time were permitted. Deprivation of food and water was maintained over this duration as well, manufacturing low-level biological effects. The Hamburg police report noted that of the 838 people taken into custody, 22 were arrested, leading to 15 investigations, seven of which were for illegal assembly. The protest was organized to contest the state withdrawal of the right to protest. *Eingekesselt* is German for 'surrounded,' or 'encircled.'

3 The police kettle put into place in Toronto on 27 June 2010, during the fourth G20 summit, trapped a random selection of over 200 bystanders, cyclists, pedestrians, and shoppers. Not one citizen from this kettle was convicted of any charge, while 90 officers were subsequently disciplined for removing their ID badges, contrary to police policy, during the kettling and throughout the summit. The anonymity of individual police who make up the snare is symptomatic of a police kettle, in part to avoid personal responsibility for violating the legal concept of habeas corpus but also to facilitate the rendering of the individual officer into the martial mass. Due to the lack of any justified reason for this kettle, it is clear that its purpose was as a live training exercise. Police Superintendent Mark Fenton, the commanding officer who ordered the kettling, has since been charged with misconduct.

4 The typical condition of a police kettle (*polizeikessen*), which is static, is differentiated in German from a wander kettle (*wanderkessen*), which is not. In the specific case of a wander kettle, the police arrange themselves in front of, to the sides of, and behind protesters as they march. Once encircled, the police then control the route, starting and stopping the march at will. Large numbers of police, nearly as many as there are protesters—as in this example from a 28 May 2007 protest against the 7th Asia-Europe Meeting in Hamburg—are necessary for a wander kettle to maintain coherence throughout this spatio-dynamic form of control.

5 A very recent technological development is bridge kettling, the earliest recorded case of which occurred on the Pont de la Guillotière in Lyon, on 20 October 2010. A wander kettle is deployed to a large bridge and detained over the geographical feature of an urban river. Water acts as a barrier without appearing to be one, and the potential of property damage to private commercial buildings is eliminated. In the Westminster Bridge kettle of 9 December 2010, young students protesting tuition fee increases experienced nightfall and plunging temperatures while held over the open water of the Thames.

6 A kettle can also be a compression machine in the special case called a hyper kettle. The police link arms, push forward firmly, compressing people against each other and any available building façades. Pushing back can result in the serious charge of assaulting a police officer. The experience of pain and claustrophobia can be intense, the purpose of which is to discourage future protests. For example, the Unite Against Fascism protesters were hyper kettled by police on 21 March 2010, as the English Defence League were left to fly their St. George's Cross flags freely.

7 Nature, specifically fauna, is introduced on the periphery of the kettle in the form of attack dogs and police horses. These domesticated animals have been trained to release themselves into a state of wildness and then revert to domesticity upon command, a feral condition that has been seen among trained police officers as well. Discipline of the police is very rarely enforced, as the state takes advantage of the benefits of the anticipated, excessive, extra-legal police behaviour.

8 While a police cordon is a line that cannot be crossed, in contrast to a police kettle, it can be retreated from. The membrane of a police cordon and a police kettle consists of the bodies and minds of the police, as well as inorganic mobile material, such as polycarbonate shields, truncheons, tough fabric, and Kevlar. In a new international style, metal elements, such as crowd-control fencing or steel barricades have become part of the police line. Plastics have also been commonly deployed as barriers during the Occupy Wall Street protests because of their light weight, flexibility, low cost, and ease of use.

9 The technologies of police cordons are also evolving at a quick pace. Two hundred of the mobile, ten-foot-tall steel police cordons shown here have been purchased in the U.K. in anticipation of the 2012 London Olympics™. Like a transformer, sections of the cordon fold up into holding cells for protesting citizens, who, based on past history, will largely be held without charge, documented, and released after an arbitrary period of time.

10 In another form called Apache kettling, landscape urbanism leaps off the face of the earth as cordon materials are tossed into the air. In this example, a helicopter identified as Crazyhorse One-Eight shot a video as it encircled its target and fired, tracing the form of a slowly spinning, oscillating, inverted cone. In the age of continuous drone wars, this cone could be described as Rumsfeldian—certainly not Platonic. Bradley Manning, accused as the whistleblower who leaked the video, is a political prisoner, torture victim, and Nobel Peace Prize nominee. ✕

"An Aerial View of the Kettling Seen From Up High on the Southwest Corner of Queen and Spadina, on June 27, 2010." Photo by Eldar Curovic. The Toronto Star, 27 June 2010, retrieved 2012-03-18.

"Police Repression at ASEM Protest in Hamburg." Photographer unknown. de.indymedia.org/2007/05/179084.shtml, retrieved 2012-03-18.

Westminster Bridge kettle, 9 December 2010. Photo by Jon Cartwright Photography. Courtesy of Jon Cartwright.

"A cordon of police battle to hold back the protesters as they surge forward towards the Right-wing marchers." Photo: Press Association. dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1259409, retrieved 2012-03-18.

"Take a Bite Out of Crime." Photographer unknown. worldwidecanine.com, retrieved 2012-03-18.

"Mariam Solayman, a member of an Egyptian activist group, shouts anti-government slogans in front of a police cordon during a demonstration outside the press syndicate in central Cairo January 27, 2011. Demonstrations demanding the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak, in power since 1981, have raged since Tuesday in several Egyptian cities, with the biggest clashes in Cairo and Suez." Photo by Yannis Behrakis / Reuters. totallycoolpix.com/2011/01/the-egypt-protests/, retrieved 2012-03-18.

"The steel cordon stretches across the road in central London today as police unveil their latest tactic in the bid to stop disorder on the streets." Photo by Mark Large. http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2068180, retrieved 2012-03-18.

Still frame from classified U.S. military video. Wikileaks. collateralmurder.com, retrieved 2012-03-18.

Bombing of a train station in Stalingrad by the German air force, August 1942. Photographer unknown. Source: German Federal Archive, Identification Code: Bild 183-B22081.

"Police Terror Against Anti-Nuclear Activists: 800 People Kettled in One Day." Hamburg Heiligengeistfeld 8 June 1986. www.nadir.org/nadir/initiativ/sanis/archiv/brokdorf/kap_06.htm, retrieved 2012-03-18.

Notes

1. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technological Reproducibility," in *Selected Writings Volume 3 1935–1938*, eds. Howard Eiland and Michael Jennings (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 2002), 121.

Scott Sørli has received professional degrees in process control engineering and in architecture, and a Master of Science in design research. His practice operates across scales and among disciplines. He is also co-curator of *convenience*, a window gallery that provides an opening for art that engages, experiments, and takes risks with the architectural, urban, and civic realms. His current design research considers agencies of wilding as bubbles of liberation fracking institutional stratifications.

Realism: A Tautological Tale

by Amy Kulper

fig.1   The Science of Medusae. *Periphylla Mirabilis*, Ernst Haeckel, *Report on the Deep-Sea Medusae Dredged by H.M.S. Challenger During the Years 1873-1876*, pl. 21, drawn by Haeckel and Adolf Giltsch, lithographed by Edward Giltsch.
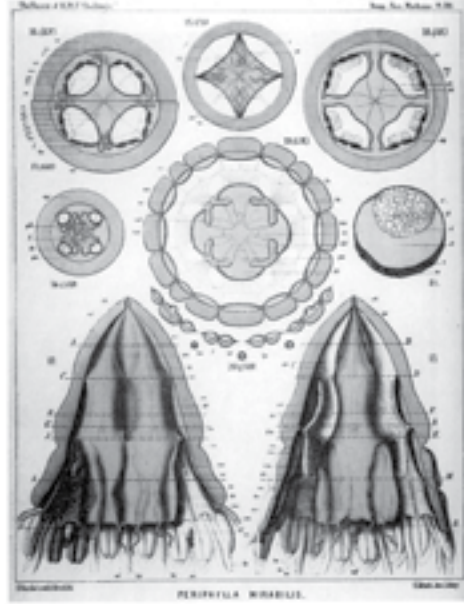

fig.2   The Art of Medusae. *Peromedusae*, Ernst Haeckel, *Kunstformen der Natur* (Leipzig: Bibliographisches Institut, 1904), table 38.

A copy of the universe is not what is required of art; one of the damned things is ample.

—Rebecca West [1]

Within the discipline of architecture, realism is often invoked as a virtue. The conceit of this worldview resides in the belief that the more realistically architects are able to represent their spatial imaginings, the more precisely design intentions can be projected into the built environment. This essay will argue, however, that the representational agency of realism is tautological, eliding the ambitions of the drawing or model with the execution of the built work, while eschewing the creative dimensions of the translational phase of architectural design.

This is a tautological tale, but also a cautionary tale in equal measure. The operations of digital fabrication have conflated architectural design and production. Within the digital convention of the cut sheet resides both the disciplinary desire for realism and the tautological undermining of architectural design's representational agency. What follows are some ruminations about extra-disciplinary instruments, fictions, and representations that collectively augur against realism as an architectural aspiration.

Real Instruments

According to some of those who espoused the mechanical-objective view, realism, accuracy, and reliability all were identified with the photographic. Nature reproduces itself in the procedurally produced image; objectivity is the automatic, the sequenced production of form-preserving (homomorphic) images from the object of inquiry to the atlas plate to the printed book. Photography counted among these technologies of homomorphy, underwriting the identity of depiction and depicted.

—Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison [2]

Daston and Galison's account of the heated debate between Ernst Haeckel and embryologist Wilhelm His in their 2007 text, *Objectivity*, offers a compelling starting point for a contemplation of 'real instruments.' At stake in this debate over the scientific representation of embryos was the question of whether drawings or photographs were more mechanically objective. His, who deployed a painstaking representational process involving a drawing prism and a stereoscope that projected an image which would then be traced upon the drawing surface and methodically checked against finely lined graph paper, characterized Haeckel's drawings as "inventions," accusing Haeckel of ushering his 'subjective' biases into the illustrations.

An examination of two drawings of the *medusae* by Haeckel—one *Periphylla mirabilis* (pl. 21) from *Report on the Deep-Sea Medusae Dredged by H.M.S. Challenger During the Years 1873–76*, the other, *Peromedusae* from *Kunstformen der Natur*—demonstrates his implicit understanding that natural specimens can be perceptually skewed towards the aesthetic or the scientific, and that, indeed, these are two sides of the same epistemological coin (Figs.1&2). Perhaps in this context, Wilhelm His' advocacy for technologies of homomorphy—technologies that maintain the integrity of the object of inquiry through the manufacture of "procedurally produced" and "form-preserving" images—and their claims on realism, can be better understood. If scientific discourse is polarized through the competing lenses of "realist" and "constructionist" accounts, then surely His' homomorphic aspirations fall squarely within the camp of realism. However, the brilliance of Daston and Gallison's argument is in their revelation of mechanical objectivity as a social construction. If mechanical objectivity is a social construction, then the technologies of homomorphy deployed by His produce results that are no more "real" (or realistic) than the aesthetic and scientific illustrations by Haeckel. If the debate between His and Haeckel is predicated upon such a false dichotomy, then several questions remain: what are "real instruments," what claims do they make for realism, and how do we identify their operations?
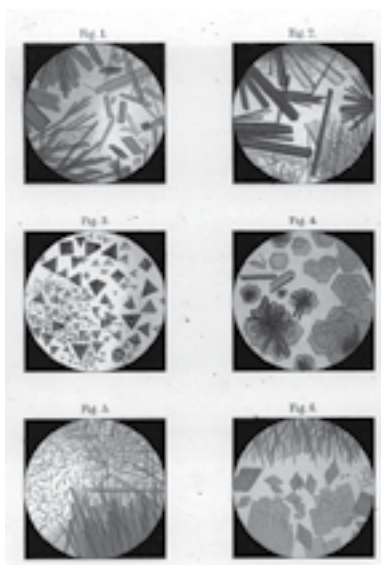

Fig.3   *Blood Crystals*, Otto Funke, *Atlas of Physiological Chemistry* (London: Cavendish Society, 1853), pl.10.
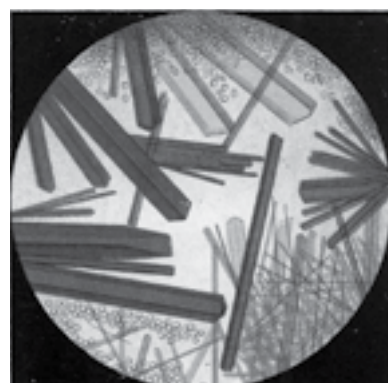

Fig.4   *Blood Crystals*, detail, Otto Funke, *Atlas of Physiological Chemistry* (London: Cavendish Society, 1853), pl.10.

Real instruments are tools that preserve representational traces of their instrumentality, calling attention to the work of the tool and the instrumental worldview it produces and propagates. The *Blood Crystals* featured in Otto Funke's *Atlas of Physiological Chemistry* of 1853 serve as a salient example of a real instrument (Figs.3&4). Here, the circular frame within which Funke represents his blood crystals preserves a trace of the microscopic lens through which he viewed the specimens, indicating to his readers that the blood was viewed through the microscope and is subject to magnification. This convention is pervasive in the atlases of the nineteenth century, becoming a trope of scientific visualization in this period, and it is interesting to consider, by way of comparison, examples of specimens produced through microscopic magnification, in which all traces of the instrument have been eradicated.

Between 1890 and 1896, Karl Blossfeldt received a stipend from the Prussian government, to travel to Italy, Greece, and Northern Africa to obtain photographs of living plants. Two years later, when Blossfeldt received an appointment at the *Kunstwerbliche Lehrenstalt* in Berlin, these plates became an archive for instructional use. In 1928, 120 of these plates were published in a volume entitled *Urformen der Kunst*. Blossfeldt's reproductions were enlarged anywhere from three to fifteen times their original size (and up to 45 times in his later work), replicating the experience of viewing the botanical specimen through a microscope, without any trace of the instrument present in the photograph (Fig.5). In Walter Benjamin's 1928

Fig.5   Karl Blossfeldt, *Monkshood: Plate #96 Aconitum*, 1928. Photograph. Print: 26cm × 19.1cm, Sheet: 31.1cm × 24.1cm.

review of Blossfeldt's work, entitled "New Things About Plants," he writes, "When we remember that Klee and, even more, Kandinsky worked for so long on the elaboration of forms which only the intervention of the microscope could—brusquely and violently—reveal to us, we notice that these enlargements of the plants also contain original stylistic forms (*Stilformen*)." [3] In the absence of any instrumental traces in Blossfeldt's photographs, Benjamin speculates upon a generative immanent nature as a stylistic source. It is as if to see these specimens microscopically enlarged is to witness nature coming into being, and to be privy to the stylistic secrets of its formation. Here, Benjamin compensates for the absent presence of a "real" instrument with the fabrication of a fictitious ontology—a morphology emanating from a stylistic source that can only be seen with the intervention of a "real" microscope or human visuality fictitiously endowed with these instrumental capacities. The conceptual withdraw of "real instruments," in this sense, invites the imaginative and instrumental production of "real fictions."

Real Fictions

The return to nature, the naturalistic evolution, which is the main current of our age, is gradually drawing all manifestations of human intelligence into a single scientific course. However, the idea of literature determined by science is likely to be surprising unless clearly defined and understood. It therefore seems useful to be explicit about what the experimental novel means, as I see it.

—Émile Zola [4]

Perhaps one of the most compelling examples of a real fiction appears in Zola's appropriation of Claude Bernard's experimental method, demonstrating the ease with which scientific procedures and representations were absorbed into literary production and, indeed, culture at large. The general atmosphere of comparative analogy in this period allowed Zola to appropriate Bernard's procedures for physiological experiment into a kind of manual for the naturalist novel (Fig.6). [5]

Fig.6   Léon Augustin L'hermitte, *The Lesson of Claude Bernard*, 1899.

Bernard published his *Introduction to the Study of Experimental Medicine* in 1865, and postulated that physiology could become an exact experimental science. In 1880, Zola modeled his *Experimental Novel* on Bernard's text, and attempted to imbue literature with this same sort of scientific precision and determinism.

The introduction of experimentation to medicine, with its human subject, is much more problematic than the use of the experimental method in the other physical sciences. However, Bernard raises these comparisons effortlessly, as if the human subject would simply be compelled to comply with experimental demands, in the same ways that inert matter does. He writes, "Comparative experimentation[…] bears solely on notation of fact and on the art of disengaging it from circumstance or from other phenomena with which it may be entangled." [6] Decontextualizing the human subject (or a particular condition within the human subject), is not only difficult, but it may prove to be at cross-purposes with the ethos of medical practice. However, this reification of the patient, or of his condition, facilitates a curt dismissal of his ontological status in favor of a network of lateral comparative relations: "As the essence of things must always remain unknown, we can learn only relations, and phenomena are merely the results of relations. The properties of living bodies are revealed only through reciprocal organic relations." [7] Here, the human subject's status of being in the world is relinquished in favour of the features he has in common with other living beings. Bernard makes lateral coherence a virtue, paving the way for Zola to co-opt his comparative methodology.

When applying Bernard's experimental method to the writing of a novel, perhaps the fictional conceit makes it easier for Zola to extract a character from its situation than it was for Bernard to disentangle the patient from his context. The experimental novel formalizes human experience to such an extent, that the outcome of the plot is not only predictable, it is inevitable: "In short, we must operate with characters, passions, human and social data as the chemist and physicist work on inert bodies, as the physiologist works on living bodies. Determinism governs everything. It is scientific investigation; it is experimental reasoning that combats one by one the hypotheses of the idealists and will replace novels of pure imagination by novels of observation and experiment." [8] In Zola's hands, the plot, once the territory of authorial negotiation between the actual and the possible, is now the prescribed outcome of the manipulation of certain "human and social data." The fictive world of the novel so closely approximates the actual, that the possible is rendered probable, or even inevitable, by virtue of this proximity. In both experimental medicine and the experimental novel, the distinction between the realms of the actual and the possible has lost all meaning.

Both experimental medicine and the experimental novel are predicated upon the acquisition of critical distance—a physical or intellectual retreat from the actual world. For the experimental physiologist, the laboratory is the locus of disengagement: "Every experimental science requires a laboratory. There the man of science withdraws, and by means of experimental analysis tries to understand phenomena he has observed in nature." [9] It is precisely this act of withdrawal from the immediate situation that fosters the aspiration of universal applicability. For the experimental novelist, acquiring a critical distance facilitates scientific knowledge, knowledge that by its very definition is universal: "In short, the whole operation consists of taking facts from nature, then studying the mechanism of the data by acting on them through a modification of circumstances and environment without ever departing from the laws of nature. At the end there is knowledge, scientific knowledge, of man in his individual and social action." [10] The desire of the naturalist novelist to achieve empirical knowledge of man and his social interactions was the subject and source of derision for many contemporary critics. Hippolyte Taine opined:

We have seen that he [the naturalist novelist] has nothing of the quick and lively imagination by which Shakespeare touches and handles the loosened threads that link beings together; he is heavy-handed, painfully and obstinately sunk into his dungheap

of science, busy counting the fibers he is dissecting, with such a litter of tools and a variety of repulsive preparations that when he emerges from his cellar and comes back to the light, he retains the smell of the laboratory in which he has been buried.[11]

In Taine's hands, the retreat of the naturalist novelist becomes suspect—the very act of disengagement calling into question the author's capacity to write meaningfully about experience.

In light of Taine's observation, Zola's experimental novel functions effectively as a scientific fiction, even if its capacity to produce literary fiction is called into question. Zola concedes that there are moments in which literary practice diverges from scientific practice: "The artist has the same starting point as the scientist; he stands before nature, has an *a priori* idea, and works in line with that idea. There only does he diverge from the scientist if he carries his idea out to the end without verifying its exactness by observation and experiment."[12] The criterion of verification is one of the characteristics that Hans Vaihinger establishes to differentiate between a scientific hypothesis and a scientific fiction. In Vaihinger's terms, the experimental novel is an optimal example of scientific fiction, in that Zola never asserts the actual existence of an experimental novel, he merely states that all novels should be written *as if* they were governed by the laws and procedures of experimental medicine.[13] Whereas the scientific hypothesis is "directed towards reality" and "submits its reality to the test and demands of verification," the scientific fiction seeks alternate measures of justification.[14] "To the verification of the hypothesis corresponds the justification of the fiction. If the former must be confirmed by experience, the latter must be justified by the services it renders to the science of experience. If a fictional construct is formed, its excuse and justification must be that *it is of service to* discursive thought."[15] The legitimacy of the scientific fiction resides in its *service to* discursive thought, its capacity to act as an instrument to the science of experience.

Zola's experimental novel, with its deterministic plot and its manipulation of social data, is an explicit representation of the science of experience. By limiting the scope of the novel to the science of experience, the authorial negotiation between the actual and the possible is instrumentalized. Determinism dictates the plot. The entire realm of possibilities is narrowed to one probable outcome. The distinction between the actual and the possible loses its meaning, as the scientific fiction and the literary fiction more closely approximate one another. The atmosphere of comparative analysis seizes upon affinities at the expense of delineating differences. Once again, Taine provides a valuable insight when he articulates the truism that a natural history museum *is not* an art gallery.[15] By extension, one might also assert that a scientific fiction *is not* a literary fiction. Restricting the possible territory of fiction to the science of experience contributes to what Erich Heller describes as the "realistic fallacy:"

But in fact, the realistic writer is only, like any other writer, fascinated by certain aspects of reality, and uses the selective schemes of his fascination for the aesthetic ordering of his chosen material. For, alas, we seem to get to know one thing at the price of losing sight of another; and however wide our interests, the sharp edge of perception in one sphere is but in contrast to the bluntness of our sensibility in another.[16]

Heller's observation points to the affinities between scientific and aesthetic points of view. Their shared reductive sensibility facilitates the efficient transmission of instrumental representations from the realm of science to the realm of art. So, in what way or ways are the naturalist novels natural? They are not natural. They propagate instrumental representations of nature. However, the fact that this operation falls under the rubric of "natural" in the context of nineteenth-century European culture is a telling detail. Zola lays claim to cultural coherence by establishing a rigorous comparison of the experimental novel and experimental medicine. As a construction, the experimental novel makes sense; it does not make reference to the ontological conditions of its existence. The nature and human nature that the experimental novel would depict are positivistic representations of reality. Experience is formalized into a science in which characters and social data are pressed into the service of deterministic plots. Comparative methodology paves the way for the dissemination of these instrumental representations of nature. With the conceptual withdrawl of the instruments of medical and literary experimentation comes the surreptitious instrumentalization of the experiences, behaviours, and processes they

analyze. In this sense, fiction becomes empirical and experimental. Realism aspires to be an end in itself, but ultimately the naturalization of experience that Zola desires reveals itself to be highly constructed. Attendant to the withdraw of real instruments, and the construction of 'real fictions,' is the agency of real representations, and their capacity to either differentiate or obfuscate the distinction between the real and the constructed.

Real Representations

To speak of things that one wants to connote as real, these things must seem real. The 'completely real' becomes identified with the 'completely fake.' Absolute unreality is offered as real presence.
—Umberto Eco[18]

Fig.7   Lyndon B. Johnson Library and Museum. *LBJ Oval Office Replica.* Interior Photographs. Austin, TX, 1971.

Umberto Eco's *Travels in Hyperreality* (1995), first published in English as *Faith in Fakes* (1986) and Italian as *Il costume di casa* (1973), examines the American obsession with copies, replicas, and simulations through the aphoristic lenses of "the real thing" and "more."[19] These phrases, for Eco, epitomize a culture predicated upon the values of authenticity and surplus, and nowhere are these tenets more palpable than in the Lyndon B. Johnson Library, with its full-scale replica of the Oval Office (Fig.7). Eco describes the inhabitable facsimile as a "Fortress of Solitude" and argues, "it suggests that there is a constant in the average American imagination and taste, for which the past must be preserved and celebrated in full-scale authentic copy; a philosophy of immortality as duplication. It dominates the relation with the self, with the past, not infrequently with the present, always with History and, even, with the European tradition."[20] However, Eco's assessment of the "full-scale authentic copy," of the "duplication" of Johnson's Oval Office, is not completely accurate. In fact, the Oval Office replica in Johnson's presidential library is actually a 7/8th scale model of the original. Within Eco's benign miscalculation resides realism's fatal flaw. Implicit in this inaccuracy are the tautological assumptions of realism—the misplaced belief in historical reincarnation, the erroneous ethos of "immortality as duplication."

Perhaps nowhere is this tautology more palpable than in the animatronic figure of LBJ residing in his presidential library (Fig.8). More unsettling than Madame Tussauds' wax effigies, this figure of Johnson dons a gingham shirt and a ten-gallon hat, recounting folksy stories in the former President's infamous Texas twang. The obvious desire for "more" of "the real thing" embodied in this animatronic simulation prompts allusions to Homi Bhabha's description of mimicry as that which "repeats" rather than "re-presents."[21] And herein lies the cautionary tale about realism. One could argue that, given the technology of Johnson's time, it simply was not possible to produce a more real, life-like figure of LBJ. But it is precisely that realism that condemns the animatronic figure to the status of historical reincarnation. Hillel Schwarz would argue that it is not Walter Benjamin's evocation

Fig.8   Lyndon B. Johnson Library and Museum, *Animatronic LBJ,* Exhibition Photographs, Austin, TX, 1971.

of the aura that this figure is lacking, but rather, this disconcerting duplicate of LBJ is deficient in its "assurance of our own liveliness," in its capacity to proffer alternatives to contemporary culture's barrage of heavily mediated experiences.[21] Here, the animatronic verisimilitude and the verbatim repetition of Johnson's best-known anecdotes serve to distinguish between this simulated experience and the 7/8th model of LBJ's Oval Office—the inexact replica.

If the animatronic LBJ operates on the principles of mimicry, then in the disparity between Johnson's actual Oval Office and its replica, resides the territory of representation, and its inherent capacity to imaginatively translate and transform the original into a copy that is something more than mere repetition. However, when it is nearly impossible to distinguish between photographs of Johnson's original Oval Office and its replica, where do we locate this representational agency, and how does it operate?

In November of 2008, *The New York Times Magazine* published an article by Jonathan Mahler, entitled "After the Imperial Presidency," detailing the expansion of presidential powers under the Bush administration. The cover of the magazine bore an image of the Oval Office, benignly attributing the photo credit to Thomas Demand (Fig.9). Those familiar with the oeuvre

Fig.9   Thomas Demand, *NYTimes Magazine Cover: After the Imperial Presidency,* 2008.

of the German photographer and sculptor know that there is nothing benign about this attribution. Demand's work begins with found archival photographs that the artist curates, analyzes, and then painstakingly reconstructs in paper and cardboard, at full scale and in three dimensions. Once the reconstruction is complete, Demand photographs it, typically in large format, and then destroys the model, leaving the photograph as the only evidence of its existence (Fig.10). In light of Demand's meticulous process, it is clear that the *New York Times'* choice of simply citing the artist in the photo credit is a ruse, given that the newspaper actually commissioned Demand to produce this piece. Like the subterfuge deployed by the George W. Bush administration in expanding presidential powers, the *Times* engaged in a similar deception, surreptitiously increasing the influence of the fourth estate. Here, the pairing of a realistic journalistic exposé with a fictitious reconstruction of the Oval Office proffers the opportunity for the reader to finally consider what is real and what is constructed. The Times' juxtaposition of a political scenario that is stranger than fiction with an aesthetic framework that posits itself as real, but later reveals itself to be completely constructed, is salient. Both the expansion of presidential powers depicted in the text, and the agility of aesthetic agency embodied in Demand's photographs speak to the capacity of representation to surpass realism's tautological assumptions.

Fig.10   Thomas Demand, *Presidency II,* 2008. Chromogenic Print, 210cm × 300cm.

A Tautological Tale

If this essay is overtly arguing against the tautological operations of realism, it is also covertly attempting to undermine the false dichotomy of realism and constructionism. Historically, the valorization of the real as an end in itself has produced nothing more than tautologies. Through a consideration of "real instruments," "real fictions," and "real representations," the tautology can be eschewed by preserving traces of the instrument, recognizing the heuristic potential of the fiction, and exploiting the translational and transformational capacities of the representation. ✕

Notes

1. Rebecca West quoted in August K. Wiedmann, *Romantic Roots in Modern Art: Romanticism and Expressionism: A Study in Comparative Aesthetics,* (Old Woking: Gresham Books, 1979), 54.
2. Lorraine Daston and Peter Galison, *Objectivity* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2007), 320.
3. Walter Benjamin, "New Things About Plants—a Review of Karl Blossfeldt, Urformen Der Kunst," in *Germany: The New Photography 1927-33,* ed. David Mellor (London: Lund Humphries, 1978), 21.
4. Émile Zola, "The Experimental Novel," in *Documents of Modern Literary Realism,* ed. George J. Becker (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963), 170.
5. Zola preferred to call his theory 'Naturalism' rather than 'Realism.' The difference between the two was, for Zola, like Bernard's distinction between observation and experimentation. The former requires a kind of passive objectivity, while the latter involves a subjective framing of the question, or hypothesis, on the part of the experimenter.
6. "L'éxperimentation comparative…ne porte que sur la constatation du fait et sur l'art dégager des circonstances ou des autres phénomènes avec lesquels il peut être mêlé." Claude Bernard, *Introduction à l'etude de la médecine expérimentale* (Paris: J.B. Baillière et Fils, 1865), 222.
7. Ibid.
8. Zola, "The Experimental Novel," 172.
9. "Toute science expérimentale exige un laboratoire. C'est la que le savant se retire pour chercher à comprendre, au moyen de l'analyse expérimentale, les phénomènes qu'il a observes dans la nature." Bernard, *Introduction,* 247.
10. Zola, "The Experimental Novel," 167.
11. Hippolyte Taine, "The World of Balzac," in *Documents of Modern Literary Realism,* ed. George J. Becker (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 107.
12. Zola, "The Experimental Novel," 193.
13. Hans Vaihinger, *The Philosophy of 'As If': A System of the Theoretical, Practical and Religious Fictions of Mankind* (CIT), 86.
14. Ibid., 85.
15. Ibid., 88-89. Emphasis added.
16. Taine, "The World of Balzac," 110.
17. Erich Heller, "The Realistic Fallacy," in *Documents of Modern Literary Realism,* ed. George J. Becker (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 595.
18. Umberto Eco, *Travels in Hyperreality: Essays,* trans. William Weaver (London: Harcourt, Brace & Company, 1986): 7-8.
19. Ibid., 8.
20. Ibid., 6.
21. Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 88.
22. Hillel Schwarz, *The Culture of the Copy: Striking Likenesses, Unreasonable Facsimiles* (New York: Zone Books, 1996), 141.

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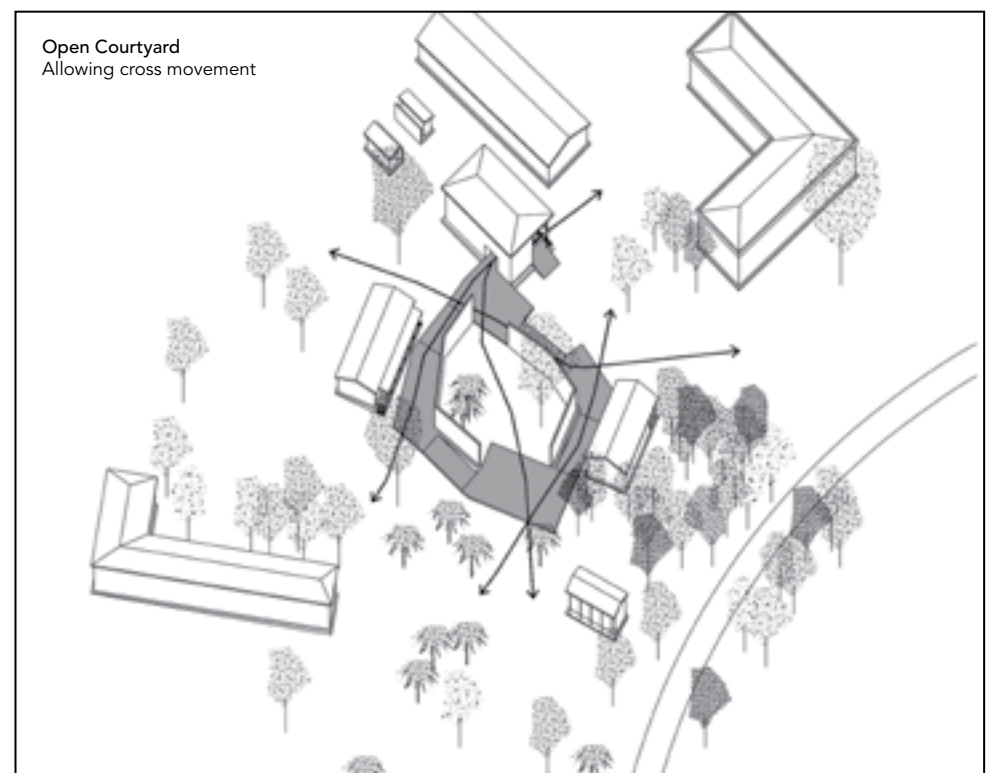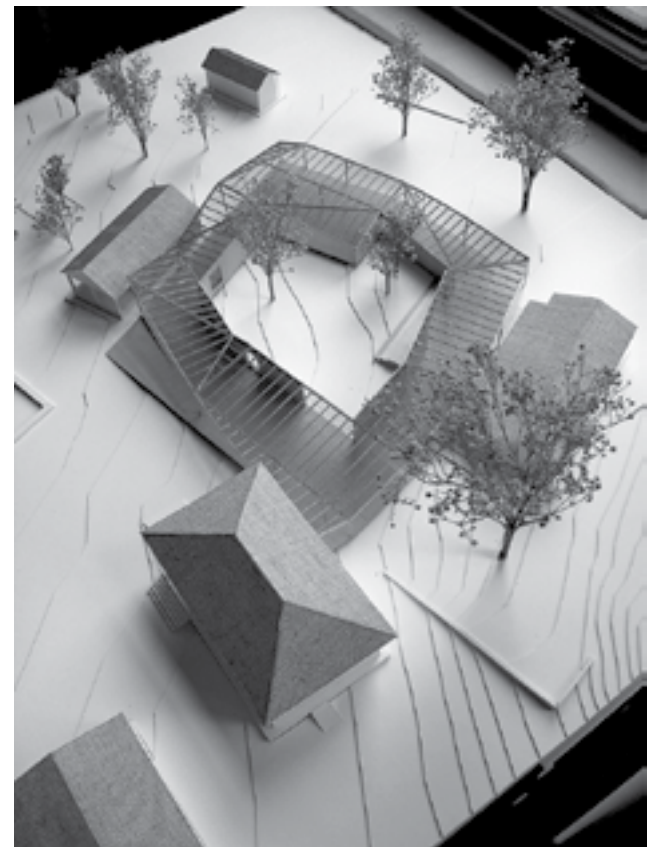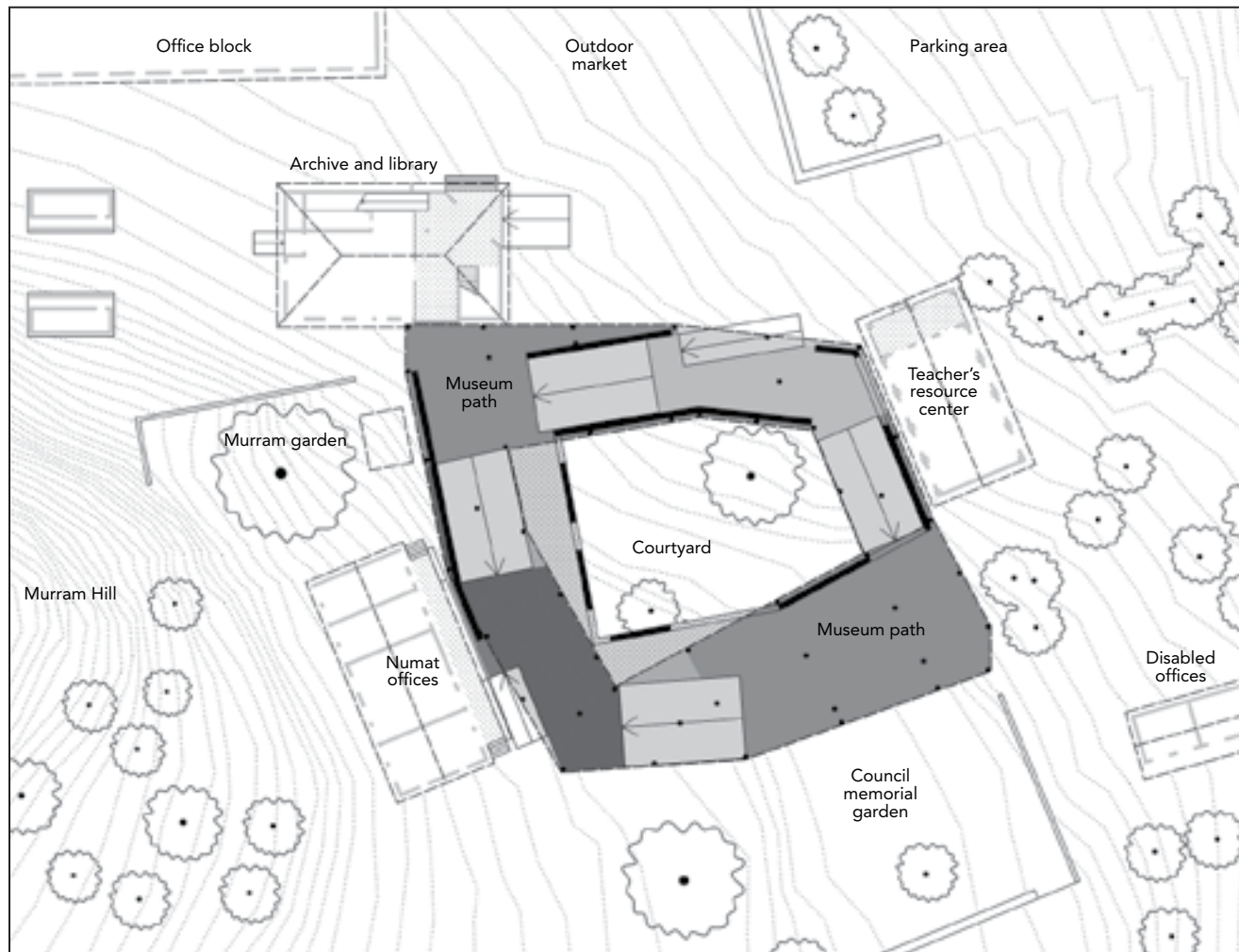
Open Museum for Peace, Kitgum, Uganda
by Rafi Segal, David Salazar

When we talk about peace, we understand it as a state that is achieved through reconciliation. Reconciliation requires justice, by way of accountability for the atrocities of a conflict; healing, as an individual and social process; and rebuilding, the recovery of the local traditions that acts of war have threatened to erase. In keeping with this understanding, the Kitgum Museum for Peace and War Archive was conceived as both a memorial to the victims of the civil conflicts in Uganda—a living archive to collect testimonies and stories of the war—as well as a museum space for cultural heritage and public events.

While the archive contains accounts of the crimes of war, the museum path and courtyard—through the display and practice of art, crafts, dress, customs and rituals—serves as an educational and public meeting space for cultural heritage and identity.

A new exhibition space in the form of a circular path is the primary organizational element of the project, which engages outdoor spaces and connects to the existing surrounding buildings, disparate structures that before seemed randomly scattered are now united through participation in the project. A space for collective activities has thus emerged among them.

Architecturally, this circular path was conceived of as a covered open space. Its outer perimeter remains open, thus allowing one to enter the museum through several points, and preserving the ability to move openly across the site. In relation to the exhibition, the path serves as a curatorial device that connects fragments of stories and events, without imposing a single narrative. It allows for individual freedom of movement, interaction, and ultimately, the framing and interpretation of events. Visitors will create different narratives as they are given the freedom to encounter the material as they wish.

Contrary to the common conception of the museum exhibition as a closed, separate, and independent experience, this partially open structure creates an exhibition space that is dependent on and integrated with its surroundings. The project fully participates in the realities on site—both the elements of nature, and the human activities and movements between the buildings—to the point that the exhibition pathway and the existing public paths on site become one. Thus the site becomes the museum and the museum becomes the site.

Within the context of Kitgum and the conflicts of Northern Uganda, the project is far more than a record and display of a past conflict. The building of the Kitgum Museum for Peace reengages and reimagines a public space as an act of establishing and dedicating a physical site for collective purposes. The result is a literal and symbolic foundation for the peace-building process. ✕

Site plan with labels: Office block, Outdoor market, Parking area, Archive and library, Museum path, Murram garden, Teacher's resource center, Courtyard, Museum path, Murram Hill, Numat offices, Disabled offices, Council memorial garden

Open Courtyard
Allowing cross movement

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Realism as a Course of Life:
A Conversation with Krzysztof Wodiczko

Scapegoat Says We would like to start with the debates about realism in Poland in the 1960s. Andrzej Turowski's essay "Wodiczko and Poland in the 1970s" discusses these questions in the 1950s, 60s and 70s, focusing especially on the debate between formalism and realism. He argues that in the early 50s socialist realism was dominant, then following the end of Stalinism in the mid-50s there was a quick turn toward abstraction.[1] Could you talk about how you saw your work developing in relation to these debates.

Krzysztof Wodiczko I really began working as an artist in the 1970s, so the debates of the 1960s happened before my time. Turowski is bringing a historical background to the 1970s in order to provide a ground for readers who know nothing about that particular period, which was curious for its openness and apparently liberal relationship to art in comparison to socialist realism.

In May 2012, Scapegoat spoke with Krzysztof Wodiczko about his ongoing engagement with the concept of realism since he began practicing in Poland in the early 1970s.

But realism as such in the mind of people in the 70s was still closely connected to socialist realism, so its politics were linked to the authoritarian politics of the communist party, or those who collaborated with them. Politics was poisoned by Stalinism and post-Stalinism, and realism was also poisoned by the legacy of that time.

I would say that social realism, as opposed to socialist realism, was set to be reborn after the end of Stalinism in 1956, when I was still a high school student. At that time the Polish philosopher Adam Schaff wrote a spirited defense of social realism against all of the criticism that was coming from those who supported the abstraction and expressionism flourishing after the end of Stalinism. Schaff attempted to defend the tradition of realism in an intelligent way, by referring to political and aesthetic debates on the topic during the early years of the Soviet Union. However in the mid-1970s, I read Linda Nochlin's book on nineteenth-century art, *Realism*.[2] It was translated into Polish by the Academy of Science, as one of a series of excellent books on topics such as semiology, semiotics, which the censors allowed because they could be superficially connected to the government's theoretical ambitions.

