Prague Paper One

Public SPACE and Urban LIFE
- performance and space

European Center in Prague

NC STATE

Prague Paper One Conference

Public SPACE and Urban LIFE
- performance and space

Friday October 23, 2015 -
Saturday October 24, 2015

Prague Institute NC STATE UNIVERSITY **2015**

Prague Paper One

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Prague Paper One Conference

Public SPACE and Urban LIFE
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Peter Kjaer

Intro to Prague Paper One

In June 2015, I invited a group of people to join the first Prague Paper symposium at the NC State University, Prague Institute, Czech Republic.

I wrote in the invitation:

"The idea is to invite researchers, teachers and practitioners from relevant artistic and academic environments to discuss and develop positions on issues and themes of highest professional interest!

The goal is to present positions, practices and research that establish a critical discourse or can contribute to establishing a critical discourse within classical practice, research and education that continuously proceed without reflecting on the changes in society. This could indicate changes in the modern paradigm or even the collapse of it.

The setup of this event is based on the presumption that knowledge is produced without limits and without control.

Knowledge is produced in universities, in businesses but also 'in-between'."

The intention was to initiate a discourse around 3 important issues:

- the role of Architecture in society of today,
- the perspective of Public Space in collapsing democracy,
- the critique of Epistemology.

The starting point for the discussion could be the situation around the discipline of Architecture. It seems as if architecture in past 80 to 100 years has lost its relation to society in terms of having coherent theories and strategies, like we witnessed during the time of functionalism.

Architecture has changed its relation to society and has become important as business and investment and lost its power in framing the life of people. The architect is either a worker amongst many in the offices or possibly a star architect making iconic buildings. Architecture has lost its critical, social and cultural position, and since functionalism it has lost its Art.

Architecture has lost its identity as an Art discipline, which for some might be acceptable, but is for others a matter of discussion. With the loss of Art architecture has lost its unique position as the creator of space, and this seems to me a fatal misunderstanding

A discourse is needed around the role of artistic, academic and practice-based disciplines as within Architecture. The ambition is to see architecture as a driver for the development of social and cultural qualities in society. I believe such a discourse must be based on new practices, new programs and a new understanding of education.

And we are searching for the ways to start such a discourse.

It seems important that we are being 'in between' two paradigms. The epistemology has through history been developed mostly inside academia and universities. Today students are getting information from everywhere and perhaps increasignly so from the internet, social media and/or from other non-traditional sources. The knowledge disseminated this way is not and cannot easily be a part of the institutional "epistemology". Nevertheless this knowledge might be essential for students to understand the context and perspective of their personal practice. The knowledge is certainly important to reflect on the changes of conditions for all kind of disciplines, their practices and their on-going development of knowledge and competences.

The starting point for the discussion is not the matter of how important Epistemology might be, but more radically a sense of the lost paradigm – modernity. It has served well in the attempt to deliberate individuals, developing democratic societies, producing economic growth, industrial revolution, technological progress and even welfare system in some societies. The darker side of this paradigm has been unsustainable environmental development, an un-even economic and social development in the world as well as unstoppable religious and ideological conflicts.

The development has reached to a level where the world seems more and more out of balance, and especially the Western culture and its value system has been challenged.

Classical values are vanishing and new tendencies are occurring. It seems like everything tends to become more radical. The postmodern philosophers introduced in the 1980s speculations about simulacra as phenomena indicating the end of the modern paradigm with the loss of 'the big story' (the modern ideology as a coherent and unifying 'story'), and introduced also an acceptance of the individualisation of the individual in society. The French sociologist and thinker Jean Baudrillard described in several publications from that period the development of society as societies without the classical balance. We see now the tendencies described by Baudrillard becoming recognizable phenomena – the world, or rather the Western culture, seems to be pornographic in the process of losing values, losing faith in democracy, losing respect for institutions and seeking solutions from the strong populistic practises in politics. It is like sex without love, a demonstration of virility without commitment and engagement.