Nochlin's position was officially accepted, but reading and discussing her book was not a very popular thing to do, and her book's elaboration of "critical realism" has been generally not well understood. However, it was really an eye-opener for me methodologically. I read it together with *In the Circle of Constructivism* by Andrzej Turowski, which was extremely important for me because it raised the political dimension of the constructivist movement in the Soviet Union in both its analytical and productivist phases.[3] It became very clear to me that in both of those books politics was central, the politics of realism and the politics of constructivism. In both cases (however utopian, or even often misguided) there was an attempt to challenge the imaginary relations of an individual to his or her own real conditions of existence (Louis Althusser's definition of ideology) as a condition for action in "the real world" toward social change.[4] Whether it was Gustave Courbet, Eduard Manet, or the constructivist revolution,[4] each attempted to move from the world of imagery, illusion, or representation into

Krzysztof Wodiczko, *If You See Something...*, 2005, composite view, installation at Galerie Lelong, New York. Courtesy of Galerie Lelong, New York.

the world of action, production and the transformation of reality. Vertov, Rodchenko, and Lissitsky were all Marxists. The realist painters of the nineteenth century were not Marxist, but Marx himself was born into that milieu; he was a realist. Philosophers and politicians with socialist and anarchist tendencies, including the utopian socialist Saint-Simon and the anarchist Proudhon affected both realist artists and the constructivists. So after reading Nochlin, realism became a very attractive proposition to me. I met her recently, when I received an American Art Critics award for an exhibition at Boston's ICA called *...OUT OF HERE: The Veterans Project*. This was the first time I had met her since reading her book in the 70s and I thanked her. I said, "you didn't just influence my life, you set the course of my life." And she responded: "I also learned a lot from you." Which was nice of her to say; at least I discovered she was aware of what I was doing.

In fact, the work at the ICA, as well as the previous interior projections, like the one in Galerie Lelong on the anniversary of September 11th, *If You See Something...*, and *Guests* at the 2009 Venice Biennale, were all referring to realist principles. I think these works resonate with Roman Jakobson's ideas about realism, when he argues (using my words, not his) that a realist drills

a hole in a wall between ourselves and reality. The artist's task and decision was to determine where to drill this hole, at what point in this wall, because through this hole we will only see a fragment that stands in for something much larger. I think this may sum up the nineteenth-century vision of realism.[5]

SS Can you briefly describe these works?

KW Galleries rarely have windows. They are usually pure interiors and as such they stand for all our own interiors. The gallery is a second interior. The first is inside our own skull. With our eyes partially blind, we are always trying to figure out what is going on outside, but at the same time so much has accumulated in our inner world. So when we enter an empty gallery it is already filled with our memories. The trick that I developed in a number of works was to create the illusion that the wall is broken somehow, that there are windows where there were not before, projecting the image of a window with its view.

I did this first in the 1980s at Hal Bromm Gallery in New York City. There I photographed windows and the view from an apartment that was for sale in the East Village. In the photos views of urban ruins appear beyond the blinds of the newly renovated apartment. I then projected those windows into the gallery, which was the same size, because the galleries in the East Village had the same size as the apartments, because it was a residential area. I called the piece *The Real Estate Projection* and I added some real estate magazines and binoculars, just to add a romantic-anthropological aspect to the projection. This was a classic realist trick—it broke the wall into reality—showing people a scene that many people saw every day. Whoever came to the gallery saw it everywhere, but didn't expect the gallery to actually become this place, so they had to realize their relationship between the art world and real estate development. The work resonated with the critique made by Rosalyn Deutsche and Cara Gendel Ryan in their essay, "The Fine Art of Gentrification."[6] The project emphasized the neighbourhood's uneven development and the role of artists in real estate development and in constructing a romantic vision of what Neil Smith would later call *The New Urban Frontier*.[7]

In 2005, I revisited this strategy in an exhibition at Galerie Lelong in Chelsea. Again there were windows projected, but this time you couldn't see through them. They looked as if they were made of frosted glass, a very typical material in Chelsea galleries. They let light in, but you couldn't see through them unless somebody leans right against them, and then there is a shocking moment when you realize that there is somebody there, and you can see many close details, but only while the person remains right at the glass. I projected these windows as if they opened into a vestibule, a type of space you could imagine in Chelsea—it could have been a hotel lobby or the gallery entrance. Behind the windows stood people who were talking about the way they were being mistreated by Homeland Security, who had lost their jobs, who had been deported, who were discriminated against. You could hear what they were saying, but you couldn't see them unless they leaned close to the glass. In this case the wall was not exactly broken. On the one hand, the viewers sensed the foggy relation we each have to the outside world, and on the other, viewers had a strange feeling that the outside world was very close, that it could almost break through the glass, creating a disaster. There was someone with whom you have a voyeuristic relationship, a shadow of somebody that could actually be very close. Perhaps you would hear something that you weren't supposed to hear or see something that you should report. The piece takes its very name from the Department of Homeland Security's slogan "If you see something, say something."

It is about the reality that is both dangerously close, frighteningly close, with which you don't want to have much contact and of which you only have a very foggy sense. So it's not the classic realist trick, where I break the wall in order to see reality. In this piece you actually don't see it, but you see what you don't see. It attempts to illustrate how little we see, how impossible it is to really establish contact with reality, while at the same time bringing us close enough to it to realize how frightening this reality is, how unacceptable it is, even if we don't understand it. It is also impossible for us to identify with those people whose situations are worse than we can imagine. This is a different form of realism because it exposes the impossibility of gaining access to reality, while also giving us a hint of what it is we cannot gain access to. It is the reality of our interior; the gallery provides space for our fears and uncertainty about the world.

It also projects the interior against the exterior. We are inside, but all the issues and threats that come from the exterior are managed by the Minister of the Interior—or Homeland Security. It also refers obliquely to Orwell's windowless Ministry of Love in *1984*, which housed Oceania's Thought Police. There you can only imagine what is inside, and when you are inside you don't see what is outside. In my piece you are trapped inside by the same Homeland Security that keeps those people outside. Like Homeland Security,

the wall and the milky windows keep you from knowing what is going on. They can protect you from your own fears, or what Bush called "terror." In Polish, terror only refers to the outside world, but in English it can be inside you. Bush's War on Terror was in fact a war against the fear of terrorism, not against terrorism itself. A war was staged against the feeling of terror produced by potential terrorist attacks, which of course created its own paranoia. The Department of Homeland Security asked you to confront your fear of terror by being vigilant, which in my piece meant that when you hear or see something beyond the milky glass you should report it. All the things that were said outside the gallery were suspicious, despite the fact that they were actually stories of Homeland Security mishandling a situation. Of course, I am stretching realism quite far, but reality has so many dimensions here, external and inner realities, and the fear of reality is itself also real.

SS **You have explained one dimension of your practice: interior projections. They seem to get at a very fundamental relationship between a psychic space and the world outside, which is active in many other aspects of your practice, certainly in the exterior projections, but also in the vehicles, which are outside in the city. These two poles seem to be fundamental to any conception of**

realism: on the one hand naïve realism argues that things just exist in the world, and on the other, critical theory claims that reality is fundamentally about how we think and perceive the world, so it is very much about interiority. We think it's great that you started with these interior works because in that way they resonate quite clearly with nineteenth-century notions of realism in art, especially in painting or film, but it would be interesting if you could now explain how the outdoor projections and vehicles operate in relation to reality.

KW There is a big difference between my interior and exterior projects, especially the projections. When you are outside a building, the façade is taller than you are. It's no longer your interiority that you are confronting, but a superior body, in the shadow of which you live—a kind of father figure. You feel it in your neck when you look up. You are like a baby, subjected to a projection from the thing that looms over you, while at the same time you project yourself onto the structure. On the one hand it projects onto you, and on the other you identify with it; you would like to be like it. The seductive aspect of monuments is that everybody wants to be eternal, to have certain power and also to feel as lonely as them. Alone,

yet having some power over the world. So the relationship a person has to architecture from the outside is very different from being inside. Any attempt to animate the outside of a building means something very different from the animation of an interior. When you encounter one of my exterior projections with video and sound (rather than slide projection), there is somebody else there in the building, so your projection meets another projection.

In many of my works, a building is made to speak through the voice and gestures of a person who may be suffering horrifying life conditions, child abuse for instance, which as a member of the public you may not want to know about. You might feel implicated in their condition, because you might have abusive tendencies yourself, or maybe you were abused and you deny it. It's frightening not to simply have your own projection and identification with the structure, because there is somebody else there and something of you is there too that you may not want to confront.

So this is a different realism. Here, because of scale, somebody who is supposed to be very small, even invisible, becomes fifty times bigger. In relation to that person you are fifty times smaller. You are forced to see the world from a bottom-up perspective and you feel this perception in your neck, you feel how small you are, which means you have something to learn from this person as if you were a student or a child. Through the

Krzysztof Wodiczko, *Arc de Triomphe: World Institute for the Abolition of War*, Paris. Visualization and design assistance by BINAA: Burak Pekoglu, Brendan Warford, Kevin Driscoll. Courtesy of Krzysztof Wodiczko and BINAA.

authority of these structures you are subjected to their sense of reality. This is a manipulative trick, because it relies on the structure's own oppressive power, which of course should itself be questioned.

This is exactly what I did in my earlier slide-based public projections, but in the more recent video-based projections with sound and motion narrative, someone else is speaking through those structures. So despite their visual similarity (especially of their photographic documents) there is almost no relationship to my previous projections, because it's not me who is animating the structure, it's somebody else who is doing it with my help. In my works, that other person is a part of a reality that is being completely repressed by most people. Who wants to have the biggest voice in the city be a man who was beaten up by his brother when he found him in bed with a man in the middle of the night? Who wants to hear that? Or, who wants to hear about some illegal immigrant who is doing all the work to make the food you eat and is paid so little that he or she starves? This person works like a slave and now they are telling you about it, sharing with you their perception of the world. Here, reality is being transmitted by symbolic structures that are imaginary and their reality may be revealed in the process.

If the tower stops functioning as a screen for your own projections because it is disrupted by someone else's appearance, then you also realize that something has been disrupted. It's a wakeup call.

In the earlier slide projections I tried to really re-actualize symbolic structures in the present, to see the frightening continuity between what's happening today and what those structures meant when they were made, by turning war memorials into symbolic war machines. Rather than simply commemorating those who died for their country, these structures actually perpetuate certain beliefs, which is why I began projecting onto buildings. The last one I did was in 1991 in Madrid during the first Persian Gulf War. There I projected a skeleton holding a gun and a petrol nozzle on either side of the Arco de la Victoria, dedicated in 1956 to Franco's army, in order to recall the phantasm of civil war. The socialist government had promised never to bring Spain into a war again, but under the pressure of NATO, the Spanish armada was sent to the conflict in the Gulf. Afterward people learned that 100,000 civilians had been killed, a fact that was mostly overlooked in the United States, but which activated public discussion in Spain. In response to this I projected the word "¿Cuantos?" onto the top of the monumental arch. This word has two

meanings, "how much?" and "how many?" So it questioned both the cost of oil and the number of people killed. This was also a reactivation, or re-actualization, of a historic war machine in a time when a new war machine was underway.

At that time I wasn't able to do video projections in the way I am doing them now. Not only were video projectors not strong enough, but I also did not have enough experience working with people. I developed this experience through projects like *Alien Staff* (1994) and *Mouthpiece (Porte-Parole)* (1996). Those projects forced me to learn techniques of working with people, so they could tell their stories. In these projects I worked with people who know what reality is, because they lived through it and are still surviving it. They see the world from the point of view of its wounds. They have a bottom-up perception. As Walter Benjamin would say, they see it from the perspective of the vanquished. That is what realists always wanted to achieve, to see the real conditions of life, to understand them from the perspective of a nameless survivor. This realism was possible in *Alien Staff*, which built on my earlier experience with *The Homeless Vehicle Project*. In the latter project there was something missing: capacities of communication and memory. Once homeless people began to use it in

a performative way, they started to speak of the conditions in which they lived. I was surprised how much the homeless operators, performers, presenters, and consultants had to say that the vehicle could not register, edit, or project.

The *Homeless Vehicle* was made in 1988 and 1989 in New York City. When I moved to Paris in 1991 and was surrounded by the xenophobia of Jean-Marie Le Pen,[8] I continued making similar equipment for immigrants. But because the issue of xenophobia was primary, I realized I could not make a vehicle; instead I would have to make communicative equipment that would be both a container and transmitter of immigrants' experiences in public space. There is a wall between immigrants' conditions of life, their perceptions and their experience, and the world in which they live. Their prophetic speech was proof to me of what was wrong with the entire democratic system, because the level of democracy in any country is measured by its relationship to strangers. Sodom and Gomorrah were punished because people misbehaved toward strangers. The democratic process is measured by its level of inclusion, and its ability to accept new discourses, in order to produce an agonistic democracy that doesn't force people to integrate, but accepts the need to disintegrate itself.

Alien Staff was realist in the sense that it provided equipment for immigrants to become realist artists themselves. It allowed them to testify to what was wrong, to protest, to break the walls of miscommunication by recording, editing, and presenting testimony of their experiences. In public space, this object with its recorded images and voices became a focus for discussion. Around it there was always an ongoing re-narration and disruption of what the staff was saying and what had been placed inside it, like relics in a reliquary. Both voices and objects became starting points for discussions about the fragments of the narrative inscribed within this thing, which meant that the very existence of the stranger was being explored, unleashing a passionate exchange. Real passions and emotions were triggered by this equipment, but throughout the exchange the immigrant remained very much at the centre of the process, mediating different people's responses. *Alien Staff* was a very informative work for me; it was not as good as I would like it to have been as a design, but both it and the *Homeless Vehicle* were very interesting experiences that helped prepare me for my most recent projects.

SS We would like to ask you about the role of design. It was constructivism that first articulated the role of design as the vanguard of artistic transformation, right? In constructivism the autonomy of the artwork is abandoned so that it can engage with and transform everyday life. The moment when the boundary between art and design breaks down offers us another kind of realism, wherein the artist engages with reality instead of representing it.

KW The realism of this design is different than the one Linda Nochlin referred to, but she approached this issue through the structural realism of design projects in the nineteenth century, speaking of their technical and physical aspects, such as the transparency of the architecture of Auguste Perret. However, in the case of my work, I am working with a more Brechtian realism.

SS We're not exactly asking about structural realism, but rather the situation in which the artist acts in the world, engaging people, rather than working on their own, and producing something practical or functional.

KW True, there was also functional realism. The fact that artists reestablish contact with reality by working with others who have had even more contact with reality and then designing something with those people—not for them, but with them—is definitely realism. Perhaps, this already happened in the nineteenth century, with the utopian realists, such as Fourier and Saint-Simon. In my work there is an attempt to be transparent. I called the process behind the *Homeless Vehicle* a "scandalizing functionalism," a method related to functionalism, but a perverted notion of it. Functionalism of the Bauhaus type always sought a solution, while my work functioned as a solution for an imaginary service, rather than an ultimate condition. The *Homeless Vehicle* was a political project, rather than pure design. It was designed to help produce new conditions that would render it obsolete. The reality to which this vehicle was responding could not be accepted; it needed to be transformed. The utopia here, if there is one, rests in the very hope that projects of this sort will help to build a new consciousness of reality to make the projects themselves no longer necessary. In a way the recognition of reality, the conditions of life and existence embedded in the design object, and the operators were the sole substance of the work. That's what makes a link between *Alien Staff* and the other equipment and projections that I developed with people. They are definitely part of the realist tradition, but I have no theory of realism.

SS It is an interesting question because we are sitting at a school of design. Some of your recent works, such as *The Arc de Triomphe: World Institute for the Abolition of War,* or the *Monument to the Abolition of Slavery* in Nantes, are very much design projects. They are highly symbolic design objects and at first glance they appear to function more in that realm than as practical spaces. However the Arc de Triomphe project is both a deconstructive and constructive pedagogical working machine in addition to being simply a symbol in the city.

KW Yes, the Arc de Triomphe project is clearly a working thing. The *Monument to the Abolition of Slavery* was deprived of its initial program. It was supposed to be a monitoring station that would transmit present day abolitionist actions

against contemporary slavery. There was a real working dimension to it that was never really realized. However, what I proposed with the Arc de Triomphe project was the opposite. In this work I want this to really respond to changing realities and also help transform that reality. So I attached a machine to the symbolic skin or body of the Arc de Triomphe itself, which is purely ideological, a machine that perpetuates certain beliefs—so that the new spaces that surround the arch are designed to help to monitor, map, and alter changing realities, so there will be less conflict and less war. At the same time, the *Institute for the Abolition of War* is designed to un-poison culture by studying the architecture that actually perpetuates this culture and introducing an analytical and critical aspect to the working memorial. The project operates on two sites, attaching itself to the existing monument in a deconstructive way and at the same time engages a much broader reality of war in order to change it.

The *Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery* also has a critical dimension, but is a more petrified structure closer to a classic monument. Julian Bonder, architect and co-author of the project, and I both congratulate the City of Nantes for letting us accomplish quite a lot within and through this monumental form. The project does more than most monuments of this sort, and that is their achievement. However, it was never fully realized according to the original competition-winning design concept that I proposed initially as a sole author. So my motivation to launch the *Arc De Triomphe* project was partially a result of being disturbed by the resistance of politicians and bureaucrats to this kind of project, their fear of creating something that will in fact act. At the speech during the opening of the memorial, I ended: "Il faut faire quelque chose" ("one must do something"). It is not enough to commemorate. I think the city is doing things—not directly through the memorial,
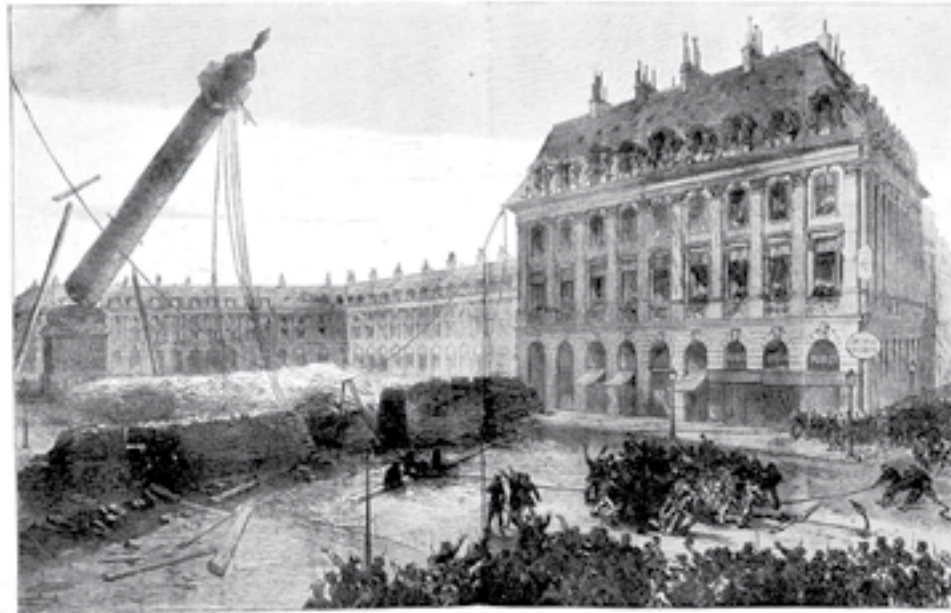
but around it and with it and taking advantage of it. I want things to be done through the projects themselves and not simply around them. So there is another aspect of realism here, more of a pragmatic aspect, if there is a link between realism and pragmatism.

SS Your *Arc de Triomphe* intervention has a relationship to the original monument that reminds me of the relation between the *Homeless Vehicle Project* and other public artworks that were built at the same time in New York City. This is something that Rosalyn Deutsche's piece "Uneven Development" discusses, the contrast between the act of symbolic legitimation that the *Homeless Vehicle* produces for homeless people and the symbolic legitimation that works of public art in Battery Park produce for surrounding real estate development.[9] Despite the fact that the vehicle does not operate as a monument, it operates in relation to monumental works of public art in a similar way. Insofar as it is a nomadic and relational device, it makes me think of the beautiful description of realism that Turowski references in his essay when he quotes the Polish constructivist Władysław Strzemiński: "There is no one absolute realism, no realism as such, but there is such a thing as a concrete realism, conditioned by given historical relations. Under different historical conditions this very same realism ceases to be a way of disclosing reality and becomes a means of falsifying and masking it."[10] It seems to me that your dynamic, changeable, scaffold-like structures, are deliberately set in an oppositional relation to monumental art, which in its very petrified form is unable to keep up with the mutability of realism. This is why your détournements of these monuments are so provocative: your projections are three hours long, and they are always performed in relation to present conditions.

KW Courbet thought that he could create historical paintings as long as they were also contemporary, about and of the present. He projected the present onto the past and argued that the opposite of realism was not idealism, but "falsism." What does "false" mean here? It refers to art that falsifies reality. Truth is a fundamental issue in my work as well, a truth that is wrapped up in public space, democracy, and *parrhesia* [the necessity to speak openly]. Right now I am interested in the realism of the democratic process itself. The *parrhesiastes* are the truth tellers—true realists—those who speak of their own lived experience in order to confront the fakeness of all of the false promises that authorities make and see the discrepancy between them and reality. In my work it is often the elected officials that need to be questioned, for what they really are doing and how they respond to real lives, needs, and critical issues. If the truth was the centre of *parrhesia*, then provocative dialogue by cynics was actually often used to get to the core of the matter, what is the true situation here. Even Socrates to some degree was a realist, because he was trying to get to the truth of people's lives. In that sense the equipment that I designed, and the processes users engage in are interconnected here in terms of design and projection. Together they lead to *franc-parler,* free speaking. These projects could come up with a proposal or vision, but they don't have to. In that way my work is *cynicistic,* not cynical—it doesn't come up with proposals in order to resolve problems, but it actually reveals the truth, the reality of somebody's life, the injustice. The risk involved in this is a realist risk. Following Diogenes' example, Courbet too took lots of risks. Perhaps his greatest risk, his statement calling for the destruction of the Vendôme column, was also an attempt to destroy falsity through realism. But he took many other smaller risks as well. In *A Burial at Ornans* he was reprimanded for showing people who were "ugly." They we beautiful paintings of real people who lived through real (and ugly) conditions of their existence. This appears as a problem of pure representation, but it is also a matter of real relationships that were activated during the process of making the painting itself. Courbet had to paint those people himself and often he would work with them in a performative and narrative way in his studio. Like when he put himself at the centre of a painting, *The Artist's Studio,* surrounded by a wide assortment of characters. He was referring to Saint-Simon's stages of life, but at the same time he was representing a spectrum of society in his studio, the class structure of France.

What Manet did with *Olympia* is also a good

example of "naked truth." You know she was a prostitute. It was a brave act on his part: he simply decided to paint this woman as she was always depicted in the history of painting, but in this case he made her real social status and existential position explicit. She was looking at the viewers as if she was trying to estimate if they had enough money to pay her for her services. It is quite a provocative look, much more than a gaze, the aggressive and active position of a working woman. That is what you can see in the look of those people who are using *Alien Staff* or speak through those monumental projections. In Tijuana you see women speaking, you see them physically there and you see them projected there. It is very much a projection of the naked truth, and in this way it refers not only to the word "projection," but also "projector," meaning active. People can be projectors, so with the use of projection equipment they themselves become projectors of truth. It's not that you are gazing at a passive image, people are actually projecting themselves onto you.

SS In that sense, projection is different from representation; it is a kind of presentation.

KW Literally, pro-jection is a "forth-throw"— an act and a process of throwing forth. That means you are throwing the truth forward for change, just as you do in a design project *(project)*. However, projection is also related to rejection. You always reject something in order to project something else. In this sense you project because you are protesting *(pro-testing)*. There is a relationship between project and protest. Protest is made of *pro* plus *testis*, or witness. I testify in order to pose something. Maybe I don't propose, but I act in the hope for something different in the future. When I bear witness to a wrong, I do it in the hope there will be some change for the better. So protest and project are connected with any type of critical design that incorporates doubt based in the rejection of something wrong. How does this relate to realism?

Parrhesia is a critical projection and the *parrhesiastes* is a critical projector. In the veteran vehicle project, the veterans themselves as projectors, in public space they project, they are no longer operating rocket launchers, but they operate a projector, hitting

blank walls and façades with some truth, and inscribing their thoughts and words onto the wall even for a moment, so that the sounds of people and the city reverberate with what had been silent. To bring to light what is kept in the dark, to hear the silence of the city, is the vocation of realists. In this conversation we haven't really grasped all the key elements that make a difference between present day realist methods and historical ones, because I haven't really sorted this out.

Krzysztof Wodiczko, *South Africa House Projection*, 1985, London, United Kingdom. Courtesy of Galerie Lelong, New York. This projection was done the same night as the Nelson Column projection by turning the projector ninety degrees.

Krzysztof Wodiczko, *The Real Estate Projection*, 1987, Installation view at Hal Bromm Gallery, New York. Courtesy of Galerie Lelong, New York.

Krzysztof Wodiczko and Julian Bonder, *Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery*, Nantes, France. Photograph by Philippe Ruault. Courtesy of Krzysztof Wodiczko and Julian Bonder.

SS You have outlined many different concepts of realism within your practice and then brought them together under the idea of the projection of truth. One idea that resonated very powerfully in your discussion of interiority is Jacques Lacan's concept of the Real. You mentioned two of Lacan's three categories of the psyche: the imaginary and the symbolic. You also referenced Althusser's use of Lacan in his definition of ideology: "Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence." What about the Real? Is it not a privileged category in relation to reality? If the Real is the thing that cannot be symbolized, if it punches a hole in the imaginary, then perhaps it is in questions of trauma as authentic experience that the Real might resonate with your work.[11]

KW Trauma is definitely a part of my work, because it creates this Real. The process of working on those projections or operating the instruments often brings forward elements that are shuttered or repressed as a result of traumatic experiences. Within these processes people often find an emotional charge and attach words to it, as a kind of a reanimation of oneself and a revival of memories that were shuttered or frozen. D. W. Winnicott called trauma a "freezing of the failure situation."[12] So you have to unfreeze it, so you can act again and bring some memory of the traumatic events back to consciousness. In order to start hearing yourself, you say certain things. Sometimes in my projects I ask people to prepare by doing some writing. A different part of the brain governs writing than speech, so sometimes when they write something and then read it, or speak about it, it really shocks them, but in a good way. Then hearing and seeing themselves speak in public, witnessed by a mass of people, or even when no one else is around, is a serious breakthrough for people who are isolated or disconnected from society, even when their memories are too painful for them to recall certain things, or talk about them. That's the way those people can make use of my projects. Some of them give quite a lot and some of them less. Some don't even take part in the project, they simply go away because they are not ready for it or don't trust it.

I don't think that trauma is something that Lacan explored very much himself, and Winnicott didn't go very far either. Even Freud abandoned his interesting early work on the theory of trauma. Today there are many non-verbal methods of healing trauma. I am now in contact with people who work with trauma patients and they are quite interested in aspects of the way I work. Although, they are moving toward an exploration of body and eye movement instead of language to help people revive systems shattered by trauma. To some degree my work also uses bodily performance and action in public space that is not directly verbal, but it still relies heavily on language, the realm of the symbolic. Maybe there is something else that I could do if I keep

working with the survivors of trauma to make the work more performative and bodily. Still, professionals who work on trauma are entirely focused on the survivors, rather than those people who surround them. In my work, I focus on the other side of trauma as well, on those who are numb, on people in society at large who haven't experienced trauma. If Foucault focuses on "fearless speech," it's also worth thinking about open and "fearless listening."[13] The Lacanian Real is there on all sides of a trauma: certainly in those who survived a horrible event, in those who experienced secondary trauma, and those who have never experienced it. It covers everybody in a moment of war. For the next fifty years trauma will be a major clinical problem in the United States. Society is sick. So what should artists and cultural organizations do? How can we respond to this reality, or this Real? It feels as if nobody is talking about this. ✕

Notes

1. Andrzej Turowski, "Wodiczko and Poland in the 1970s" in *Krzysztof Wodiczko*, ed. Duncan McCorquodale (London UK: Black Dog Publishing, 2011).
2. Linda Nochlin, *Realism* (London: Penguin Books, 1971).
3. The original title of Andrzej Turowski's book was *The Constructivist Revolution*, but he was forced to change it to *The Constructivist Circle* because the censors believed the word revolution should be reserved for political revolutions.
4. Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" in *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays* (London: Monthly Review Press, 1971).
5. This reference is to Roman Jakobson's assertion that Realism is aligned with the Metynomic pole of language, rather than the metaphoric pole, which is aligned with Romanticism. Jakobson lays out this distinction in "The Metaphoric and Metonymic Poles" in Roman Jakobson and Morris Halle, *Fundamentals of Language* (The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1956) 76-82. Linda Nochlin refers to Jakobson's ideas in *Realism*, 164-65, 182.
6. Rosalyn Deutsche and Cara Gendel Ryan, "The Fine Art of Gentrification," *October* 31 (Winter, 1984): 91-111.
7. Neil Smith, *The New Urban Frontier: Gentrification and the Revanchist City* (London: Routledge, 1996).
8. At the time, the President of the National Front Party.
9. Rosalyn Deutsche, "Uneven Development" in *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1996). 49-107.
10. Władysław Strzemiński quoted in Andrzej Turowski, "Wodiczko and Poland in the 1970s," p.23-25.
11. Jacques Lacan introduced his concept of the Real in the early 1950s, and it is a key concept in all his published seminars. See Jacques Lacan, *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan Book 1: Freud's Papers on Technique 1953-1954*, ed. Jacques-Alain Miller, trans. John Forrester (New York, London: W.W. Norton and Co., 1991).
12. Donald Winnicott, "Metapsychological and Clinical Aspects of Regression within the Psycho-Analytical Set-Up[1954]." in D.W.Winnicott, *Through Paediatrics to Psycho-Analysis*. Ed. M.Masud and R.Khan. (London: The Hogarth Press and The Institute of Psycho-analysis, 1978), 281.
13. Michel Foucault, *Fearless Speech*, ed. Joseph Pearson (Los Angeles, Calif.: Semiotext(e), 2001)

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Manet: Images for a World Without People
by Pier Vittorio Aureli

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1 Artists and architects increasingly appear to be uncomfortable with the ubiquitous power of images. In conferences, lectures, and discussions one often hears the recurring lament that images have replaced "real" things, "real" facts, "real" people, "real" experiences. While in the visual arts the turn towards performance and event took place some time ago, within architecture this has been a relatively new phenomenon. For example, in recent Biennales and other architectural exhibitions it is possible to see how installations—some being almost one-to-one architectural models and events featuring architects interacting with visitors—are replacing drawings and pictures as the primary mode of architectural representation. With the current rise of activism and participation as a new cultural trend in a time of economic crisis, what the French art curator Nicolas Bourriaud has defined as "relational aesthetics" has entered architecture.[1] A relational aesthetic within architecture means that architecture is no longer about drawing, designing, or building, but about editing, curating, presenting, acting, and interacting.

And yet everything ends up being an image. Even if architects dislike images and try to stage "real" events or situations, images remain the fundamental medium through which these events are transmitted. Instead of trying to go beyond images, perhaps it would be more interesting to understand them not as mere illustrations, but as a form of production. Within architecture the production of images transcends the distinction between "virtual" and "real" spaces. If architecture is not just built matter, but the embodiment of values, ideologies, and affects, then the production of images has to be understood as a substantial aspect of the production of architecture in its real form. This becomes especially true within a condition in which communication, representation, and affect are fundamental assets of contemporary political economy. Images are not just simulacra of reality, but have a material reality; they are *things among things.* The tradition of thought known as post-operaism has taught us to resist the postmodern distinction between the virtual and the real in favour of an understanding of reality as production, in which what exists as information and knowledge, as well as physical objects, are part of the same field of affective relationships.[2]

It is in light of this approach to reality as a productive-affective apparatus that it is crucial to rethink the production of images and their role in presenting architecture. In the following notes, I would like to put forward some reflections on the problem of making images in architecture and how these images may establish a critical relationship between their production and subjective response. The following will be articulated in two parts. First, I will summarize how images have become central to the rise and development of architecture as a discipline since the fifteenth century. In the second part, I will reflect on the ontological dimension of images as "pictures." Specifically, I will refer to critical reflections on the work of the nineteenth-century French painter Edouard Manet, put forward by Georges Bataille, Michel Foucault, and Michael Fried, which I believe offer an engaging understanding of the production of images as material entities liberated from their role as mere simulacra of reality.

2 Images gain importance within architecture at the moment it is distinguished from the practice of building in the fifteenth century. As soon as architecture is practiced as a "project," as a projection of something that does not yet exist, the role of drawn images becomes crucial. Unlike the medieval master builder, the architect does not build, but *designs* architecture. The word design itself is a reminder of the importance of *disegno*, the two-dimensional delineation of an object. The *disegno* of a building in plan, elevation, and perspective becomes then the fundamental object of architectural production. Such importance is amplified by the invention of printing and the diffusion of architectural treatises. If Alberti, the first modern theorist of the architectural project, wrote a treatise with no images (to avoid erroneous copies of his precepts), with the invention of printing, it was possible to mechanize the reproduction of drawings and make them available for imitation and copy. The mass production and re-production of drawings is thus at the very origin of architecture, creating a means for the effective and accurate transmission of architectural ideas. While drawings as orthogonal projections of buildings became a scientific and measurable method to direct and control the construction of architectural artifacts, perspectival views become the fundamental way to *present* a project in its realist form. Since the sixteenth century, rendering architecture through images has been a crucial tool for persuading a patron or explaining architecture to a larger audience. For this reason, architecture as painted image is an important genre parallel to the rise of non-narrative subject matter in painting such as the still life and landscape.

If the most radical of modern architects rejected the artistic rendering of their schemes in favour of more objective and scientific forms of representation (think of Hannes Meyer's use of impersonal axonometric drawing), within the postmodernism of the latter part of the twentieth century the production of drawings and renderings per se became once again crucial. Critics and historians of architecture have understood the rise of "paper architecture" in the 1960s and 1970s as a utopian critique of modern urban development. What they have overlooked is how its rise was also triggered by the increasing importance of communication as a form of immaterial production in which information, knowledge, and affect play fundamental roles. Indeed, since then the reproduction of the architectural "general intellect" has occured mostly via visual material such as photographs, drawings, renderings, and diagrams. This condition is reflected by the forms of buildings themselves, which seem to be designed as three-dimensional images more suited to be experienced as reproductions than as spatial constructs. Indeed, the most celebrated architectural buildings are today known through their reproductions, especially photographs. It is possible to say that post-Fordist modes of production, in which communication plays a key role, imply an experience of architecture in which the object (architecture) and the viewer's subjective response to it are constantly collapsed into the same entity. This is evident in architectural projects which use perspectival views to produce ann empathetic relationship with their audience. Images do not simply render proposed interventions, but suggest and determine ways to experience them; the representation of architecture thus becomes one with its subjective experience. It is within this context that a critical stance towards the role of images is not to refuse them, but to open a gap—a critical distance—between images and their experience.

3 In order to suggest a different understanding and use of images, I would like to refer to the paintings of Edouard Manet. What characterizes Manet's work is its ambivalence: his paintings are both realistic and abstract. They are realistic because they represent their content in the most prosaic and down-to-earth way. They are abstract because of their stubborn, inexorable flatness—they are pictures after all. It is well known that famous paintings such as *Olympia* and *déjeuner sur l'herbe* radically challenged their first viewers. And yet, as is frequently noted, this challenging aspect was not due to the particular subjects of these paintings, but to the way the pictures themselves were composed and presented.[3] In both paintings, the main figures seem to address the beholder directly, and yet their gaze is empty, leaving the audience suspended in a paradoxical condition of both confrontation and indifference. The emptiness of expression is amplified by the composition of the paintings in which all the things depicted—people, objects, landscapes—are treated with equal importance. It is for this reason that the radicality of Manet's pictures have become the object of three important reflections on representation: those put forward by Georges Bataille, Michel Foucault, and Michael Fried.

In his studies on Manet, Bataille emphasized how, for the first time in the history of pictorial representation, Manet attacked the most important convention of images: their narrative function.[4] From Aristotle's *Poetics* up to the nineteenth century, the role of images, and especially painted images, was to address human action; the history of visual arts was unthinkable outside of its function to narrate the history of man. But according to Bataille, Manet's pictures do not narrate anything: the subject matter is devoid of any allegorical or historical quality. As Carole Talone-Hugon has suggested, Manet makes things *visible* and no longer *legible*.[5] For Foucault, Manet's pictures do not express anything but the material properties of painting itself.[6] For example, in a painting such as *Le port de Bordeaux,* Manet depicts the multitude of boats docked in the port as a pattern of vertical and horizontal lines. According to Foucault, this pattern reproduces not only the vertical and horizontal lines that delimit the surface of the painting, but also the very grain of the painting: all the vertical and horizontal fibres that constitute the canvas itself as a material object. This attitude, which anticipates abstraction without being abstract, is complemented by Manet's radical critique of one of the most important narrative tropes of western painting: whatever situation is depicted within the frame of the painting, the thing or person around which the event unfolds is always contained by the painted scene. Foucault cites Masaccio's famous fresco *Obolo di San Pietro,* in which all the figures look at the event of the miracle performed by the main protagonist of the painted scene.[7] In Manet's paintings such as the *Serveuse de Bocks,* the figures depicted often look at events that happen quite outside the space depicted. Such displacement makes more evident the artificial cutting of reality that any image makes. For this reason Foucault elected Manet as the first creator of images whose main theme is the material properties of images themselves. With Manet, the idea of images as illusionistic constructs is replaced by the idea that any picture is a material object with its own peculiar material properties. In different ways both Bataille and Foucault see in Manet's work the possibility of liberating the image from its representational aura towards its full affirmation as a material object.

The critique of the theatrical aura of painting is further developed by the formalist criticism of Michael Fried. Unlike Bataille and Foucault, though, Fried did not focus on the literality of painting, but on the way Manet developed a special awareness of the effects of painting on the beholder. For Fried, Manet is the first artist to be

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fully aware of the problematics of looking at a picture.[8]

As is well known, the relationship between the artwork and its beholder has been the central focus of Fried's criticism. For him, a work of art must be finite in itself and not dependant on the viewer's subjective response. The moment art depends on subjective response it becomes "theatre," loses its integrity, and interferes with the everyday experience of the beholder. As is also well known, Fried developed a critique of theatricality in his canonical essay "Art and Objecthood," in which he attacked minimal art.[9] In this essay, he argued that the literalness of work by artists such as Donald Judd and Robert Morris implied that a work of art is always incomplete and requires the direct engagement of the viewer—and her capacity to move around the artwork—to be fully realized. In this way the boundary between art and what is not necessarily art is blurred in a situation that resembles our normal everyday condition. As Fried argues, "we are all literalists most of our lives."[10] For this reason, Fried called for an art that was radically complete without the need to engage the active participation of the viewer. For Fried such art included, for example, the paintings by Morris Louis and Kenneth Noland, or the sculptures by Anthony Caro, in which what was expressed were the relationships *within* the work itself. For example, in paintings by Louis, the relationship between the rivulets or strips of colour and the rectangular blank canvas is so strong and complete that it presupposes an arrested, "transfixed" beholder in front of them. On the contrary, minimalist artworks are experienced through a situation of radical indeterminacy with respect to subjective response. This means that the intentions of the artists are no longer recognizable since they become confused with the subject's experience of the artwork itself. It was within this preoccupation that Fried rediscovered Denis Diderot's critique of theatricality in painting.[11] For Diderot, paintings were produced in order to be seen and this condition resulted in the excessive rhetorical play of the figures and scenes depicted. Diderot called for a painting style liberated from this primordial convention, as what was depicted would exist without a beholder in front of it. Fried recognized a Diderotian approach in the paintings of Chardin, such as *Young Student Drawing*, in which the French painter portrays a man seen from the back completely absorbed in the activity of drawing. Fried defined this condition of the subject as "absorption," as opposed to the theatricality of more traditional painting in which everything is active in order to entertain the beholder. However, this interpretation of an anti-theatrical art came to a crisis when Fried was confronted with the work of Manet. Unlike the absorbed figures of Chardin's pictures, in Manet's paintings, the figures often address the beholder in an almost aggressive way. This is evident in famous pictures such as *Le déjeuner sur l'herbe* and *Olympia*. According to Fried, in these paintings the condition of beholding a picture is directly registered into the painting itself and thus the actual beholder is placed in an unprecedented position. Even though Manet is a theatrical painter in the Diderotian sense of the term, the radical frontal approach of his compositions—what Fried called the condition of "facingness"—makes evident the primordial convention that a picture must be beheld with a new force and explicitness. For Fried, such ostensible theatricality becomes a profound critique of theatricality, because by making it so explicitly evident, the painter reinforces the distance and thus the confrontation between the image and the beholder, who is then made aware of the constructedness of the picture itself.

Recently, Fried has rediscovered such an approach in contemporary photography, especially the work of the photographers affiliated with the so-called Dusseldorf School, such as Andreas Gursky, Candida Höfer, and Thomas Struth.[12] In their work, the image is clearly constructed in order to be beheld. And yet it is precisely this factor that makes these photographs non-illusionistic depictions of reality. For example, as Fried has argued, Gursky's images are spectacularly open to visual inspection because of their wealth of details, yet they rebut any possibility of representing a particular point of view that could be taken by someone in front of the photograph. For Fried, such a condition of radical facingness produces a "severing" effect between the photograph and the viewer. By reading the paintings of Manet and the work of these contemporary photographers, Fried seems to suggest the possibility that images can be radically themselves by emphazising their condition of being beheld. By making clear that the image is made in order to be seen, the producer of the image destroys the aura of the picture, which is its illusionistic status, its claim to offer a privileged "view" on reality. Above all, the severing of images from the viewer attacks one of the most crucial powers of images: inviting the viewer to interact with them by identifying her real experience of space with what is depicted in the image. Such interaction and identification between picture and viewer, subject, and object, is today a fundamental characteristic of the productive and re-productive apparatuses of the post-Fordist economy in which subjects are governed by making them active participants in the spectacular production of their own experience. The work of Manet, and the critical discourse that it originated, suggests a radical alternative to the contemporary regime of image production, as well as the production of architecture. This radical alternative consists in assuming that images are finite constructs, material objects with their own material properties. The radical lesson of Manet's images is that they are not mere fragments of the world; rather, they are objects in themselves that not despite, but because they accept and even exalt their condition of being beheld, confront beholders as something separated, severed from them. ✕

Images Captions

Diploma Projects,
Architectural Association, London.
Tutors: Pier Vittorio Aureli,
Barbara Campbell-Lange, Fenella Collingridge.

left to right:
1. Jorgen Tandberg, *Immeuble Cité* in Antwerpen:
    A house for 1600 inhabitants, perspective,
    2010.
2. Jorgen Tandberg, *Immeuble Cité* in Antwerpen:
    A house for 1600 inhabitants, perspective,
    2010.
3. Tijn van de Wijdeven, *We Need Stuff*:
    Emptiness as a strategy, interior, 2011.
4. Tijn van de Wijdeven, *We Need Stuff*:
    Emptiness as a strategy, promenade, 2011.