It might be that we are in between a history based on a paradigm we understood and a future of new tendencies and possibilities, we cannot even imagine yet. Possibly we are in between an old insufficient paradigm and an arising different paradigm.

It also seems that the understanding of the modern concept of space is undergoing changes and transforms into something different.

The change of the concept of space offers a possibility to consider the meaning of architecture in a period where it seems as if Architecture is without meaning. Contrary to that one could claim, that architecture in this period probably contains all meanings, but those must yet be revealed. To find the raison d'etre of architecture we will have to work, discuss, test, establish projects and learn from them. We need to establish trans-disciplinarity and inter-disciplinarity strategies and break down the barriers between disciplines, establish new ways to communicate beyond the empty political phrases, relate to beauty and poetry to find our values, based on which we can communicate with each other.

We will need to find relations between digital and physical; between body and mind; between facts and images as well as between virtual and actual.

And we will need to proceed fast!

The Prague Paper Session One is just a small and humble attempt to bring together a group of people who have different opinions, experiences, professions and cultures to join in a debate – hopefully the first but not the last. We hope this publication of the presentations and documented the discussions through aphorisms will help us enlarge the group in search of new paradigm.

Per Nilsson

(A Fragment of) Paradigm Lost

Diagnostics

> If space-junk is the human debris that litters the universe, Junk-Space is the residue mankind leaves on the planet. The built … product of modernization is not modern architecture but Junkspace. Junkspace is what remains after modernization has run its course, or, more precisely, what coagulates while modernization is in progress, its fallout. Modernization had a rational program: to share the blessings of science, universally. Junkspace is its apotheosis, or meltdown … We do not leave pyramids.[1]

For years we have experienced how our culture has reached its limits of growth, physically as well as spiritually. It becomes more and more apparent that the paradigm called *modern*, or even worse *post-modern*, has exhausted its resources intellectually, spiritually, economically and humanistically. Through its claims to justification, at last reduced to power and consumption, modernity is continuing its ideological growth beyond limits of its own survival.

1. Koolhaas, Rem "Junkspace," in *October*, vol. 100, Obsolence. (Spring, 2002), p 175.

To invoke the infamous Oswald Spengler might be a too bitter pill to swallow, but his claim in *Der Untergang des Abendlandes*,[2] that a culture on its deathbed only repeats what it produced during its heyday while incapable of novelty, seem to carry weight. We can remind ourselves of Rem Koolhaas' furious text *Junkspace* from 2002, where he, commenting on contemporary architecture, writes: "Restore, rearrange, reassemble, rewamp, renovate, revise, recover, redesign, return—the Parthenon marbles—redo, respect, rent: verbs that start with re-produce Junkspace...Junkspace will be our tomb."[3] Artistically and philosophically we can add remake, rethink, react; re- being a contemporary hallmark of our culture. Re- has given birth to everything from cell-phones to i-pads, from computerized cars to robotic vacuum cleaners, from Botox injections to penis enlargements elevating us into a continuous series of up-grades, into *Culture X.O.* The essence of our culture seems to be promoting an endless duration of the present. It's as if no one thinks, makes or acts anymore unless thinking, making and acting is reduced to up-grading hard- or software.

2. Spengler, Oswald *The Decline of the West*, transl. C. Francis (Vintage Books USA, 2006).

This emblem of western culture is part of instigating a second emblem, globalisation. But what the west has been exporting throughout the globe, often in very violent, colonial, today post-colonial, ways is now reduced to second grade repetitions and up-grades. First grade repetitions and up-grades are still benchmarked for western culture even if development in Russia, China, India, Brazil and countries in Africa, the Middle East and South-East Asia can be interpreted as signs of the decline of the west. In Spenglerian terms this could mean that there is no alternative culture waiting to take over after the old west has run its course since the aspirants to the crown only beat us at our own game, delivering us in to an endless duration of the present. Signs of decay were, however, clearly perceived much earlier than in the present century, and particularly the last century exemplifies through world wars, the Holocaust, nuclear disasters, pollution etc. etc. modernity's in-humanism

3. Koolhaas, Rem "Junkspace", p 183.

and its environmentally disastrous implications.