Notes

1. Nicholas Bourriaud, *Relational Aesthetics*
    (Paris: Le Press du Réel, 1998).
2. See especially Christian Marazzi, *Capital
    and Affects* (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e),
    2010).
3. Michael Fried, *Manet's Modernism, or, The
    Face of Painting in the 1860s* (Chicago:
    University of Chicago Press, 1998), 25.
4. Georges Bataille, *Manet* (Geneva: Skira,
    1955).
5. Carole Talon-Hugon, "Manet o lo smarrimento
    dello spettatore", in Michel Foucault, *La
    pittura di Manet*, ed. Maryvonne Saison,
    trans. Simona Paolini (Milan: Abscondita,
    2005), 75.
6. Michel Foucault, *Manet and the Object of
    Painting* (London: Tate, 2011), 15.
7. Ibid., 50.
8. Fried, *Manet's Modernism*, 18.
9. Michael Fried, "Art and Objecthood," in
    Artforum 5 (April 1967): 12-23. Reprinted in
    Michael Fried, *Art and Objecthood* (Chicago:
    The University of Chicago Press, 1998),
    148-172.
10. Ibid., 168.
11. Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality:
    Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot*
    (Chicago: University of Chicago Press,
    1998).
12. Michael Fried, *Why Photography Matters As
    Art As Never Before* (New Haven, London:
    Yale University Press, 2008).

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educator. He is the co-founder of Dogma, and
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including *The Project of Autonomy: Politics
and Architecture Within and Against Capitalism*
(2008), and *The Possibility of an Absolute
Architecture* (2011).

Kids on Buildings:
Echos, Mirrors, and Ghosts
A Conversation with Jesse Boon

Scapegoat meets Jesse Boon, three and a half years old, outside of OMA's new addition to the Cornell University Architecture School in Ithaca, New York.

Scapegoat Says Jesse, tell me what you think about this building **Jesse Boon** Those things are really interesting. They are balls. We can sit on them, but I don't know if we can climb way up there. SS On that concrete hill? Let's try. JB But it really is steep. You have to try it. SS Okay, let's try. JB I know that it's slippery. That sure is slippery! Let's try it. Whoa! We can't. SS Let's try. JB Hold my hand. Hey. Sure is steep. Whoa. I don't want to. SS Okay let's go back down a little. JB Now that was so fun! SS What are these balls good for? JB Sitting! But it's too steep. Let's run around these balls. Let's pretend it's a race. SS Okay let's go! JB Boom boom boom zoom zoom! Hey, we can do this with the balls. [*Balancing on balls*] SS That's fantastic! JB Careful! It's a little bit dangerous. It's too dangerous for us. Hey what are these? Balls! SS What are these balls? JB I don't know... Hey, I know. They are lights! SS I think you're right. JB At night they are lights and at morning they are balls. Whoa, they do make sounds. [*Banging on balls*] SS Maybe we should go inside the building now. [*Entering the building across rubber relief letters on the floor indicating directions*] JB Um, don't step on the E or the man. That's what it says. SS You're stepping on it! [*Crossing bridge into cavernous dome presentation space*] JB It's good that I have a cape that I can fly with. SS Do you think this place is for flying? Where would you fly? JB If I could fly I'd fly up there [*pointing to ceiling*] but I can't fall down cause I'm a good flyer—whishhh…Uh oh, I stepped on more letters! SS Oh you really like these letters so much. [*Lying on floor*] Let's look through this window [into main lecture hall]. What do people do here? JB Draw. SS What makes you think that? JB Cause those pictures are there—on the curtains there are so many pictures. That man's going to go down the stairs. We need to follow him cause he's a super-villain and it's a job for me. Nothing can stop Radioactive Man. [*Walking down stairs*] SS Not even this big staircase? JB Not this. It's really big but nothing can stop me. I can go all the way down. Uh oh, more letters. Watch. I jump over the letters. SS Yeah! Do it again! [*Climbing on concrete bench under the concrete dome with exposed fluorescent tube lights*] JB This is my slide spot. Come on, step on it and it's gonna slide you. Whoa! SS That's so cool! Jesse! Uh oh. That's not a good design. You just pulled the florescent tube out. That was a surprise. JB I'm a good puller. SS I wonder if they meant for that to happen… JB How can it turn on again? [*Fixing the light*] SS You did it! JB I didn't do it, you did it! There, it's back. I'm gonna pull on a small light, is that okay? SS I don't think we should pull them anymore. JB I will. I will pull. SS Don't pull it! We don't want to break it. I know it's very tempting.

[*Lying down in corner where dome hits floor*] JB This is where I sleep. It's time for us to sleep cause it's morning. I sleep in the morning. I'm sleeping here. SS This is a good sleeping space. Look at this place here. Wait till you see this. [*Looking up at glass reflecting*] JB It's a window for us. Oh look, I can see us! Sure is cool. SS It is cool. JB Yes it is. It sure is cool. I—hear—my—self [*Discovering that we are in crux of dome base and our voices echo; montone voice*] SS I—heard—my—sound—too. JB I—heard—my—sound—right—now. SS Do you know what that's called? An echo. JB I—do—want—a—treat—right—now. SS Did—you—hear—my—sound? JB Sound. JB It's echoes. There's our reflections. [*Looking up at wedge of glass above in corner*] SS That's our reflections. Can—you—hear—my—echo? JB Yeah—I—can. How—can—you—hear—me? SS Because—I—have—ears. JB How—can—you—listen—to—me? SS With—my—ears. JB How—can—you—talk? SS With—my—mouth JB How—can—you—make—that—sound? SS It's the building that makes the sound. JB That's—my—echo. SS Oh that's your reflection—it's different. There are two things happening right now, echoes and reflections. JB Let's look out of our window. SS You really got in there close to that window. JB I see everything. I see snow. You look out too. SS I see snow too. JB I—want—to—have—a snack. SS Hey Jesse, let's go see this other part of the building, then we can have a snack. [*Touching textured concrete with exposed aggregates*] SS What do you think of this stuff? JB So rocky! SS Yeah it is so rocky. Are you lying down because of the rocks or the letters? JB The rocks. They make me feel tired. SS Oh, you just touch it and then you fall down. [*Falling down to demonstrate effect of rock*] JB Be quiet! SS Why? JB I'm sleeping. SS Something about the rocks and the letters together makes it extra sleepy. JB These rocks are real. SS Why did you say that? JB Because they're hard. [*Touching felt on wall next to textured concrete*] SS What about this, is it real? JB Yes, that is real. SS What makes it real? JB The rocks. SS The rocks make the felt real? JB No, the felt makes the rock real. [*Walking on aluminum grate ramp lit from below*] SS What do you think of this ramp Jesse? Do you like this? JB Yeah. SS Why do you like it? JB Cause it sure is shiny. What can we do? SS I don't know what can we do. Can we dance here? JB Well, a little. [*Dancing and stomping on grating*] JB Bang bang, got it! SS Okay, how about we run all the way down? JB Ready, set, go—race! [*Running down*] SS Let's go this way. What's this? Let's figure it out. [*Looking at backlit Xs and Ys at washroom entrance*] JB More letters. SS What letters are they? JB X and Y! SS That's right. JB Look it's a fountain. I can't drink here. [*Struggling to push button and drink*] SS I have the same problem with this fountain, Jesse. What's in here? JB It's a bathroom. Come on into my rocket! [*Entering toilet cubicle*] SS Is this your rocket? JB Rocket ship. It can blast off. SS And that's the button. JB Come in the rocket and blast off. Blast off! [*Closing door so we are in curvilinear stainless steel cubicle*] JB We're going up to Mars. SS How long is it going to take us? JB Six hours. SS I know another place in here that's a lot like a rocket ship. JB How can we get in it? SS It's down here. Let's run. [*Arriving at elevator and pushing call button*] JB Here is our rocket! Blast off! The rocket ship is landing. SS Now what's going to happen? JB Here's our rocket. Come on into our rocket. [*Entering elevator*] SS Which button are you going to press? JB This one. I pressed number 2. We are going up. [*Arriving at second floor*] JB It's our stop, but I want to go back down. I don't want to go out. SS There's a

snack place here. JB Okay. [*Exiting elevator*] Is this another rocket of ours? SS Yes, this is our rocket stairs. JB Look at this. What's this? I'll show ya…shhh, come on into our rocket. [*Entering

curving mirrored storage cupboard*] SS I don't fit in this rocket. JB You can. We're blasting off. SS We can't cause I'm too big. Do you want me to get out? JB Yeah get out. Get into your own rocket. Out of my rocket. [*Exiting storage cupboard*] JB Where are you? SS Out here. Are you having fun? JB I'm going to outer space. Are you having fun? SS Yeah, I'm having fun. Are you having fun? Maybe we could have a cookie or something. JB I'll close my rocket then I'll come to your rocket. [*Stepping up*] SS These are our space snacks. [*Eating cookies*] JB So how was your day? We landed on Marszzz. I pressed Mars so we landed on Mars. SS Which planet are we going to now? JB Venus. Is it hot? SS I don't think it's that hot. Which place here looks like Venus? JB Bzzzz…let's go. Mission control. SS Yes mission control? JB You're landing on Venus. [*Walking to

metal mesh curtains at window*] SS Commander Jesse… JB Are you having fun? SS Yeah I'm having fun. Are you? JB Yes, I'm on my rocket. I'm going to that one. Are you having a good time? SS Yeah, I'm having a good time. How about you? JB Yeah. Come to my moon. Ride up my rocket. We already arrived at Venus. SS I think Venus looks like these curtains here. JB Let's go hide. Come on. You go beside me in this ghost factory. [*Going in between full window and white mesh curtain*] SS I guess these curtains look like ghosts. JB I'm a ghost in my house. Nobody can see us. SS Cause we're ghosts in our house. JB Ghosties are here. Nobody can find us. SS We're in our ghostie house. JB I'll trap you. I'll trap you, ghost. Gotcha ghost! Caught you! [*Wrestling with imaginary ghosts*] ×

Jesse Boon is a Toronto-based jack-of-all-trades, dabbling in music, letters, painting and dance. He is planning to attend kindergarten in September 2012.

Photographic Encounters in the American Desert

by Alessandra Ponte

Above and below: *Desert landscape with tourists (author with friends)*, American South West, December, 1997-. Photo by author.

The Indians do not like to be photographed.
—Aby Warburg[1]

Strictly speaking, one never understands any-thing from a photograph. […] Today everything exists to end in a photograph.

—Susan Sontag[2]

The arid territories of the American Southwest have been the real (and fictional) theatres of the mythical conquest of the West. The region is punctuated by magnificent pre-Columbian ruins, and Native Americans represent a substantial portion of the population, living in reservations, and in some exceptional cases like the Pueblo Indians, still occupying the land of their ancestors. The desert landscapes have also been, and still are, heavily used by scientists and the military to develop and test the most advanced weapons. American Indians and war technologies have gen-erated two significant and apparently very distant forms of tourism. The first has a longer lineage, and began at the end of the nineteenth century. The second, a more recent trend, emerged in the early 1950s, and is commonly referred to as "atomic tourism." One may argue that in both cases the objects of fascination and attraction are determined by war and its effects. Of course, this is spectacularly clear in relation to the phenome-non of atomic tourism. In the case of the encoun-ters with the native inhabitants of the region, the history of past violence and the pain of present conflicts are less evident, if not hidden.

Paul Chaat Smith, a Comanche and an as-sistant curator at the National Museum of the American Indian, has recently written that in the United States, a most forgetful country "whose state religion seems to be amnesia,"[3] Indian his-tory, and in particular recent Indian history, needs to be relentlessly recalled. A significant portion of such history involves precisely the accounts of how Native Americans (and their culture) have been stereotyped and commodified in order to satisfy an ever growing and variable tourist indus-try. One may say that tourism has been another form of conquest and subjugation, another Indian war. In such a war, as in previous ones, American Indians valiantly developed forms of resistance that since the very beginning found as one of their privileged targets that quintessential tourist weapon: the camera.

Travelogue: 1997

I went to visit the American Southwest for the first time in 1997. I was already planning to write a book on the American desert, and had read extensively on the topic, including books dealing with the Native American inhabitants. I knew about the pueblos of the Zuni and the Hopi, of the presence of Navajo and the other tribes living in the reservations, and about the spectacular and mysterious pre-Colombian ruins. I was also aware of how, since the beginning of the twentieth century, the architecture, arts, and traditions of these peoples had been exploited, commercialized, and even transformed in order to serve the tour-ist industry. In addition, I was familiar with the ethnographic literature about the various tribes, from the notorious accounts of the Zuni written at the end of nineteenth century by anthropology's first "participant observer," Frank Hamilton Cushing,[4] to the celebrated *Patterns of Culture* (1934), in which Ruth Benedict established her famous opposition between the "Apollonian" Pueblo cultures of the Southwest and the "Dio-nysian" attitudes of the Native Americans of the Great Plains.[5] At the time, for almost two decades the work of the first American ethnographers had been under intense critical scrutiny, as part of a general process of re-assessment of the disci-pline. With the writings of Paul Rabinow, Edward Said, Roy Frank Ellen, James Clifford, George E. Marcus and Michael M.J. Fisher,[6] anthropology's claims to provide authoritative interpretations and convey an authentic experience of other cul-tures had been radically challenged. The mirror had been turned, so to speak, on the discipline, revealing a rather disturbing picture. During the same period, tourism and tourists had been extensively investigated by sociologists, anthro-pologists, and experts of semiotics, all intent on demonstrating the hopelessly inauthentic character of the modern tourist experience.[7]

Before even arriving in the Southwest, I was therefore prepared to enjoy the inauthentic na-ture of the experience and accept the limitations of a role that I considered inescapable. I was go-ing to be a tourist, consciously part of the global phenomenon of commodified culture. I had no illusions about the possibility of acquiring a superior or detached status by qualifying myself as "traveler," "pilgrim," "observer," or "sympa-thetic researcher." This, I presume, was also the attitude of my companions. I was traveling with

four others, architectural critics and historians. None of us was American, and for all of us this was the first encounter with the region and its native inhabitants. We landed in Albuquerque loaded with guidebooks and cameras. Each of us had at least one camera at the beginning of the trip and, before the journey was over, we all ended up acquiring disposable Kodaks to take panoramic photos. We had the impression that panoramic photos were best suited to capture the spectacular scenery. The truth is that no appara-tus can really capture such landscapes. No matter how many commercials, films, photographs, or paintings by the best artists one has seen, no matter how much one has the feeling of already knowing these places, the reality of them is going to surprise, enchant, and overwhelm the traveler. Nevertheless, like every good tourist, we took hundreds of slides and photos, and bought post-cards, more guides, more books, and more slides on sale at various tourist locations, not to men-tion every possible kind of souvenir, from Stetson hats to bolo ties, from sand paintings to kachina dolls, as well as Navajo, Zuni, and Hopi jewelry. I don't think we missed a single tourist shop from Albuquerque to the Grand Canyon and back.

The airport of Albuquerque fully satisfied our desire for a theme park experience: fake adobe interiors, shops selling miniature sand paintings, dream catchers, and kachina dolls, together with restaurants serving Spanish rice and Texan fajitas. I am writing from memory (I didn't take notes during the trip), and what I remember next is the drive to Santa Fe with a detour to visit the pre-Columbian ruins at the Bandelier monument— haunting and inscrutable in the freezing, trans-parent winter afternoon—and a very cold and uncomfortable first night at a Best Western Hotel.

Santa Fe

The titles of two 1997 publications, bought dur-ing the trip, evoke part of the feeling of walking the streets, visiting the museums, and shopping around the plaza. The first, *The Myth of Santa Fe*, written by Chris Wilson, a professor of the Uni-versity of New Mexico living in Albuquerque, is focused on architecture and the politics of culture, and investigates the invention and "creation" of a "modern regional tradition."[8] Wilson's book meti-culously maps the history of the occupation of the area beginning with the so-called Pueblo Indians (sedentary people who practiced agriculture),

followed by the arrival of the nomadic ancestors of present-day Apaches and Navajos, and then by waves of Spanish and "Anglo-Saxon" colonization. After sketching a narrative of conflict, repression, and domination, but also of exchange and racial miscegenation, Wilson proceeds to demonstrate how, from the early 1900s, the city was deliber-ately designed to appear a romantic and exotic destination where three distinct and equally "picturesque" ethnic groups were living together in harmonious segregation. The second book, the catalogue of an exhibition, presents the system-atic marketing of the entire region under the title *Inventing the Southwest: The Fred Harvey Com-pany and Native American Art*.[9] An article about the show, published in *The New York Times* in December 1997, remarks on how Fred Harvey, an English immigrant, set the standard for masterful cultural packaging already in 1876. The company operated the dining cars of the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railway, and created along the line restaurants and tourist hotels designed in a style mimicking the adobe construction of Spanish and Pueblo settlements. The company was also re-sponsible for collecting, displaying, and organiz-ing the sale of antique and contemporary Indian artifacts, from Navajo blankets and silver jewellery to Pueblo pottery and baskets. Native American artists were also employed to decorate the hotels and stores of the Fred Harvey Company, together with craftsmen and women practicing their art, in appropriate settings, under the very eyes of the tourists. The author of the *Times* article dryly observed that the exhibition gave the impression that both sides benefited from the encounter, without any hints of the Indians being victim-ized in the exchange. This feeling was echoed in a quotation from a speech given shortly after the opening of the show by Rayna Green, director of the American Indian Program at the Smithsonian Institution. The Indians of the Southwest, she said, had already "learned to play Indian from the 17th century onward, first from the Spanish." The article, however, closes with a chilling quotation from a video about Native Americans still recall-ing the glory days of the Fred Harvey Company. What the company did, said a 70-year-old Zuni, was take them "from ritual to retail."

Strolling in the plaza, peeping in every shop and art gallery, what did I experience, precisely? The atmosphere of an invented romantic Spanish colonial past was maybe too well maintained, and the artists (long marketed through artist colonies)

Taos Pueblo (our car in front of the entry point), New Mexico, December, 1997. Photo by author.

Taos Pueblo (with French art historian), New Mexico, December 1997. Photo by author.

and Indians were there, playing the tourist game in a rather dignified and ironic way. It didn't particularly disturb me: after all, I was from Venice (Italy), a city that had been surviving mainly as a tourist attraction for centuries, selling its own atmosphere of glorious art, architecture, death, and decay. I was used to sharing the narrow Venetian *calli* with masses of tourists unaware of the rules governing the navigation of the labyrinthine urban fabric, watching vegetable stalls and bakeries disappear daily to give way to souvenir shops, and explaining patiently that no, Ponte Vecchio is in Florence, what you are looking at is the Rialto Bridge and no, I don't own a gondola.

Taos Pueblo

Freezing cold, thespian sky, intense, fierce light, and clouds throwing unexpected shadows. Primeval profiles of buildings and mountains, wood fires perfuming the air with the aroma of piñon and sage. We were stopped at the entrance by a polite man: there was a fee to pay for the use our cameras, and we were told to ask permission to take photos of the inhabitants. Very few people were around, most of them indoors, their attitude unaffected and remote, welcoming tourists in uncluttered adobe interiors transformed into shops. We were the only visitors that day. We wandered around without expressing much, almost speechless in fact. We didn't photograph the inhabitants of Taos, and when I go through the pictures taken during that visit, the only human figure to be seen against the stunning landscape is that of a solitary French historian.

I was very aware of the many architects who had preceded us on such a pilgrimage, like Rudolph Schindler, who, in 1915, confided to Richard Neutra: "My trip to San Francisco and among Indians and cowboys are unforgettable experiences. That part of America is a country one can be fond of, but the civilized part is horrible, starting with the President down to the streetsweeper."[10] Schindler considered Pueblo architecture the only true indigenous architecture he had seen in the United States, claiming they were the "only buildings which testify to the deep feeling for the soil on which they stand."[11] Upon his return to Chicago he proposed a design for Dr. Martin of a country house in adobe construction in Taos. The house was never built, but the "lesson" of Pueblo architecture remained a considerable if subtle presence in the development of Schindler's

California modernism. His friend Neutra shared a similar attitude. He saw adobe architecture for the first time reproduced in 1923 at the Museum of Natural History in New York and praised Pueblo Indians for being "the people who influenced the modern California building activity."[12] Their feelings are interesting in contrast to the one of their contemporaries, the great American "master" Frank Lloyd Wright, who feared "Indian or Mexican 'hut' builders." For all his love for the "organic" and poetic vision of buildings as "shelter," in Wright's opinion, architecture, like music and literature, was beyond the Hopi. For him the native way of building was not even sympathetic to the environment: "The Indian Hopi house is no desert house with its plain walls jumping out to your eyes from the desert forty miles or more away."[13] I was also thinking about Aldo van Eyck and his ethnographic investigations of the architecture of the Dogon of Western Africa and the Amerindians of New Mexico, which he visited in 1961, and I was trying to remember if any of them made remarks about photography.

What came to mind was a chapter, tellingly titled "The Inscrutable," from Reyner Banham's *Scenes in America Deserta*. Like us, he came for the first time to Taos Pueblo in winter and found the place deserted, the central plaza empty. Like us, he concentrated his "photographic attention" on the "memorably strong and elementary buildings" as "so many, many architectural visitors have done." And then, in an arresting passage, Banham explained how he found it impossible to take a picture:

Trying to pursue surviving photographic light, I probed the terraces through the zoom lens until I suddenly came upon a scene that I could not bring myself to photograph. High on the terraces there was a white-robed figure, looking almost like a Roman statue, who appeared to be addressing the westering sun. I knew nothing about the priests of Taos at the time; his garb was unexpected and his action inscrutable. I felt, overwhelmingly and in a way that was new to me, that I had seen a piece, a small corner, of a culture that felt more alien, unknown, than anything I had encountered before. The sense of having come up against a glass wall through which seeing was possible but comprehension

was not […] has never really gone away ever since.[14]

At the time I didn't know precisely in what climate Banham wrote this extraordinary statement. *Scenes in the America Deserta* was published in 1982, more then a decade after his first encounter with the native inhabitants of the Southwest. I felt his was the only acceptable stance, against a depressing panorama of more than a century of well-meaning travelers ready to embrace Indian culture and offer their own questionable and self-serving interpretations.

Taos

I knew about the town of Taos through the writings of the ailing "over-civilized" intellectuals and artists who had escaped there in between the two world wars to seek solace and renewal in the purified, dry desert air, and in the rituals performed by "primitives" still living at one with Nature and the Gods. Here came the capricious and willful American heiress Mabel Dodge Luhan to seek "Change with a capital C," as she wrote in *Edge of Taos Desert*, the fourth and last volume of her autobiography. She came to join her third husband, the painter Maurice Sterne, who wrote her a prophetic letter in November of 1917: "Dearest Girl, Do you want an object in life? […] Save the Indians, their art-culture—reveal it to the world […] That which Emilie Hapgood and others are doing for the Negros, you could, if you wanted to, do for the Indians, for you have the energy […] and, above all, there is somehow a strange relationship between yourself and the Indians."[15] And indeed she devoted her immense vigour, money, and credit to save "her" Indians, spending the rest of her life at Taos, building, together with her new husband, the Pueblo Indian Antonio Luhan, a mythical adobe house designed to become "a kind of headquarters for the future [and] a base of operations for *really* a new world plan."[16] There, the new and "whole" Luhan managed to attract and enlist to her cause an astounding number of leading figures of the post-war American and European intelligentsia: the painters Andrew Dasburg, Marsden Hartley, and Georgia O'Keeffe (who later set up her own house at Abiquiu); photographers Paul Strand, Ansel Adams, Edward Weston, and Laura Gilpin; stage designer Robert Edmond Jones, choreographer Martha Graham, and others. A sojourn with the Luhans inspired Willa Cather

to write the thoughtful and delicate *Death Comes for the Archbishop* (1927), and Mary Austin also came, which led her on a trajectory that changed her life. A writer already familiar with the semi-arid country of south-central California and with the Paiute and Shoshone Indians, Austin arrived in Taos in 1919 and visited frequently, studying northern Pueblos and becoming involved in a famous controversy about the ownership of Indian lands. In 1924, she settled permanently in Santa Fe, helping to organize the Spanish Colonial Arts Society for the promotion and preservation of the Hispanic artistic tradition and eventually organizing her own home as an operative centre for the foundation of a new America. The arid Southwest was to be the setting "for the next fructifying world culture" because its climate could shape an ideal "American" community: egalitarian, environmentally conscious, a producer of "adequate symbols in art," and still practicing meaningful religious rituals. Progressive social reformer John Collier, another early visitor to the Mabel Dodge Luhan house in Taos, stayed on to become the "greatest Indian Commissioner" in the history of the U.S., and launched his crusade to defend the lands and rights of the Pueblos with an essay entitled "The Red Atlantis," joining an ever expanding circle that promoted a cultural nationalism rooted in regionalism. Anthropologist and folklorist Elsie Clews Parsons, another friend of the Luhans, fought along the same lines to preserve Native American art, rituals, and social organization as an alternative to a deracinated and neurotic Anglo-Saxon civilization. She also took advantage of the friendship of the Indians to publish information about their cults that they wished to keep secret, following on the footsteps of many ethnographers before her.

Even D.H. Lawrence came to Taos, lured once again by Luhan, fleeing a Europe devastated by mechanized war, to establish his utopia (Rananim) and immerse himself in the "oceanic" feeling of the primitive. His was an ambiguous, uneasy, encounter: the "old red forefathers" were devoted to a "cult of water-hatred" and never washed "flesh or rags." Their drumming and dancing resonated in the deepest recesses of his over-sophisticated European soul, evoking an ancient shared communion with the gods and nature, but signaled, at the same time, the impossibility of its recovery for civilized man. At the conclusion of the depiction of his first experience of Navajo ritual dancing, Lawrence wrote: "I have a dark-faced,

Approach to Shiprock, New Mexico, December 1997. Photo by author.

Goosenecks, Utah, December 1997. Photo by author.

bronze-voiced father far back in the resinous ages. My mother was no virgin. She lay in her hour with this dusky-lipped tribe-father. And I have not forgotten him. But he, like many an old father with a changeling son, he would deny me. But I stand on the far edge of their firelight, and am neither denied nor accepted. My way is my own, old red father; I can't cluster at the drum anymore."[17] This impossibility was explored in its most grotesque ramifications in *Brave New World*, the ominous science fiction novel written in 1932 by Aldous Huxley, before his own visit to Taos, on the basis of a number of conversations with Lawrence. The book depicts a future society ordered in castes of laboratory-produced individuals, conditioned to like the work they are destined to perform, made happy by the government-distributed drug *soma*, and practicing compulsory, orgiastic, and meaningless sex. Only on a reservation in New Mexico, surrounded by barbed wire fences, are a few thousands Indians left to live a "savage life." Two tourists from the "civilized" world visit the reservation to observe with mounting disgust the filthiness and squalor of the Indians' existence. Puzzled and repulsed by the lack of hygiene, the sight of women actually giving birth, familial relations, and hideous ceremonies—Huxley here offers a quite fanciful portrayal of regional religious ceremonies, mixing Navajo rituals with the Hopi Snake Dance and the Spanish Penitentes' practice of self-flagellation—the tourists rescue one of the "savages" to bring him to the civilized world as an object of curiosity. The novel ends with the suicide of the rescued savage, unable to fit into the technologically controlled, consumerist, "happy" society that he finds inhuman and revolting.

I found the well-meaning, paternalistic, but eventually exploitative and even racist attitudes of these early-twentieth-century intellectuals disillusioned with western culture much more disturbing than the straightforward commercialization of entrepreneurs like Fred Harvey. Nevertheless, the former left quite a mark on the region and its houses; the landscape they described, painted, photographed, has become a major tourist attraction. One can visit Mabel Dodge Luhan's house, Ghost Ranch, where D.H. Lawrence lived with his wife Frieda, the chapel where his ashes are supposedly preserved, the residence of Georgia O'Keeffe in Abiquiu, and Brett House (the home of the painter Dorothy Brett, the only member of Lawrence's utopian community), which at the time of our visit had become an upscale

restaurant. Tourist brochures publicized the "stunning O'Keeffe country," and invited you to plan excursions to "D.H. Lawrence's haunts" in and around Taos. We did, of course retrace some of their footsteps, and I remember visiting the Kit Carson Home and Museum, and the house and studio of one of the co-founders of the Taos Society of Artists, the painter Ernest Blumenschein. But what I remember most about the town of Taos is the overwhelming New Age atmosphere. Later I learned that already at the beginning of the eighties the number of alternative healers proposing mental and physical therapies (about one hundred) matched the number of artists residing in the town. Most of the New Age healers took inspiration from Indian and Hispanic practices and subscribed to the legend that mystical, restorative forces were at work in the area—and a lot of them, of course, were Jungians. This was something I knew about. A lot of scholars concerned with the American Southwest refer to the heavy presence of Jungians in Taos.[18] In 1972, for example, architectural historian Vincent Scully, in his monumental *Pueblo: Mountain, Village, Dance*, observes: "Taos attracts Jungians, especially, like flies to compost, and indeed everyone who is attracted to the mystery of humanity's buried thoughts."[19]

Carl Gustav Jung was one of the early visitors to Taos, a big catch of the infatigable Mabel Dodge Luhan, herself a Jungian. Jung went to sit at the feet of the priests of Taos Pueblo to gather a new perspective on the psyche of "the white man," and more material to support his theory of the archetypes and of a collective unconscious. Despite the apparently disparaging remark, Scully himself seems to follow in Jung's footsteps by proposing a parallel interpretation of Indian rituals and Greek tragedy. In the preface to his volume on the Pueblo, Scully presents the research, largely based on ethnographic literature, as the prolongation of his study for *The Earth, the Temple and the Gods: Greek Sacred Architecture*, a book he published in 1962. The analysis of the Pueblos, writes Scully, "grew directly out of my previous work in Greece, whose landscape the American Southwest strongly recalls, not least in the forms of its sacred mountains and the reverence of its old inhabitants for them. Only in the Pueblos, in that sense, could my Greek studies be completed, because their ancient rituals are still performed in them. The chorus of Dionysus still dances there."[20] Reyner Banham, in *Scenes*

in America Deserta, describes Scully's efforts as "the most splendid and disastrous of all paleface attempts to focus on 'the Indian phenomenon.'"[21] Scully's "flights of fancy," explains Banham, were to some extent acceptable in the case of Greece, where he went equipped as a scholar trained in a classical tradition greatly indebted to Greek civilization. With regard to the Pueblo and their culture, which Scully knew only in "translation," he was utterly missing the mark by attempting the comparison between "polis" and "pueblo." In this controversy, I found myself on the side of Banham, even if Scully provides at least an interpretation—like Banham, I was at loss, fascinated but incapable of comprehension. And still I had not seen the Indians dancing.

Towards the conclusion of his extended critique of Scully, Banham oddly remarks: "What the book does deliver is photography (much of it his own) that has the unmistakable ring of truth."[22] Is photography always truthful, and does it explain anything? One would expect a subtler comment from such a thoughtful and keen observer as Banham. In fact, his statement is also inaccurate: Scully states in the preface of his volume that he had to use a great deal of old photographs because of the restrictions already in place in numerous communities. Photography of any kind was forbidden in the Hopi and Keres towns. The Zuni villages, Taos, and Acoma permitted photography of the towns, but never of the dances. These prohibitions made his task very difficult, but Scully approved of them: "We can only be glad," he writes, "that the surviving Americans became so canny at last. Otherwise, one is soon doing it for the camera rather than for the god, and that is the end of it all."[23] The interdictions in most cases included (and still include) sketching, filming, and taping, and Scully is not the first scholar to signal them. The earliest ethnographic reports from the Southwest, including the famous (or infamous) narrative of Cushing, insist on the Indians' caution towards, and even active if hopeless resistance against, any form of representation of themselves and their ceremonies. In spite of this unwillingness, scientists, journalists, militaries, missionaries, tourists, and professional photographers systematically captured their physiognomies and most sacred rituals on camera. Some photographic reportages were conducted with the best intentions, even if with the utmost disregard for Indians beliefs and feelings. Edward S. Curtis's epic project of documenting

the "vanishing race" is a case in point.[24]

Equally momentous in the field of art history was the photographic records collected in New Mexico and Arizona by Aby Warburg at the very end of the nineteenth century. Oddly neither Banham nor Scully mentions the visit of the German scholar, and the crucial role it assumed in the development of Warburg's "pathos formula" or the Dionysian impulse in the arts. Warburg went to the Southwest after a number of conversations with the ethnographers of the Smithsonian in Washington. He registered in his journal the Indians' displeasure with photography, but went on taking and buying pictures. At the same time, he kept mourning the killing of the primordial vitality and unity still expressed in Indian rituals, an irreparable loss brought about by the implacable scientific and technological character of the schizophrenic European "civilization."[25]

In a recent essay, Beverly Singer, professor of anthropology and Native American studies at the University of New Mexico, refers to a renewal of interest for Indian photographic portraits in 1970s that led to a reviving trend in the collection of everything native.[26] The late 60s and early 70s were the years during which Scully and Banham conducted their explorations of the Southwest. During this period, Banham explains, "Indian culture was to be admired as an exemplar to wasteful and ecologically destructive Western man."[27] It must have been precisely the time of the epic migration of the hippies from the birthplaces of the counterculture to the American Southwest. Leaving Haight-Ashbury in San Francisco or Lower Manhattan (both increasingly overrun by junkies and other ugly characters, and constantly covered and exploited by the media), the flower children were converging on the arid and exotic territories of Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico in search of free (or cheap) land where they could experiment with alternative, communal ways of life. New Mexico, and Taos in particular, became the epicentre of the phenomenon. In 1969, Stewart Brand, editor of the *Whole Earth Catalog*, forum for the dispersed tribes of the counterculture, was proclaiming: "New Mexico is the center of momentum this year and maybe for the next several. More of the interesting intentional communities are there. More of the interesting outlaw designers are."[28]

Around the same time occurred the mythical Alloy conference, which took place during the spring equinox of the same year in an area

Above and below: *Monument Valley, Navajo Indian Reservation*, Arizona/Utah border, December 1997. Photo by author.

situated between the Mescalero Apache Reservation and the Trinity atomic bomb test site. According to Brand, the initiator of the conference was Steve Baer, inventor of the Zome, a variation on Buckminster Fuller's geodesic dome, which became a favourite model of construction in the newly founded countercultural communities. What Steve Baer had in mind, explains Stewart Brand, was "a meld of information on Materials, Structure, Energy, Man, Magic, Evolution, and Consciousness."[29] Given this premise, the choice of the site for the conference was quite strategic, reflecting the interests not only of Steve Baer (who moved to Albuquerque after studying mathematics at the ETH in Zurich), but of most of the participants. In fact, many of 150 outlaw designers present at the conference shared a common fascination for the sciences and the most advanced technologies, including those developed by and for the military, and a profound interest for Native American culture—and not just because of the exemplary ecological attitude evoked by Banham. What attracted the generation who followed LSD prophets and gurus expounding the wisdom of exotic religions, of course, was the "magic" of the Indian system of beliefs and the spiritual practices involving the consumption of drugs.

Typical is the case of Stewart Brand, who, after studying ecology at Stanford, served in the U.S. Army, and then became involved in the work of USCO ("US" company), an anonymous group of East Coast artists producing avant-garde multimedia installations. Brand then moved to San Francisco to become a member of the Merry Pranksters, the crazy tribe of Ken Kesey, responsible for organizing the notorious Acid Tests. In the early sixties, while collaborating with USCO, Brand visited the Warm Springs, Blackfoot, Navajo, Hopi, Papago, and other Indian reservations to research and gather photographs and other materials for a multimedia experience called "America Needs Indian." The event employed movie projectors, Indian dancers, and multiple soundtracks playing simultaneously. In 1966, it became part of the Trips Festival in San Francisco, one of the era's greatest countercultural moments. Brand, who for a time was married to a Native American mathematician, mentions in the *Whole Earth Catalog* a recommended collection of publications written on Indians or by Indians:

The booklist that follows comes from two intense informal years (and five slack

ones) hanging around Indian reservations, anthropologists, and libraries. Long may Indians, reservations, anthropologists and libraries thrive! They gave me more reliable information, and human warmth, than dope and college put together. I am sure the books all by themselves cannot deliver The Native American Experience. For that you need time immersed in the land and neighborly acquaintance at least with some in fact Indians."[30]

He was preaching to the converted. Members of the counterculture in the Southwest were already fraternizing with the local natives, displaying an active interest in particular for the peyote ceremonies, living in tepees, wearing Indian attire, and adopting names like New Buffalo for their newly founded communities.

They were also rediscovering the previous generation of escapees and Indian lovers, from D.H. Lawrence to Aldous Huxley and Mabel Dodge Luhan. In the cult film *Easy Rider* (1969), the tragic account of a journey of two countercultural bikers travelling from Los Angeles to New Orleans in search of America (and which incidentally also presents a fictional portrayal of New Buffalo), one of the characters, played by Jack Nicholson, constantly quotes D.H. Lawrence. Dennis Hopper himself, after the incredible success of the film, moved to Taos and lived in the house of Mabel Dodge Luhan with the hope of creating an alternative movie centre.

This enthusiastic espousal of Indian costumes and way of life was inspired more by a fanciful image of the Native Americans than the reality of local tribal traditions. The tepee, for example, was far from being the typical habitation of the region. The Navajo built hogans and Pueblo adobe architecture. Likewise, names like New Buffalo evoked more the hunting and nomadic life of the tribes living on the plain than the sedentary habits of the Pueblo who subsisted mainly on a diet of corn, beans, and squash. Nevertheless, scholarly books, diaries, memories, and oral narratives copiously document these encounters and the tolerating attitude of the Native Americans.

In the eyes of many palefaces, an alliance was in fact staged between hippies and Native Americans. Years later, Brand noted: "By the end of the 60s, Indians had been adopted by the hippies, and to everyone's astonishment, not least mine, it basically worked out. There was a transmission

of traditional frames of reference from older Indians to hippies, who were passing it to their young peers in the reservations and a lineage was inadvertently, but I think genuinely, preserved."[31] But what was the Indian perception of this supposed alliance? And did it really take place? Scully, in *Pueblo: Mountain, Village, Dance*, offers a glimpse into the Indian response by reporting an episode that took place in June 1968 at Shipaulovi. Hopi clowns were performing during the intervals of a kachina dance, "satirizing social workers and the agents of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. At other times they have taken off hippies and missionaries, tourists, and especially all Indian lovers, always."[32] On a different occasion, reports Scully, in one of the kivas of Mishongnovi, in the course of a ritual, some hippies, "wrapped Indian-like but unfortunately not Hopi-like," sat by mistake on the benches reserved for the dancers. "The priests," writes Scully, "said nothing at first, but the women carried on until they stirred themselves to make the hippies move. A number of them passed out (zonk) later."[33]

The year after our trip, Philip Deloria, a historian of Indian descent, published *Playing Indian*, a thoughtful investigation of the way Americans since the time of the Boston Tea Party have repeatedly appropriated Indian dress and acted out Indian roles in order to shape their national identity. Retracing this fascinating history, Deloria devotes an entire chapter to Indians and the countercultural New Age, wherein he describes the response of real Indians. As a conclusion, Deloria observes: "Like many before them, they [the countercultural and new age Indians] had turned to Indianness as sign of all that was authentic and aboriginal, everything that could be true about America. […] Yet like those who came before, they found that Indianness inevitably required real native people, and that those people called everything into question. Playing Indian, as always, had a tendency to lead one into, rather than out of, contradiction and irony."[34] However, despite all the misunderstandings, inconsistencies and paradoxes of the encounters between hippies and Indians, these years of revolt against the dominant values of American society and of civil rights battles had a profound impact on Indian consciousness. As I was to learn later, in the unrest of the time American Indians found the seeds of a transformation that has recently been compared to a cultural revolution. But in the winter of 1997, during the journey that took us to

the Zuni and Hopi towns high on their mesas, to the bare and silent remains of Canyon de Chelly, Mesa Verde, and Chaco Canyon, to the ominous museums of Los Alamos, to the unimaginable gorgeousness of the Grand Canyon, Monument Valley, and Shiprock, and to the reservations sprinkled with casinos and dialysis clinics, the fruits of that revolution were still unknown to me. The Indians, selling souvenirs, acting as guides, and living in evident poverty, remained a baffling presence. And then, at the very end of our trip, we saw them dancing.

Acoma

The "Sky City," almost an afterthought. One of us insisted on visiting it, even though it was our final day and we had to catch planes in different directions early in the afternoon. We left the last of the Best Western hotels very early in the morning. It was still dark and exceedingly cold. We had to leave our car at the foot of the mesa where Acoma has stood, unchanged, for centuries. A guide drove us up in the astonishing radiance of the morning. Elemental adobe compositions, blinding sunshine on snow and ice, a terse and freezing sky, drums and stamping feet—it was December, time to celebrate the winter solstice. Once more, we were the only tourists. We sat, unused cameras in our hands, in a corner of the church San Estevan del Rey. Dressed in traditional attire and beautifully masked, the men came, and the adolescent boys, and the maids, and the mature women and the children, joyously dancing, honoring the bountiful new year to come. Again we were speechless, a silence that stayed with us beyond the quick adieus at the airport. For the first time in my life I felt the unbelievable power of a traditional society and the experience still haunts me ten years later.

Coda

In the early 50s, one widely advertised attraction of Las Vegas was its proximity to the Nevada Test Site. An iconic 1957 photograph of "Miss Atomic Bomb," portraying showgirl Lee Merlin of the Sands Hotel with a cotton mushroom cloud added to the front of her swimsuit, is an image that has been reproduced in hundreds of publications and embodies the spirit of the time. One can still buy souvenirs displaying the long-legged blonde raising her arms, euphorically celebrating the

Above and below: *Canyon de Chelly*, Apache County, Arizona, December 1997. Photo by author.

extravagant face of the Atomic Age. Las Vegas, the city of "sin," was strangely gaining a new legitimacy by joining the Cold War effort and transforming the spectre of nuclear annihilation into spectacle. Documents about the Las Vegas of the time, like the famous postcard advertising the Pioneer Club (circa 1955), with its winking cowboy sign and a glowing red mushroom cloud in the distance, show how images related to atomic tourism quite often employed the strategy of association with the pioneer and Native American past of the area. Resorts and gaming establishment like El Rancho or the Hotel Last Frontier in the early 40s were offering "authentic" western experiences like horseback riding, BBQs, and line dancing. The 1950s saw the creation of the Last Frontier Village, a sort of theme park, complete with old western post office, general store, jail and museum illustrating the Indian roots of the region. In 1955, the Hotel Last Frontier added a new building to the north of its property, naming it the New Frontier Hotel and Casino. The intention was to discard the western theme in favour of a modern atomic or space-age experience. Nevertheless, contemporary photos show attendants dressed in cowboy attire and full Indian regalia waiting for the guests at the main entrance. After reducing to entertainment the painful history of war, domination, and conquest over the western territories and their indigenous occupants, Las Vegas was performing the same operation on the Cold War and the threat of obliteration of life and civilization: the tragedies and perils of the old and new wars were reassuringly contained and gloriously reframed by the powerful, all-American myth of the Frontier.

In February 2005, the Atomic Testing Museum opened in Las Vegas. An affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, it's located only a mile from the Strip and appears to be quite a popular tourist destination. To judge from the numerous postings on the internet, visitors love to be portrayed in front of photographs of spectacular nuclear explosions. The mission of the museum is to present scientific matters in a compelling way, preserve the legacy of the Nuclear Test Site, and promote public accessibility and understanding of the site. The various galleries document the history of the NTS in the context of the Cold War, show how the Atomic Age was reflected in pop culture, and display photographs, films and interviews with on-site workers and protestors. The most spectacular section of the museum is the

Ground Zero Theatre, a replica of a bunker where visitors can watch a video of an atomic explosion accompanied by a realistic multi-sensory experience of deafening sounds, shaking, vibrations and blasts of hot air. Not far from the Theatre are the Steward of the Land Galleries I and II. The first covers geology, hydrology, and radiation monitoring. The second is dedicated to archeology, endangered species, and Native Americans. According to the museum authority, a collection illustrating crafts and various objects used by the ancient inhabitants of the NTS is being completed with the collaboration of a local tribe.

Nuclear power and American Indians

At the Atomic Testing Museum, we find the association, albeit carefully reframed and updated, already constructed and exploited by the Las Vegas of the 50s. At the museum, the Indians, instead of being presented like the warriors of a Buffalo Bill show, are offered to the visitors as descendants of a primeval civilization living in harmony with the arid territory. The label "stewards of the land" seems to suggest a possible reclamation of the technologically devastated terrain thanks to the everlasting wisdom of its original occupants. A similar strategy is deployed at the Nuclear Test Site, which has now also become a tourist destination. The signs posted on the fence surrounding the NTS, after describing the function and the origin of the area, tactfully announce: "Archeological studies of the NTS area have revealed continuous occupation by prehistoric man from about 9,500 years ago. Several prehistoric cultures are represented. The last aboriginal group to occupy the site was the Southern Paiute, who foraged plant foods in season and occupied the area until the arrival of the pioneers."

Once again Americans are playing Indian, or better still playing with the Indians. The Native Americans represented at the museum and mentioned on the NTS signs are not the contemporary inhabitants of the reservations living in poverty next to contaminated areas, suffering from obesity, diabetes, heart disease, alcoholism, making an uncertain life catering to tourists. The lands that have been taken from the original owners are symbolically "returned" by the institutions, but not to the Indians of the present, immersed and transformed by the reality of contemporary America. The reinstated Indians offered to the

tourist gaze are safely frozen in time. They are the custodians of immemorial knowledge, captive to tradition and authenticity.

Indeed, tradition and authenticity are the traps that a new generation of Native American artists are exposing and trying to evade. They are questioning and challenging the carefully constructed prison where they are condemned to conform to a required stereotype, and their weapon of choice is very often photography. From a wealth of provocative artists, I will mention only three examples.

In 2005, Zig Jackson became the first Native American photographer represented in the collection of the Library of Congress in Washington D.C.. Jackson donated four photographic prints from each of three series. The first group of photographs, under the title *Indian Photographing Tourist Photographing Indian*, humorously represents invasive tourists taking pictures of reservation Indians. The second, *Native American Veterans*, more somberly honours military veterans and their families from Plain Indian reservations. *Entering Zig's Indian Reservation*, is the final, darkly amusing, series in which Jackson represents himself. Wearing Indian attire and sunglasses, he poses at various sites in San Francisco next to a huge, official-looking sign that says, "Entering Zig's Reservation." Under the heading, the sign lists private property rules that include "No Picture Taking," "No Hunting," "No Air Traffic," and "New Agers Prohibited."

Hulleah Tsinhnahjinnie, a Diné/Seminole/Muscogee, is an artist that privileges photography as a medium and conduit for political expression, and became internationally famous with *The Damn Series* of 1997. When exhibited at the Barbican Gallery in London, two images in particular captured the attention of the audience and the press: *This is not a commercial, this is my homeland*, and *Damn! There goes the Neighbourhood*. The first depicts Monument Valley, the iconic southwestern panorama of mesas and red mittens employed innumerable times as a setting for advertisements and films. The superimposed titular inscription subtracts it from the realm of cliché and reframes the iconic scenery as sovereign Diné land. The second represents a desert landscape with an old photograph in the foreground of an Indian warrior holding a smoking gun, and a garish, bullet-ridden Oscar Meyer Wiener-mobile behind him. Once again, the inscription that seems to come out, cartoon-like,

from the mouth of the warrior, eloquently denounces the fate of the Indian people and of the lands they have lost.

In 1992, James Luna, a Luiseño Indian, proposed a performance at the Whitney Museum in New York entitled *Take a Picture with a Real Indian*. Visitors were asked to pick a real Indian from a selection of cardboard cut-outs and invited to take a Polaroid. The work was inspired by a trip through Navajo land during which Luna had seen Indians selling souvenirs and catering to tourists.

James Luna, *Take a Picture with a Real Indian*. Performed for the National Museum of the American Indian, Columbus Day, Washington D.C. Train Station, October 10, 2012. Image courtesy of the artist.

James Luna, *Artifact Piece*, in "The Decade Show: Frameworks of Identity in the 1980s," The Studio Museum in Harlem, New York, in collaboration with the New Museum of Contemporary Art and the Museum of Contemporary Hispanic Art, 2009. Image courtesy of the artist.

Above and below: Clouds dissolving over the Grand Canyon after a winter storm, Arizona, December 1997. Photo by author.

A few years before, in an exhibition called *Artifact Piece*, Luna had spectacularly called attention to the exhibition of Native American people and their relics by displaying himself in a glass case at the Museum of Man in San Diego. For days he remained motionless, dressed in a loincloth and surrounded by personal documents and ceremonial objects. Many members of the public were stunned by the discovery that the unmoving figure on exhibit was actually a living and breathing individual. In another memorable performance, *Petroglyphs in Motion*, Luna presented a non-linear history of Native American man using typical stereotypes. Beginning with a petroglyph, Luna in turn impersonated Shaman, Rockabilly, War Veteran, Drunk, and Coyote. Vertiginously traveling through time, his characters mutate, learn, and evolve.

The powerful works of these artists eloquently speak of a new form of resistance and self-representation. The camera, held for so long in the hands of the white man, the scientist, the missionary, the military, the tourist, is no longer kept at bay with interdictions very often ignored. Photography, now in the hands of American Indians, is no longer there to record stereotypes, immortalize tradition, or confirm authenticity. Poignantly or ironically it exposes unbalanced systems of relationships, different perceptions of time, history and reality. The Indian wars have moved to new battlefields. Paraphrasing James Luna, who in 2005 together with Ed Ruscha represented the United States at the Venice Biennale, tourists beware: the petroglyphs are in motion. ×

Notes

1. Aby Warburg, "Excerpts from Aby Warburg's Diary," in *Photographs at the Frontier: Aby Warburg in America 1895–1896*, eds. Benedetta Cestelli Guidi and Nicholas Mann (London: Merrell Holberton Publishers with the Warburg Institute, 1998), 155.
2. Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (New York: Picador, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1977), 23–24.
3. Paul Chaat Smith, "Luna remembers," in *James Luna Emendation*, 51st International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia, Fondazione Querini Stampalia, Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian (Washington and New York, 2005), 26.
4. On nineteenth-century ethnography in North America, see Curtis Hinsley, *The Smithsonian and the American Indian: Making a Moral Anthropology in Victorian America* (Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1981); Curtis Hinsley, "Ethnographic Charisma and Scientific Routine: Cushing and Fewkes in the American Southwest, 1879–1893" in *Observers Observed: Essays on Ethnographic Fieldwork, History of Anthropology, Vol. 1*, ed. George W. Stocking Jr. (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), 53–69.
5. For a contextual analysis of the interpretation of Ruth Benedict, see George W. Stocking Jr., "The Ethnographic Sensibility of the 1920s and the Dualism of the Anthropological Tradition," in *Romantic Motives: Essays on Anthropological Sensibility, History of Anthropology, Vol. 6*, ed. George W. Stocking Jr. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989), 208–276.
6. Paul Rabinow, *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1977); Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon, 1979); James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature and Art* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1988); James Clifford and George Marcus, *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); George E. Marcus and Michael M.J. Fisher, *Anthropology as Cultural Critique* (Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press, 1986); *Ethnographic Research: A Guide to General Conduct*, ed. Roy Frank Ellen (London: Academic Press, 1984).
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8. Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1997).
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13. Frank Lloyd Wright, "Organic Architecture," *Architects Journal*, August 1934, quoted in *Shelter and Society*, ed. Paul Oliver (New York, Washington: Frederick A. Praeger Publishers, 1969), 16.
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15. Maurice Sterne, quoted in Mabel Dodge Luhan, *Edge of the Taos Desert: An Escape to Reality* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987), xi–xii.
16. Lois Palken Rudnik, *Utopian Vistas: The Mabel Dodge Luhan House and the American Counterculture* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 93.
17. D.H. Lawrence, "Indians and an Englishman," in *D.H. Lawrence and New Mexico*, ed. Keith Sagar (Paris/London: Alyscamp Press, 1995), 10.
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21. Banham, *Scenes*, 126.
22. Ibid., 127.
23. Scully, *Pueblo*, xvi.
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25. See *Photographs at the Frontier: Aby Warburg in America 1895–1896*, eds. Benedetta Cestelli Guidi and Nicholas Mann. See also Joseph L. Koerner, Aby Warburg, *Le rituel du Serpent: Art et Anthropologie* (Paris: Macula, 2003); and Philippe-Alain Michaud, *Aby Warburg et l'image en movement* (Paris: Macula, 1998).
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27. Banham, *Scenes*, 120. Banham's first encounter the American desert took place in February 1968.
28. Steward Brand, "Report from Alloy," *The Last Whole Earth Catalog* (Portola Institute and Random House, 1971), 112.
29. Ibid.
30. Ibid., 382.
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34. Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1998), 180. An expanded and revised version of this text has been published as Philip J. Deloria, "Counterculture Indians and the New Age," in *Imagine Nation: The Counterculture of the 1960s and 70s*, eds. Peter Braunstein and Michael Doyle (New York/London: Routledge, 2002), 159–188. On Indianness and American society, see Marianna Torgovnick, *Primitive Passions: Men, Women, and the Quest for Ecstasy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).
35. James Luna's performance for the 2005 Venice Biennale, *Emendatio*, was sponsored by the Smithsonian Museum of the American Indian.

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Scenes in a Concrete Deserta
by Sergio López-Piñeiro

Factories are uniquely powerful spaces defined by an interior and virtual horizon line produced by the protective extra coat of paint located in the lower half of the columns and reaching up to a person's eye-level. This accidental datum, unique to this type of building when it is completely empty, makes the visitor feel as if in an interior desert. *Scenes in a Concrete*

Deserta explores mismatching encounters as described by Reyner Banham in *Scenes in America Deserta* (1982) and *A Concrete Atlantis* (1986) through the manipulation of this interior space by transforming the virtual horizon line into a series of homogeneously distributed virtual volumes. ✕

Sergio López-Piñeiro (Madrid, 1973) is the founder of the architectural practice Holes of Matter. An Assistant Professor at the University at Buffalo Department of Architecture, he has previously worked at NoMad (Madrid, 1998-2000) and at Foreign Office Architects (London, 2000-2002). López-Piñeiro graduated from ETS Arquitectura Madrid in 1998 and received his M. Arch. degree from Princeton University in 2004, where he was awarded the Suzanne Kolarik Underwood Prize. He is a registered architect in Spain.

Albert Kahn, Continental Motors Company.

Albert Kahn, Burroughs Adding Machine Company.

Albert Kahn, Ford Motor Company.
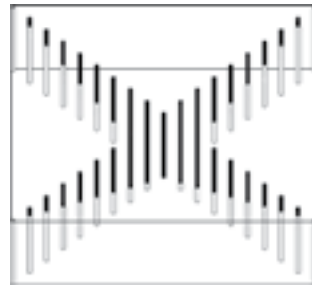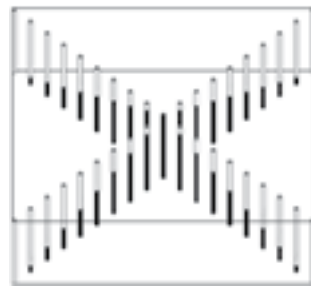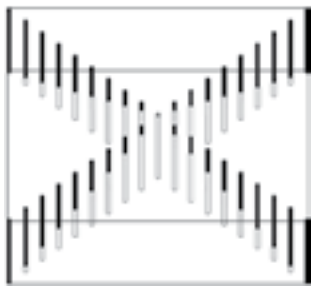
Three sets of axonometrics, along with their perspectival views, showing three variations of a virtual volume.

Axonometric showing four virtual octahedrons.

1-5: Set of images showing how one of these virtual volumes would be perceived by a person moving through the space.
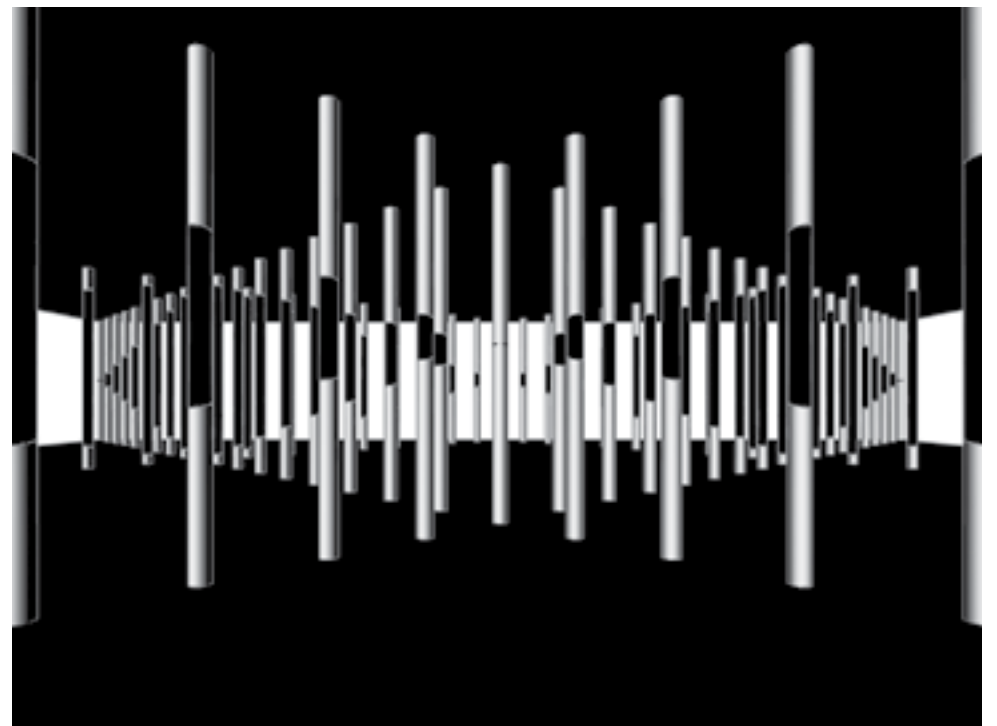
Perspectival view of four virtual octahedrons.

Occupy, the Time of Riots, and the Real Movement of History
by Jason E. Smith

Every age has its riots. In ours, each day, all over the world, they go off by the hundreds: food rebellions, landless peasant uprisings, worker strikes that get out of hand, anti-police brutality riots in urban slums. At what point does this steady beat of riots crystallize into an age, into a time of riots? How should we understand the riots we see or do not see, the riots we fear and the riots we take part in, when they begin to assume a kind of configuration, to accumulate in a certain chaotic order, and begin to echo each other, as if converging obliquely in one single, if still largely unfocused, assault on the existing order? *Le temps des émeutes*: this was the expression used in France after 1848 to refer to the early years of the workers' movement, the two decades preceding the sudden eruption of revolt across Europe that year. This period was marked on one hand by a certain disconnection between the proliferation of socialist and utopian sects, with their alternately arcane or lucid schemes for treating the emergent so-called "social question," and on the other by the immediate needs of workers themselves in their often violent responses to transformations of the production process occurring at the time. The formal subsumption of worker activity under capitalist social relations combined with radical changes to industrial production—only then just beginning—often occasioned the sabotage of the work process and the outright destruction of newly introduced machinery.

However punctual their occurrence and staccato their rhythm, these worker assaults, often a defense of older forms of the labour process, began to almost unconsciously produce a certain orientation that would not be clarified strategically for some time. To be sure, the virtual convergence of worker struggles often finds its structural unity in specific objective conditions, namely those of a crisis internal to a particular phase of the capital relation, or in the restructurations of these relations, often occasioned by technological transformation. But we must not underestimate the more contagious process whereby revolts communicate through the proliferation of affects, affinities, and hatreds th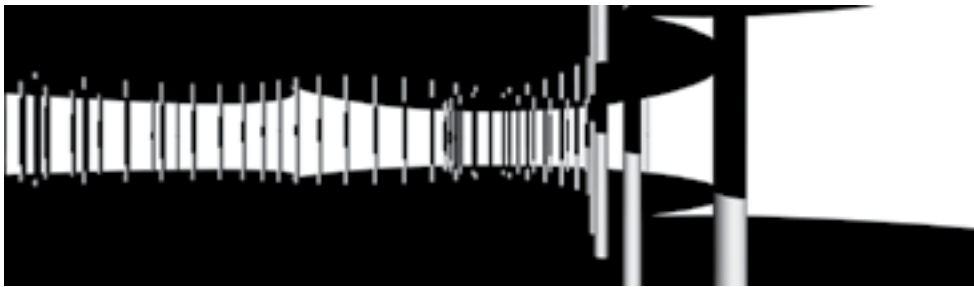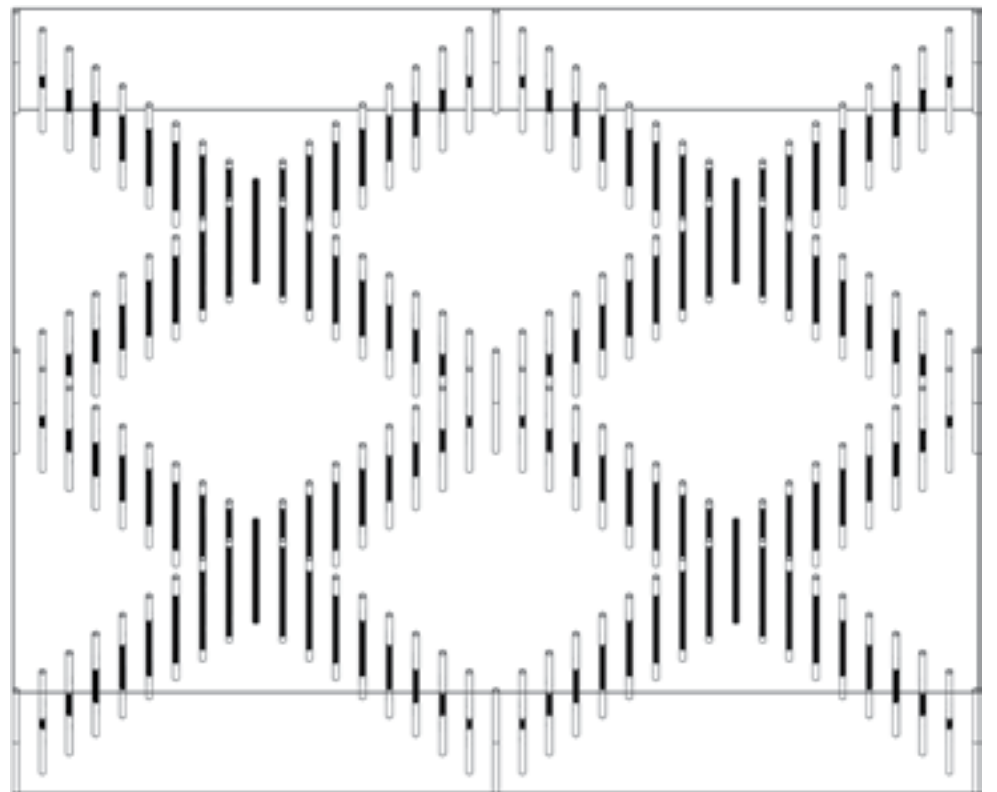at circulate among previously unconnected places and times, sometimes with a speed so rapid they seem to happen everywhere all at once, as if forming a ring of fire.

Over the past five or six years, probably beginning with the banlieue riots in France in November 2005 up to the London riots of August 2011, from the anti-CPE struggles in France in 2006 to the recent "movement of the squares," from the anti-austerity general strikes in Greece over the past two years to the astonishing revolts in North Africa last year, we are awakening from the neo-liberal dream of global progress and prosperity: after forty years of reaction, after four decades of defeat, we have re-entered the uncertain stream of history. We bear witness to a new cycle of struggles; ours is a time of riots.

The most remarkable aspect of the Arab rebellions of last year is neither the fact of their occurrence nor the success they enjoyed in deposing the senile autocrats and their entourages whose power (so often supported by Western billions) crumbled. What is most remarkable is the reception of these revolutions in the West. Here I do not mean the cynical instrumentalization of the riots on the part of the political classes who, with predictable vulgarity, projected their own unearned narcissism onto the revolts, imagining that the people who risked their lives taking and defending Tahrir square somehow wanted to have a Western-style social arrangement, with its fig-leaf democratic circuses barely concealing the ruthless extraction of wealth from the earth and its populations that is its very raison d'être. These same commentators who claimed to admire the Egyptian people's intransigence, and even their

capacity for revolt (for we should not forget that the revolt in Egypt involved the burning down of police stations, the liberal use of Molotov cocktails, and violent clashes with the state security apparatus and its hired thugs) were only yesterday cheerleaders for the regimes that fell, and who today condemn the most minor confrontations with the police over "here" (as recently occurred with Occupy Oakland). In referring to the reception of the Arab Spring Revolutions in the West, I want to emphasize instead the fact that these victories, even if only partial and often fragile, were received not as struggles undertaken by peoples far away nor by people so different from "us." To the contrary, they produced a movement of identification, probably false, but irreducible all the same: that these people were like us, and we could do what they have done. From one perspective, there was minimal resonance between the situation unfolding in North Africa and what would become the movement of the squares or the Occupy movement: a revolt on the part of an immiserated petit bourgeoisie that faced a future completely destroyed by debt, a life without the State functionary position they might have expected to receive only ten years prior. But what is important in this identification is the distance it marks from the Third-Worldist positions characteristic of the movements formed on the basis of a *solidarity* with anti-colonial and national liberation struggles in the 1960s. While politically consequential for a number of reasons, these solidarities were founded on the assumption that it was only the peasant populations of the non-industrialized West who were still capable of leading a global assault on the imperialist (and therefore "final") stage of capitalist development; the assumption was that the West and its workers' movement—indeed class struggle itself—had been completely absorbed into the dynamic of capitalist development. The Arab revolts of early 2011, and their reception in the West, make it clear that this previous cycle of struggles has come to an end. The conditions for this can no doubt be found in the objective transformation of the capitalist world system itself, which has slowly undermined the core-periphery articulation characteristic of earlier historical moments. But, for us, it is the subjective effects that deserve further consideration, and in particular the assumption that struggles in the post-industrial West, whether the indignado movement in Spain or Greece, or Occupy in the U.S., could be modeled on the successful rebellions of North Africa.

It is not irrelevant that these revolts took place in countries and cities on the southern coast of the Mediterranean, only hundreds of miles from Athens. This fact makes the movement less a European phenomenon than a conflagration of the Mediterranean basin, a geopolitical configuration that would include Spain and Italy as well. The Mediterranean rim would form, in a post-core/periphery age, a geo-political formation brought together through the resonance of revolts, out of which other echoes would resonate. But a closer inspection underlines the more fundamental differences between what has occurred in the global "movement of the squares"—the occupation of Syntagma Square in Athens, the movement of the "indignados" in Spain, as well as the Occupy movement in the U.S., with its two poles of Wall Street and Oakland—and the Arab spring. The Arab Spring cannot simply be folded into the fallout of the financial crisis of 2008. It is quite clear that even though North African countries like Tunisia and Egypt would necessarily feel its effects, it would not have the same kind of impact there as in industrial and post-industrial Europe and North America—and certainly not with the same immediacy. Instead, and this is essential, we can assign the triggering incident to that of a police murder, a murder by the State, in the form of the suicide of the street vendor in

Tunisia. This is what links the Arab Spring and the intensity of its initial emergence more closely to the 2005 banlieue riots in France, the British riots of 2011, and importantly, the riots of December 2008 in Greece. All three European events involved a murder committed by the police that triggered a ferocious reprisal. But in North Africa the riots managed to endure beyond the usual few days (though the French riots lasted as long as two weeks) and expand beyond the mere destruction of property, looting, and conflagration of State symbols (the burning of schools and police stations). They were able to consolidate in central urban places, and formalize their virulence into a single, simple watchword: "The people want the regime to fall."

The fundamental question posed by the Occupy movement in the U.S. is why the tactic of occupation had such a resonance, even before the Arab Spring. We should not forget that it was the University of California anti-austerity struggles of 2009–10 that put the tactic on the map, even as the UC student movement itself inherited the tactic from earlier initiatives in Europe, such as the anti-CPE struggles in France in 2006 and even the university occupation in Zagreb in 2009. It is also worth pointing out that many of the insurrectionary elements that helped organize the Oakland camp were veterans of the UC struggles of a few years before. What is perhaps most remarkable is the way in which the tactic of occupation itself was able to take root in a vastly different context, a transplantation that survived the passage from a small radical milieu on UC campuses to the complex class composition of the Oakland camps, with its convergence of increasingly immiserated petit-bourgeois elements—ex-students crushed by mountains of debt—and a large, predominantly black homeless population. Indeed, this convergence would necessarily reveal fractures and even antagonisms for which there would be no organizational or ideological fix available. The tactic of occupation—and we should be clear that, in the end, protestors did not occupy any buildings, met as they were by hundreds of police in riot suits—is an intense experience both because it is materially difficult to defend these claimed spaces and because of the subjective disposition it induces. You are always on the defensive—which was not the case with the dramatic port blockades pulled off in Oakland, or even in the failed actions to take buildings—constantly haunted by the sudden attack in the middle of the night by riot police who are massed just around the corner, armed with tear gas, rubber bullets, flashbang grenades, and zipties.

It is important when considering the appeal of occupation as a tactic to recall the form of struggle assumed by the anti-globalization movement, particularly during its peak phase between Seattle and Genoa. The summit-hopping tactics of the anti-capitalist movement, for all its numbers and intensity—bringing together a range of factions on the left, from liberals to organized labour, from the new social movements to black blocs, both Seattle and Genoa occasioned the most intense street battles witnessed since the 1960s—revealed a fundamental weakness: the inability of the movement to construct its own temporality. Not only did the movement fixate on the more institutional facades of the new, "imperial" form of power that emerged with the neoliberal restructuration of the 1970s and 1980s, fetishizing political and juridical figurations of that power rather than attacking it at its heart—in the largely invisible penetration of micro-powers into the webs of everyday life on the one hand, and in the refinement of the global class relation on the other, now no longer tied to worker identity and the workers' movement—but the timing of its actions, however spectacular they may have been, was always determined by

the cadence of the State or its imperial successors. Empire should be understood as a certain rhythm of convocation, the capacity to determine when and where decisions regarding the destiny of a people (war, bank bailouts) are made, and at the level of the State, the capacity to call for elections, for a vote. What the Occupy movements were capable of, whether in the dramatic but qualified successes of the Arab Spring, or in the more equivocal experience of the movement of the squares in the West, was the construction of an immanent duration. This construction of its own temporality, of its own internal dynamics, was not, however, the formation of an interiority (or if it was, the fetishization of its own inner workings and operations almost always spelled doom). The trajectory of Occupy Oakland, whatever its future may be (and there is no assurance that it will have one), remains exemplary here. The occupation of Oscar Grant Plaza, and the growth of various organs capable of treating the contradictions and conflicts, established a temporality marked by this rhythm of conflict and the development of capacities for handling contradiction. What made it possible for this camp to prevent its own collapse is that the construction of its own temporality—its surges and retreats—was dependent on both the unpredictable, but inevitable, contingency of a police attack, as well as the outward projection of its own capacities into the city through the aforementioned successful port shutdowns and even in the failure to occupy buildings or create a defensible base for offensive actions to come.

What is remarkable about the experiences of the Arab Spring was their capacity to move on the basis of the contingent trigger of a police murder (even if this takes the form of a police attack followed by a suicide), from the punctual intensity of the anti-police riot to the immanent duration of occupation: an occupation of Tahrir Square that functioned as the site of convergence among various layers of the Egyptian population as well as a launching point for the counter-assault on the Mubarek regime. By way of a conclusion, it may be more relevant to address the situation in Greece, a country marked deeply and painfully by the global economic crisis and currently faced with devastating austerity measures imposed by a government of technocrats installed by their German financial masters. The protest there is remarkable for having brought together, in however fragmented and disconnected a manner, the anti-police riots of December 2008, the occupation of Syntagma square in 2011, and the massive general strikes that occurred on the occasion of parliamentary votes on austerity measures. What we see in these three elements is not only the actions undertaken by different social forces—the anarchists, immigrants and lumpen rioters, the futureless petit bourgeois of the square, and the remnants of the workers' movement in the general strikes—but rather three temporalities that seem to exist side-by-side, without yet finding their explosive articulation, without yet forcing Greece from revolt to revolution. As these three temporalities fuse together in a ruptural unity, the time of the State will buckle, and the time of riots will force open a new phase in the transition to life after capitalism. What will resurface is nothing less than what Marx, in an enigmatic but decisive phrase, called the "real movement of history."[1] ✕

Note

1. I want to thank Jasper Bernes in particular for helping shape some of these thoughts.

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A Forensic Investigation
of the Objective Reassembly of the Public
by Mahsa Majidian

This series of images is of event-spaces from the recent conflicts in the Middle East and Northern Africa. Let us call them "situations." The practice of resistance and conflict exercised in these situations registers them as territories within broader systems, as heterotopias or islands. I would like to call them "The Other Cities."

The Other City works on three levels. The first is situated within an everyday city and includes objects of everyday life. It motivates both ephemeral and spectacular inversions of normative social and political relations through the agency of these objects. The second level is the disturbance of a city-system within a regional network of nation states with similar political conditions. For example, a person in Tripoli finds the struggles of a Tunisian man similar to his, and is motivated to form a similar "public" in protest. The third level of the Other City is the point of view of people in the West experiencing the emergence of an "other" form of urbanism through images online.

The Other City is a point of view (an internal space), a spatial quality, and a form of urbanism. While it is formed by a set of internal relations—Actors and Networks[1]—its "otherness" is achieved through the fact that it sits in relation with the everyday city that surrounds it and cities we know around the world. For centuries, the idea of the Other City has been, and continues to be, the "reserve of imagination." Without the Other City, "dreams dry up, espionage takes the place of adventure, and the police take the place of pirates."[2]

The otherness of the Other City, as well as the reassembly of its Actors, is understood, rendered, obfuscated, and imitated through images, which are the permanent evidence of an ephemeral condition. Their effect also contributes to a "resonance" something emerging in one island reverberates with the wave emitted by something emerging from another island. Each situation is "the sudden creation, not of a new reality, but of a myriad of new possibilities."[3]

This project is a forensic investigation of the image as a piece of evidence, deconstructed and organized to bare its claim-making objects. For each, readers are presented with an aerial plan where the form of the Other City is cropped from the larger city that surrounds it, and annotated with dates, locations and objects. Above each map, some of these objects are defined in order to express their unique contexts. Surrounding it, a range of images and video stills have been gathered from a variety of online sources, including both official news media and citizen journalist accounts, each labeled and accessible for readers to make connections among them. These images illustrate the claim-making objects defined on all five of the maps.

This work's title is taken from Shahre Farang, which literally means "Other City" in Farsi, a portable urban viewing box that was a precursor to cinema in the early 1900s, which presented images of European capitals for the edification and pleasure of the citizens of Persian Towns. Here, each page can be seen as a viewing box and includes significant and widely published images of the Other City in each urban context, the map and a selection of definitions. Readers will have to build up events from this fragmentary evidence in a forensic (forum-building) representation—as they reconstruct the situation, and reassemble "the public" of the city. ×

Notes
1. Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).
2. Michel Foucault, "Des espaces autres" (paper presented at the Cercle d'études architecturales, march 14, 1967)," trans. Jay Miskowiec, *Architecture Mouvement Continuité* 5 (1984): 46-49.
3. Alain Badiou, "Tunisie, Egypte: quand un vent d'est balaie l'arrogance de l'Occident." *Le Monde*, February 18, 2011. Available in English at: http://www.lacan.com/thesymptom/?page_id=1031.

Mahsa Majidian is a recent graduate of the University of Toronto's Daniels School of Architecture Landscape, and Design, who has also studied in Vancouver (UBC), Buenos Aires (UBA), and Tehran (University of Art). Her interests lay in critical theory, the public sphere, complexities of urbanism, and forensic aesthetics, and her thesis was a curated event based on Actor-Network Theory called "The Other City."

The Other City   Tehran, Iran   شهر فرنگ

Building
× University: An institution of higher education and scholarly research that may confer graduate, undergraduate, and postgraduate academic degrees. The site of universities has served as the locus of political or economic protest movements at many times in late 20th and early 21st centuries.

State Institutions
× Moral Police/Revolutionary Guards/ Religious Police: Moral Police/Revolutionary Guards/ Religious Police: Enforces the application of Islamic Sharia law in some Islamic countries. In authoritarian regimes that follow the Sharia Law as part of their constitution, the Religious Police might also be entitled to police the allegiance of individuals to the ruling party, and take any necessary action when criticism of the government is raised.

People
× Student: A person enrolled in an educational institution. Students of post-secondary institutions (colleges and universities) have often been associated with civil disobedience, occupations, and unrest.

Communication Devices
× Satellite TV: Television programming distributed through communication satellite(s) stationed in space and orbiting the earth, and received through outdoor antenna or parabolic mirror dish. Since the distribution of satellite television cannot be controlled by states that do not have physical access to particular communication satellites, the use by civilian populations of small antenna or satellite dishes grant access to many foreign media television channels.

Moving Signs
× V Sign: A hand gesture in which the index and middle fingers are raised and parted, while the other fingers are clenched. It has various meanings, depending on the cultural context and how it is presented. It is most commonly used to represent the letter V as in "victory" (e.g. in The Middle East and Northern Africa), as a symbol of peace, and as purely expressive gesture with no intended meaning.

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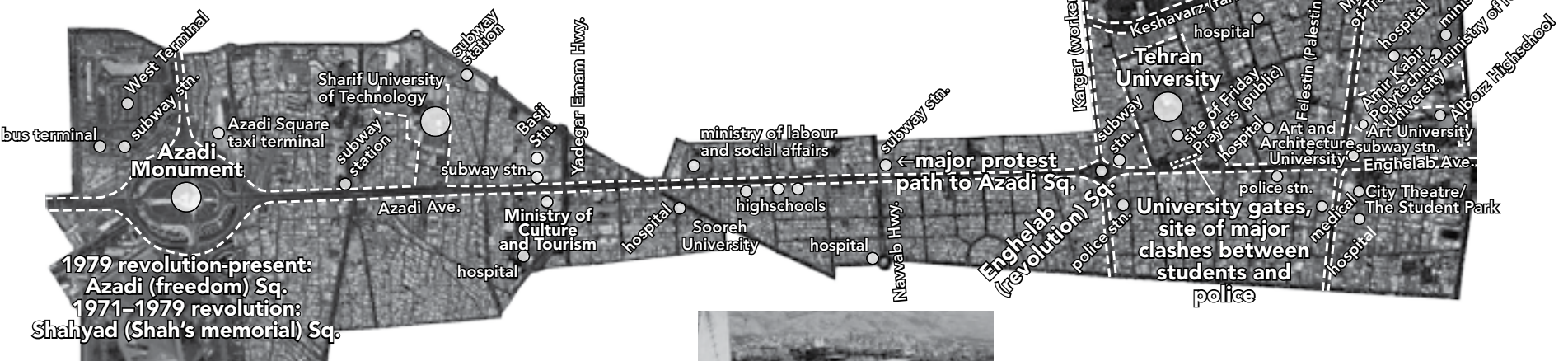
1. Plain cloths attacking the protesters in front of University of Tehran gates. No credits. http://www.bbc.co.uk/persian/iran/2010/07/100708_l19_anniversary_18tir_unrest.shtml.

2. Supporters of Mir Hossein Mousavi try to calm down fellow demonstrators as they rescue a bloodied riot policeman (center) who was beaten during a protest in Valiasr Street in Tehran on June 13, 2009. Photo: BEHROUZ MEHRI/AFP/Getty Images. http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2009/06/irans_disputed_election.html.

3. Student protesters stand on the roof of their university campus. Photo: Getty Images. http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/gallery/2009/jun/16/iran-protest?picture=348929974#/?picture=348929976&index=1.

4. Iranian police destroying satellite dishes in Tehran. Photo: ISNA. http://vitalperspective.typepad.com/vital_perspective_clarity/2006/08/total_informati.html4.

5. Protests continue in iran over disputed presidential election. No credits. http://electionupdates.caltech.edu/2009/06/16/protests-continue-in-iran-over-disputed-presidential-election/.

6. A riot-police officer sprays tear-gas at a supporter of Mir Hossein Mousavi, who is attacking him with a police stick during riots in Tehran on June 13, 2009. Photo: OLIVIER LABAN-MATTEI/AFP/Getty Images. http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2009/06/irans_disputed_election.html.

The Other City   Manama, Bahrain   شهر فرنگ

Building
× Monument: "The primary element closely identified with an event or piece of architecture which characterizes the city." (Aldo Rossi) Monuments are typical in that they summarize questions of consequence to the city, and are special in that they have a meta-economic value.

Mechanical Implements
× Tear Gas Grenade: Formally known as a lachrymatory agent or lachrymator, TGG is a non-lethal chemical weapon which irritates mucous membranes in the nose, mouth and lungs, and stimulates the corneal nerves in the eyes, to cause tearing, sneezing, coughing, pain, difficulty of breathing, and even blindness.

People
× Protestor: One who participates, either by words or actions, in an act of protest, or expression of objection to any particular set of events, policies or situations. Protesters may organize a protest in order to make their opinions heard publicly, and thus influence public opinion or government policy; or they may undertake direct action in an attempt to directly enact a desired change themselves.

Transport
× Truck with Mounted Water Cannon: A truck carrying a device that shoots a high-pressure current of water, often over hundreds of feet, used in firefighting and riot control. Modern versions do not expose the operator to the riot, and are controlled remotely from within the vehicle by a joystick. Sub-tanks are also available to dispense dyes and/or chemicals.

Occupation Devices
× Roadblock (Barricade): Barricade, from the French barrique (barrel), is any object or structure that creates a barrier or obstacle to control, block or force the flow of traffic in a desired direction. Adopted as a military term, barricade can also denote any improvised field fortification, most notably established on city streets during urban warfare. Barricades can be highlighted by setting on fire objects such as trash bins or vehicles.

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(map labels) Bahrain financial harbour · Bahrain world trade centre · government house · ministry of foreign affairs · ministry of state · King Faisal Hwy. · mosque · Bahrain financial harbour · central municipal council · mosque · city centre market · islamic school · hospital · national Evangelical church · Saikh Khalifa bin Salman Hwy. · mosque · American mission hospital · Manama cemetery · Pearl Roundabout (Martyr's Square) [demolished] · Pearl residential towers · school · mosque · health centre · school · King Faisal Hwy. · health centre · school · school · Manama cemetery · ministry of education · school · ministry of interior · ministry of interior police headquarters · ministry of interior fort

1. The monument in Pearl Square that had become the defining monument to anti-government protestors was razed on Friday (Manama, Bahrain).
Photo: Hamad I Mohammed/ Reuters.
http://www.nytimes.com/2011/ 03/19/world/middleeast/ 19bahrain.html.

2. Bahrain's Financial Harbour.
Source Unknown.

3. A Bahraini woman shows empty packages of tear gas and sound bomb used by riots police in Manama. February 14, 2011.
Photo: Reuters.
http://makanaka.wordpress. com/2011/02/17/the-streets- of-bahrain-algiers-sanaa/.

4. The 2011 F1 Bahrain Grand Prix was cancelled after anti-government protests and a police crackdown.
Photo: Hamad I Mohammed/ Reuters
http://www.guardian.co.uk/ sport/2012/feb/09/bahrain- f1-gp-attack-sword

5. Military vehicles passed protesters in Manama, Bahrain's capital.
Photo: Agence France-Presse—Getty Images.
http://www.nytimes.com/image pages/2011/03/17/world/ jp-1BAHRAIN1.html.

"If you lived here…":
Lifestyle, Marketing, and the Development of Condominiums in Toronto
by Ute Lehrer

It's not just a condominium, it's a lifestyle. Minto 30 Roe is almost too good to be true. This is a lifestyle for the young, and the young at heart, smack in the middle of Toronto's most vibrant neighbourhood […] On April 14, we're holding a Preview Event to launch the amazing Minto 30 Roe. Register today and get on the list for your personal invitation.

—*Advertisement in Toronto Metro, April 5, 2012*

Commercially motivated sales strategies for attracting potential buyers are as old as the building industry itself. But in today's world, wherever we look, we are bombarded with material and non-material images. As intellectuals in the twentieth-century first showed us,[1] commodification has reached into every corner of our society and led to unprecedented levels of mass production and consumption. Guy Debord called this "the society of the spectacle," in which social relations are mediated through images. He postulated that industrial capitalism was obsessed with the notion of possession, while in a post-industrial society the objective is to "appear."[2] This is exactly what we see in today's urban transformation. An essential human right, shelter, has become commodified in such a way that it is no longer about the necessity of housing people, or of owning a dwelling, but of buying into a lifestyle, and thereby pushing use toward a new degree of alienation.

Toronto is undergoing a massive spatial, social, and quite possibly political, transformation. It began in the late 1990s, when billboard signs and sales offices popped up, taking over parking lots and derelict industrial lands, using a plethora of images that spoke the language of youth, health, and beauty. Part of the sales strategy of developers was to turn the sites of future condominium development into a spectacle.

Billboards, brochures, and websites publicized amenities such as roof-top gardens, swimming pools, barbeque terraces, and indoor gyms. All of these images implied the creation of secured spaces with guarded lobbies, while hyping up a lifestyle specific to the condo dweller's experience (including birds-eye views of the city). People seemed to buy into the combination of individual ownership and collective use of common spaces and amenities with preselected people. What followed was a building frenzy of condo towers in the downtown core that has now spread throughout the city and the Greater Toronto Area. The "Condo Boom,"[3] as it has been referred to from the mid-2000s onward, has since transformed entire neighbourhoods.