We find one expression of the reason lurking silently behind this situation already in Karl Marx's *The Grundrisse* in the fragments on machines, speculatively called an *automaton.*

[...] once adopted into the production process of capital, the means of labour passes through different metamorphoses, whose culmination is the machine, or rather, an automatic system of machinery [...], set in motion by an automaton, a moving power that moves itself; this automaton consisting of numerous mechanical and intellectual organs, so that the workers themselves are cast merely as its conscious linkages ... The science which compels the inanimate limbs of machinery, by their construction, to act purposefully, as an automaton, does not exist in the worker's consciousness, but rather acts upon him through the machine as an alien power, as the power of the machine itself.[4]

That Marx was able to foresee the cultural development of such automaton is both admirable and scary. But the fact that we can interpret our current system-development as guided or produced by such, especially how administrative power and late capitalist global market systems act upon us, that they are the producers of Junkspace, makes it clear that it, the automaton, in fact exists in our consciousness and that is one reason for musing upon it. Will it eventually turn all our conciousnesses into Junkspace or has that already occurred? What development can have led to the production of such automatons? Of course that question can't be fully answered here but an image can be pointed at, interpreted and reflected upon as a fragment of paradigm lost.

4. Marx, Karl "The Fragment on Machines," from Marx, Karl *The Grundrisse*, pp 692-693 at http://thenewobjectivity.com/pdf/marx.pdf

Let me propose that the dawn of our cultural paradigm dates all the way back to the great divide, the paradigm shift between Mythos and Logos, which took place with the entrance of the culture of Reason through the philosophies of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. This paradigm shift is usually described as the end of the ancient battle between poetics and philosophy regarding truth, (between art and image and philosophy and discourse) where Plato in the 10th book of the *Republic* declares philosophy victorious.[5] Friedrich Nietzsche's reaction toward this victory is harsh: "With Socrates Greek taste undergoes a change in favour of dialectics...with dialectics the rabble gets on top. Before Socrates the dialectical manner was repudiated in good society: it was regarded as a form of bad manners..."[6] Bad manners, the priority of philosophy over poetry, the rabble of reason over tradition, has been the hallmark of the western culture ever since, leading to approaching limits of growth, approaching an endless duration of the present through a slow build-up of an automaton that now comes into full and complete glory as the highest achievement of our cultural paradigm, producing Junkspace globally. This of course is a simplification. Mythos and Logos have had a dialectical relationship throughout history, through what we call the Middle Ages, through the Renaissance, Enlightenment and Romanticism and onwards into Modernity. However, that extrapolation of Logos has occurred and that the dialectical route of Mythos and Logos has reached its culmination through the development of Logos, leading to the reduction of validity claims to power and consumption and production of Junkspace is what can be detected in the 21st century. Whether the cultures to come are in a duration of an endless present where change only is recognisable through the latest up-grades and then forgotten, or in a resurrection of Mythos, not a Mythos 2.0 but *Mythos X.O* or if there something completely unrecognisably new is too early to tell.

5. Plato *The Republic*, transl. Lee. D. (London: Penguin Books, 1987), Book Ten, 607 a-e.

6. Nietzsche, Friedrich *Twilight of the Idols/The Antichrist* (London: Penguin Books, 1990), p 41.

I suspect that the illegitimacy of the reduced claims to justification, power and consumption, which the automaton drives onwards, but also which the powers-to-be choose cynically to ignore together with the risks and decline they entail, is no secret to anyone. In 1980 Peter Sloterdijk coined a definition of cynicism appropriate for our time: "Cynicism is enlightened false consciousness...Logically it is a paradox, for how could enlightened consciousness still

7. Sloterdijk, Peter *Critique of Cynical Reason*, transl. M. Eldred (London: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), p 5.

be false? This is precisely the issue here."[7] Putting this sign of the times up infront of ourselves as a mirror we can muse on the following statement:

At two thousand marks net a month, counterenlightenment quietly begins; it banks on the fact that all those who have something to lose come to terms privately with their unhappy consciousness or cover it over with "engagements."
    The new cynicism, precisely because it is lived as a private disposition that absorbs the world situation, does not glaringly draw attention to itself in a way that would correspond to the concept itself. It envelops itself in discretion...this is a key word for charmingly mediated alienation.[8]

Almost ninety years before Sloterdijk's definition of cynicism, not long after Marx's speculations on machines, Nietzsche wrote about the last men in his *Zarathustra*:

8. Sloterdijk *Critique of Cynical Reason*, p 7.

'We have invented happiness,' say the last men, and they blink. They have left the regions where it was hard to live, for one needs warmth. One still loves one's neighbour and rubs against him, for one needs warmth...A little poison now and then: that makes for agreeable dreams. And much poison in the end, for an agreeable death. One still works, for work is a form of entertainment...One no longer becomes poor or rich: both require too much exertion...One is clever and knows everything that has ever happened: so there is no end of derision. One still quarrels, but one is soon reconciled—else it might spoil the digestion. One has one's little pleasure for the day and one's little pleasure for the night: but one has regard for health.
    'We have invented happiness,' say the last men, and they blink.[9]

Such symptoms on our society's intellectual/poetic status are legion and I will not bother you with too many, even if a hopeful sign is that many of the writers quoted here express their dissatisfaction in a philosophical/poetical manner, smudging the boundaries between disciplines. They probably skipped the now mandatory courses in academic writing during their university studies. However, let me provide a last beautiful example from the contemporary writer/classicist/poet Anne Carson:

9. Nietzsche, Friedrich "Thus Spoke Zarathustra," in *The Portable Nietzsche*, ed. W. Kaufmann, transl. W. Kaufmann (New York: Penguin Books, 1976), pp 129-130.

Imagine a city where there is no desire. Supposing for the moment that the inhabitants of the city continue to eat, drink and procreate in some mechanical way; still, their life looks flat. They do not theorize or spin tops or speak figuratively. Few think to shun pain; none give gifts. They bury their dead and forget where. Zeno finds himself elected mayor and is set to work copying the legal code on sheets of bronze. Now and again a man and a woman may marry and live very happily, as travellers who meet by chance at an inn; at night falling asleep they dream the same dream, where they watch fire move along a rope that binds them together, but it is unlikely they remember the dream in the morning. The art of storytelling is widely neglected. A city without desire is, in sum, a city of no imagination.[10]

Such a city without desire, without imagination, might be a city produced by an automaton, delivering its citizens into an endless duration of the present complete with Junkspace and amnesia. And still, scary enough, it's an acquired culture.

10. Carson *Eros the Bittersweet* (Champaigne: Dalkey Archive Press, 1998), p 168.

Given the premise that our culture, or maybe worse our civilisation, has exhausted its resources and that remedy is lacking within its arsenal, given the premise that we are on the brink of losing our contemporary paradigm; what should we do? We can of course submit to the characterisations above and with Pangloss[11] state that we are living in the best of worlds ("dans le meilleur des mondes possibles") and if there is any problem the solution is to cynically fine-tune the system, the automaton, prolonging its death struggle, instigating a series of up-grades promoting amnesia. Such is the dominant opinion today where even Swedish universities regard themselves as tuning forks streamlining the prevalent system and produces Junkspace. 'We have invented happiness,' says university leaderships, and they blink while put-

11. Voltaire *Candide Ou L'Optimisme* (Livre de Poche, 1999).

ting an administrative automaton to good use producing Junkspace in all our brains, wrecking departments without even noticing it. As long as the automaton works and produces, fine-tuning itself, all is good. Do you feel the iron cage closing in or are you already a lost cause?