The condo boom has naturally had a great impact on the city. It has led to a monoculture of housing forms in the downtown core and to a further eradication of spaces that are on the fringe of the market economy. Because condo owners have almost everything inside, they no longer need to engage with the city below. Their everyday life is contained within controlled spaces, and any encounter with the "other" is reduced to its bare minimum.

Image production within the built environment has been around for a long time.[4] But in the case of the condominium tower it wasn't enough to sell the physical product; there was also an explicit necessity to create a need for a lifestyle unique to the condo-dweller. Before the typical condo-dweller moved into his or her new place the need for such a life had to be socially constructed. While legal regulations took shape in North America in the mid-twentieth century,[5] Toronto began to see a few isolated examples of this form of housing, particularly along the waterfront. The normal trajectory was, and still is, to privilege the single or semi-detached house over any other form of living arrangement. While about half a million (of 2.7 million) Torontonians live in high-rise apartments built by private developers between 1950 and the early 1980s, these dwellings tend to be rental units in neighborhoodsalong traffic nodes and corridors.[6] A new cultural understanding was thus necessary to convince people to buy property in downtown areas, within buildings where all residents shared an entrance and amenities, paid maintenance fees and tolerated the s and smellssocial practices of their neighbours.

In the early days of the boom, condo development faced two challenges: While developers were drawn to evelopers to Toronto as a foreign practice in the urban landscape of this city, and that the cheap lands in Toronto's former industrial areas they had little experience in selling units in a highrise building. Likewise, potential buyers needed to be introduced to the idea of this form of living. Hence, with the help of the advertisement industry, ng needed a complete image makeover in order to be attractive to the tential buyers lifestyle became the selling point, not the building itself. It is helpful to borrow here from Charles Rutheiser's concept of "imagineering," which he understands as place-making not only through urban design but also the "aggressive, relentless use of advertising."[7] Together with what Kipfer and Keil[8] call "Toronto Inc.," this practice can be seen as the backbone of a forceful advertisement strategy of condo developers in seeking their clientele, which also corresponds with the municipal and provincial strategies that

Artist's concept of the DNA3 condominium at the corner of King and Shaw Streets Toronto.
© Graziani + Corazza Architects

were developed for planning policies since the early 2000s.[9] These were all features of a concerted effort to make condo-living attractive at a place where there was no widespread practice of this living form: billboards went up on potential sites; stylish websites were launched; glossy sales brochures were disseminated; themed sales offices were erected; their openings were celebrated as hip events with long lineups (sometimes lasting hours, or even several days); and chic TV and radio commercials drew the attention of the public to this new form of living. One of the most controversial ads was a video clip, showing a couple lining up at the entrance of a club. When they finally reach the front of the line the bouncer asks them, "are you on the list?" We then we see them stepping aside, crestfallen.[10]

When, in the early 2000s, the first massive wave of billboards appeared in the downtown core, an advertising language was developed that was significantly different from suburbia, which normally draws on images of family, nature, and harmony.[11] In contrast, the visuals in the city showed healthy-looking, young, active, white and predominantly female residents enjoying life in their new condominiums.[12] Condo advertisements comprised a crucial part of an intensive effort to transform former industrial areas into places with a particular lifestyle—a lifestyle that first needed to be created. One common strategy played with the imagination of potential buyers by making reference to other cities. As if Toronto were not hip enough to sell itself on its place-specific merits, sales strategies, especially between 2005 and 2007, pointed to cities around the world:

Living at 76 Shuter is living downtown New York style.[13]

Inspired by the world. Fashioned in Toronto. The Delano in Miami. The Mercer in New York. The Montalembert in Paris. W Hotel in Honolulu. What sets these hotels apart? Each is a boutique of singular style and character. This is a luxurious South Beach style Skyline bar.[14]

Chateau Royal itself is modeled after an elegant Parisian residence complete with a steeply sloping copper look roof, dormer windows and balconies galore. The street level is home to small specialty shops and a café all sheltered by the white awnings reminiscent of Boulevard St-Michel or St-Germain-des-Prés.[15]

The lobby, cool, crisp and composed, borrows its inspiration from the couture runways of Paris, London or New York.[16]

Malibu is a condo development squeezed between an elevated inner-city highway and a busy surface road, and it plays on the imagination of passersby by making reference to a

place associated with an outdoor lifestyle that is healthy, playful, and affluent. During construction, all year round a female body in a bikini lured the eyes of drivers to the site and promised a life full of sunshine and beaches: "Right where Harbourfront meets the real lakeshore, there is an enclave of West Coast cool. Malibu. Toronto's first California condos."[17] Now that the condo is completed and people have moved in, it is fair to say that there is very little California feel to this development, just as the lack of "London" is evident at the Esplanade development, which presented itself with the slogan, "Club London. If you live here, you are a member."[18]

Exclusivity is also one of the dominant strategies used to sell the condo lifestyle. A club with a fitness centre is a staple of almost every condo in town, but more and more condos are also geared toward the high-end market,

incorporating exquisite materials and design elements, individual access elevators, as well as service personnel such as concierges and butlers. Another strategy that is applied almost universally is the reference to "Owning the sky":[19]

Welcome to your personal window of the world.[20]

Stunning, unmatched panoramic views both to the north and south overlooking historically protected properties.[21]

Revel in breathtaking, unobstructed waterfront and city views.[22]

All these slogans are complemented by a gendered imaginary that more often than not uses the female body in the visual presentation of the condo environments.[23] In a variation on the normative homogeneity of these fantasies, some advertisements use Toronto's ethnic diversity to sell a form of cosmopolitanism and exoticism. While advertising agencies are busy selling us condominiums as a lifestyle, they further alienate us from the idea of dwelling as shelter.

The spectacle that surrounds condo dwelling has created its own nemeses, though only in very sparse forms. The "are you on the list" video clip sparked an instant response from ordinary people who wrote lists of names on billboards, and the ad was quickly pulled before the controversy could grow any bigger. Immediately adjacent to this project was the Bohemian Embassy, and the developers there did not lose any time in suing a local artist, Michael Toke, after he had used the visuals and graphics of the development and turned them into a critique by calling it "Bohemian Embarrassment. Cons and lies."[24] While these are place-specific interventions, recently, we saw a more politically motivated critique,[25] bringing together the sales strategies of the condominium boom with the fundamental right for shelter. After having observed the ad campaign for condo developments, Sean Martindale appropriated some illegally placed advertisement boards for condos and used them to construct a tent-like structure. While he was more interested in them as sculpture than as shelter, he left their subsequent use open to appropriation. His response lies somewhere between Debord's call for ordinary people to make ordinary art to liberate us from capitalism, and John Berger's warning about glamour culture:

Glamour cannot exist without personal social envy being a common and widespread emotion. […] Either [the individual] then becomes fully conscious of the contradiction and its causes, and so joins the political struggle for a full democracy which entails, amongst other thing, the overthrow of capitalism; or else he lives continually subject to an envy which, compounded with his sense of powerlessness, dissolves into recurrent day-dreams.[26]

The success of the condo boom in Toronto and other cities around the globe leaves us with the impression that individual lives are increasingly regressing into daydreams. ✕

Notes

1. See for example: Walter Benjamin, *Das Kunstwerk im Zeitalter seiner technischen Reproduzierbarkeit*, Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung, 1936. John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (Penguin Books, London, 1972); Frederick Jameson, Postmodernism: *The Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press. 1991)
2. Guy Debord, *Society of the Spectacle*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone, 1995).
3. *Arlene Williams and Diego Garcia*, "Condo BOOM! event shakes up discussion about Toronto city planning," *YFile*, Dec 15, 2006.
4. See Ute Lehrer, "Willing the Global City: Berlin's Cultural Strategies of Interurban Competition After 1989" in *The Global City Reader*, eds. N. Brenner and R. Keil (Routledge, 2006), 332-338.
5. John Cribbet, "Condominium: Homeownership for Megalopolis?" *Michigan Law Review* 61 no.7 (May 1993): 1207-1244. Douglas Harris, "*Condominium and the City: The Rise of Property in Vancouver*," *Law and Social Inquiry* 36, no.3 (Summer 2011): 694-726.
6. See www.towerrenewal.ca.
7. Charles Rutheiser, *Imagineering Atlanta* (London/New York: Verso, 1996), 2.
8. Stefan Kipfer and Roger Keil, "Toronto Inc.: Planning the Competitive City in the New Toronto," *Antipode* 34, no.2 (March 2002): 227-264.
9. See also Adrian Blackwell and Kanishka Goonewardena, "Poverty of Planning: Tent City and the New Official Plan," in The Contested Metropolis, ed. Raffaele

Paloscia (Basel, Boston: Birkhäuser, 2004); Ute Lehrer and Jennefer Laidley, "Old Mega-projects Newly Packaged? Waterfront Redevelopment in Toronto." *International Journal for Urban and Regional Research* 32, no.4 (2008): 786-803.
10. Landmark Building Group for Westside Lofts. See also Ute Lehrer, "Urban Renaissance and Resistance in Toronto," in *Whose Urban Renaissance? An International Comparison of Policy Drivers and Responses to Urban Regeneration Strategies*, eds. L. Porter and K. Shaw (London: Routledge, 2006), 147-156.
11. Roger Keil and John Graham, "Reasserting Nature: Constructing Urban Environments After Fordism," in *Remaking Reality: Nature at the Millenium*, eds. Bruce Braun and Noel Castree (London/New York: Routledge 1998).
12. Ute Lehrer, "The Urban Artefact as a Prototype for Lifestyle Changes: Sales Offices, Billboards and Advertisement Strategies for Condominium Towers in Toronto," (paper presented at *Urban Artefacts, Types, Practices, Circulations*, University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland, June 14-15, 2007).

13. http://www.76shuter.com.
14. http://www.boutiquecondos.ca.
15. http://www.chateauroyal.ca; website expired
16. http://www.22condominiums.com/main_nav.html; website expired
17. Text from original condo website, expired
18. http://www.londoncondos.ca/flash/index.html
19. http://www.cityplace.ca/panorama
20. http://www.yorkvilleresidences.com
21. http://www.museumhouseonbloor.com/buildingfeatures.php; this is the text of today. Seven years back the text read: "Forever views both north and south."
22. http://www.cityplace.ca/hve/index.asp
23. Leslie Kern, "Selling the 'Scary City'," *Social and Cultural Geography* 11, no.3 (May 2010): 209-230.
24. http://torontoist.com/2006/08/fauxhum_boboooo
25. Susan Buck-Morss, "Visual Studies and Global Imagination," Papers of Surrealism 2 (2004).
26. John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (New York: Penguin, 1972), accessed May 28, 2012, http://jan.ucc.nau.edu/~jsa3/hum355/readings/berger.htm.

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Objectless in Vitebsk: Reflections on Kazimir Malevich, Architecture, and Representation

A Conversation with Elitza Dulguerova

Malevich's panels decorated several buildings in Vitebsk, including the White Barracks (above), where the Committee for the Struggle against Unemployment had its workshops (December 1919).

Scapegoat posed the following questions to Elitza Dulguerova, Assistant Professor in Art History at the University of Paris I, Panthéon—Sorbonne, who works on the social history of the Russian avant-garde. We are interested in Kazimir Malevich's claim that "Suprematism is the new realism." Additionally, we want to clarify the relationship between this claim and what happened to Suprematism when it confronted the built environment, namely during Malevich's tenure (1919–1922) in the then Soviet town of Vitebsk.

Scapegoat Says   **What led Malevich to proclaim that "Suprematism is the new realism?" What, for Malevich, is the *real* in realism, and why does this necessitate an attack on representation?**

Elitza Dulguerova To my knowledge, Malevich first used the concept of "realism" in 1915 within his performative declaration on the birth of Suprematism. His announcement of the new art was staged both visually, through an ensemble of 39 mostly unseen paintings, and as a discursive event, through several writings and declarations. The paintings were exhibited at the group show *The Last Futurist Exhibition of Paintings 0,10 (Zero-Ten)* (Petrograd, December 19, 1915 to January 19, 1916). According to the well-known and infinitely reproduced photograph of Malevich's works at *0,10*, the display in itself acted as a visual manifesto for the advent of a new art of non-representational—almost geometrical—forms floating in space. But Suprematism also came into being through a series of written and spoken texts. In addition to the short, hand-written statement hung on the wall of the Suprematist room, Malevich published a longer essay, "From Cubism to Suprematism: The New Painterly Realism," which was on sale during the *0,10* group show. Its second edition, based on a public talk from January 1916, expanded the lineage of Suprematism to Italian Futurism without altering the emphasis on realism: "From Cubism and Futurism to Suprematism: The New Realism in Painting."[1]

Živopisnyi, the adjective translated into English as "in painting," or sometimes as "painterly," was not a mere epithet for Malevich but an important part of how he conceived of "realism" at this moment. It could even be argued that "realism" was but the predicate of "painterly": if Suprematism was realistic, it was by being true to painting. Malevich was not the first artist who paired a term strongly associated since Courbet with commitment to everyday reality, with a non-mimetic painterly technique (in his case, *bespredmetnoe iskusstvo,* or "objectless art").[2] By 1915, this shift in the notion of "realism" away from mimesis was already a major stance in the writings of the French Cubists, which were quickly translated to Russian, thoroughly discussed in the futurist public debates in Moscow and Petrograd and sometimes directly "imported" by the Russian artists who lived and worked in Paris.[3] The 1912 treatise *Du "Cubisme"* by Albert Gleizes and Jean Metzinger

had already emphasized the distinction between a "superficial" and a "deep" realism, the first being solely concerned with meaning and granting little consideration to the means of reaching it (Courbet), while newer art such as Cubism was filed under the label of "deep" or "true" realism. One of the closing sentences of their text sums up quite clearly Gleizes and Metzinger's understanding that "realism" was not a reflection of reality but rather a means of transforming it. In doing so, the subjective vision of the Cubist painter had to become an objective truth for every viewer: "A realist, he [*the new painter*] will shape the real in the image of his mind, for there is only one truth, our own, when we impose it on everyone."[4] Fernand Léger was another active proponent of "réalisme de conception" over "réalisme visuel," arguing that, "The realist value of a work is perfectly independent of any imitative quality. [...] Pictorial realism is the simultaneous arrangement of the three great plastic quantities: lines, forms, and colors."[5] Redefining realism stood for more than a new technique: Léger believed that it had an emancipatory value for the artist as well as for the beholder, freeing them from the submission to the normative realm of bourgeois appearances. Malevich's emphasis on "realism" in 1915–1916 can thus be seen as a symptom of his urge to maintain a tie with Cubism and European modern art, while defending the novelty and ultimate difference of Suprematism. In his interpretation, realism in painting was a means to make "living art," to go beyond representation and into creation:

> In the art of Suprematism forms will live, like all living forms of nature. [...] The new realism in painting [*živopisnyi,* painterly] is very much realism in painting [*painterly*], for it contains no realism of mountains, sky, water. [...] Until now there was realism of objects, but not of painted units of colour, which are constructed so that they depend neither on form, nor on colour, nor on their position relative to each other. Each form is free and individual. Each form is a world.[6]

It seems to me that this understanding of "realism" does not outlive the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution. Instead, Malevich's writings from the early 1920s dwell on the concept of "objectlessness" (*bespredmetnost*) both as the ultimate goal of art and as the condition of the world that Malevich longs for. I would not ascribe this semantic shift

to political conjuncture alone, insofar as the political appropriation (and approval) of realistic painting and sculpture as the only "appropriate" art for a communist state was not yet dominant, at least not until the end of the Civil War in 1921. The Vitebsk years in the life of Malevich—from late 1919 to mid-1922—were years during which the political uncertainty and precariousness of everyday life left room for intense experiments with future modes and possible forms of art.[7] This was the case not only in Vitebsk, at the Free State Artist Studios under the direction of Malevich, but also at the Moscow Institute of Artistic Culture (INKhUK), first under the direction of Kandinsky, and then, from 1920 on, within the framework of the Constructivist circle. I would rather guess that the move from "realism" to "objectlessness" allowed for a more accurate definition of the reality that Malevich was trying to conceive—both philosophically, as a way to overcome not only imitation but also any dependence on established objects or rules, and politically, as a state of rest and peace beyond conflicts, struggles and divisions.

A recently published transcript of "Note on the Limits of Reality," a lecture that Malevich delivered to his fellow UNOVIS members in Vitebsk in 1921, can be used to introduce his conceptual framework.[8] Malevich argues that the need to represent phenomena or things belonged to a foregone conception of art, where art was seen as a means to grasp and understand the "real" world. This could no longer be the case, he adds, as we now know that such an understanding cannot be objective: we perceive not one but multiple "realities" smoothly sliding into each other. Arguing that reality has to be thought of as something that happens *as* a representation, Malevich gives the example of a child who would alternately define his father as a "big person" when in the company of other adults, and as a "small person" when they play together. Malevich concludes that when we experience the world we do not single out things or elements: "no dishes, no palaces, no chairs."[9] The existence of the latter divides the world into parts and thus betrays both our experience and the demonstrations of contemporary science. This search for an experience that is both relative (free, not obeying predefined rules) and unified (not divided) motivates the anti-utilitarian stance of Malevich's writings in the 1920s.

In the aftermath of the Bolshevik revolution, Malevich reconsidered the other major premise of Suprematism by stating that "painting was done for

long ago" and bequeathed the task of developing architectural Suprematism to the young architects in somewhat vague terms, as the "era of the new system of architecture."[10] Such a stance was not surprising in 1920, when the Moscow INKhUK was debating the definition and rules of construction as an alternative to easel painting.[11] El Lissitzky certainly also played a part in this shift towards architecture. Lissitzky had been a member of the Vitebsk branch of Narkompros [People's Commissariat for Education] since May 1919, and a teacher at the People's Art School of Vitebsk under the direction of the People's Commissar Marc Chagall. It was under these circumstances that Lissitzky convinced Malevich in late 1919 to leave his teaching position at the Free State Artists' Studios in Moscow and join the Vitebsk team.[12] As is well known, Lissitzky was trained as an architect, and his Suprematist-inspired "Prouns" [Projects for the Affirmation of the New][13] were attempts to correlate the exploration of the pictorial space in Suprematism to the space of the viewer, thus going beyond painting and into the three-dimensional realm. However, even though Malevich started considering architecture as a potential field for Suprematism and even qualifying it—in a still unspecific phraseology—as the ultimate art, he would not achieve the shift from painting to architecture, or even from two-dimensional to three-dimensional forms, during his stay in Vitebsk.

SS **Why and when was Malevich in Vitebsk? Can you briefly explain the situation there?**

ED Malevich moved from Moscow to Vitebsk in November 1919. The UNOVIS (Exponents or Champions of the New Art)[14] group was officially created in February 1920 and became dominant at the Vitebsk Free State Artist Studios after the departure of Chagall in May of the same year. In the following two years, UNOVIS organized exhibitions, conferences, and theatrical representations, published a series of books, including several treatises by Malevich, and took part in the life of the city of Vitebsk. Through its ramifications, the UNOVIS ideas spread out to the cities of Smolensk, Orenburg, and Perm; its works were shown in exhibitions in Moscow and displayed at the 1922 First Russian Art Exhibition in Berlin. For a number of reasons, including severe financial cuts, administrative reorganization and increasing intolerance towards "formalist" art

Photograph from Aleksandra Shatskikh, *Vitebsk: The Life of Art* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 82.

practices, in the summer of 1922 Malevich and most of his students left Vitebsk for Petrograd, where the UNOVIS project was carried on at the State Institute of Artistic Culture (GINKhUK).[15]

SS Did the school have a presence in the town? Can you describe Malevich and UNOVIS' projects there?

ED The activities of the UNOVIS group within the city of Vitebsk did not involve the building of new architectural forms nor did they redesign its urban plan. In most cases, they expanded and translated Suprematism's compositional and formal characteristics to larger, two-dimensional surfaces. As Alexandra Shatskikh has summed it up in her study:

> Suprematism's vast decorative potential was unleashed in a variety of ways: in the signboards created for the stores and shops of the EPO (United Consumer Association); in the propaganda panels that decorated the sides of streetcars; in the drawings for murals on buildings and interiors; and in the decorations on the ration cards used during the period of War Communism.[16]

And while for a year the streetcars in Vitebsk were covered with Suprematist designs, the only three-dimensional projects were the monuments to Karl Marx and Karl Liebknecht by one of Malevich's colleagues, the sculptor and teacher David Yakerson.[17] Unveiled in Vitebsk in 1920, the monuments combined Suprematist-inspired foundations of differently sized rectangular blocks, asymmetrically balanced together, with geometrically simplified yet representational busts. For Shatskikh, the lack of architectural experiments in Vitebsk was due to "material constraints," material shortages and poverty.[18] The term "super-grafics" [*super-grafika*], used by some Russian scholars to depict the urban projects of UNOVIS in Vitebsk avoids classifying them in pre-established categories such as "decorative." However, in underscoring the graphic aspects of Suprematism, it dismisses the ambition of spatial exploration and projection into the three-dimensional realm.[19]

Most projects were commissioned for celebratory occasions (1st of May, the anniversary of the Vitebsk school of art, Karl Liebknecht's and Rosa Luxemburg's deaths). An interesting collabora-

tion stemmed from the invitation of the Vitebsk Committee for the Struggle against Unemployment to celebrate its second anniversary. In December 1919, Malevich decorated the exterior of the White Barracks building that housed the workshops of the Committee, and with El Lissitzky re-designed the interior of the Vitebsk theatre for the festivities. While there is little visual evidence of most UNOVIS projects—except for some studies and sketches—this collaboration with the Committee for the Struggle against Unemployment was rather well documented. The photograph of the workshop building is particularly revealing. The Suprematist panels by Malevich are spread over the façade both horizontally and vertically. Most of the horizontal elements are painted compositions, while some of the central figures seem to be shaped panels. On the first row, at the level of the street, large, human-sized panels containing simple compositions of triangles, squares and circles alternate with the windows and doors of the building. The two entrances—to the building and to the adjacent enclosure—seem to be framed by single-shape compositions: two full-sized squares for the former, two decentred circles for the latter. An upper level comprises a series of smaller and more complex compositions, each of which stands on the cornice of one of the street-level panels. Their display is symmetrical on both sides of the main entrance. Above the squares and the front door rises the central part of the decoration. It consists of two monumental vertical compositions of dynamically distributed, mostly rectangular forms of various sizes. Between these two elongated panes stand two shaped panels: a big dark circle in the middle, similar in size to the squares on the first level and, immediately below it, a smaller dark diamond. The upper half of the window behind the circle remains uncovered. It bears a strong resemblance to another basic Suprematist form: the black square. The balance between symmetric and dynamic positioning of shapes testifies to Malevich's desire to restructure the rigid solidity of the original building while creating a feeling of harmonious lightness.

SS What was the reception of the work in the town?

ED Documents on the reception of UNOVIS projects in Vitebsk are quite scarce. One of the most often quoted depictions is Sergey Eisenstein's account of the transformation of this "sooty and cheerless" provincial city, typically "built of red brick": "But this city is especially strange. Here the red brick streets are covered with white paint, and green circles are scattered around this white background. There are orange squares. Blue rectangles. This is Vitebsk in 1920. Its brick walls have met the brush of Kazimir Malevich. And from these walls you can hear: 'The streets are our palette!'"[20] It is unclear whether this depiction of the filmmaker's visit to Vitebsk in June 1920, probably written in 1940, refers to the Suprematist-decorated trains or to buildings such as the one discussed above.

It seems to me that the urban projects of the UNOVIS group can be read in at least two different ways. On the one hand, as a non-representational response to the post-Revolutionary brief to decorate the urban environment and translate revolutionary ideas into visual form. This would explain why both Chagall's and Malevich's works could peacefully coexist in the city of Vitebsk during the 1st of May celebrations in 1920, despite their theoretical differences.[21] On the other hand, these projects were also attempts towards a weightless, "objectless," restful architecture as theorized in Malevich's writings.

SS What is the relationship between Malevich's realism (largely expressed through painting) and the urban projects in Vitebsk? What is at stake in the transition from painting to architecture?

ED Malevich's own experiments in architecture—his *architecton* models and *planit* drawings—date from the period between 1923 and 1927, after his move to Petrograd and before his retrospective shows in Warsaw and Berlin in 1927. During this period Malevich discussed architecture in a series of texts and sometimes considered it as the ultimate end of creation which reaches beyond the three realms of religion, civic life, and art.[22] Architecture cannot be dissociated from Malevich's more global quest of a "reality beyond image" towards which "the bullet and the aeroplane fly, the train rushes by, man runs, the bird flies, the planets and the sun move, for only there, in the idealess state, does the world end, as an image, as will, as imagining, and the world dawns as objectlessness."[23]

In his fascinating 1924–25 text on the ideology of architecture Malevich does not reject technology, science, or utilitarianism per se. He concedes that inventions like "aeroplanes, ships, trains, radios, and electricity" were partly driven by the desire to "sweep" away obstacles such as "water, space, hills, and time" on man's way to peace.[24] However, "utilitarian technology" keeps architecture subdued to objects and tools as divided parts of the whole, and to ideas and images (such as expediency) that were meant to introduce order into what used to be chaos. Malevich disagrees with this dependence, as for him "*life* wishes to be expedient, whereas *art* has parted with the image of an aim [...] it has no beginning or end, it has no 'whither' or 'whence' [...] consequently it is without idea because it is already reality beyond image."[25] In contrast to the propensity of Constructivism to shape life by introducing new functional forms, Malevich considers that art should not give form. As he would demonstrate later in a 1928 text, our belief that "art is something that gives form to the functional side of life" is inaccurate, "since it is impossible to form any function of life: forming it we do not really form it but merely place it in an order established by some form of art."[26] Architecture doesn't have to create a new form of order but a state of restfulness, unity, and spaciousness. To do so, it has to be freed from the object-like characteristics of matter and of the divided things, namely weight (*ves*), so as to achieve balance and equilibrium (*ravnovesie*), as "weight is born in utilitarianism, outside utilitarianism I do not know whether weight exists."[27] Malevich coins the neologism "*ut-grazhdanin*" [ut-citizen] for the citizen submitted to the utilitarian needs of

daily life who has been granted palaces, gardens, and monuments created for a specific, temporary, and utilitarian need.[28] In contrast, the art of architecture is "eternally beautiful in its equilibrium" and bears an "architectuality" that resists social or ideological contingencies: "Pagan temples also serve as temples for Christians because they are architecturally [*sic*] beautiful."[29]

The "1/48" essay contains a precious—and rare—depiction of objectless architecture which brings to mind Malevich's *architectons*, on which he was working at that time. If architecture should give rise to the feelings of spaciousness, emptiness, and restfulness ("in eternal beauty there are no horizons"[30]), it had to be freed from all obstacles and limits, both material and conceptual. Walls, floors and ceilings are designed to delimitate space, to create horizons, to host tools. Malevich starts by suggesting to move apart the six sides of the basic structure of a cube (a room) to create more empty space but quickly objects that a full liberation from any limit is not possible, as "no matter how I shift the walls, I am always surrounded by walls, my sight meets an obstacle but senses space."[31] He then considers a path opposite to this infinite openness: confinement within a cube as a safe and concealed place to rest, as a refuge from life's adversities. This double bind seems to depict his own architectural experiments, as the *architectons* allow for a variety of points of view and perceptions of space instead of a predetermined notion of horizon, and yet offer the possibility to alternate between openness and inner retreat.

Christina Lodder has argued that Malevich was interested in "architecture as a problem" rather than a solution, which might explain why, even in his *architectons*:

> The precise function of the elements in each structural ensemble is not identified [...] There are none of the usual features you might expect in an architectural model; there are no indications of windows, doors, entrances, or exits. The models were not conceived in response to the needs of particular architectural briefs, or intended to answer the highly specialized, practical requirements of specific building types, such as hospitals, communal housing, or schools. They were also not related to any particular structural system of building. Indeed, how they were to be built and function was left pretty vague. Even their scale is not really indicated. None of them has an identifiable façade, but exist in the round, fully in space. If architecture is the way space is enclosed for a given purpose, then Malevich's structures are not architectural. They exist in space, but do not define space, or contain space within them.[32]

Going back to Malevich's Vitebsk projects such as the 1919 façade for the Committee for the Struggle against Unemployment, one notices that while it has departed from objects and utilitarian expediency, while it creates a dynamic yet harmonious feeling of space, it persists in creating an image instead of being a "reality beyond image"—an objectless image but an image nonetheless. ✕

Notes

1. Malevich, K. S., "From Cubism and Futurism to Suprematism: The New Realism in Painting" in *Essays on Art 1915-1928*, vol.1, ed. Troels Andersen, trans. Xenia Glowacki-Prus and Arnold McMillin (Copenhagen: Borgen, 1968), 19-41. Both the 1915 and 1916 essays have been reprinted in Russian in Kazimir Malevich, *Sobranie sochinenii* [Collected Works], vol.1, ed. Aleksandra Shatskikh (Moscow, Gileia, 1995), 27-34, 35-55.

2. Following scholars like Christina Lodder and Charlotte Douglas, I prefer "objectless" to "non-objective" (the term used in the English edition of Malevich's writings). The problem with "non-objective" lies in its philosophical undertones hinting at oppositions such as objective/subjective. This is not the framework Malevich is working with. Furthermore, the Russian terms for these philosophical categories are *ob"ektivnyi*, *sub"ektivnyi*, that is, Latin-based words, while Malevich uses *bespredmetnyi*, a neologism based on the Russian word for object, *predmet*. "Objectless," on the other hand, should not convey connotations of "pointless" or "purposeless." As used in recent scholarship on Malevich, it is first and foremost a literal translation of *bespredmetnyi*, "without an object," without the qualities of a material object, mainly its materiality, its reference to the everyday, its weight. However, on a more theoretical level Malevich does suggest that "objectlessness" has to do with a certain degree of aimlessness as well. His writings in the 1920s look forward to a state of rest (or "laziness," as he would phrase it in another text from the Vitebsk period). Rest is a state devoid of purpose or aim, it is the state of unity that Malevich is looking for. To follow any aim

or purpose would mean dissolving this unity.

3. Two of Fernand Léger's seminal essays, "Les origines de la peinture et sa valeur représentative" (1913) and "Les réalisations picturales actuelles" (1914), were initially delivered as lectures at the Académie Vassilieff in Paris, whose owner, the Russian artist Marie Vassilieff, was also one of the fourteen participants in the *0,10* exhibition.

4. Albert Gleizes and Jean Metzinger, *Du "Cubisme"* [27 December] 1912] in *A Cubism Reader. Documents and Criticism 1906-1914*, eds. Mark Antliff and Patricia Leighten (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2008), 435.

5. Fernand Léger, "Les origines de la peinture et sa valeur représentative," *Montjoie!* (May 1913), english translation in Antliff & Leighten, *Cubism Reader*, 535-6.

6. Malevich, "From Cubism and Futurism to Suprematism," 38.

7. On the relation between modernity and contingency, see T.J. Clark, "God Is Not Cast Down," in *Farewell to an Idea: Episodes from a History of Modernism* (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1999), 225-297.

8. "Zapiska o granitzah real'nosti" [Note on the Limits of Reality] in *Sobranie sochinenii* [Collected Works], vol.5 (Moscow: Gileia, 2004), 191-194.

9. Malevich, "Zapiska," 193.

10. Malevich, "Suprematizm. 34 risunka" [1920], in *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol.1, 189; "Suprematism. 34 drawings," in *Essays on Art*, vol.1, 127-128 (translation modified).

11. See Maria Gough, *The Artist as Producer: Russian Constructivism in Revolution* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

12. Unless otherwise noted, all the factual and archival information related to the city of Vitebsk, its art school, teachers

and projects is strongly indebted to Aleksandra Shatskikh's extraordinarily well-documented book, *Vitebsk: The Life of Art*, trans. Katherine Foshko Tsan (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 2007).

13. See Nancy Perloff and Brian Reed (eds.), *Situating El Lissitzky: Vitebsk, Berlin, Moscow* (Los Angeles, Getty Research Institute, 2003).

14. "Exponentes" is the translation adopted in the English version of Shatskikh's book, while the more affirmative "Champions" is suggested by Christina Lodder in her inspiring article, "Living in Space: Kazimir Malevich's Suprematist Architecture and the Philosophy of Nikolai Fedorov," in *Rethinking Malevich. Proceedings of a Conference in Celebration of the 125th Anniversary of Kazimir Malevich's Birth*, eds. Charlotte Douglas and Christina Lodder (London: The Pindar Press, 2007), 172-202.

15. Shatskikh, *Vitebsk*, 220-224.

16. Ibid., 117. The projects mentioned by Shatskikh were realized by different students and teachers from the UNOVIS circle.

17. Ibid., 169-183.

18. Ibid., 117.

19. Selim O. Khan-Magomedov, *Suprematizm i arhitektura: problemy formoobrazovaniia* (Moscow: Arkhitektura-S, 2007).

20. Sergey Eisenstein, "Strannyi provintsial'nyi gorod" [A Strange provincial city] (1940), quoted and translated in Shatskikh, *Vitebsk*, 118.

21. Ibid.

22. Cf. the ending of his 1924 essay "Arhitektura kak stepen' naibol'shego osvobozhdeniia cheloveka ot vesa" [Architecture as a degree of the greatest liberation of man from weight], in *Sobranie sochinenii* [Collected Works], vol.4 (Moscow: Gileia, 2003), 285.

23. Malevich, "1/48. Mir kak bespred-

metnost' (ideologiia arhitektury)" in *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol.4, 216, translated as "1/48. The World as Non-Objectivity," in *Essays on Art*, vol.3, ed. Troels Andersen (Copenhagen: Bergen, 1976), 290 (translation modified).

24. All quotes from "1/48" in *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol.4, 205; in *Essays on Art*, vol.3, 276-7.

25. "1/48" in *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol.4, 216; in *Essays on Art*, vol.3, 290 (my emphasis).

26. "Zhivopis' v probleme arhitektury", in *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol.2, ed. Aleksandra Shatskikh (Moscow: Gileia, 1998), 135-136; translated as "Painting and the Problem of Architecture" in *Essays on Art*, vol.2, ed. Troels Andersen (Copenhagen: Bergen, 1968), 14.

27. "1/48", in *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol.4, 205; in *Essays on Art*, vol.3, 277.

28. "1/48", in *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol.4, 211; in *Essays on Art*, vol.3, 284.

29. "1/48", in *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol.4, 209; in *Essays on Art*, vol.3, 282.

30. "1/48", in *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol.4, 215; in *Essays on Art*, vol.3, 289.

31. "1/48", in *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol.4, 215; in *Essays on Art*, vol.3, 288.

32. Lodder, "Living in Space", 192.

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Jia Zhangke's *Still Life*: Destruction as Intercession

by Erik Bordeleau

This essay is intended as a kind of meditation on stillness, or, more precisely, the *stopping power* that characterizes *Still Life* (2006), looming as it does on the border of the real and the imaginary, of time and history, of documentary and fiction, and ultimately, politics and "life." Many commentators on contemporary Chinese cinema have insisted on the realism of Jia Zhangke's films and their quasi-documentary aesthetic as a means to deduce their political relevance. But if *Still Life* really is a film of great political interest, it is not only by virtue of its striving to bear witness to a China in full mutation. How, then, should we envisage the ethical and political tenor of Jia Zhangke's filmic interventions in relation to their acclaimed realism?

Jia Zhangke's cinema stands out not least for its concern for blending with the worlds it frames; it is obviously not seeking to "split skulls," as Eisenstein would have it. In that sense, the challenge of this essay consists in getting as close as possible to the point where Jia's filmic gesture and the gestures actually filmed become indiscernible. For Jia Zhangke is an *intercesseur* (mediator), perhaps the greatest living *intercesseur* of the Chinese art world (along with Ai Weiwei). The concept of intercession was first shaped by Quebec filmmaker Pierre Perrault and then amplified by Gilles Deleuze in his studies on the time-image.[1] Briefly, we can say that intercession involves an act of fabulation, which relates to what Deleuze calls the "power of the false"; for beyond a mere transmission of information (as potentially suggested by the English translation, "mediation"), intercession poses the problem of how one can *believe in the world.* Below I attempt to highlight the qualitative transformations that Jia's filmic gesture of intercession assumes, fosters, and supports in a radically unbelievable world—contemporary China.

Perhaps better than any other work in the realm of contemporary Chinese cinema, *Still Life* offers a unique opportunity to meditate on this function of intercession in a context of extreme socio-economic mutation and massive destruction of ecosystems and human habitats. In the film, the gesture of intercession ultimately consists of a dive into the eye of 拆 (*chai*, demolition), a passage along the very line of the demolition process, which the *chai* character represents both in its foretelling and figuration. Conversely, I will say of *chai* (and of other elements we'll encounter during the analysis) that it interpolates duration within the film, making an *imaginal interruption* in which the stopping power of *Still Life* resides.

Intercession and interpolation are the two primary concepts with which I want to envisage Jia's filmic gesture. The former relates to ideas of becoming, and is an obligatory passage for those whom Gilles Deleuze calls the "people to come"; the latter is only intelligible through a strong conception of imagination as a properly human faculty, which can be identified with an editing operation.[2] The two concepts are complimentary in their orientation and inclination toward the *intersection* or *in-betweeness* of things—they both approach the world "by the middle." They also both relate to a movement from singular to singular, according to what Giorgio Agamben has called an analogic, or paradigmatic, logic that traces "exemplary constellations," which can be read as virtual itineraries or passages for the coming community.[3] But for a constellation to be formed, the present needs to be immobilized. It is this constellation of thought that I wish to explore in greater detail below.

Standing as close as it gets to the demolition process caused by the construction of the Three Gorges dam, *Still Life* presents itself as a practice of the non-place, as did *The World* (2004), Jia's previous film. But unlike *The World*, *Still Life* is not so much about unilateralizing existential malaise as it is a way to frame "progress" in real time, which is to say a way of withstanding this test of destruction in the present tense. In this filmic involvement or *mise en jeu*, there is an echo of Walter Benjamin's description of the destructive character: "What exists he reduces to rubble—not for the sake of rubble, but for that of the way leading through it."[4] Of course, Jia is not responsible for the destruction of Fengjie, a soon-to-be-submerged city with more than 2000 years of history. Instead, by taking up the task of putting on film such a critical moment of Chinese history, focusing on the beauty of the gestures and bodies performing the demolition, and witnessing the threshold of stillness that insists at the foremost point of the *chai* character-event, Jia avoids the futile clichés feeding China's national will to power. In this, he also pays tribute to the anonymous victims of this pharaonic project by providing them with a truthful reflection of their situation and, above all, in the foretold exile, the possibility of an encounter.

UFOs and Realism

Stealthy and untimely, the apparition of the spectre…
—Derrida, *Spectres of Marx*

Around the middle of *Still Life*, a strange event, one might even say a "pure" event, occurs: a UFO unexpectedly crosses the sky, leaving the characters—and the audience—immobile and speechless, in a state of pure seeing (*voyance*). For a few seconds, the world is suspended: a spectral moment, a "moment that no longer belongs to time," as Derrida would put it, while everything appears in an unreal immobility, halfway between reality and fiction, secretly misadjusted.[5]

The incongruity of this apparition is quite surprising, especially given that Jia's films are usually described as "realistic," because of their social content and also because of the minimalist, quasi-documentary aesthetic that characterizes them. The introduction of this purely imaginary element naturally raises questions regarding the meaning of realism in Jia's films. The passing of the UFO interpolates the narrative, cuts it in two and marks the transition between the two stories around which *Still Life* revolves: those of San Ming, a miner who comes back to his wife after 16 years of separation, and Zhao Tao, who, after being left by her husband without any news for two years, goes to see him at the dam's construction site where she announces her intention to divorce him. From this perspective, the UFO would be drawing the narrative boundaries of each of these stories from the outside, so to speak, noting their fictitious dimension. This reference to a "transcendental" point from which the story is told problematizes the relationship between reality and fiction. In a manner that remains obscure, the UFO's passage identifies itself with Jia's filmic gesture. It seems to signal a hypothetical point of contact (even if a disjunctive one) between fiction (the film) and the filmmaker's actual reality, something like the cosmic imprint of his filmic intervention in the world. In other words, we could say that where the UFO interpolates, a power of the false is at work, which would also correspond to a movement of intercession—to interpolate is at the same time to interrupt and to imagine, to insert and to falsify, to introduce and to disguise.

写生/写意: "To Write Life" or the Life of Images

It is characteristic that in Chinese we don't say that a form, a figure or a sign have a "signification," but an "intention," 意 (yi): form, figure and sign are, by essence, an acting out.
—Jean-François Billeter, *L'art chinois de l'écriture*

Jia Zhangke was first invited to the Three Gorges dam's construction site by his friend Liu Xiaodong, a famous Chinese painter who was closely involved in the rise of the 6th generation of filmmakers in China, then working on a series of paintings about the lives of workers and peasants forced to leave their homeland.[6] One of the works he produced at the time, "Three Gorges," was sold for over 22-million Yuan in November 2006 (about US$ 2.6-million dollars then), which was a record for a work of contemporary Chinese art at that time.

It is in this context that Jia simultaneously shoots two films: *Still Life*, a fiction, and a documentary film about Liu Xiaodong, entitled *Dong*. Both films were presented at the 2006 Venice Film Festival, with *Still Life* winning the *Lion d'or* of the competition.

The proximity between these two works gives us an opportunity to think about the complex relationship between realism, documentary and fiction in Jia's work. When juxtaposed, these two films may even cause some discomfort to the viewer who experiences the blurred divide between reality and fiction created in the passage between them.

But before addressing this issue, we must first ask a question that can hardly be avoided given the title of the film, namely the question of the relationship between cinematographic realism and "still life" as a pictorial style. Originally, *Still Life* was to be called 静物 (*jing wu*), the Mandarin equivalent of "still life," before the Chinese title became 三峡好人 (*San Xia Hao Ren*), "The Brave People of Three Gorges." In Mandarin, the full expression for translating "still life" is 静物写生 (*jing wu xie sheng*), where *xie sheng*, which literally means "writing life," suggests a style of realistic painting that takes the outside world as a model. In English, *xie sheng* can be translated as "painting from life," which is also the title of a book on the work of Liu Xiaodong.[7] To "paint from life" refers to a type of painting done in the open air, outside the studio. The term *xie sheng* opposes a classical Chinese painting practice called 写意 (*xie yi*), meaning literally "to write from intent or idea" (etymologically, *yi* is "the sound of the heart," evoking the idea of resonance); *xie sheng* focuses on the subjective relationship between the artist and the object he or she depicts, suggesting that these objects can never cast be completely objectified.[8] It is not least in this regard that Jia Zhangke and Liu Xiaodong share a desire to portray contemporary China's situation closest to its transformations by painting and filming *in situ*, "from life."

In this context, it is interesting to examine more attentively the artistic approach of Liu Xiaodong as it is presented in *Dong*. His desire to seize reality in the flesh led him to develop a very particular painting technique:

My objective is to confine myself in a narrow space to paint, so to eradicate part of my rationality. [...] After years of painting, control is not a problem. But to attain the kind of control that enables me to give a vital expression, I have to set strict limits on form and physique. That is: I lie on all fours to paint, as if to dive into it, staying no more than one meter from the canvas. You can't see that far from such a standpoint. And then, you portray your subject with earnestness, as if making a transcription, through physical conditions, to prevent too flawless a transcription. In this situation, I let my body go with the flow, so my physical energy is poured into it.[9]

In his series of paintings made at the Three Gorges, Liu Xiaodong devoted himself to capturing the natural beauty of the workers' naked bodies, sculpted by their labour. To do so, he brings them together in a reduced space, around a mattress. He spreads his canvas a few steps from them, directly on the ground, and "isolates" himself on the spot. The bodies pose, motionless, while Liu is vigorously busy "pouring himself" onto the canvas, transmitter-transcriber of the concentrated power of the bodies, assembled and composed,

suspended in still life. In the description of his pictorial gesture, Liu Xiaodong pays special attention to the organization of his own physical activity (later in *Dong*, we also see him doing a kind of *gong fu*). "All of him" is in play in the energetic transcription process, in a way that seems to stand midway between *xie sheng* and *xie yi*, giving a unique depth to his pictorial "realism." It also seems that his sense of form and the way he gives shape should be understood in relation to the Chinese calligraphic tradition, which has always attached a prime importance to the bodily integration of the writing-painting gesture. In that tradition, it is the whole body that captures and internalizes the figure, which then manifests it spontaneously:

> When the calligrapher captures a dynamic figure and internalizes it, it becomes a "pregnant figure." The Chinese character he utilizes, 意象 (*yi xiang*), literally means "figure of intention," which is to say that the figure carries intention, or is "pregnant with intention." This expression refers to the dynamic images that we hold within us, which spontaneously tend to expression when reactivated: a gesture, an expressive moment that we have integrated. It is in this sense that the figures collected by the body itself are "pregnant" or "charged with expression."[10]

This description of the "figures of intention" and their relationship to the calligrapher's body stays closest to the vital process by which an image is made physically dynamic. Liu Xiaodong's energetic contraction produces a pictorial space saturated with life, concentrated in figures that run deep, reaching Jia's films in a fashion that may be taking part in what Benjamin called a *Dialektik im Stillstand*, a stillstand dialectic, where images stand on the threshold of movement and immobility, in a tension-charged pause.[11]

Ultimately, the only way to grasp Jia's filmic gesture in all its complexity involves going further into what could be defined as the question of imaginal impregnation, halfway between traditional Chinese calligraphy and painting, and Benjamin's dialectic of the image. Or, again: Jia's filmic gesture's ethico-political power must be conceived on a plane that we could call, following Warburg and Agamben, "the life of images." Bill Viola synthesizes what is at stake here when he underlines how "images live in us […] we are living databases of images […] and once images get into us, they never stop growing and transforming themselves."[12]

Dong, Still Life's real?

The vital force of the workers' naked bodies celebrated by Liu Xiaodong constitutes a central motif of *Dong*, but also of *Still Life*. In his excellent interview with Jia, entitled "Jia Zhangke: Painter for Political Camera," Stéphane Mas underlines that "what Xiaodong Liu says of the bodies of these workers, this beauty, this strength, is featured in *Still Life*," adding that "time's work upon the bodies is everywhere present, especially in *Still Life*."[13] Indeed, *Dong* and *Still Life* are intimately linked, and their juxtaposition gives rise to a complex entanglement between reality and fiction. For example, in *Still Life*,

Mark, a young, fanciful man that San Ming befriended dies after he is crushed under a brick wall.[14] In the documentary *Dong*, we witness the return of a worker's corpse to his family; there again, San Ming is present. In an extremely disturbing way, this scene extends the *Still Life* character's fictional death. San Ming (which is his real name) appears as a character witnessing the fictitious death of a friend, and as an all-too-real witness to the death of a colleague.

Another less dramatic element subtly blurs the line separating documentary and fiction: seeing San Ming, one of *Still Life*'s main protagonists, pose as a "simple," anonymous worker for one of Liu Xiaodong's paintings. The figural and "unreal" immobility of Ming is retroactively interpolated in *Still Life*'s imagery, creating a kind of duplication of perspective, thus revealing another essential aspect of the complexity of Jia's filmic gesture. Pictorially speaking, something more-than-real, a complex of living pictures on the screen—an imaginal contraction—brings reality and fiction into a zone of indiscernibility.

It is difficult to conceptualize precisely the tenor of the viewer's malaise created by this blurring of reality and fiction, as if fiction's effect of plenitude would decompose under the rough contact of documentary.[15] Could this be a bit of pure time, then? The life of the images seems to involve a "chronic time," a *chronos* seized in essential rupture with chronological time, which seems to make way for the emergence of what Deleuze might call "de-actualized peaks of present."[16] From this line of imaginal emergence, our meditation gains a new ground: it is about educing both the cinematographic and ethico-political significance of interpolation as the production of de-actualized peaks of present in *Still Life*. The stopping power at work in *Still Life* that manifests itself at the border of the real and the imaginary, of documentary and fiction, must now be sought out at the threshold of time and history.

Still Life's Temporal Paradox

Still Life is a deeply paradoxical work. On the one hand, everything in it is in motion: the construction of the Three Gorges dam gives rise to a huge migratory flux, as thousands of former residents of Fengjie see their city progressively impounded beneath the rising waves. As in his previous works, Jia shows the effects of China's accelerated economic development on the lower classes, focusing here on the forced deracination of the "brave people of the Three Gorges," as the Mandarin title of the film goes.

On the cinematographic plane, everything seems only to be movement, but a slow, fluid movement, meandering and meditative, merging with the regular flow of the mighty Yangtze, as suggested by the film's magnificent opening shot. The film also incorporates a number of elements from classical Chinese painting: river, mountain, and mist (notice that in Mandarin, landscape is written 山水 (*shanshui*), "mountain-water"). Also, in Chinese tradition, the omnipresent fog of the Three Gorges valley, softening the mountain's outline and beautifying the landscape, is thought to enhance the fertility of exchange and the fluidity of communication. In *I Ching* (*Book of Changes*), for example, figure 58, 兑 (*dui*),

"to exchange," is obtained by the double repetition of the trigram "fog" (again, if we add the radical "speech" to *dui*, we get 说 (*shuo*), which means "to speak"). Jia, who studied fine arts and classical painting before devoting himself to film, describes his use of the many panoramic views in *Still Life* as a "gesture that takes after the rolls of classical painting, that they would unroll like this in space."[17] Jia adds, "if I chose cinema, it's because it enables you to show passing time."[18] Between the juxtaposed human and natural temporalities, *Still Life* shows a life that, despite everything, follows its course irreversibly. In that sense, *Still Life* actually is a "still life," which consists, according to Deleuze, in a pure and direct form of time.[19]

And yet, in a less obvious but nonetheless palpable way, *Still Life* is also charged with a stopping power; in English and German, respectively, we could say "standstill" and "stillstand," two expressions that suggest something that resists and holds itself, in a kind of verticalizing but immanent interruption. In *Still Life,* something *con-sists* and *re-sists* itself.[20] The verb "to resist" comes from the Latin *resistere*, where we find *sistere*, "to be stopping." On a macropolitical plane, as in other works by Jia—and more broadly, the best of the 6th generation's cinema—*Still Life* resists by interpolating itself into the flux of Chinese mass-media, short-circuiting the molarizing and sanitized representations from the national marketing venture that flood and format Chinese public space. However accurate this description may be, this level of analysis falls short by confining itself to a criticism of representations. We must also examine Jia's micropolitics—his subtle way of entering the imaginal intimacy of the *forms-of-life*—to reveal the planes of consistency he finds there. It is on the molecular, imaginal level that we must ultimately look for *Still Life*'s stopping power, and the singularity of Jia's filmic gesture.

Belief and Time

The criticism of contemporary capitalism as hegemony of subsistence and negation of existence must ask the question of consistency, and, as such, of the belief that constitutes it, which is to say, that consists in it.

> —Bernard Stiegler, *Mécréance et discrédit I. la décadence des démocraties industrielles*

The cinema must film, not the world, but belief in this world, our only link.

> —Gilles Deleuze, *Time-Image*

The construction of the Three Gorges hydroelectric dam is a major symbol of Chinese modernity; one could even say that it somehow summarizes the principal historical episodes of China's twentieth century. The idea was put forth as early as 1919, by Sun Yat-Sen, founder of the Republic of China, and again in 1949 at the time of the Communist Party's accession to power. The project aims to control the Yangtze's deadly spate, improve navigation conditions, and, of course, produce electricity. In the early years, several feasibility

studies had been conducted, but because of the political turbulence that affected China it was not until 1979, just as the Cultural Revolution ended, that the exact site of the dam was confirmed. In 1989, Jiang Zemin and Li Peng overcoming all obstacles (and with the latter's son a major shareholder in the project), the Three Gorges Project was adopted. The project was voted on at the Chinese National Assembly on April 3, 1992, and the construction began a year later.[21] By using television archives showing Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping, *Still Life* emphasizes the historical dimension of the Three Gorges project. And in one sequence, the grandeur of the project is emphasized as somebody talking to a man responsible for the construction of a bridge connecting the banks of the Yangtze exclaims: "The Yangtze is tamed. You have achieved Mao's dream."

Still Life reminds us that the Three Gorges dam project is a long-term affair. But beyond the historical aspects, the film essentially questions the very event of the dam, its unbelievable character. Of course the dam is there, present, too present. But paradoxically, the fact that it is undeniably *there* is not sufficient to be certain we are contemporaries of it. This is because co-presence with the event is never simply chronological: if so, we could not say that something (un-believable) *happens* to us.

For Deleuze, this problem opens to the central question of "belief in the world." Belief, for Deleuze, is not belief in something (holding a representation as truth), but rather a belief by which the world holds together, and by which a becoming is effectuated, a belief that insures the imperviousness of a becoming-line, or the assumption of a determined relationship to time. From this immanent conception of belief, Deleuze short-circuits the direct opposition between reality and fiction and affirms a function of fabulation where fiction is presented as power and not as model. Defined as such, the function of fabulation is immediately political:

> It is the real character who leaves his private condition, at the same time as the author his abstract condition. […] It is a word in act, a speech-act through which the character continually crosses the boundary which would separate his private business from politics, and which *itself produces collective utterances.*[22]

Insofar as it constitutes itself as a fabulation power, Deleuze can say of cinema that it "becomes a free, indirect discourse, operating in reality."[23] Belief engaged in fabulation *operates* in reality—it works, realizes, effectuates. If there is a policy in Deleuze, we must look for it at the peak of belief and fabulation, in a complex back and forth between effectuation and counter-effectuation.

The gesture of intercession unfolding in *Still Life* is nothing less than an attempt to rise to the event that is the construction of the Three Gorges dam. It is in this context that we should understand the introduction of fantastic elements in *Still Life*'s narrative: a UFO crossing the sky, a building of surreal architecture suddenly taking off like a rocket, characters from an era that has past using cell phones and playing video games; these imaginary elements problematize the relationship to the real and reveal a necessity for it to be made fiction, in the mode of fabulation. To justify the surrealist side of *Still Life*, Jia will simply mention that in China, "unbelievable things happen all the time. […] We sometimes have a hard time believing what we see."[24] Filming "from life," Jia oversteps strict realism to reach at the fabulatory fusion point of the real, filming not only the world, but our belief in this world. In doing so, he offers a sort of fictional and collective fulcrum for the personal biographies of the victims of the dam's edification who are also at risk of not withstanding the demolition, of being unable to integrate their difference to this larger-than-life event, and of being swept away by the waves of a fatally distended time.

Passage: The Eye of 拆 *(Chai)*

For the present shape of this world is passing away.
—Paul, *Letter to Corinthians*

Still Life takes us into the ruins of a city that's disappearing, using the workers' demolition labour as a common thread. "The first time I saw the destruction of those buildings," says Jia, "I really felt that it meant the end of something, but also the beginning of a new era."[25] Several sequences in the film show different aspects of tension between past, present, and future. At one point, for example, we can see a group of archaeologists working to salvage vestiges of the past. Relation to the past is also very important in the encounter between San Ming and Mark, the young impersonator of the famous actor Chow Yun-Fat who dies later in the film. San Ming tells Mark he wants to reconnect with the woman he had bought 16 years ago. The object of his quest involves a certain loyalty towards the past—"we do not forget what we are," he says—contrasting with the ways of young Mark, who wants to be as modern he can be, and claims to live in a "world of adventurers." At one point, the two exchange their cell-phone numbers, and San Ming's ringtone plays "Long live the brave people." When he hears it, Mark exclaims: "Fuck! Brave people? None of those in Fengjie these days!" Note that this same expression, found in the Mandarin title of the film, 好人 *(hao ren)*, accentuates its historical dimension. The sequence continues with the music of Mark's ringtone, which seems to have been composed expressly to describe the current situation in the valley of the Three Gorges: "Waves flow, waves pound/the river runs for a thousand miles/It surges through our world of woes/and carries all of our sorrows." To the music, the camera then turns to a television screen that will show a sequence of images beginning with a woman in tears, and continuing with a ship sailing on the river. This gentle, beautiful, filmic transition will conclude with the UFO passing overhead.

The situation is harsh, very harsh, for migrant workers appointed to the demolition of Fengjie. "All of these workers are more or less unemployed," says Jia, "are more or less homeless, with this perpetual movement from one place to another, this feeling of permanent exile."[26] These workers occupy a crucial position in Chinese economic development, and it is no coincidence that they are Jia's topic of choice. They are the great sacrificed people of Chinese economic development, at once indispensable and supernumerary. One particularly striking scene of *Still Life* sums up their condition: while bare-chested workers hammer at the remains of a collapsed building, a team in protective suits is going through the ruins, spraying

pesticides in preparation for what will soon become the riverbed. A strange music emphasizes the incongruity of the moment, while on a wall still standing, a poster reads: "Give yourselves, bodies and souls." Time runs out: in some way, the future is about to happen, but obviously, this future will not be the workers', who will have already given everything.

In showing this solidarity with the fate of the workers, the imaginal power of *Still Life* is concentrated in a political present tense, on the cutting edge of the demolition process. Amidst the ruins of Fengjie, Jia taps forces that are irreducible to the hollow fable of economic progress and national power that saturates the Chinese mediascape and deprives the labouring class of an adequate representation of its condition. The ultimate stake of Jia's intercession gesture is to translate into images the power of destruction mobilized in the Three Gorges valley, in a way that educes a becoming and configures it as a passage. But how does he do it?

Anyone who has travelled to China in recent years knows that an essential feature of its current situation may be observed in a ubiquitous figure constituting a real threshold between the old and new, the past and future: 拆, *chai*, which means "demolition," a character that can be found on any building to be destroyed. We could say that Jia's act of intercession is to integrate the latent dynamism of the *chai* figure, and actualize its readability, in the heart of the chaos brought on by the accelerated destruction of Fengjie. This readability is provisional and punctual, as is the passage of this disappearing world's figure. Like other contemporary Chinese artists, Jia invites us to wholly go through the *eye of chai*—only at this price can there be contemporaneity in China.

Discussing classical Chinese poetry, Qin Haiying mentions how "some verses appear as a juxtaposition of images […] where each word becomes, as Barthes says about Mallarmé, a 'station' that can radiate in all directions."[27] This parataxic power of the Chinese character illuminates the particular status of the *chai* of *Still Life*. *Chai* presents itself as a paradigmatic example of imaginal interpolation, in which resides the stopping power of *Still Life*. For despite the apparently continuous character of the gesture of intercession, the passage is not smooth: it implies an imaginal interruption, the introduction of "an enduring interval in the moment itself"—an interpolation.[28] At the peak of the *chai* figure, *Still Life* di-stills some pure time.

If the figure of *chai* really does configure a possibility of passage, it is insofar as it is established as an imaginal *contretemps*, transfiguring the actuality of the destruction and making it into chronic, non-chronological time—a peak of de-actualized present. There is a passage only because, in one way or another, there is a stop *by* the image, a stop *at* the image. The present in *Still Life* is a present edited in images; and the site of the passages it configures may ultimately be what Foucault, when describing the threshold of the outside and fiction, called the "neutral intermediary" or "interstice of images."[29]

Conclusion: China in the Time After the Mutation

The moment is the Caudine Yoke beneath which fate must bow to the body. To turn the threatening future into a fulfilled "now," the only desirable telepathic miracle is a work of bodily presence of mind.
—Walter Benjamin, *One-way Street*

In an interview conducted by Agnès Gaudu, Jia directly questions his relationship to Contemporary China and the incredible mutation that his country has experienced since the start of the economic reforms:

Jia Zhangke As a Chinese, I feel I do not understand very well what happened in China during all those years. The evolution went so fast… The male and female characters don't understand either. We are in the presence of a UFO. The policy of reform and openness taught us that life would improve. But, up to today, the better life is a UFO, it has not materialized… *I think that Deng Xiaoping's reform is over and that what we see today is not China in mutation, but China after the mutation.* It's like the dam. It is finished and we can even visit it. We have reached a certain level of material life, but a question remains to be resolved: how to manage all of this?

Angès Gaudu There will be no more change?

JZ *We are already at the end of what such reform could bring.*

AG On the question of where China is going, you cannot answer either?

JZ I make films that simply show what happens. Economy in good or bad health, open or conservative periods, everything is mixed up. It is difficult to synthesize. Before, I thought that China's problem was that the economic development was too quick. Today, I think that quickness is not a problem. Its problem is political and cultural openness, which are too slow, and the difference between these two rhythms, an accelerated economic development and a slow political change.[31]

What is particularly remarkable in this passage is that Jia systematically breaks from the story of economic transition and its promise of infinite progress. He highlights the growing gap between economic-technological progress and the political openness in his country, a discrepancy that is certainly not specific to China, and one that Bernard Stiegler defines as a "process of detemporalization," meaning that "society is disadjusting from the technical system, and this disadjustment is already, in itself, a loss of time."[32] In Jia's words, this would translate in the following statement: "we have not yet finished digesting recent history." But to trigger a "digestion of

history," we must necessarily find its term, and it would be vain to look for it on a strictly chronological plane.

"If the idea of human progress doesn't hold," says Sigfried Kracauer, "it's primarily because it is inseparable from the idea of chronological time as a matrix of a process that carries meaning."[33] *Still Life*'s UFO symbolizes, in its own way, the limits of the progressive imagination. It is well known that UFOs appear only in the empty sky of progress, when the past's constellations have lost all readability. They embody the arrow of homogeneous time, charging to the future: they are the spectral incarnation of the utopia of progress. But paradoxically, their apparition bends the line of chronological time. For an instant, the course of time is suspended. We could say that the UFO appears only at the point where the progressive imagination asymptotically approaches its own limit.

By saying that we are now facing China "after the mutation," Jia resists the "informed progressive tendency" to think the present through a requirement for politico-cultural completion. *Still Life* posits itself exactly at this gap between the homogeneous, empty time of progress and the vital need to stop the present, or rather, give way to a concept of present "which is not a transition, [but rather one] in which time originates and has come to a standstill."[34] In his study of messianic temporality, Agamben states: "Our representation of chronological time, as the time in which we are, separates us from ourselves and transforms us into impotent spectators of ourselves—spectators who look at the time that flies without any time left, continually missing themselves."[35] To rise to the event that is happening to us, we must manage to counter the loss of time; we must literally give ourselves time. To give oneself time is, for San Ming or Zhao Tao, to bring about encounters that will help solve the problems of the past, so that each can conjugate his life in the present.

In my reading of Jia Zhangke's *The World*, I discussed what Debord calls the "systematic organization of a breakdown in the faculty of encounter."[36] In *Still Life*, by contrast, there is a celebration of the qualified time of the encounter. Significantly, the film is divided into four parts: tobacco, alcohol, tea, and sweets. At the time of planned economy, these luxuries were distributed amongst the population in an egalitarian way. In *Still Life*'s economy, "they are," Jia says, "the sign of the persistence of social relations in China."[37] The interpolation of these intertitles during the film effectively emphasizes its power to establish relations of these symbolic objects, which are signing, through their exchange, the open and undetermined time of the encounter. ✕

Notes

1. See Pierre Perreault, "Le discours de la parole" (1966) in *De la parole aux actes* (Montreal: L'hexagone, 1985); Gilles Deleuze, "The Powers of the False" and "Cinema Body and Brian Thought," in *Cinéma 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989).

2. Etymologically, interpolation means "interruption." In a complex exegesis of the relationship between potentiality and multitude in the political thought of Dante, Agamben notes that "in Averroist tradition, [interpolation] coincides with imagination." For more details, see "L'opera dell'uomo" in *La potenza del pensiero* (Vicenza: Neri Pozza, 2005), 375. It is also interesting to note that Adorno, speaking of Benjamin, says that "for him, philosophical imagination is the ability 'to interpolate in the smallest detail.'" Quoted in Gérard Raulet, *Le caractère destructeur* (Aubier, 1997), 89. Furthermore, in *Cos'è il contemporaneo?* (Rome: Nottetempo, 2008), Agamben suggests that the contemporary divides and interpolates time. It is in this tradition that we position our use of the concept of interpolation.

3. For more details on the "paradigmatic gesture," see the chapter "What is a paradigm?" in Giorgio Agamben, *Signatura rerum* (Torino: Boringhieri Bollati, 2008).

4. http://www.theoria.ca/theoria/archives/2007/01/benjamin-the-destructive-character.html

5. Jacques Derrida, *Spectres de Marx* (Paris: Galilée, 1993), 17.

6. For example, Xiaodong was an actor in Wang Xiaoshuai's *The Days* (1993) and the art director for Zhang Yuan's *Beijing Bastards* (1993).

7. Weiwei, Ai, Liu Xiaodong, Liu Xiaodong: *Painting from Life*, Timezone 8, Hong Kong, 2008.

8. In both cases, surprisingly, the Chinese prefer to say of the literate painter that he's "writing." Why? According to Zheng Wuchang, author of *A Complete History of Chinese Painting Studies* (*Zhongguo huaxue quanshi*) (Shanghai: Shuhua Chubanshe, 1985), "the scholars despise the term 'paint,' which has something of the craft to it, and makes you think of the formal reproduction of things." Qin Haiying summarizes the comments of Zheng in *Segalen et la Chine: Écriture intertextuelle et transculturelle* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003), 138. François Jullien also offers some elements of answer: "If we like to say of the literate painter that he writes, it is to signify that what he is representing—bamboo, rock or character—is never apart from a will to say [vouloir dire] and that the shape he traces, even when borrowed from the world, is invested with his subjectivity." Jullien, *Le nu impossible* (Paris: Seuil, 2005), 91.

9. *Dong*, Film, directed by Jia Zhangke, Hong Kong, 2006.

10. Jean-François Billeter, *L'art chinois de l'écriture* (Paris: Skira/Le Seuil, 2001), 185.

11. For an enlightening analysis of this dialectical conception of the image tracing back to Aby Warburg's "dynamogrammes" and "pathos formulas," see Giorgio Agamben, *Ninfe* (Torino: Boringhieri Bollati, 2007).

12. Quoted by Agamben in *Ninfe*, 10.

13. Stéphane Mas, "Jia Zhangke: peintre pour caméra politique", accessed October 24, 2008, http://www.peauneuve.net/article.php3?id_article=171.

14. The circumstances surrounding his death remain mysterious, but some sequences in the film lead us to believe that Mark, who was not a worker, was the victim of a settling of scores between rival gangs linked to demolition companies.

15. In *Film Fables*, Rancière notes that documentary has the possibility of presenting the "meaningless truth of life" emblematic of aesthetic art, a feature which he opposes to the plausible action characteristic of representational art and its mimetic requirement: "The privilege of the so-called documentary film is that it is not obliged to create the feeling of the real, and this allows it to treat the real as a problem and to experiment more freely with the variable games of action and life, significance and insignificance." Jacques Rancière, *Film Fables* (Oxford: Berg Publishers, 2006), 17-18.

16. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinéma 2: The Time-Image*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Robert Galeta (London: Athlone Press, 1989), 130.

17. Mas, "Jia Zhangke," http://www.peauneuve.net/article.php3?id_article=171

18. Ibid.

19. Deleuze, *Cinéma 2*, 273. Deleuze discusses still-lifes in relation to Ozu, who greatly influenced Hou Hsiao-Hsien, one of Jia Zhangke's principal sources of cinematographic inspiration.

20. The expression "to resist oneself" is a cornerstone of Santiago Lopez Petit's thought. See *Horror Vacui: La travesia de la noche del siglo* (Madrid: Veintiuno Siglo, 1996). The reflexive form of the verb "to resist" allows for internalizing the opposing action. It also allows for it to be reconducted to the body.

21. For more details, see Philippe Savoie, "Impact durable du barrage des Trois Gorges sur le développement durable de la Chine," *Revue VertigO* 4, no.3 (2003).

22. Deleuze, *Cinéma 2*, 222-223.

23. Ibid., 155.

24. Mas, "Jia Zhangke," http://www.peauneuve.net/article.php3?id_article=171.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Qin Haiying, *Segalen et la Chine*, 23

28. Gilles Deleuze, *Cinéma 2*, 155.

29. See Michel Foucault, *Maurice Blanchot: The Thought from Outside*, trans. Brian Massumi (New York: Zone Books, 1987).

30. Walter Benjamin, *Selected Writings Vol. 1: 1913-1926*, eds. Marcus Bullock and Michael William Jennings (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1996), 483.

31. Agnès Gaudu, "On n'a pas encore digéré l'histoire récente," in *Courrier international* 862 (May 10, 2007); my emphasis.

32. Bernard Stiegler, *Mécréance et discrédit, Vol I: La décadence des démocraties industrielles* (Paris: Galilée, 2004), 71.

33. Quoted in Laurent Olivier, *Le sombre abîme du temps* (Paris: Le Seuil, 2008), 147.

34. Walter Benjamin, "On the Concept of History," accessed May 31, 2012, http://www.efn.org/~dredmond/Theses_on_History.html.

35. Giorgio Agamben, *The Time That Remains* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2005), 68.

36. See Erik Bordeleau, "The World without Future: Stage as Entrapment in Jia Zhangke's Film," *China Review* 10, no.2 (2010); Guy Debord, *The Society of Spectacle*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1994), aphorism 217.

37. Agnès Gaudu, "On n'a pas encore digéré l'histoire récente."

Images

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To Search High and Low: Liang Sicheng, Lin Huiyin, and China's Architectural Historiography, 1932–1946
by Zhu Tao

Lin Huiyin and Liang Sicheng on the Temple of Heaven, Beijing, 1936

1932—A YEAR OF SIGNICANCE

In the West, 1932 was the year that modernist architecture, labeled the "International Style" by Hitchcock and Johnson in their exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art, gained new momentum, spreading its influence throughout the world. Partially in reaction to the swift development of modernism in China, that year was also a defining moment in the historiography of Chinese architecture. Liang Sicheng and Lin Huiyin, two young architectural historians, published separate essays in the March issue of the *Bulletin of the Society for Research in Chinese Architecture*, establishing an intellectual blueprint that would guide their historical studies for the following 14 years.

Lin's essay, "On the Principle Characteristics of Chinese Architecture," was a theoretical attempt to portray Chinese architecture, with its long evolution over thousands of years and strong influence across the vast Asian continent, as a unique and significant system. Moreover, Lin believed that China's wooden architecture demonstrated a profound construction system in which the "pure timber frame structure was always incorporated with a coherent aesthetic expression." It was this principle of "structural rationalism" whereby Chinese architecture resonated with both the Gothic system in the West and the burgeoning modernist architecture being constructed around the world. Lin further speculated about how traditional Chinese architecture could be molded into "modern Chinese architecture." Since China's timber-frame construction shared the same structural principles with modern reinforced concrete and steel-frame construction, "one only needs to change the building materials, without radically changing the major structural parts, so that the (new) possibility of the (new) materials will lead to a new development. That in turn will result in an extremely satisfying new architecture."[1]

Fully concurring with Lin's theoretical formulation of Chinese architecture, Liang's essay, "Architecture of the Tang Dynasty," offered an historical analysis that mapped out the evolution of Chinese architecture with a central thread that weaved together at least three separate strands of thinking. Following both Johann Joachim Winckelmann and Charles Darwin, he demonstrated how history evolved in a manner similar to life's cyclical growth: birth-adolescence-maturity-decline. This notion, in turn, led to a nationalist conviction, shared by Liang and many other contemporary Chinese intellectuals, about the fate of Chinese culture. They argued that Chinese culture originated in ancient times, reached its peak during the Tang dynasty, gained its refinement during the Song dynasty, and started to decline during the Ming and Qing dynasties, leading finally to the early-twentieth century reality that it was being humiliated and overshadowed by encroaching Western cultures. Therefore, the writing of China's architectural history was of paramount importance to both Liang and Lin, as they believed that China's civilization could only be reconstructed through "the re-examination of its national heritage."[2]

Liang used a structural-rationalist approach to show how the birth-to-decline progression had been manifested in China's architectural history. In particular, he chose the "natural growth" of wooden brackets as the most salient expression of the rise and fall of China's architectural culture: the configuration of the brackets, from their early stage of simplicity, reached their complexity and maturity during the Tang and Song dynasties, and then gradually "lost their structural value" during the Ming and Qing dynasties, when they degenerated into mere decoration. Within this progression, Liang believed that a high degree of prestige should be applied to Tang architecture because "Tang art was the golden moment of China's art history." However, at the time, Liang was not even certain that any examples of Tang construction had actually survived in China; and he was only able to examine and admire Tang architecture by viewing the images of the Dunhuang Murals and photos of Hōryū-ji, a well-preserved Tang temple in Nara, Japan.[3]

MISSING COMPONENTS

Liang and Lin's historiographical construction was problematic in two respects. First, they were so eager to portray China's traditional architecture as one singular *system*, as important as the Greek, Roman and Gothic were in the West, that they highly generalized the concept of Chinese architecture. In their account, only one dominant architectural style could best represent China's "national style:" the official timber structure exemplified by the Northern Chinese royal palaces and Buddhist temples, especially the ones built during the period from the Tang to Jin dynasties. As a consequence of their idealization, the diversity of China's architectural culture—the multiple construction systems and building types, and in particular, the vernacular buildings of different regions and ethnic groups—was roundly dismissed.

Second, Liang and Lin had theorized Chinese architecture before they had carried out a thorough empirical study. In April 1932, one month after they published their two essays, Liang conducted his first field study in Ji County, Hebei, to be followed by more than 10 years of jointly conducted field research. Liang, Lin and their colleagues painstakingly surveyed and documented each building, and incorporated it into the historical, genealogical framework they had previously developed. In other words, each building became physical proof of their preconceived theory. Although Liang, Lin and their colleagues have been credited as the first group of Chinese architectural scholars to emphasize the importance of research based on field studies, their approach was radically different from that of another contemporary historian, Fu Sinian, who insisted that historians should not follow or promote any "-ism," but should collect only objective evidence. Fu's famous slogan: "We're not book readers (intellectuals). We just go all the way to Heaven above and Yellow Spring (hell) below, using our hands and feet, to look for things."[4]

CLIMBING UP: 1932–1937

Mo Zhongjiang under the eaves of the Ying County Wooden Tower, 1933

Lin on the beam of the Bell Tower of Kaiyuan Temple, Zhengding, Hebei, 1933

Liang under the eaves of the library of Longxing Temple, Zhengding, Hebei, 1933

During this period, Liang and Lin's study was a process of constantly "tracing back-climbing up" along the historical trajectory they had established. Based on the knowledge they had gathered from their readings about Ming and Qing architecture in Beijing, they and their colleagues went to the northern Chinese countryside to investigate a series of temples that had survived from the Yuan, Jin, Liao, and finally, Tang dynasties. In July 1937, among numerous discoveries, their greatest triumph was the identification of the Foguang Temple, a timber structure dating back to 857 AD, during the Tang Dynasty, in the Wutai Mountains, Shanxi Province. This breakthrough was a powerful repudiation of Japan's declaration that one could only see Tang structures in Japan, a position that tormented Liang and Lin for years. Finding the Foguang Temple was the pinnacle of their careers.

Liang, Lin and their colleagues looking for the Tang-era Foguang Temple in the Wutai Mountains, 1937.

Yet, at this juncture, history could not have been more dramatic. The most glorious moment in Liang and Lin's career was also one of the darkest ones in China's modern history. On July 8, 1937, when Liang, Lin and his colleagues were celebrating their finding of the Foguang Temple, absorbed in measuring the building deep in the Wutai Mountains, the Lugouqiao Incident broke out in Beijing's outskirts. Japan invaded China, sparking the Second Sino-Japan War. This forced Liang, Lin and their colleagues to immediately flee to Southwest China, where they would stay in hiding for nine years.

SENT DOWN: 1937–1946

Despite the misery they experienced, Liang and Lin's exile to the Southwest ironically turned into a fruitful grand tour that greatly expanded their horizons.[5] Their escape across the continent opened their eyes to China's diverse building types, construction systems and formal expressions in response to varied local materials, as well as climatic and cultural conditions. Among all of their discoveries, vernacular housing opened up a new sphere of interest for their architectural study. During the period of 1932–37, Liang and his colleagues focused exclusively on temples built according to royal construction standards, and had been indifferent to vernacular housing in spite of seeing examples everywhere during their trips to the countryside. Among the numerous reports they published in the *Bulletin* during this period, not a single essay was devoted to these vernacular buildings. However, from 1937 until 1946, their attitude changed dramatically.

Living in the remote countryside of Southwest China, they had to cope with the severe lack of financial support and access to transportation. Also, there were very few buildings constructed in accordance with the royal standard. Liang and his colleagues had no other choice but to closely study the humble buildings in which they resided, or others nearby. For example, Liu Zhiping, an assistant of Liang, measured the courtyard house he inhabited in Kunming. In 1944, he published a thorough report in the *Bulletin*, which was the first essay on China's vernacular housing ever written by a member of the Society for Research in Chinese Architecture.[6] Liu Dunzhen, director of the Society's Literature Study Department and one of Liang's colleagues, measured his parents' countryside home, "Liu Residence" in Hunan province, in the same year. Similarly, Liang measured a courtyard compound in Li Zhuang, a small village on the outskirts of Chongqing, where they lived between 1944 and 1946.
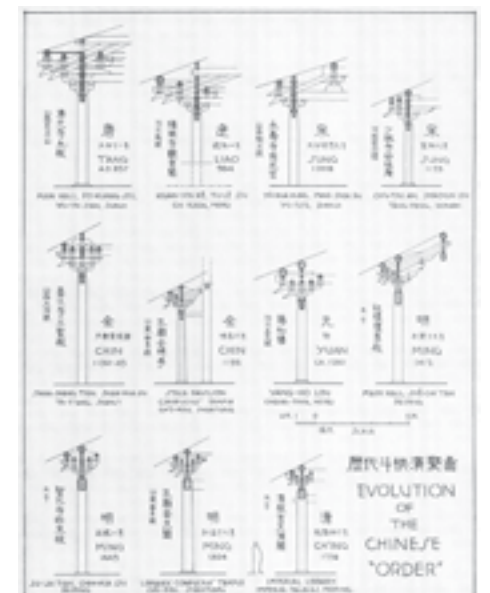
CLOSURE

Between 1932 and 1941, Liang and his colleagues visited more than 200 counties in 15 provinces and examined more than 2,000 traditional structures. Based on their case studies, Liang completed his manuscripts for the *History of Chinese Architecture* (in Chinese) in 1944, and *Chinese Architecture, A Pictorial History* (in English) in 1946.[7] Liang's two books were a full materialization of the intellectual blueprint that he and Lin had drawn up more than ten years before. His *Pictorial History* was a direct expansion of the two essays he and Lin published in 1932, and it focused only on the structural rationalist principles of Chinese timber construction and its evolution through four periods: Adolescence (200 BCE–220 CE, Han), Vigor (850–1050, Tang), Elegance (1000–1400, Song), and Rigidity (1400–1912, Ming & Qing). Liang's other book did mention some other elements, such as masonry structures, vernacular housing, and gardens, but this section was quite marginal compared to his extensive account of timber royal palaces and temples. The heterogeneous materials Liang and his colleagues collected during their exile in Southwest China, e.g., the vernacular, the minority, the ordinary, and the unorthodox, which could have added complexity and diversity to his historical account, were largely excluded or repressed in Liang's writing.

Awareness of these materials occurred 10 years later. During the 1950s, when Marxism-Leninism became the dominant ideology in Mao's China, Liang was constantly attacked for being too bourgeois, with no sense of the class struggle. His colleague, Liu Dunzhen, one of the many who criticized Liang, rose to prominence during this period. All of the materials that Liang, Liu, and their colleagues had collected in Southwest China formed the central content of Liu's alternative history book entitled *A Brief Account of Chinese Dwellings*, published in 1956.[8] ✕
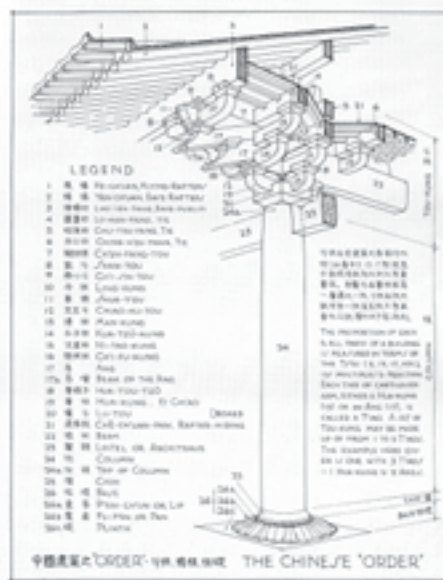
Liang's illustration of the evolution of the Chinese "order" in his *Pictorial History*.

Notes

1. Lin Huiyin. "On the Principle Characteristics of Chinese Architecture," *Bulletin of the Society for Research in Chinese Architecture* III. no.1 (1932): 163-79.
2. Liang and Lin were among the Chinese intellectuals who grew up during China's New Culture Movement of the mid-1910s and 1920s. They were particularly inspired by Hi Shi, one of movement's central leaders, who listed four major tasks that Chinese intellectuals needed to carry out: "studying issues," "importing theories," "reexamining the national heritage," and "recreating civilization." Hu Shi, "The Meaning of New Tide," *New Youth* 7. no.1 (1919).
3. Liang Sicheng. "Architec-

ture of the Tang Dynasty," *Bulletin* III. no.1 (1932): 75-114.
4. Fu Sinian. "The Objective of Working in the Institute of History and Philology," *Collection of Mr. Fu Mengzhen's Academic Essays* (Hong Kong: Longmen Bookstore, 1969), 179-80.
5. On the way to the Southwest, Lin Huiyin contracted tuberculosis, and thus was much less involved in the field trips during the years of 1938-46.
6. Liu Zhiping. "Yunnan Stamp House," *Bulletin* VII. no.1 (1944): 63-94.
7. Liang's *History of Chinese Architecture* was formally published by Baihua Wenyi Publishing House (Tianjin) in 1998. His *Chinese Architecture, A Pictorial History* (in English), edited by Wilma Fairbank, was published by the MIT Press in 1984.

8. Liu Dunzhen. *A Brief Account of Chinese Dwellings* (Beijing: Architecture Engineering Publishing House, 1957).

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ANTHROPARK

ANTHROPARK IS AN ENTERTAINMENT AND EDUCATIONAL FACILITY DEDICATED TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF KNOWLEDGE AND PUBLIC APPRECIATION OF THE ANTHROPOCENE

ANTHROPARK 入類パーク

The "**Anthropocene**" is an informal term for an epoch where human impact is so significant as to constitute a new geological era for its lithosphere. For example, there has been chlorine from atomic weapon testing found in ice cores, as well as mercury traces from coal plants. The beginnings of this epoch can be linked to the industrial revolution, and it was then developed in the modern and post-modern periods in which efficiency, consumption, and enjoyment form the holy trinity for a machinic modus operandi.

All distances collapse and all separations collide into a twisted knot. Ingenuity and atrocity; excess and lack; culture and nature appear as two sides of the same coin. False dichotomies beget false harmonizations. Where the lines are drawn will reveal different perspectives in a multiplicity of virtual realities.

> *...CULTURE AND NATURE APPEAR AS TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN...*

Individuals in our capitalist society *are estranged from the self through repressive injunctions to "Enjoy!"* —for *"no man is an island,"* except in enjoyment. This injunction distracts and distances oneself from the other, and ultimately from the network of islands. But the island is an illusion. In an interconnected network, all actions have direct and indirect impacts, therefore implicating each individual part and dissolving the veil of isolation.

AnthroPark is a theme park about line-drawing. The park form provides *an immersive experience and moves seamlessly from utilitarian moments to symbolic ones* in intense corporeal and psychological ways. The AnthroPark experience offers a chimeric collection of byproducts of Anthropocenic enjoyment that aggregate in entangled participatory jouissances. ***Please, enjoy!***

PARLIAMENT of PRIMATES

Enlightened Primates also inherit the unhappiness of their human counterparts. As if awakening from a dream, they too became aware of the vulgarities of reality.

...A VERITABLE ENTHRALLMENT OF HUMAN AND ANIMAL; CULTURE AND NATURE...

人類パーク

*SITES IN OPERATION

DIRECTORY:

001...A.P.E.	————	(Area of Perpetual Excrescence)
002...A.R.C.	————	(Animal Reserve Complex)
003...A.REN.A	————	(Architectural Renaturalization for Animals)
006...C.R.O.P.	————	(Cellular Re-engineered Organic Produce)
007...I.E.	————	(...ment of Insidious Energies)
019...P.E.N.	————	(Plains of Equilibrium and Neutrality)
020...P.O.P.	————	(Parliament of Primates)
028...W.I.Z.	————	(Waste Isloation Zone)

COME SEE THE UNFOLDING WHITE STRIPES OF THE ALBINO ZEBRAS
...AND OTHER NEWLY DISCOVERED SPECIES IN THE ANIMAL RESERVE COMPLEX!