But we can suspect the problems to be even more serious and read the so called postmodernist's dystopian rants as the last death twitch of our culture and suggest that putting the prefix post- in front of anything is as useful as using the prefix re- in order to be innovative and creative, as useful as poulticing a cancer. But we could also suspect that we already are living at the dawn of cultures to come, only we, Hegelian owls of Minerva, have not noticed them yet. As Carson writes, "Nor would the mechanical death of moments have come roaring down on us as darkness, had we not stopped to look around for the light."[12]

We can suspect that younger generations in global societies not only live in different up-graded versions of cultures than their parents and rulers of their societies but in new cultures altogether. They are only superficially connected with "our" culture of Logos, no longer actual for them other than occasionally through out-dated one way communication systems like television or radio. This since in an increasing speed we consume the culture we are living in, even its physical manifestations and our kids are rapid consumers. No one looks upon i-phone 6, a new car or a robotic lawn mover as life investments. They're out-dated as soon as they leave the assembly line, manufactured by children with a slightly darker skin colour than ours, located somewhere in a factory on a different continent. Even architecture today has a shorter life span than an average western citizen. At the same time we "elders," (and the elders are getting younger and younger,) experience a loss of meaning in a culture that is leaving a bleak dystopian taste in our mouths while our amphibian kids are rummaging the littoral landscapes of social media, of the Internet far beyond our reach. If they visit the old world, the physical mother earth, they treat it as a playground, the Burning Man festival being only one example. Anyway, we now have to learn from them, culture running backward while technology runs onward or sideward, maybe upward. We no longer die out from the culture we once were born into; we die out from *Culture X.O*.

One reason for the upcoming situation can be elucidated by Hannah Arendt's distinction between thought and cognition and "of all things of thought, poetry is closest to thought," and how thought increasingly has been devalued in western culture.

Thought and cognition are not the same. Thought, the source of art works, is manifest without transformation or transfiguration in all great philosophy, whereas the chief manifestation of the cognitive processes, by which we acquire and store up knowledge is the sciences. Cognition always pursues a definite aim...but once this aim is reached, the cognitive process has come to an end.[13]

Thought on the other hand will not come to an end until the death of the particular thinking subject, of which it is a continuous expression, elevating the subject into unknown territories. Art together with philosophy and poetry are intellectually manifested through thought, a different species from science and cognition.

I would like to stress this distinction and claim that cultural development in increasing manner since Socrates has been driven by cognition, slowly building claustrophobic systems working through automatons, while thought has been forced into the back seat. Gunnar Andersson portrays this distinction as one between critical thinking and creative imagination and writes: "What brings light to the world? Neither critical thinking nor creative imagination alone is enough. Critical thinking without creative imagination leads to scepticism and nihilism, creative imagination without critical thinking leads to

12. Carson, Anne *Plainwater: Essays and Poetry* (New York: Vitage Books, 2000), p 15.

13. Arendt, Hannah *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998), p 170.

14. Andersson, Gunnar "Preface," in Nilsson, Per *Non Serviam: Philosophical Essays on Arts of Living* (Umeå: Bokförlaget h:ström — Text & Kultur, 2015).

enigmatic fantasy."[14] However, even if Andersson portrays this distinction as one between science and art, I would claim it to be a distinction within thought itself. Hence, enigmatic imagination as well as critical thinking is part of thought, the capacity for making art, poetry and philosophy rather than cognition, through which automatons are built.

Therefore if we really think this through, it was thought battling thought in the ancient battle referred to by Plato since poetry and philosophy are of the same species, from the same source, even if also distinct from each other.[15] It is as if thought caught an *autoimmune* disease, fighting itself. On the level of species we can think of *cannibalism* leading to *Creutzfeldt Jakob's Disease* impregnating the modern mind with nihilistic scepticism and as a result to-talised, almost organic, now digital, automatons slowly brought forward by cognition through, as well as producing, an endless series of up-grades; a two in one system development, *a look, no hands* culture.