THE AREA OF PERPETUAL EXCRESCENCE WELCOMES YOU!
A CENTERPIECE THAT CAPTURES THE SPIRIT OF THE PARK...
CARBON RECEPTORS! ALGAE MOUNTAIN!
CAPTIVATING VISITORS–FIRST BREATHS SINCE THE PARK'S INCEPTION. IT WILL LEAVE YOU GASPING FOR AIR!
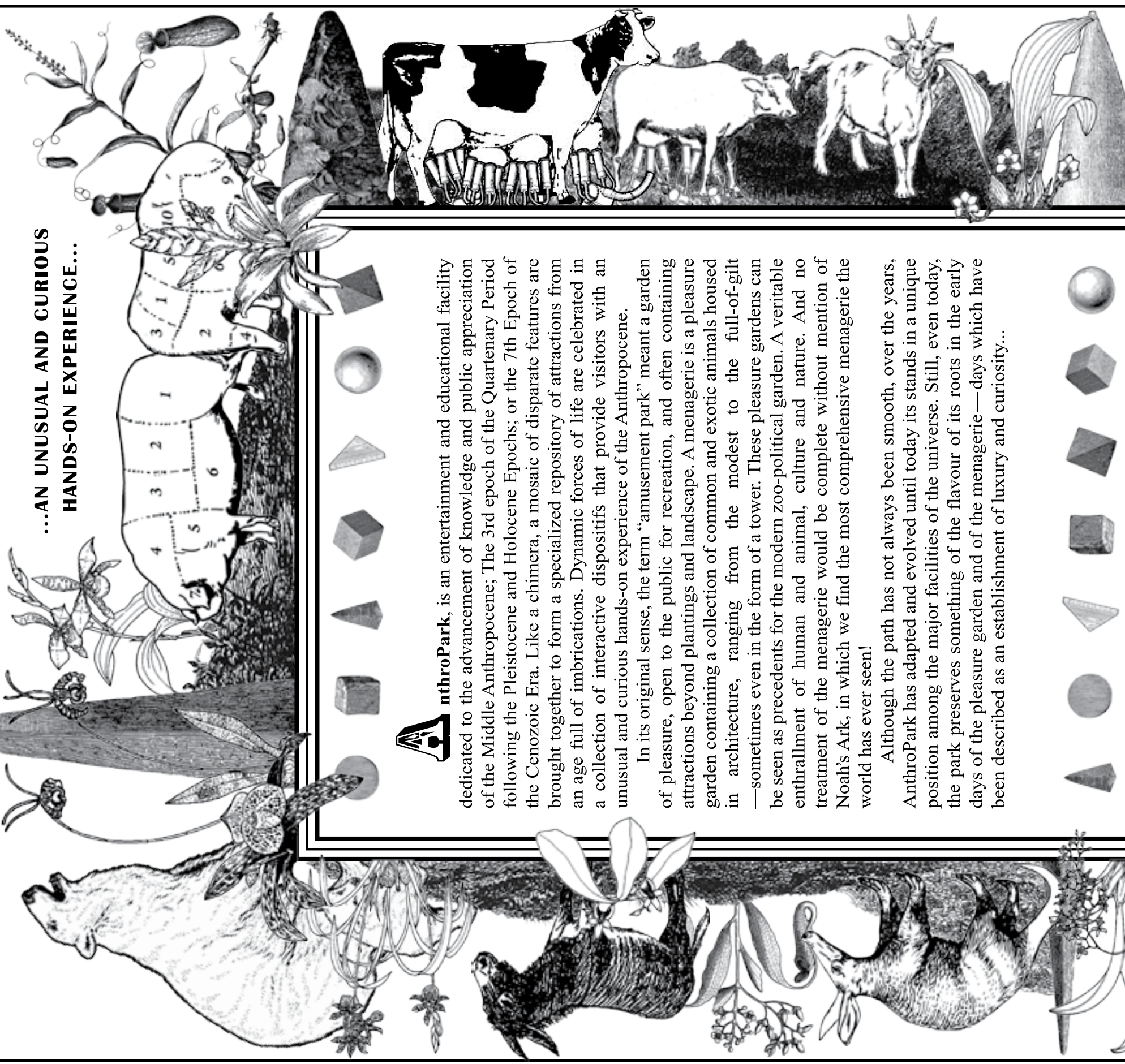
...AN UNUSUAL AND CURIOUS HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE...

AnthroPark, is an entertainment and educational facility dedicated to the advancement of knowledge and public appreciation of the Middle Anthropocene; The 3rd epoch of the Quarternary Period following the Pleistocene and Holocene Epochs; or the 7th Epoch of the Cenozoic Era. Like a chimera, a mosaic of disparate features are brought together to form a specialized repository of attractions from an age full of imbrications. Dynamic forces of life are celebrated in a collection of interactive dispositifs that provide visitors with an unusual and curious hands-on experience of the Anthropocene.

In its original sense, the term "amusement park" meant a garden of pleasure, open to the public for recreation, and often containing attractions beyond plantings and landscape. A menagerie is a pleasure garden containing a collection of common and exotic animals housed in architecture, ranging from the modest to the full-of-gilt —sometimes even in the form of a tower. These pleasure gardens can be seen as precedents for the modern zoo-political garden. A veritable enthrallment of human and animal, culture and nature. And no treatment of the menagerie would be complete without mention of Noah's Ark, in which we find the most comprehensive menagerie the world has ever seen!

Although the path has not always been smooth, over the years, AnthroPark has adapted and evolved until today its stands in a unique position among the major facilities of the universe. Still, even today, the park preserves something of the flavour of its roots in the early days of the pleasure garden and of the menagerie —days which have been described as an establishment of luxury and curiosity...

A SPECIALIZED REPOSITORY OF ATTRACTIONS FROM AN AGE FULL OF IMBRICATIONS!

The Other City
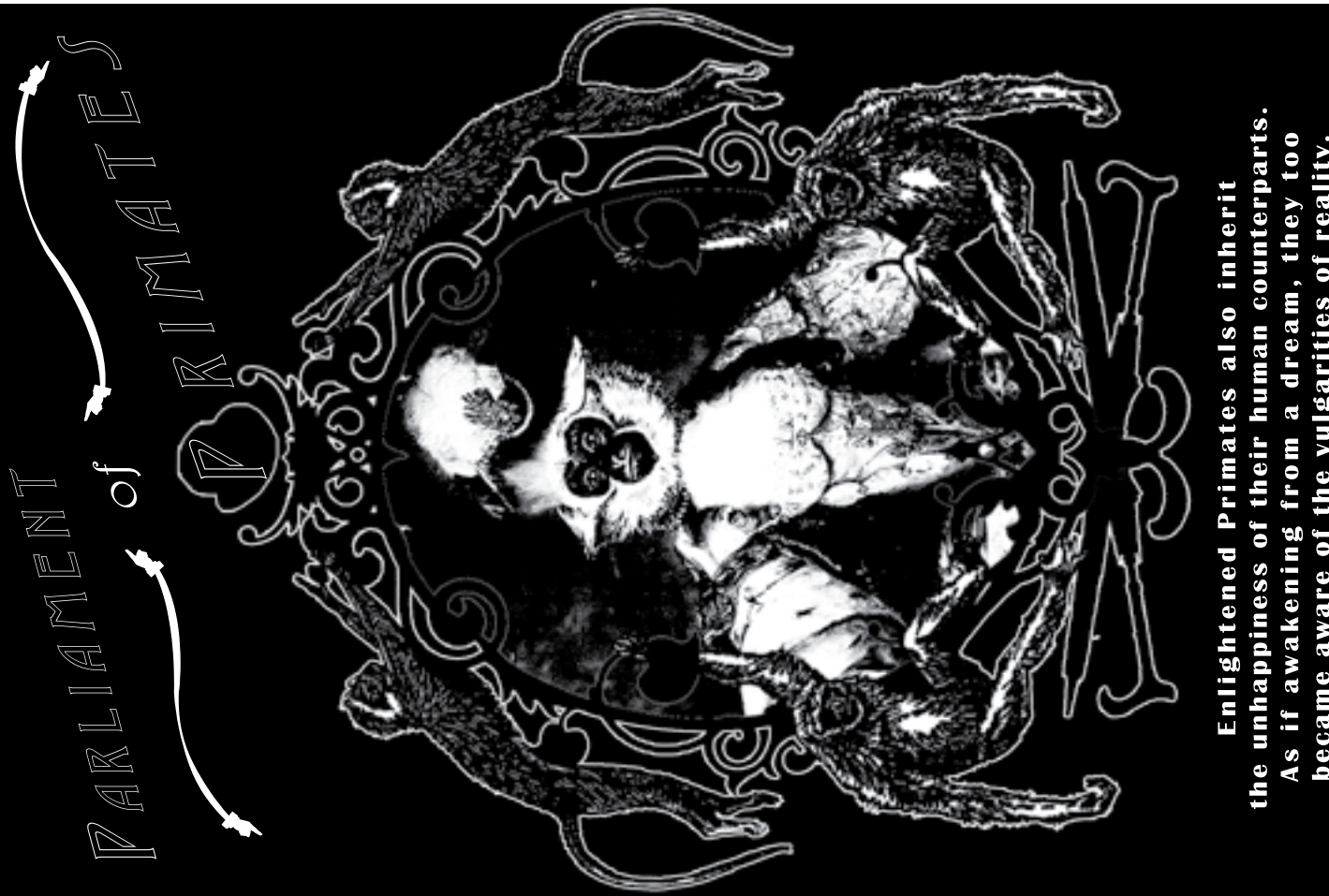
Cairo, Egypt

شهر فرنگ

City Fabric

×Bridge: Bridge: A built construction spanning over a body of water such as a river, channel, lake or spring; or a road or highway. Characterized by their height, and thus distinguished in urban centres from their surrounding built environment; bridges often serve as focal points in the control of contested urban spaces.

×Roundabout: A circuitous road used to efficiently redirect high volumes of vehicular traffic; generally used in place of an intersection, and often, where multiple roads or streets intersect. In major urban centres, that space may become the site of a monument, as in Place du 14 Janvier 2011 (Tunis), Azadi Square (Tehran), Tahrir Square (Cairo), New Clock Square (Homs), Pearl Roundabout (Manama)

Transport

×Truck with Mounted Water Cannon: A truck carrying a device that shoots a high-pressure current of water, often over hundreds of feet, used in firefighting and riot control. Modern versions do not expose the operator to the riot, and are controlled remotely from within the vehicle by a joystick. Subtanks are also available to dispense dyes and/or chemicals.

Communication Devices

×Social Media/News Blogs: Any of a number of internet-based communication applications that support the exchange of user-created content for social/political interaction. Their content can come in the form of text, images, and/or audio based feeds; and, in contrast with the content of traditional printed press, has become increasingly difficult to control, due to the fragmented nature of its distribution.

People

×Islamist: A controversial term, which generally reflects a person or persons whose ideologies maintain that Islam is both a religion and a political system. The term may or may not refer to persons strictly adhering to Sharia Law, and/or the moral code and religious laws of Islam.

×Foreign Media: Foreign Media: Individuals representing the media outlets of foreign news agencies who 'independently' document, and report on events through written articles, photo-journalism, and/or video footage—such as al Jazeera, BBC Persian, VOA, and France24.

The Nile

metro station

state TV

Feb 3: foreign journalists attacked by Mubarak supporters

Ramses Hilton (journalists)

Feb 2: area controlled by Mubarak supporters
Feb 4: area controlled by army

Abdel Monem Riyad Square

6 October Bridge

Egyptian Museum

Feb 3–6: protesters' barricades

Ruling Party HQ

Feb 2: main area of clashes—army positioned
area occupied by anti-government protesters

Nile Hilton

Arab League

location of tents

metro station

metro station

Abdin Palace

Tahrir Square

Kasr al Nile Bridge

Intercontinental Hotel

Mogamma government building

US embassy

Mohammed Mahmoud St.

Al Kasr al Aini

Interior Ministry

People's Assembly (Egyptian Parliament)

Feb 1: army tank line-ups
Feb 4: military checkpoint

metro station

1. Anti-government protesters fill Tahrir Square in Cairo February 10. 2011.
Photos: REUTERS/Dylan Martinez.
http://totallycoolpix.com/2011/02/the-egypt-protests-part-04/.

2. "The Battle of Qasr al-Nile Bridge" January 28. 2011. Being attacked by water cannons by the Police, the demonstrators sit down to pray, turning the police attack into an 'unholy' act as well. Photographer unknown.
http://boingboing.net/2011/01/28/egypt-photo-proteste.html

3. Egyptian opposition supporters near Twitter graffiti in Tahrir Square. Cairo, in February. Social networking sites were used to help organise opposition demonstrations. Photo: Steve Crisp/Reuters.
http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/cifamerica/2011/mar/03/internet-facebook.

4. A man takes part in Friday prayers while on top of a light pole at Tahrir Square in Cairo.
Photo: REUTERS—Mohamed Abd El-Ghany.
http://english.al-akhbar.com/photoblogs/egypt-reclaiming-revolution.

5. Cairo, a group of anti-government protestors and journalists. No credit.
http://www.popgive.com/2011/11/defensive-gear-of-egyptian-protesters.html.

The Antinomies of Realism: Postwar Italian Housing Projects

photographs and text by Mary Lou Lobsinger
image preparation: Natalie Dubois

The standard definition of realism rests upon the claim to represent reality. In keeping with the historical category, realist practices of the early twentieth century aspired to an aesthetic of the concrete aligned with a critical-political vocation to represent authentic social conditions. As an epistemological category, realism conflates seeing with knowing—that is, verisimilitude is substantiated by empirical knowledge and visual evidence. Much painting has been judged by its life-likeness, and certain eras of film (for example, postwar Italian neorealist cinema) aspired to the pseudo-documentary style of the witnessed chronicle. To make reality present, the realist writer employed formal techniques such as excessive visual description, especially of apparently extraneous detail, and dialogue between characters speaking in local, authentic dialects. In classic conceptions of realism, form, technique, and content are nothing unless leveraged by a political belief in representing the socio-historical conditions of the popular classes. In the 1930s, a robust exchange among German Marxist thinkers—Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Ernst Bloch, Bertolt Brecht, and Georg Lukács—played havoc with any direct understanding of the relation between aesthetics and politics, expressionism and realism. From that point onward, any questions about realism, about the dialectical play between form and content, or of the representable, became much more complicated.

At the centre of realism lays an epistemological dilemma. To represent reality requires that the matter of the world be structured for visual or literary communication. Communication relies on conventions, socially agreed upon codes of representation, aesthetic devices or techniques whether painterly, architectural, literary, or cinematic. If the content of realism is understood through a set of formal conventions, if a realist practice is recognized by technique, then the work produced belongs to the domain of the aesthetic and is hardly a pure expression of authentic experience—of the inchoate or raw materials of life. Once in the realm of cultural production all the conceits of representation are brought to bear. When realists claim, however naively, to present reality unfettered by aesthetic device, they hail the ideological suppositions underpinning naturalism. Roland Barthes' withering description of the existentially committed practice of the social realist writer in *Writing Degree Zero* (1953) silenced the possibility of escaping ideological motivation. A realist practice that acquits itself of the shared conditions of critical reception falls out of the discourse of art and then most certainly "ceases to be an aesthetic mode of representation."[1] Literary scholar Frederic Jameson neatly summed up the realist dilemma, writing that realism "is a peculiarly unstable concept owing to its simultaneous, yet incompatible, aesthetic and epistemological claims, as the two terms of the slogan, 'representation of reality' suggest."[2] And this instability is amplified when the discussion turns from pictorial arts and the literary tradition to the question of realism in architecture.

To speak of realism in architecture is to confront the paradox inherent in the concept, whose social, political, or historical truth is made evident by the architectural project. The question appears tautological. Do an architect's intentions, the claim to represent reality accompanied by particular formal choices, or political beliefs legitimate a realist practice? If likeness to an existing referent confirms pictorial realism or the replication of proletarian dialect characterizes literary realism, then to what external reality, life-likeness, or dialect would guarantee architectural authenticity? What does the mimicry of vernacular built forms or architecture designed as if freed of stylistic pretensions represent? How is the real in architectural representation verified? If, as K. Michael Hays has argued, "the real represented by architectural realism is a real that architecture itself has produced" then architectural intentions do not much matter.[3] How is one to judge practices that obstinately reference "realities" beyond the theoretical frameworks that periodically define architecture as a discipline? Are these necessarily not realist because they stand beyond the frame of convention? And how do architects account for the unintended realities produced by the architectural project.

The relative meaning of realism and the irrepressible problems of representation were thoroughly argued in the heated cultural debates over the future of realism following the end of WWII. The rise and fall of Italian realism can be conveniently bracketed on one side by the efforts of screenwriters and film directors, the clandestine communists who in the early 1940s looked to Italian *verismo* of the nineteenth century as means to critique the bourgeois state and fascism. In this encapsulation, a seminar on the problems of realism in Italy held at the Gramsci Institute in Rome in 1959 concludes the episode.[4] A more philosophical bracketing of postwar Italian realism could equally correspond to the ideological distance that separates the reception of Jean-Paul Sartre's essay of 1947, *What is Literature?*, from Theodor Adorno's unforgiving critique of committed practice published in 1962.[5] These chronological and philosophical anchors prove useful, but only to a degree. Given that it was for the most part a debate involving the Italian Left, a timeline would need to include, among other events, the Partito Comunista Italiano's (PCI) response to the Cominform and Zhdanovian dictates of the late 1940s, Khrushchev's 1954 speech on architecture, his denunciation of Stalin's corruption and shocked response to the events in Hungary of 1956. What can be said is that from the 1940s onward, the translation of Lukács' ideas on critical realism into Italian, the later reception of Adorno's *Minima Moralia*, and Brecht's work profoundly influenced Italian realism. These texts offered concepts and analytic methods that in the early 1950s sparked fierce intellectual exchanges over the future of realism. The contours of the debate begin with charges that neorealism had devolved into naturalism and idealized depictions of the subaltern classes. There is no question of the pivotal role played in the polemics by Lukács' characterization of types.[6] Active narration, the construction of historical types in the Lukácsian sense of narrating history, was prescribed as a remedy. To narrate history had ideological consequences, for as Lukács wrote, "it is perfectly possible to describe the essentials of an historical event and yet be in the dark about the real nature of that event and of its function in the historical totality."[7] Writing in 1960, the Italian philosopher Galvano Della Volpe cautioned against the error of adhering to socialist realism. Arguing that realism was characterized by breadth and not narrowness, Della Volpe shifted the debate's focus from two supposed antithetical terms—realism defined as a dialectic between form and content versus modernism as a decadent formalism—to one single purpose: ideological critique. Echoing Brecht, he wrote that artists must question reality for the truth can be concealed in as many ways as it can be revealed.[8]

In Italy, architectural realism fell hard on the heels of the various ideologically oriented realisms that cut across cultural fields such as cinema, literature, and the visual arts. In the early 1950s realism in architecture was, for a very short time, a political and theoretical preoccupation of a handful of young architects aligned with the PCI. It remained well under the radar of the mainstream magazines. At that time, realism found its object in the realization of architectural programs with a political cause, such as working class and youth social centres (Centro Sociale) or in state-sponsored housing projects. There are a few published texts (though most remained unpublished) and certainly there is little to show in terms of built work from this period. The influence of Lukács' ideas within architectural thinking would be much delayed. In the early 1970s, nearly two decades later, the idea of literary types became one of many influences on the conception of architectural types. But Lukács' unforgiving critique of the ideology of modernism, if not its architectural forms, and his anti-avant-gardism forever marked

Fig. 1
Tiburtino Housing Project, Rome (1949-54)
Project Architects: Ludovico Quaroni, Mario Ridolfi (lead architects); Mario Fiorentino, Federico Gorio, Maurizio Lanza, Piero Maria Lugli, Giulio Rinaldi, Michele Valori with Carlo Aymonino, Carlo Chiarini, Sergio Lenci, Carlo Melograni, Gian Carlo Menichetti. Many of the architects who worked on the Tiburtino project were members of the Rome-based Association for Organic Architecture (APAO).

Fig. 2
The INA-Casa (Istituto Nazionale per le Assicurazione-Casa) sponsored project is located 7 km east of Rome, south of the Via Tiburtina along the Via Dei Crispolti. The architects designed 771 units for an 8.8-hectare site to house a projected population of 4,000 inhabitants. Photographs taken in 1954 show that the site's natural rolling topographic features had been leveled in preparation for building construction. In an attempt to reinstate a more natural relationship between the buildings and the street, the architects introduced raised walkways, irregular facades, and entry addresses at street level. They hoped that the design would give a more casual, less uniform, and natural appearance to the area.

Fig. 4
The casual front entrances along the raised walkway were intended to produce more intimate thresholds between public, semi-public, and private domestic spaces. The scale and detailing of the door stoops and awnings mimic the vernacular character and ambience of an Italian village. It was imagined that the design would better suit the future inhabitants of the state-sponsored housing project.

Fig. 5
The raised walkways, open spaces, and juxtaposition of various built forms were designed with the intention of enabling the *mise-en-scène* of urban tableaux. This area of the Tiburtino was not designed in concert with other parts of the project. Similar to other sections of the development, the architects attempted to orchestrate picturesque episodes, producing quaintly framed moments between buildings and spaces.

Fig. 3
Lead architects Quaroni and Ridolfi provided an overall urban strategy for the site, but they delegated sections of the design development to smaller teams of architects. Their intention could be interpreted as ideological: to give the appearance of the design as having evolved spontaneously over time and without an overarching plan. In this part of the project, a staircase in front of a now-graffitied wall leads from the street to a raised walkway that skirts one side of the inner block. The entrances to the second-level units face an interior green space rather than the street.

Fig. 6
The project is often described as focusing on the street and the pedestrians' experience of an unfolding succession of spatial episodes. The street façades are designed to appear casual or built without a predetermined design agenda. Reminiscent of farm buildings more than suburban dwellings, the awkwardly sloped roofs and detailing such as the wooden shutters were all carefully composed.

Fig. 7
The designers claimed to be influenced by the buildings of the existing Roman working class quarters and rural architecture. They invoked neorealist cinematic techniques when referring to their approach to design and choice of architectural "language" as a kind of dialect of the drawing board. The episodic, frame-by-frame narrative of space also emulated the pseudo-documentary techniques of cinematic neorealism. The buildings should appear happenstance, non-formal, and realistic, and as such, the project was interpreted as a critique of the supposed formalist and functionalist values driving the designs of modernist housing estates. Today there are few pedestrians to be found and fewer places available to park a car. The amenities, themselves few and far between, require a car.

a generation of Italian architects schooled in the 1950s.

The Tiburtino housing estate built on the periphery of Rome is frequently referred to as the manifesto of neorealism in architecture. The construction of the state-sponsored project predated the cultural debate over realism, and by the late 1950s it became, without any polemical intent, the cipher for neorealism in architecture. Certainly many of the young architects working on the design were members of the PCI, but they never referred to the design as realist or neorealist while it was under construction. Rather, they made arguments against a peculiar idea of modernism, calling the Tiburtino a post-functionalist design strategy. The tropes identified as neorealist include a self-conscious borrowing from vernacular dwellings, perhaps some influence from *Neue Sachlichkeit* or from what elsewhere was called the New Empiricism. Viewed disparagingly by the young architects immersed in the literary debate and versed in Lukàcs, the Tiburtino exemplified everything that was wrong with neorealism: picturesque, homely vistas, and attempts to make design appear informal, organic, and undesigned.

When in the late 1960s and early 1970s realism in architecture appears again, the political partisanship and cultural optimism that marked the earlier debate had altogether transformed. The social, political, and economic upheavals were no less turbulent. If anything they were more divisive, as the Italian Left had scattered into multiple factions and politicized violence became a new urban reality. In architecture, the realist imperative to represent socio-historical conditions, the desire to bring form and content into dialectical play, underwrote oblique and academic notions about history as the reality of architecture. Architectural type informed by various sources, including Lukács, functioned as the cornerstone for an idea of realism as architectural rationalism.

A second wave of massive-scale, state-sponsored housing projects express a rather different socio-political and architectural reality. Le Vele, a home to the Camorra crime organization and made famous by the film *Gomorrah*, the Amiata al Gallaratese by Carlo Aymonino (with Aldo Rossi), and the Corviale by Mario Fiorentino, for example, are cities unto themselves. They explode any attempt to represent anything beyond the purely architectural: the modernist housing of the Unité type with capacities for housing upwards of 5,000 people. On the periphery of Naples, Milan, and Rome, at a scale of intervention only possible after the passing of planning Law 167 in 1962, these settlements as single forms erased any residual nostaglia for authentic representation of the popular classes. What reality is expressed as a wall of housing against the forces at work in urbanization, a kilometre-long building against the piecemeal sprawl of uneven socio-economic development and the continual inability to house immigrants and the working classes?

Corviale provides a fitting conclusion to the story of Italian architectural realism. The project was no longer based in claims to represent reality, as architects and critics shifted to analogy; a wall, a dam, a "monumental aphorism dropped in a place where it is impossible to live," an ideological sign that attempts to anchor the forces of urbanization between city and territory.[9] The paradox of this realism is that the chief architects of Corviale—Mario Fiorentino with Federico Gorio, Michele Valori, and Piero Lugli—had, as young architects twenty years earlier, collaborated with Ludovico Quaroni and Mario Ridolfi on the Quartiere Tiburtino.

In January 2012, Tiburtino is well-kept, and is even an architectural destination. The recently painted group of buildings stand out from what is an otherwise grim area crowded chock-a-block with mass-housing projects and, of course, automobiles. The Corviale, on the other hand, seems abandoned by all but its inhabitants. Broken elevators and smashed windows, empty public areas and supposed amenities covered in graffitti, walkways littered with dog excrement—its troubled history continues to live on. ✕

Fig. 1
Corviale Housing Project (1975-81; 1983-94). Construction was suspended between 1981 and 1983 due to financing problems within the IACP (Autonomous Institute for Popular Housing). Project architects: Mario Fiorentino (lead) with Federico Gorio, Piero Maria Lugli, Giulio Sterbini, Michele Valori. Almost all of the architects had worked on the Tiburtino housing project more than 20 years earlier. The passing of planning law 167 in 1962 made possible the assembly of a large tract of land able to support the gigantic scale of building.

Fig. 2
The five architects were asked to develop a scheme for a housing project located on a site just inside the city boundary on the periphery of Rome. The architectural team proposed a unitary intervention, an unvarying volume that would appear as a wall of inhabitation toward the city. At the level of architectural idea, the project depicts an architectural shift from narrative (as in the Tiburtino, for example) to analogy as explanation for built form. The initial conception had the housing component face the city side and the support services face the countryside.

Notes

1. Fredric Jameson, *Signatures of the Visible* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 158.
2. Ibid.
3. K. Michael Hays, *Architecture Theory since 1968* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1998), 254.
4. "Problemi del realismo in Italia," *Il Contemporaneo* 11 (February-March, 1959): 3-59; participants included Carlo Salinari, philosophers Galvano Della Volpe and Lucio Colletti, film critics Antonello Trombadori and Umberto Barbaro, and Rossana Rossanda, Raffaele De Grada, Mario De Micheli, Mario Alicata, Valentino Gerratana, architects Carlo Aymonino, Franco Berlanda, Carlo Melograni, among others.
5. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Qu'est-ce que la littérature?* (Paris: Gallimard, 1947); and Theodor Adorno, "Commitment," in *Aesthetics and Politics: Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Ernst Bloch, Bertolt Brecht, Georg Lukács*, ed. Fredric Jameson (London: Verso, 1977), 177-195.
6. See Antonio Banfi, "A proposito di Lukács e del realismo in arte," *Realismo* 18 (January-February, 1954): 6; and Franco Fortini, "Lukács in Italia," *Officina* 3 (1959): 77-101.
7. Georg Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness. Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. R. Livingstone (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1994), 12.
8. Galvano Della Volpe, "Engels, Lenin, and the Poetic of Socialist Realism," in *Critique of Taste*, trans. Michael Caesar (London, New York: Verso, 1991), 239.
9. Manfredo Tafuri, "Diga insicura / Sub tegmine fagi..." *Domus* 617 (May 1981): 22-26.

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Fig.3
The elevators frequently malfunctioned and, along with the entryways, were often targeted by vandals. By late 1983, nearly 700 families were illegally occupying the building. The squatters settled into the fourth floor of the main building, which had originally been designed to support boutiques for artisan products, offices and commercial activities. This design strategy emulated the modern housing typology of the Unité d'Habitation, designed by Le Corbusier in the early 1950s.

Fig.4
Security was a problem. Underemployment was a big problem. The enormous corridors were unprotected from vagrants, vandals, and the weather. The inhabitants felt abandoned by authorities, isolated in their units, and disconnected from the life of the city. The root of the problem stemmed from the enormity of the structure and the presumed self-sufficiency and autonomy of the housing complex.

Fig.6
In built form, there were three aspects to the assembly. The main building is 10 stories in height and 1 km in length. The plan proposed units for 6,300 inhabitants, 5 grand public spaces or parks, three groups of services, a comprehensive school from kindergarten to middle school, commercial necessities, and excellent vehicular circulation through a series of ring roads. But it turned out that there were approximately 10,000 people living in 1200 apartments at any given time, not including the ever-present population of squatters. Although numerous attempts were made by the Carabinieri to evict them, they would return each time to take over different parts of the building and site, including the park.

Fig.5
The public spaces were unkempt and abused. Playgrounds, an outdoor theatre space, a park, and other public amenities were isolated from the main buildings and out of sight from the ring road and walkways, and thus rarely used.

Fig.7
In the 1970s, Mario Fiorentino argued that Corviale represented a bridgehead between the city and the countryside beyond, and as a gigantic building it would present a complex architectural reality in relation to the city. Today, it represents a rather different complex relation between utopian architectural thinking and form, public housing policy and what it means to inhabit.

Fig.8
The historian Manfredo Tafuri wrote that the architects' ability to persuade the state authorities and the IACP of the reasonableness of the proposal was perhaps the most astounding aspect of the accomplishment. And more poetically, Tafuri claimed that Corviale was not a model for housing but a sign of poverty, as a place where it was impossible "to live"—the building stood as a tragic monument. Designed in the 1970s as a promise for the future of the city and its inhabitants, it soon stood as the sign of an architecture that had little chance of influencing future developments. (Manfredo Tafuri, "Diga insicura/sub tegmine fagi..." Domus 617 (May 1981): 22-26.)

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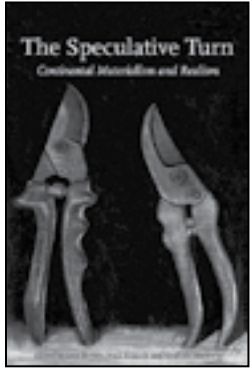
The Speculative Turn: Continental Materialism and Realism, Levi Bryant, Nick Srnicek, and Graham Harman (eds.), re.press, 2011, 440 pp.
Reviewed by Thomas Nail

What is speculative realism? Simply put, it is the philosophical position that there is a reality independent from human thought, language, and culture. This may sound banal, since it is so widely accepted as "common sense," but this sort of argument has not been seriously made by philosophers for a long time, and never quite like this. In fact, most of the last hundred or so years of philosophy has been explicitly directed at disabusing us of this sort of "naïve" realism in favour of a vision of reality strictly limited or mediated by human experience, language, embodiment, social and political structures, etc.

After decades of post-Kantian philosophy (phenomenology, structuralism, post-structuralism, and deconstruction), is it possible to discern a new philosophical practice today that would allow knowledge of reality, untethered by human consciousness, discourse, culture, or power? *The Speculative Turn* assembles more than two dozen essays by many of the key figures in present-day continental philosophy on precisely this question. If you have heard the words "speculative realism" (SR) in passing over the last four or so years and were curious as to who the main theorists of this new tradition are, what the main debates are about, and where its main critics stand, this is the first book you need to own. Not only does *The Speculative Turn* provide a robust (440 page!) introduction to this philosophical debate, it marks a new turn in contemporary continental philosophy that can no longer be ignored as a passing fad.

The lineup here is impressive. Among the many contributors are: Alain Badiou, François Laruelle, Bruno Latour, Slavoj Žižek, Quentin Meillassoux, Isabelle Stengers, Alberto Toscano, Peter Hallward, Manuel DeLanda, Adrian Johnston, and John Protevi. With 25 contributions, this is perhaps one the most extensive and diverse anthologies of continental philosophy of the last ten years. However, attention should also be directed to its method of publication with re.press, an open-access publisher that publishes under a creative commons license. In addition to printing 'real' books available in stores and online, open access titles are also available free of charge in digital form. How many book reviews can say, "if this review sounds interesting to you,

you can download the book right now for free from the publisher"? Books like *The Speculative Turn* support and give credibility to what I hope will be the future of academic publishing.

The Speculative Turn is organized into five main thematic sections. The first section, "speculative realism revisited," is composed of essays from the participants of the first Speculative Realism event held in 2007 at Goldsmiths College, London: Graham Harman, Iain Hamilton Grant, and Ray Brassier. Having followed the published transcriptions of this conference in the third volume of the journal *Collapse*, I found this first section a great marker of how much these thinkers have changed since then (Brassier now even rejects the name Speculative Realism altogether). The second section is devoted to Quentin Meillassoux's book *After Finitude* (2006) and includes (among other essays) a compelling critique of his notion of a "virtual God," by Adrian Johnston. How Meillassoux remains committed to the absolute necessity of contingency (non-totality) and still maintains the potentiality of God seems entirely inconsistent and gives the origins of SR a strange theological dimension that Johnston rejects. The third section on politics is disappointing. It is clear that Speculative Realism has demonstrated "a notable absence so far when it comes to issues of subjectivity and politics," as Nick Srnicek says (165). However, in attempting to locate the implications of SR for politics, he concludes that realism constitutes "the necessary, but not yet sufficient, conditions for constructing

new empirico-transcendental spaces incommensurable with the capitalist socius" (181). In other words, SR is so far insufficient for thinking politics. This insufficiency is further supported by other realists: for Brassier, "there can be no ethics of radical immanence" (178), and for Hallward, SR even fails to account for any "actual process of transformation or development" (139). The fourth section on metaphysics is quite strong and includes essays from Meillassoux, Laruelle, Levi Bryant, Bruno Latour, Harman, and Steven Shaviro on what SR analyzes best: being and potentiality. The final section on science is diverse, perhaps too diverse to conclude anything in particular about SR's relationship to science beyond what the individual authors seem to have already been up to well before anyone was talking about SR.

The courage and boldness of *The Speculative Turn* in announcing a break with the last 150 years of continental anti-realism is impressive, even exciting. However, when the editors compare this with the traditions of phenomenology, structuralism, post-structuralism, post-modernism, and deconstruction, one cannot help but feel the inadequacy of SR. What constitutes a new philosophical tradition? There are too many characteristics to list here, but at least one of them is that it bears directly on the actual world in some fashion. Every philosophical tradition has been able to rethink not only "what is," but also how being is specifically distributed in art, love, ethics, and politics. In short, "there is no theory of the event in SR," as Alain Badiou says in the opening

interview of this volume (20).

Not only is there no theory of the event, but much of the focus of SR remains unconcerned with actual politics, ethics, or art at all. With such a large volume, it is a shame that this lack could not more clearly be filled. Why should anyone who is working on aesthetics, ethics, or politics find SR attractive or useful? Even if they agree with its ontological convictions, what consequences do they have? This will no doubt be one of the largest barriers to establishing the coherency of SR as more than an "interesting, but ultimately useless theoretical venture" (165). If SR is defined only by its ontological commitment to some variety of realism, but remains too radically divided in its methodology and theory of actuality, it will not be intelligible as a new tradition. This is a particularly unfortunate dilemma given that we are witnessing today the largest constellation of world-wide revolutionary movements since the 1960s. It is also possible, however, that *The Speculative Turn* is an untimely announcement: something which, at the moment, sounds absurd and insufficient, but which in time will have already been true. Even still, while philosophical realism may be the necessary condition for contemporary philosophy to move forward, it is definitely not yet the sufficient condition. ✕

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Semblance and Event: Activist Philosophy and the Occurrent Arts, Brian Massumi, MIT Press, 2011, 224 pp.
Reviewed by Marcus Boon

Just as 9/11 constituted a crisis for Deleuzian thought in its postmodern incarnation, so the various liberatory movements that sprung up around the world in 2011, from Occupy to the Arab Spring, have constituted a crisis for the schools of critical thought that have flourished around Žižek and Badiou in the last decade. While Badiou's notion of fidelity to the truth of an event initially seemed to be an advance over the Deleuzian project of groundless, immanent experimentalism—so easily appropriated into the capitalist marketplace as the logic of consumer choice—fidelity itself seemed to find its limit in 2011 in Zuccotti Park, as Žižek's *passage à l'acte*, the heroic gesture of intervention, encountered the full might of spectacular force, and it became increasingly unclear what would be at stake in continuing to occupy 100 square metres of corporate/public land at the southern tip of Manhattan (to use only the most well known location) against the massed forces of the media and the police. The courage to act, while praiseworthy, is evidently not enough. But what, then, is? What should we do, now that we know there is a "we" that has publically declared itself? Žižek has claimed that it is a matter of a "strong body able to reach quick decisions and to implement them with all necessary harshness."[1] There are few takers for this today other than residual Stalinists and the venture capitalists who currently own the state. We can formulate the crisis of liberation movements today as one of practice. Although the word initially evokes little more than the banality of "what one does," or perhaps the pursuit of some hobby or interest, it is clear that our political crisis today involves our inability to imagine a set of practices that constitute the basis of an emancipated world. To put it bluntly: how does one establish a collective practice of being in the world (formerly known as "political economy") without it devolving into matters of private, individual, consumer choice—and without it devolving into a collective exercise of force that lacks any value or orientation other than the mere reproduction of power through its repeated exercise?

This is the point at which another look at Deleuze's work, or more specifically his work with Félix Guattari, seems to hold potential, since the key to a radical, new, and emancipatory form of practice may involve being able to think fidelity to the truth of the event, in the terms set out by Badiou, along with the Deleuzian imperative to experiment. This is where Brian Massumi's new book, *Semblance and Event: Activist Philosophy and the Occurrent Arts*, comes in. It is not an easy

read; if you dislike Deleuzian jargon, then following its translation into Whitehead's jargon and back is going to be even more unpleasant. More frustratingly, the book simply ignores the important critiques made of Deleuze over the last decade as if they never happened. Nevertheless, the book has something new to tell us.

One of the interesting things about Massumi's work in the last decade (especially *Parables for the Virtual*) is its attempt to develop a Deleuzian philosophy in accordance with contemporary neuroscience.[2] Massumi was recently criticized in *Critical Inquiry* for misinterpreting neuroscientific data to support his elaboration of a world of pre-subjective affective vectors and a philosophy of immanence, but his model remains an intriguing one.[3] The title of the book, *Semblance and Event*, refers to the way that a pre-cognitive, ever-shifting immanent multiplicity of events are taken up and figured as perceptible forms which he calls semblances. Massumi gives the example of a flash of lightning. The totality of atmospheric conditions that produce the flash are inaccessible to the senses. The visible lightning and the boom of thunder comprise the semblance of the event of a certain set of atmospheric conditions, their figuration: "The lightning is the appearing tip of a more expansive event that never shows in its entirety. The fullness of the event's conditioning and occurrence is perceptually felt, in the dynamic form of how what actually appears steals the show" (24). The framework here is that of Deleuze's actual (semblance) and virtual (event). But the example is problematic, since at the moment of the flash of lightning, there is a radical and correlative shift in atmospheric conditions. As Massumi observes, the flash is not the semblance of the build-up of atmospheric tension, but its resolution. In other words, the semblance is itself a new event, rather than the semblance of the prior one. The problem is likely that Deleuze's model of virtual and actual works well when applied to film, where a cinematic image clearly has a double status of virtual and actual, and where the appearance of the image as semblance constitutes an event. But does it work as an ontology? That there is a gap between appearance and reality is well known, but in what way does reframing this as actual and virtual, or semblance and event, help us to generate new kinds of practice?

Although Massumi dubs his "activist philosophy" "speculative pragmatism," there is no mention in the book of the speculative realist philosophers who have emerged in recent years. This is unfortunate because, whether you agree with them or not, the assertion of a real—either that of objects that remain beyond all iterations of appearance in Graham Harman's case, or of mathematical forms in the work of Quentin Meillassoux—is significant, especially since the real is asserted there precisely against the vagueness of Deleuze's ontology. Massumi is also vague, tantalizingly so. What is the world beneath, before co-evolving with the subject-object relationship? It is one of movement, process, waves, to use Massumi's favoured words. But Massumi hesitates to designate what is in effect a vibrational ontology as such. Pre-subjective affect, "direct perception," "feeling-thinking," "the amodal in person," and other such designations remain more or less Kantian formulations. Furthermore, for Massumi, the semblance of an event or, if you like, the event of a semblance, is equivalent to the instantiation of the virtual as the actual, but what is the relationship between virtual and real? The virtual is usually described as a swarm of potentialities—

and such a swarm cannot be the same as the real. The notion of a singular "truth," which for Badiou emerges out of the event's manifestation of the real and cuts through the multiplicity of the virtual, is unimportant to Massumi or Deleuze. A semblance is beautiful, at best a truth rather than *the* truth, but better than that, it is "quivering life" or "bare activity," before things like truth and content intervene.

In *Semblance and Event*, Massumi offers a brilliant reading of Walter Benjamin's mysterious notion of "non-sensuous similarity" as the "non-local" connection of pre-cognitive entities, which provide a kind of ground for the production of sensuous similarities, likenesses, discourse, etc.[4] This potentially does provide a way of rethinking the relation of virtual, actual, and real, as well as a basis for a new kind of practice. But, to return to the topic of the weather, the example of the ritual production of similarity that Massumi uses (taken from Benjamin but updated for rave culture), that of dancers who imitate the sky, falls apart, because no one today really believes that this imitation is efficacious in changing the weather. What one is left with is something "aesthetic." Massumi has described what the hope of so much "relational" art is today—using a local practice to produce a nonlocal effect, but it remains unclear whether art, in these terms, is capable of producing the kinds of nonlocal political effects that this model aspires to. The creative life that Massumi affirms is captured by structural elements that enforce particular meanings and ways of living—for Deleuze this was the Nietzschean cycle of active and reactive forces. And guess who tends to win?

By "activist philosophy," Massumi mostly means "a philosophy of action, of acting" rather than "political activism," but he does follow through on the latter meaning in the final section of the book. Indeed, he offers a rather stunning reversal of the two meanings, such that the politics of parties, laws, doctrines, etc. is "apolitical," while the creative "techniques of existence" deployed by modernist masters such as Mahler and installation artist Robert Irwin, are now key examples of the "political" because of their inventive iterations. But if creativity is immanently political, how does one explain the capture of a relational form such as interactive art or gaming, which Massumi himself claims is now one of the fundamental "techniques

of existence" of global capitalism? More generally, how does one stop "creativity" qua "immaterial labour" from becoming the newest form of capital, as it has today? Isn't the assertion of immanent creativity as political per se just another version of the liberal utopia that Žižek has assailed so well? My sense of it, as indicated above, is that Massumi needs to explain what happens if the notion of the real is introduced into his (and Deleuze's) system—the Lacanian Real as "that which always comes back to the same place."[4] And if capture by the symbolic (in Massumi's version, the return of truth, content, etc.) is inevitable, what form does a "technique of existence," (aka a practice), have to take to produce actual novelty rather than its reified form? These questions also suggest a version of the event closer to Badiou's, something perhaps quite rare but which requires a response, a "technique of existence," but one demanding fidelity to the truth of the event. It's not that I think Badiou is right and Deleuze and Massumi are wrong. The point is that practice must involve some kinds of constraint or logic that shape creativity in particular ways, allowing it to be explored collectively, evolve and increase its efficacy. This remains our challenge today, and it is in this situation that the important work Massumi has done here regarding the development of a practice takes on its full power. ✕

Notes

1. Slavoj Žižek. "Shoplifters of the World Unite." *London Review of Books* (19 August, 2011).
2. Brian Massumi. *Parables for the Virtual: Movement, Affect, Sensation* (Raleigh, NC. Duke UP, 2002).
3. Ruth Leys. "The Turn to Affect: A Critique." *Critical Inquiry* 37, no.3 (2011): 433-472.
4. Walter Benjamin. "On the Mimetic Faculty" in *Selected Writings: 1931-1934*, eds. Michael W. Jennings et. al. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard UP, 2005), 720-722.
5. Jacques Lacan. *The Four Fundamental Concepts of Psychoanalysis: The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book XI* (New York. Norton, 1998), 42.