Hence it can be argued that pre-cognitive rage and linearity, the potential development of automatons, were lurking beneath the surface and stepped in to fill the empty space after thought battled thought, and that cognition propelled our societies into a state where the left-over of thought became subordinated to an automaton, went from poetry to philosophy and in the con-tinuous movement of more and more linear, horizontal and stratified culture, philosophy became subsumed under the reductive sciences, and now the bat-tle rages between these reductive sciences and politics, a politics that has become increasingly disenchanted only pragmatically clinging to illegitimate power, a politics bound by the demands of a global late capitalistic market, which as a system of digital machinery works on us all. Who then will sub-sume whom? The reductive sciences seem to be in the lead demanding that politics, the social sciences, humanitas, art and philosophy follow, copy their methods, commit metaphysical fallacies and continuously evaluate them-selves after quantitative criteria. Hence, the fallout of our contemporary cul-ture, scepticism, nihilism even cynicism, is not unfamiliar trends today where an automaton also works on scientists, demanding from them consumable goods, or rather continuous series of up-grades. The absence of thought, or rather thought reduced to cognition is the hallmark of modern western cyn-icism. This ought to be the main lesson to learn from our route through the paradigm of Logos.

But thought has always been around even if increasingly being brought into the shadow of cognition whose claim to justification has become more and more reductive, more and more instrumental and more and more nihilistic. The only way for thought, for art, to justify itself in the eyes of cognition is to adapt, to subordinate themselves to the validity claim consumption, produc-ing up-grades with built in hiccups rectified by the next up-grade complete with novel hiccups and so on. Universities that once were doing research and education are now producing for the market, their products being what we once called students. They listen to the call from the market and produce accordingly, up-grading their products every semester.

But maybe we, just as Emma Goldman in her anarchistic writing, could dis-regard the cognitive practical schemes of modernity: "A practical scheme... is either one already in existence, or a scheme that could be carried out un-der the existing conditions; but it is exactly the existing conditions that one objects to, and any scheme that could accept these conditions is wrong and foolish."[16] Hélène Cixous in the seventies, when first writing on feminism in *The Laugh of the Medusa*, found herself in a similar situation: "The future must no longer be determined by the past. I do not deny that the effects of the past are still with us. But I refuse to strengthen them by repeating them, to confer upon them an irremovability the equivalent of destiny, to confuse the biological and the cultural. Anticipation is imperative."[17] Cixous does not

15. Arendt, Hannah *The life of the Mind* (New York: Harcourt, Inc. 1978), p 8.

16. Goldman, Emma *Anarchism and Other Essays* (New York: Dover Publi-cations, Inc, 1969), p 49.

17. Cixous, Hélène "The Laugh of the Medusa," *Signs*, Vol. 1. No. 4 (Summer, 1976), pp. 875-893.

apply a practical scheme already existing or one that can be carried out under existing conditions. She does not favour cognition over thought. She brings down positions and much like Glenn Gould's piano playing her writing, like art, speeds up, turns dots into lines, refuses positions and proliferates like a Deleuzian rhizome. "There are no points or positions in a rhizome, such as those found in a tree or a root. There are only lines. When Glenn Gould speeds up the performance of a piece, he is not just displaying virtuosity, he is transforming the musical points into lines, he is making the whole piece proliferate."[18] Deleuze and Guattari are so tired of trees. Cixous, as a practitioner of arts of living, creates her own littoral landscapes to investigate, turning into an amphibian[19] rather than an up-grade and fashioning herself aided by her writing.

Sadly though, we know that the Israeli army today are training in accordance with *A Thousand Plateaus*,[20] and that the global market is becoming rhizomatic and nomadic. And what if Michel Foucault's analyses of the surveillance society actually helped bring it out helped in radicalising it? What if we teachers were to listen to and accept Louis Althusser's pardon while also agreeing that he was right?

I ask the pardon of those teachers who, in dreadful conditions, attempt to turn the few weapons they can find in the history and learning they 'teach' against the ideology, the system and the practices in which they are trapped. They are a kind of hero. But they are rare and how many (the majority) do not even begin to suspect the 'work' the system (which is bigger than they are and crushes them) forces them to do, or worse, put all their heart and ingenuity into performing it with the most advanced awareness (the famous new metods!). So little do they suspect it that their own devotion contributes to the maintenance and nourishment of this ideological representation of the School, which makes the School today as 'natural', indispensable-useful and even beneficial for our contemporaries as the Church was 'natural', indispensable and generous for our ancestors a few centuries ago.[21]

Moving On

I'm here happy to propose a fragment of what I take to be the most promising route for moving into un-known territory, moving through the Looking Glass, regarding our old paradigm truly as a Paradigm Lost, promoting an active, life-affirming nihilism instead of the cynicism of contemporary culture. We got to keep movin'. Movement is the most elementary and historically oldest of all the specific liberties constituting freedom.[22] Moreover movement, mobility and mobilisation are all so significant features of our modern epoch that their interruption and frustration is regarded an emblem of the post-modern. This, since movement in a post-modern condition has gone from an idea of modern controlled flow to stop-and-go, hiccupping or stuttering, as anyone who's witnessed a contemporary dance performance, or maybe been in a traffic jam, has experienced. In fact movement in modernity is important enough to make Sloterdijk write:

Some urbanists and a few military theorists who were willing to speculate knew it first; dubious philosophers who distrusted modernity thought about it; schizos in intellectual circles in big cities followed the urbanists' example and got really into it; swanky art and literature sections in newspapers started talking about the matter—soon there will be many of them who say that they always knew it, Knew what? Well, the trivial fact that kinetics is the ethics of modernity.[23]

Blues legend Robert Johnson however, early expressed an ambiguity within the foundation of the claim that kinetics is the ethics of our modern epoch, an ambiguity within the ethos of movement itself or at least within its pre conditions.

18. Deleuze, Gilles & Guattari, Félix *A Thousand Plateaus*, eng. Transl. B. Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), p 8.

19. On amphibians and littoral landscapes, see Nilsson, Per *The Amphibian Stand* (Umeå: Bokförlaget h:ström — Text & Kultur, 2009). pp 77-114, on their relationship to arts of living, see Nilsson, Per *Non Serviam: Philosophical Essays on Arts of Living* (Umeå: Bokförlaget h:ström — Text & Kultur, 2015).

20. Weizman, Eyal Walking *Through Walls*, at: http://eipcp.net/transversal/0507/weizman/en

21. Altuhsser, Louis *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses: Notes towards an Investigation* at https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/althusser/1970/ideology.htm, p 14.

22. Arendt, Hannah *Men in Dark Times* (Seattle: Stellar Books, 2014), p 9.

23. Sloterdijk, Peter "Mobilization of the Planet From the Spirit of Self-Intensification," eng. transl. H. Ziegler, in *Planes of Composition: Dance, Theory and the Global*, ed. A. Lepecki & J. Joy (London: Seagull Books, 2008), p 4.

I got to keep movin', I got to keep movin'
blues fallin' down like hail, blues fallin' down like hail
Umm mmm mmm mmm
blues fallin' down like hail, blues fallin' down like hail
and the days keeps on worryin' me
there's a hellhound on my trail[24]

Are we moderns then chased by hellhounds and if so will the stop and go, the hiccupping of post-modernism, deliver us to them, and if chased is movement still a liberty?

Just notice the intense interest for keeping flows of wares and goods across borders, while the few meters of the same border simultaneously for refugees constitute an endless distance forcing a stop, not a hiccup, but a stop of movement if not an illegal break through takes place, a break through causing borders to be over-flooded. Hence, in distinction to wares and goods refugees are not part of the ethos of modernity. Refugees rather are being part of the post-modern and even if they act in accordance with the ethos of modernity trying to manifest the most elementary liberty and through performative maneuvers transgress borders they do so as illegals and they got to keep movin', cause there's hellhounds on their trails. "These maneuvers must be fluid and 'tactical' rather than 'strategic'; no land or space is appropriated, only a temporary negotiation of the terrain through the meeting of feet and land. And the idea of the well-made plan must give way to the changing of circumstances."[25] Refugees have to adapt to their environment, have to become *nomads* or *amphibians*. The fluid maneuvers and movements amphibians and refugees are forced into can be likened with *contemporary dance*, transgressing hostile borders of a guarded idea or conception of what choreographed dance, its territory is, and in contemporary dance the dancer *smudges* these borders to use a term borrowed from André Lepecki, constantly beginning everything anew, aiming for something unexpected. In this particular sense contemporary dancers are like nomads, amphibians, refugees, i.e. illegals. Through smudging, borders and limits turn into spaces, spatial thresholds that constitute a, for refugees endless no-mans-land, for amphibians littoral landscapes and for both, spaces that never will be allowed to crystalize, never stratify.