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London +10 (Architectural Association Agenda 10) 2010
Reviewed by Brendan D. Moran

Larger cities and metropolitan regions constitute richly layered environments, serving many purposes and fostering various cultures and subcultures simultaneously. Within these environs, new aural and televisual accessibility to both public and private realms have lately complicated the psycho-geographic parameters of contemporary urban life. In the process, practices involving traditional social relations dependent upon space and place are being transformed, as in the case of smart phone applications

like Brazil's Dengue Torpedo and London's Urban Green Line.[1] For architectural educators, developments like these influence the manner in which fledgling designers are trained to negotiate the chaotic realm of social practices (both professional and not) to be found at work in today's heterogeneous territorial expanses, from the urban to the exurban, as well as in-between and beyond.

In particular, questions of how the "urban" inflects the "architectural" (and vice versa), as terms specifying distinct scalar or intellectual qualities of spaces and environs, are again (as in the 1960s) newly important, largely because new digital realities have complicated

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any clear distinction between them. What contemporary means are available for assisting future architects to become conversant and adept with the precise forces that alter and control our primarily urban planet? And what sorts of secrets yet might be revealed by having architecture students investigate the DNA of cities in search of the penumbras that render such forces visible? At the Architectural Association in London, Diploma Unit 10 (DU10) has been devoting sustained attention to these matters for nearly half a century. A new publication about its recent activities, *London +10*, portrays the unit as advocating an aggressive agenda for using the eponymous city as a laboratory for quasi-scientific study on the part of its students, and in the process proves that the recent dilemmas just noted have long been its primary domain. While the results are decidedly mixed, it is clear the endeavours detailed present exciting possibilities bristling with compelling implications that extend far beyond design education proper.

London +10 is a welcome addition to the literature available on design instruction and its pedagogical aims, as well as a testament to the innovative nature of the AA's system of independent Diploma Units.[2] The book is framed by a most persuasive gambit: London is at least ten cities layered into one. The volume refreshingly posits that the last two decades of socio-economic upheaval and development in the city have only exacerbated the complexity of distinct and varied forces shaping public space and urban environs. Compiled into one thick (dare I say *urban*) package, the volume consists of thirty-eight student projects arranged in ten thematic sections, accompanied by six framing essays by noteworthy educators, critics, and writers (even one novelist), as well as maps, tables, and timelines that trace the teaching unit's scope and development over time. The ten in the title turns out to be a kind of pun or ruse framing the collection: it is the tenth volume in the Architectural Association's *AA Agendas* series; it constitutes a portrait and history of sorts of Diploma Unit 10 over the last two decades; and ten themes—*conflict, control, exchange, fiction, groups, life, power, space, structures,* and *time*—serve to didactically explicate the particular logics of its strategic pedagogical mission.

The bulky middle section of the book, entitled "Expanding the Themes," encompasses the selection of design projects generated since 1989. They are further framed by short essays by unit graduates devoted to various subthemes found lurking within the ten chosen

rubrics. This illustrated centre is framed fore and aft by un-illustrated texts: in the front, the context of millennial London is fleshed out by novelist Will Self's semi-autobiographical travelogue focusing on recent social changes, as well as architectural historian Rowan Moore's compendium of the ten most important architectural events from the last two decades (the development of Canary Wharf, Sir Norman Foster's global practice, and the upcoming 2012 Olympics, to name only three). At the back are four essays—two by DU10's current director and volume editor Carlos Villanueva Brandt, one by former Unit student Alex Warnock-Smith, and one by historian/critic Brian Hatton—that augment the introductory contextualization with other sorts of frameworks. Hatton's "Another Alternative London: NATØ's London" chronicles how the early pedagogical agenda initiated by DU10 founder Bernard Tschumi in the 1970s transmogrified over the next decade into numerous extravagant installations mounted by the design collective Narrative Architecture Today, led by (among others) subsequent DU10 director Nigel Coates. Warnock-Smith's "Direct Projects: An Insider's View," the most compelling contribution to the volume, uses a first-person narrative to question what lessons the Unit might actually have inculcated in its participants, thereby rendering them subsequently available for whatever endeavours graduates have undertaken since. Brandt's essays close out the volume, laying out his pedagogical methods and missions in the first and, in the short three-page manifesto that follows, theorizing the unit's current modus operandi, "direct urbanism," a term first coined in the unit's 2005–06 prospectus.

Brandt's basic claim for this pedagogy is two-fold: that it treats "methods of engagement" within the city (and in relation to urbanity in general) as the grounds for an experimental, situated form of design activity; and that direct urbanism is the amorphous practice constituted by such engaged explorations, focused more directly on real-life matters rather than on disciplinary specificity. In the all-too-brief polemic, the author locates his interest in the relationship of the urban to the architectural by asking whether we can "internali[z]e urbanism and externali[z]e architecture," i.e. apply urban systems thinking to design while at the same time abandoning any lurking fixation on object buildings.[3] Citing institutions that employ direct strategies to achieve dynamic interventions in London, such as Meals on Wheels and the recent congestion charge for operating motor vehicles in central London, Brandt

proposes that designers can emulate the tactics adopted by non-design initiatives, thereby affecting the city directly through means beyond conventional urban design. Doing so depends, however, on getting the students to understand the interactions of two distinct types of urban specifics, namely "situations" and "architectural and/or urban structures."[4] Towards these ends, the unit's pedagogy requires the student, over the course of their two-year diploma studies, to go out into the city beyond the AA and familiarize themselves with a locale and its multiple, complex and quantifiable variables—diverse stakeholders, infrastructural assets and liabilities, entrenched social dynamics, existing exchange mechanisms, etc. This excursion is mandated in order that students come to design a project by proposing a form of calculus involving the dependency of these myriad parameters upon physical forms, i.e., the aforementioned "structures." Precisely because it in fact constitutes a meta-practice—a pedagogical lesson that generates a platform capable of emboldening students to imagine a personalized mode of practice as the very core of their identity as a designer— direct urbanism clearly exceeds what one might consider a training in the architectural. In short, DU10's method of instruction relies on what could be termed a meta-physics of urban practice; or, rather, an emphasis on practices rather than forms as the very grounds for invention on the part of the designer.

Brandt's pedagogy grows out of earlier activities in Diploma Unit 10, especially the concern (under Tschumi) with the relation of architectural forms to "events," i.e., the specificity of distinct programs. It has a more ambivalent relationship, however, to the Coates era, when an interest in the theatrical narrativization of spatial conditions (in particular those of punk London) replaced earlier concerns. Under Brandt's stewardship since the late 1980s, attention has shifted away from this toward a meta-discursive understanding of practice, in which the Situationist *derive* has become the paradigmatic experience through which students study the nested complexity of urban systems. Brandt's extrapolation of earlier dynamics asks students to generate new formulas for imagining the design project as a constantly changing confluence of parameters, determined less by formal logics than by what he refers to as "real contexts[…] between the political and the everyday."[5] Such explorations, occurring just within—or just beyond—the control of one creative individual, leverage experimentation en route to expertise, promoting proficiency
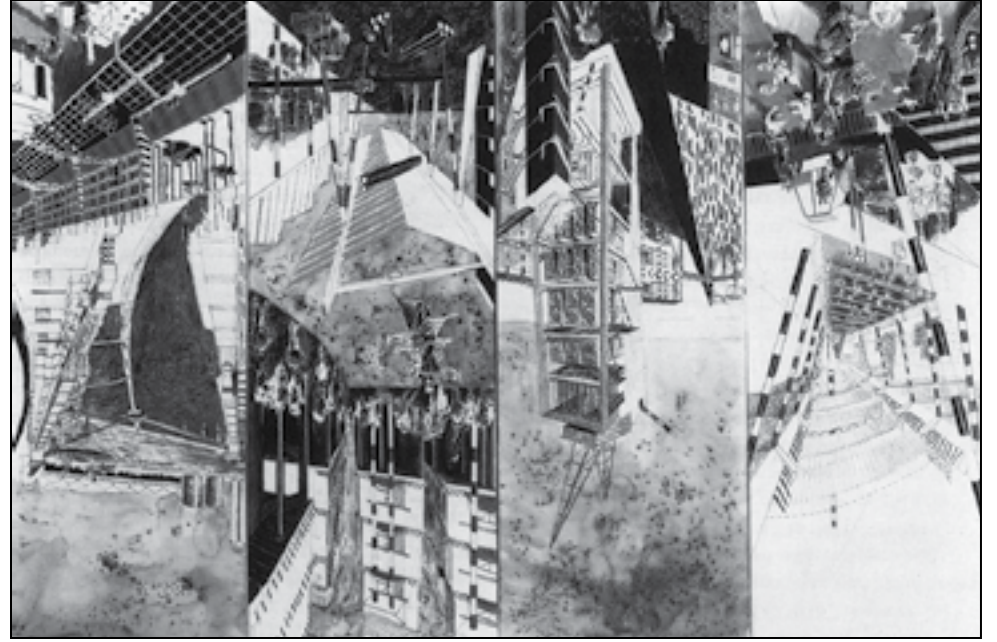
Carlos Villeneuva, *Timber Fiber Factory*, Isle of Man, London (perspectives). Student project, Diploma Unit 10, 1982. Giant Sized Baby Town, under direction Nigel Coates.

in both design as well as the intricacies of urban life. A fluid yet palpable duality results from this tactic, ultimately pitting static "structure" against lively "situation" within a reconfigured network of social, economic, political and technological forces. With this pedagogy, then, Brandt in effect is explicating—like many thinkers and pedagogues before him—the terms of a productive, creative schizophrenia.

This dialogical shading is most compelling for being encapsulated simultaneously in the content of the book and in its specific form, especially the book's central section. There the themes are fleshed out in short texts on various sub-themes (for example, within the theme *control*, the subthemes are systems, rules and order), written by some of the very students whose projects "illustrate" the larger themes. In sequence, one first reads these musings and then views the design work (replete with very brief descriptions, all written by Brandt) that gave birth to the subsequent reflections. In classic chicken/egg fashion, one can ask whether the designs flesh out the descriptive provocations, or, instead, if the specifics of a discursive unfolding enrich and enliven the work's representational rigor and rather clinical beauty. Clearly both are occurring simultaneously as one proceeds through the ten themes, as though an education or a life; and it is the frisson between them that animates this portion of the publication. But as Tschumi wrote in a precursor to this volume, the 1983 exhibition catalogue *The Discourse of Events* (devoted to earlier Unit 10 student work), "[p]ublishing student projects makes sense only if the projects rise beyond the documentary quality generally offered by such publications and place themselves historically."[6] Here, it is less the projects that suggest any historical consciousness than the overwhelming implication that a vital contemporary pedagogical project lies in locating design innovation within larger understandings of professional and social practice.

However, the accompanying shift in emphasis—from envisioning interventions to imagining potential practices—comes at the cost of a demotion of graphic representation, reflected in the volume's overwhelmingly high text-to-image ratio. This aspect of the volume confronts the reader with a quandary as to whether this experiment proves a success or failure. While I think the former is clearly the case, the reader has to take the writers' and editors' word for it. Design drawings in *London +10*, even though accompanied by Brandt's project summaries, are not given central importance, as in the earlier DU10 publication; instead, they are wrapped by retroactive thematization, introductory and concluding texts, and in

particular Brandt's theorization of his pedagogy's larger merit, all un-illustrated texts. Following the texts on sub-themes with a series of curated two-page spreads—one per design proposal, woefully inadequate for conveying any but the faintest glimmer of the project's general flavour—produces a retroactive counterpoint that only suggests rather than convinces this reader that there are potential experiential benefits at stake at the level of design.[7] As a database, with full inclusion of *all* materials for each project depicted, the volume might have become a user's manual for engaged education in general, providing evidence of the interaction of numerous disciplines within the realm of the urban and the architectural; as it is, the volume only hints at what amounts to an updating of Paulo Friere's critical pedagogy, one potentially capable of liberating the urban from fossilization within discourses of events, spaces and places—and perhaps, even the architectural.[8] In short, the desire to understand the specifically architectural applications of "direct urbanism" are whetted but somewhat squelched by the book.

The overall effect suggests that if direct urbanism enables or initiates new productive associations within an existing, complex network of connections it is ipso facto valuable, but this might be beside the point when it prevents certain overarching logics from being recognized, i.e., a parametric understanding of an expanded (non-disciplinary) urban field. Brandt intimates as much in his essay on the vagaries of method, remarking that "context is not the be-all-and-end-all of the work," and that students are to proceed with the intent of "expanding the variables of context beyond the existing social, political, economic and cultural limitations," one might even add beyond the context of design and design education proper.[9] Such pedagogy can have a specifically architectural aspiration, or not—it might even prove most architecturally provocative, nay even successful, precisely when it dispenses with any a priori understandings of the architectural. Unfortunately, the volume doesn't come down either way on this possibility, and it easily could have.

This potential versatility of deployment, however, frames a perplexing dilemma found in the task of training designers: toward what particular (political) ends can the architect's practices be applied? Addressing this, however, would probably require a more sustained investigation of the very question of the real—or what Brandt refers to as "real life." Two essays in particular offer insights toward these ends: Warnock-Smith's autobiographical, worm's-eye view of the pedagogical experiment that is DU10; and Edmund Fowles'

piece "Interchange," from the *exchange* theme section. Both elucidate important dynamics raised by Brandt's construct of direct urbanism, namely, in what ways does its understanding of architecture's relationship to the city, distinct as it is from those of Le Corbusier, Team X members, Aldo Rossi, Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, Rem Koolhaas, Tschumi and others, offer a means for the student to formulate a future, viable form of practice?

Describing the experience as overwhelmingly painful, Warnock-Smith claims his educational transformation at the AA boiled down to learning the schism between "[d]irect experiments in the city, and analytic experiments in the studio."[10] Thus, after urban immersion and inhabitation, observation of the site and subsequent familiarization with the concerns of local stakeholders and potential topics worthy of investigation, the student frames a situation to ameliorate through architectural design. Such a way of working necessitates the student turn outward, beyond architecture, for some kind of expertise or set of knowledges that would assist her in making sense of the situations she has experienced. It is at this point that "action" takes on a new meaning, beyond the normative shift from analysis to synthesis involved in more traditional design exercises. The author notes the importance of what he calls "working drawings" of the area under examination, which frame the challenge of representing social conditions and activities, the lives lived and struggles waged in an urban locale.[11] As described by Warnock-Smith (and Brandt), such accessible technical devices become forceful elocutions of the potential of networked knowledge to empower creative imaginations. I would argue this way of working amounts to a kind of non-digital parametricism, one that eschews coding and computer programming—while *deploying* computer models—to focus instead on those "identified social, political, economic and interactive variables that constitute the site."[12] Such an interpretation of Brandt's DU10 pedagogy suggests it clearly has applications beyond the limited scope of architectural or design education, due to being attuned to the newly revised parameters of social activities and dynamic forces in an increasingly digitally enhanced milieu.

Fitting hand in hand with Warnock-Smith's text, Fowles' essay—on the difficulties of grasping the overall network of exchanges taking place within the physical structures that make up the city—offers a counterpoint to it. By emblematically citing Transport for London's 2002 *Interchange Plan* as a document endemic of the challenge facing design

Henrik Rothe and Ole Scheeren, *MexT–Project for Greater London Council*.
Westminster, London (perspective). Collaborative student project. Diploma Unit 10, 2000.
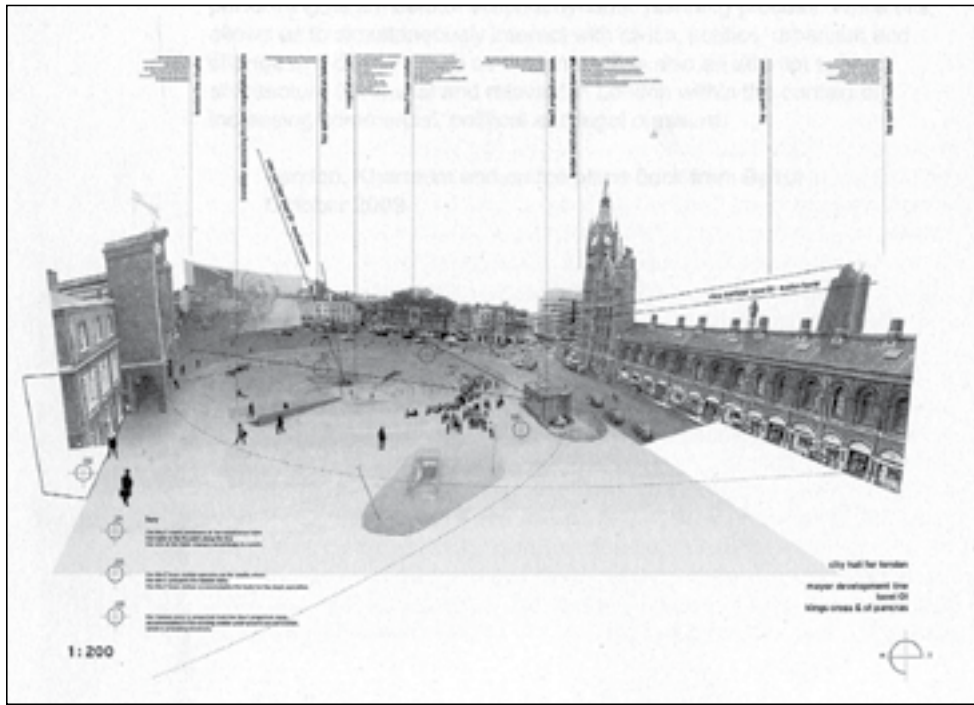
Reviews

practices today, Fowles claims its snappy catch phrase—"Making London simple"—reveals the conundrum at the heart of training designers to act within a parametric understanding of contemporary urban space. He argues that if any representation or design strives to cut through the complexity of political, social, economic, ecological, and infrastructural concerns, it must possess accuracy while simultaneously simplifying an unbelievably complex situation, furthermore rising to the occasion of its own generation to create something iconic, symbolic and readily apprehensible. There is an inherent level of complexity to be found when taking into consideration multifarious forces—say, different constituencies and communities competing for the same limited services, or the cohabitation of stakeholders with different interests within a certain public realm—over and above just modeling found parameters as opposed to newly desired ones. The scale and character of actual encounters, exchanges and events tend to get overlooked, or at least downplayed, in the face of ever increasing amounts of quantifiable descriptive information. When designers accept the challenge of compensating for this tendency, they face a nearly insurmountable communicative quandary: how to be representative without being reductive? Fowles thus argues, surprisingly, against simplification as a design intention. Taking food distribution and exchange (retail, not wholesale) in the East London area of Hackney as a case study for testing the instrumentality of "direct urbanism," his included design proposal is based on the premise that there is an alternative "to the oversimplification of interchanges," namely layering the complexity of urban life onto city spaces at every scale: urban, architectural, and infinitesimal.

Unfortunately, these two clearly articulated insights—the importance of computer modeling as the key parametric representation of the urban, and the necessity of imaginative and communicative layering in their employment toward determinate ends by designers—are not so well framed by the volume's visuals. Over the years, Brandt's students have taken

increasingly to generating 3D CAD models of their specific sites, incorporating coded information within them; yet as published, the output of these models are a bit off-putting in their digital austerity, taking on a technocratic gleam that renders them often more opaque than communicative.[14] While no doubt they enabled the designers to develop their own working methods—proposing an addition to an existing structure, demolishing and reconstituting it instead, or retrofitting another—their potential as communicative images accessible to any but the most technocratically minded urban denizen (government official? community activist? average citizen? protestor?) remains unclear.

Perhaps there is a silver lining here, intimated by Warnock-Smith: the particular "analogous" linkages that can ultimately serve to unite the student's methodical command of systematicity with an unrelated (and unexpected) desire or outcome, and in the process fathom new representational horizons. His DU10 project "Urban Integration System" seeks to render the immigration system more humane while also generating a more integrated public realm, by redesigning the recently privatized housing complex Collingwood Estate in London's Tower Hamlets as an "Integration Centre" that locates services for particular asylum seekers within an immigrant community of similar cultural background. In projects like this, the surrealism inherent in the unit's early Situationist inspiration plays a strong role. Although it is hard to judge from the imagery included, the very act of depicting such an aspiration spatially in and of itself begins a process whereby it can participate in the rearranging and improvement of those urban environs where such activity currently plays out. At the same time, this begs the question—or, rather, postpones resolution—of the political valence made available by doing so, i.e. how do the designer's nascent historical imaginations, generative of and by new associations, in turn get deployed, so as to generate effects in the so-called "real" world that can be

predicted and controlled?

In this regard, DU10's current direction is at least a minor success; for many of the unit's graduates have gone on to engage in what Warnock-Smith describes as a variety of "reali[z]ed interventions, planning applications and consultancy work."[14] Two directions seem to predominate: one tending toward the realization of architectural projects that rely on dispersed or non-traditional spatial programming to facilitate new public stagings of interaction; and another that questions the very limits of architecture in relation to contemporary urban spatial practices. An example of the former is Ole Scheeren, who completed a collaborative project (with Henrik Rothe) in DU10 that dispersed the various spatial, infrastructural and mediatic components of offices for the Greater London Authority along a linear path weaving through the city. For a while Scheeren was a partner at OMA, importantly shaping that firm's Beijing project for CCTV (as well as exhibits about it), and recently he has opened his own firm. Two other grads, Eyal Weizman and Markus Miessen, exemplify the latter direction. Following his time at the AA, Weizman completed an interdisciplinary PhD that focused on the role played by architecture within the Israeli-Palestinean conflict, which he has reconfigured into a series of publications and exhibitions that challenge the assumption that architecture is ever truly autonomous of larger political machinations. He now runs the new Centre for Research Architecture at Goldsmiths College, University of London, which grounds architectural research in a non-professional context and aims "to open up the discipline and praxis of 'architecture'—understood as the production of rarefied buildings and urban structures—into a shifting network of 'spatial practices' that includes various other forms of intervention."[15] Miessen is following in Weizman's footsteps, pursuing his own doctorate in this program while also running nOffice (with Magnus Nilsson and Ralf Pflugfelder), whose projects have included a series of temporary meeting/working space interventions, among them multiple

efforts for the annual Performa Arts conferences and the "On-Site" Hub at the 2011 Gwangju Biennale in South Korea. In such pursuits, an attention to the staging of encounters and the intermixing of constituencies dominates the work, suggesting that the legacy of DU10 is present, but not limiting.

Clearly, DU10 shifts pedagogical emphasis from inculcating a pre-ordained set of techniques and design methods, focusing it instead on what Francesca Hughes has termed the architect's necessary task of "reconstructing her practice."[16] This (re)construction of practice, however, depends upon assumptions of a kind of realist transparency, one that is instrumentally essential for the varieties of outcomes envisioned by "direct urbanism." Concluding his essay on method, Brandt claims the chosen themes "describe the live reality of the city, the real city, the real London."[17] I would contend that they do not quite do so, as there is no one "reality" capable of being described. In Brandt's turn of phrase, however, is a hint at what underlies the unit's reliance on computer simulations, the primary tools for producing Warnock-Smith's "working drawings." Such parametric understandings of situations, structures, organisms or even practices are, by and large, an extremely recent innovation. Is not their eerie contemporaneity, however, or their timely unheimlich effect, precisely the reflection of not one model of reality but many—as well as of new subjects who can juggle all of them at once? Must such a new subject need to possess the acumen to choose between them, above and beyond who might have the power to realize them? By tweaking parameters, myriad potential tomorrows appear in an instant, in the process creating a vast family of related "ghost" realities, as well as figures who can literally see these ghosts. The shadowy simulacra of the computer model, be it BIM, AutoCad, or Rhino, is of course today's new reality within design professions and the world at large; negotiating the interface between them will determine how much better (or not) this future world will be than the one it supersedes. While together these shadows

simulate a living future—unexplored potentials, unrealized hopes and desires, but also fears and worries about the nature of complexities yet-to-come—they also raise new questions about how to live, and how design might (yet) live. In much the same manner, London +10 generates a dialogical pulse between (in)determinate method and (im)probable

application. The construct of direct urbanism simultaneously emphasizes both the exact realities of a newly parametric urban territory and the far more ethereal machinations of a ghost in that particular machine. For this achievement alone, it might well yield unexpected lessons for students and teachers alike, no matter their specialization. ✕

Notes

1. Dengue Torpedo, a cell phone application developed by the Social Apps Lab at University of California Berkeley's Center for Information Technology Research in the Interest of Society, allows citizens to publicize sites of stagnant water within São Paolo by using crowdsourcing capabilities. Urban Green Line, a social networking organization devoted to gardens and parks in London, is a website and mobile app-supported initiative started by students from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design.
2. Diploma study in Great Britain, as the second component in the education of a professional architect, entails advanced design work and is similar but not precisely analogous to the options studio or thesis studies that follow core curriculum in most North American programs. At the AA, diploma units have a long-term semi-autonomy, a situation that allows for sustained pedagogical experimentation not commonly found in analogous North American contexts. Figures who have taught Diploma Units at the AA and garnered a sizable reputation (even notoriety) while doing so include Elia Zengelis and Rem Koolhaas, Zaha Hadid, Leon Krier, Peter Smithson, Cedric Price, and Daniel Libeskind, among others. For a discussion of the formation of the current AA unit system out of earlier pedagogical practices, see Irene Sunwoo, "From the 'Well-laid Table' to the 'Market Place': The Architectural Association Unit System." *JAE* 67. no.2 (March 2012): 24-41.
3. Carlos Villanueva Brandt, ed., *London +10* (London: The Architectural Association, 2010), 289.
4. Ibid, 281.
5. Ibid, 281.
6. Bernard Tschumi, "Spaces and Events," *The Discourse of Events*, ed. Nigel Coates (London: Architectural Association, 1983), 6.
7. They constitute less than ten percent of DU10's production over the period covered!
8. I am referring here to such noteworthy activist publications as his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970) and *Education for Critical Consciousness* (1973), with their interest in the pioneering pedagogical philosophies of John Dewey and others. Brandt, *London*, 282.
9. Brandt, *London*, 270.
10. Ibid, 270.
11. One is reminded of the myriad "immutable mobiles" Bruno Latour identifies as the harbingers of modernity, which emerged immediately before the Enlightenment, in particular maps, printed books and periodicals. See Bruno Latour, *Science in Action: How to Follow Scientists and Engineers through Society* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987).
12. Brandt, *London*, 271.
13. Although there are probably many ways now to produce such "parametric" models, the reliance on extrusion as a formal technique in a large quantity of the representations depicted in the book suggests that the straightforwardness of protocols found in popular modeling software like SketchUp are to a certain extent exploited within the studio's work. However, this may also merely be a register of a certain temporal unfolding, in which the limitations of software are being pushed by pedagogical desires.
14. Brandt, *London*, 274.
15. "Postgraduate Studies, Visual Culture," 8 (Research Architecture booklet available at http://www.gold.ac.uk/architecture/, accessed 06/15/12). Located within the postgraduate Visual Cultures division, the Centre offers MA, M.Phil and PhD degrees.
16. Francesca Hughes, *The Architect: Reconstructing Her Practice* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1998).
17. Brandt, *London*, 287.

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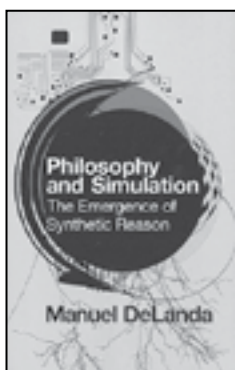
**Philosophy and Simulation:
The Emergence of Synthetic Reason**
Manuel DeLanda, Continuum, 2011, 226 pp.
Reviewed by Heather Davis

What causes newness in the world? How do things emerge that weren't there before? How, for example, can the combination of oxygen and hydrogen produce the quality of wetness when neither of these gases is wet in and of itself? In his new book, *Philosophy and Simulation: The Emergence of Synthetic Reason*, Manuel DeLanda sets himself the task of providing a philosophical account of this fundamental problem by providing a theoretical foundation for emergence. He begins by contrasting the physical properties of atoms that collide with and build upon one another without changing states with the emergent qualities of a chemical reaction, where the interaction of two different molecules produces properties that neither originally possessed. This difference provides a basis for a detailed account of emergence itself.

The epistemology of the concept of emergence has undergone a radical historical shift over the twentieth century, but DeLanda insists that it is more important to consider the ontological status of emergence, because it is always fundamentally

irreducible; it cannot simply be broken down into component parts, but rather irrupts into the world. This irreducibility, he contends, leads to an immanent materialism where objects are composed of what he terms "universal singularities." Computer simulations provide for him both the testing ground for the emergence of biological and social categories, as well as a case study for emergence itself.

What is most fascinating about the book is the way in which it is written, its form reflecting its content through increasing layers of complexity. DeLanda begins with the basic components of the physical world and then moves through the various stages of evolutionary development: from the appearance of polymers, RNA molecules, bacteria and other simple organisms, to subjective gradients of multicellular organisms, memory and significance in mammals, to primates' complex social structures manifested in tools and manual operations, and finally to language and power in hierarchically stratified societies. With each of these movements, he pairs increasingly complex computer systems as both tools of analysis and as systems that simulate the various scales of emergence. DeLanda moves from cellular automata and genetic algorithms to multi-agent systems, using computer programs that in their increased complexity mirror the chemical and biological evolutionary processes they are designed to research.

The insight and strength of the book lie in its strange intermingling of methodological analysis and a rigorous examination of the concept of emergence. As the book progresses, the increasingly complex individuals (any singular bounded entity, from an atom to an institutional organization, that can be delimited through its particular historical, material and/or social context) are never represented as totalities. Rather, the idea of an assemblage (as developed in DeLanda's other books, specifically *A New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity*) reflects the way in which these wholes retain both irreducibility and decomposability.

He writes, "emergent entities at one scale can be used to compose emergent entities at a larger scale,"[1] but each of these entities is itself irreducible, bringing into existence that which was only virtually contained within the field of possible structures. Significantly, DeLanda performs this argument in the form of the book even as he analyzes the quality of emergence and simulation as its content.

Philosophy and Simulation provides a sustained argument for the objective existence of diagrams of assemblages, as expressed through computer programming and simulation. What will be most interesting to readers whose interests lie outside the domain of computer studies is the way in which these programs reveal an "intimate link between ontology and epistemology." This insight is perhaps the most profound argument for the justification of computer simulation beyond its practical use as prediction models for understanding evolutionary systems (from biological organisms to the development of social systems). The simulations themselves are not representations of that which they simulate; rather, they create their own space of emergence in an act parallel to evolutionary processes. They also act as guides to help us distinguish between what is non-emergent, or rule-based, and that which emerges from the structure of a "possibility space." It is the overlap between the biological world and the mathematically produced possibility spaces that enable simulations to be useful, not because of their direct correspondence, but because mathematical models have the ability to mimic the behaviour of a process within a certain range of values. As DeLanda states, "the computer simulations discussed throughout this book are emergent wholes composed of information existing above the computer hardware that provides their material and energetic substratum."[2] The simulation models examined in the book are layered together to create a relation of part to whole that is also the argument for the book itself.

The synthesis between these two subjects is indeed fascinating, but DeLanda chooses to

cleave apart the biological and computational, dividing each chapter into these two components. By doing this he makes the work quite technically specific—more general philosophic implications and conclusions are taken up at length only in the Introduction and Appendix. These chapters serve as a field guide to the broader claims of the book, where each chapter then looks in detail at a particular program and particular category of emergence. DeLanda states that computer "simulations can play the role of laboratory experiments in the study of emergence complementing the role of mathematics in deciphering the structure of possibility spaces. And philosophy can be the mechanism through which these insights can be synthesized into an emergent materialist world view that finally does justice to the creative powers of matter and energy."[3] However, this mutual influence is primarily expressed through the overall form of the book rather than in the content of its individual chapters. The balance of the book is taken up with the material emergence of simulation programs. While this provides considerable detail and a strong theoretical foundation for the argument that diagrams actually exist, it will be most useful to readers who have a specific interest in these computer programs. ✕

Notes

1. Manuel De Landa, *Philosophy and Simulation: The Emergence of Synthetic* Reason (London: Continuum, 2011), 23.
2. Ibid., 201.
3. Ibid., 6.

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The Other City

Tripoli, Libya

<div dir="rtl">شهر فرنگ</div>

Building

× Military Compound/Base: A facility directly owned and operated by, or for the military, or one of its branches, which shelters military equipment and/or personnel, and facilitates military training and operations. In most cases, a military base will rely on external provisions to operate; however certain complex bases are better equipped with food, water and other staples to sustain themselves during more prolonged periods of siege.

State Institutions

× State-Sponsored Media: Mass communication outlets such as television and radio stations, and newspapers, which, in contrast to independent or private media, are sponsored, overviewed and funded by the state.

Static Signs

× Urban Name: An urban name refers to the name of a piece of urban fabric; and can be changed for various reasons. For example, a changed political regime can trigger widespread changes in urban names, following independence, revolution, etc. Name changes are often an attempt to "rewrite" history, by eliminating/acquiring a historical, political, or cultural reference.
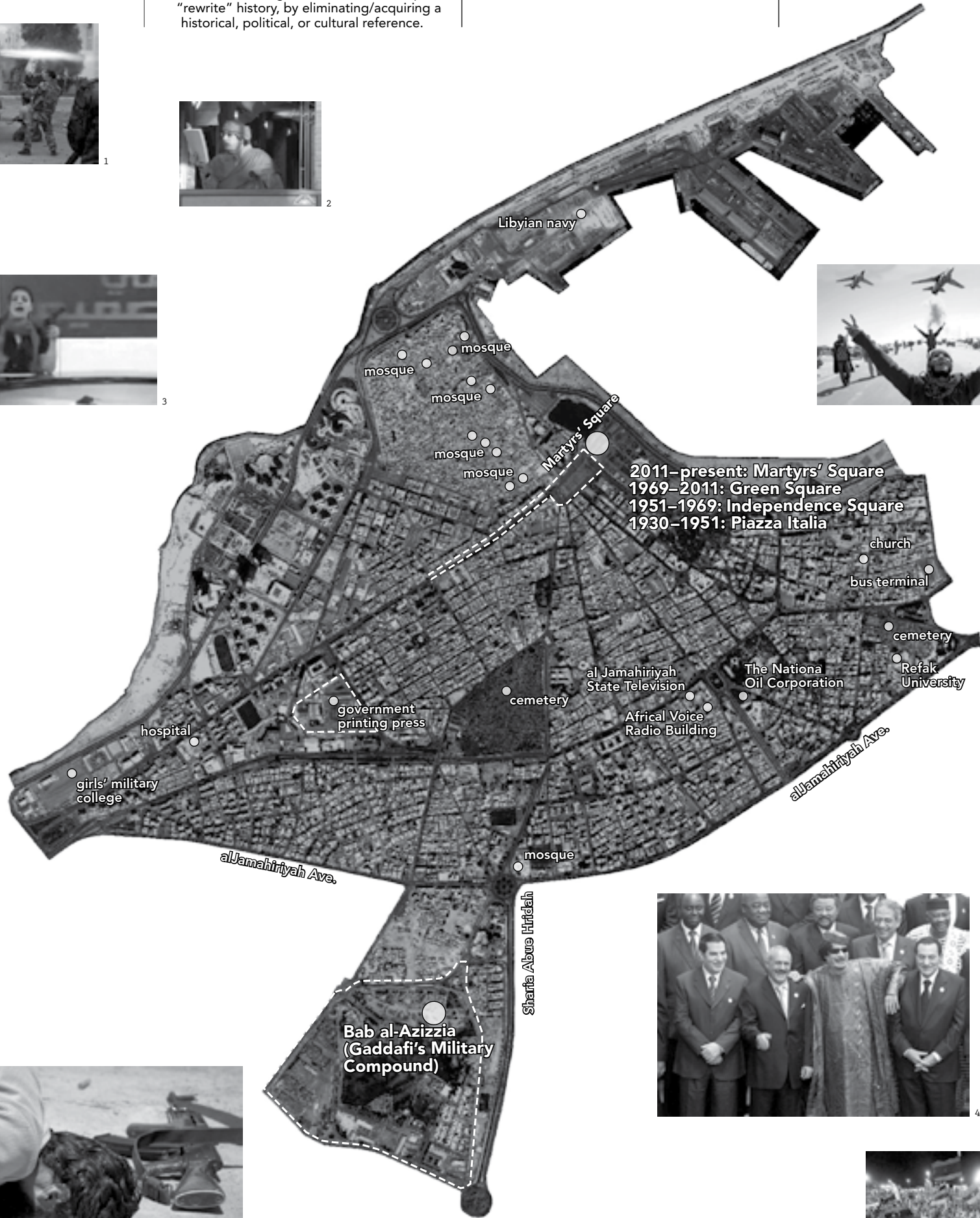
People

× Head of State: The individual serving as the 'chief public representative' of a monarchy, republic, federation, etc. He/She is responsible for legitimizing the state and exercising the political powers, functions, and duties granted to the head of state in the country's constitution and laws.

× Armed Rebel: A person engaged in rebellion, uprising or insurrection, as a refusal of obedience and/or order. The term, therefore, can be associated to a wide range of behaviour that is aimed at destroying or replacing an established authority such as a government or a head of state.

Transport

× Military Aircraft: Any fixed-wing or rotary-wing aircraft that is operated by a legal or insurrectional armed service of any type, which can be either combat or non-combat.

City Fabric

× Piazza: An open square (especially in an Italian town) used for public gathering, and where multiple streets converge. These spaces can be used for political rallies and public speeches.

1

2

3

6

Libyian navy

mosque
mosque
mosque
mosque
mosque
mosque

Martyrs' Square

2011–present: Martyrs' Square
1969–2011: Green Square
1951–1969: Independence Square
1930–1951: Piazza Italia

church

bus terminal

cemetery

al Jamahiriyah State Television

The National Oil Corporation

Refak University

cemetery

Africal Voice Radio Building

government printing press

hospital

girls' military college

alJamahiriyah Ave.

alJamahiriyah Ave.

mosque

Sharia Abue Hridah

Bab al-Azizzia (Gaddafi's Military Compound)

4

5

7

1. An anti-Gaddafi fighter fires a Grad missile during clashes with Gaddafi forces October 11, 2011, Libya. Photo: REUTERS/Asmaa Waguih. *http://www.reuters.com/article/slideshow/idUSL5E7KT4YC20111011#a=1.*

2. Gaddafi reading from his Green Book on Jamahiriah Network (video available on euronews website. Originally broadcast on Tripoli's Jamahiriah Network). *http://www.euronews.com/2011/02/23/gaddafi-mad-dog-of-the-middle-east/.*

3. The controvertial Hala Misrati, waving a pistol on her last broadcast before the fall of Libyan State TV. *http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hala_Misrati.*

4. from left: Former President Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali of Tunisia, Former President Ali Abdullah Saleh of Yemen, Libya's Gaddafi, and Egypt's former president Hosni Mubarak. Photo: AFP.

5. Thursday, April 14, 2011 file photo, a Libyan rebel fighter belonging to a battalion commanded by Abdel-Moneim Mokhtar makes noon prayers in the desert on the outskirts of Ajdabiya, Libya. Photo: Photo AP/Ben Curtis. *http://ziomania.com/imagez/2011/04/43.html.*

6. A National Transitional Council fighter, showing a Victory sign. Source Unknown.

7. Tens of thousands of Libyans celebrate the arrest of Muammar Gaddafi's son Saif al-islam and the partial fall of Tripoli. Photo: GIANLUIGI GUERCIA/AFP/Getty Images. *http://news.nationalpost.com/2011/08/21/libyan-rebels-take-tripolis-green-square/.*

The Other City

Homs, Syria

شهر فرنگ

Communication Devices
× Telephone: An electronic device for the two-way transmission of speech. Most modern cellular telephones have added functionality of taking and transmitting photographic images and video, as well as access to email, internet and social media access.

Mechanical Implements
× Mortar: An indirect fire weapon that fires explosive projectiles known as (mortar) bombs at low velocities, short ranges, and high-arcing ballistic trajectories.

City Fabric
× Street: A length of well-travelled surfaces for automotive and pedestrian transportation. In popular uprisings, the street is often considered contested ground between the state and those committed to protest, in form of rallies, sit-ins, group prayers, and even battle-grounds.
× Cemetery: Cemetery: A place in which dead bodies and cremated remains are buried. Funerals in Islam follow fairly specific rituals. The journey from where the post-mortem prayers are performed (usually a mosque) to the burying grounds (cemetery), could potentially take a political gesture, such as a rally.

Building
× Hospital: An institution for the medical and surgical treatment of illnesses, injuries, and disease, and serviced by professional physicians, surgeons, and nurses. Hospitals are usually funded by the public through the state, or by health organizations (for profit and non-profit), charities, or religious orders.

People
× Political Opposition: An organized political party or parties who do not currently hold the seat of power in the state, and who are generally opposed to the current. Political opposition may be oppressed as in an authoritarian regime, or recognized as in the official opposition in a parliamentary system.

alKhaldeeye (Sunni Neighbourhood) one of the major targets of government attacks

National Hospital

mosque

Khalid ibn Walid Mosque

hospital

Alkendi Hospital

hospital

Choutri Al Kouwatli Ave.

Old Clock Square

cemetery

New Clock Square

hospital

Homs City Council

Old Homs Souk

Old Homs

Bab alDarib (Sunni Neighbourhood) one of the major targets of government attacks

hospital

Al Droubi Mosque

Bab alDarib Gate

cemetery

mosque

cemetery

Citadel of Homs

Al Atassi Friday Mosque

St. Matanius Church

Lady of Transition Church

alMuthana School

cemetery

Fadwa Tukan School

The national Evangelical School

Othman ibn Affan Mosque

Farabi High school

alMukhales Church

Homs Northern Police Station

Sebaa (Sunni Neighbourhood) one of the major targets of government attacks

Inside the 'capital of the Syrian revolution'

1. Stills from video uploaded by user homs20111 (around 0:35).
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f2vXoRY5YMU.

2. Stills from BBC's Sue Lloyd Roberts's secret coverage of Homs conflict.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-15344158.

3. Residents of Homs carrying a dead man's body through the city for burial.
Photo: Reuters.
http://www.aljazeera.com/video/middleeast/2011/08/20118317544610290.html.

4. Syrian protester tagging the phrase "Down with Bashar," during the Syrian Uprising 2011.
Photo: Flickr Commons.
http://www.theworld.org/2011/08/syrian-troops-shell-protesters/.