Virtually illegals dream of folding spaces, folding them so that the far away comes near, so that the far already is here, a virtual folding of actual space/time continuum. Spaces like these are only noticed when opened up through performative maneuvers, when they are travelled, when they are folded and unfolded. They will stay smooth and pulsating, contracting and expanding, oscillating between intense chora and lethargic extension[26]between virtual folding and actual duration of the present. "The slightest shift in the local situation changes everything: a particular mountain or sea crossing on one day might be unusable the following day. The improvisational here is not with an aim towards 'expression,' but rather the matter-of-fact maneuvers (whose etymology is suggestive of work done by hand [or in the case of smudging, where feet work on fluid ground]) across uncertain terrain."[27] It's about being able to adapt, about resistance and transgression through adaption comparable to discipline in art, dance, philosophy and mysticism, i.e. a potentially liberating discipline aiming beyond cognition and common sense. In intellectual terms the etymology is one of thought working on cognition whether mentally, bodily or spatially, as well as on movement. Therefore contemporary dancers today are amphibians, potential artistic experimentalists and philosophers, involved in developing arts of living through smudging boundaries, flooding borders and folding and unfolding spaces, striving for bringing the most far near. And so they are refugees, illegals, if viewed from the point of view of modern cognitively impregnated civilisation. And the fact that the conditions

24. Robert, Johnson "Hellhound on my Trail," at, *http://www.xroads.virginia.edu/~MUSIC/blues/homt.html*

25. Seth, John "Itinerant Improvisations: From 'My Favorite Things' to an 'agency of night,'" in *After Criticism: New Responses to Art and Performance*, ed. G. Butt (Malden. MA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2005), pp 151-152.

26. On chora, intensity, lethargy and extension see Nilsson, Per *Non Serviam: Philosophical Essays on Arts of Living* (Umeå: h:ström—Text & Kultur, 2015).

27. Seth "Itinerant Improvisations: From 'My Favorite Things' to an 'agency of night,'" pp 151-152.

of refugees can strike us all shapes a condition of fear and rage significant of, and necessary in, modern societies. Still, their lives on thresholds speaks a lot about practitioners of arts of living, whether they are refugees, contemporary dancers, experimentalists in art or runaway philosophers.

My proposal then is to start experimenting, experimenting artistically, performatively, become refugees from duration of the endless present produced by automatons. That means that we should regard all disciplines we apply, choreography and contemporary dance, visual art, media art, performance, architecture, philosophy etc. as forms of art, i.e. that we begin to experiment artistically rather than instigate up-grades of previous works. The reason for this is that I view thinking, creative imagination, art as the most promising way to intellectually, bodily, spatially and visually start making, mapping, folding, unfolding and moving through unknown littoral landscapes open to futurity[28] while also understanding that a map is not a tracing.[29] Making, folding, unfolding and moving through are activities emblematic of illegals. As Nietzsche's free spirits yet to come I propose that we experience experimental living, shape our arts of living and just keep on movin'.[30]

Promoting thought over cognition is significant of experimenting artistically. Therefore I propose that we take inspiration from Paul Feyerabend's characterisation of open exchange as a starting point for a coming artistic experimentation.

An open exchange...is guided by a pragmatic philosophy. The tradition adopted by the parties is unspecified in the beginning and develops as the exchange proceeds. The participants get immersed into each other's ways of thinking, feeling, perceiving to such an extent that their ideas, perceptions, world-views may be entirely changed — they become different people participating in a new and different tradition. An open exchange respects the partner whether he is an individual or an entire culture, while a rational exchange promises respect only within the framework of a rational debate. An open exchange has no organon though it may invent one, there is no logic though new forms of logic may emerge in its course.[31]

Isn't "they become different people participating in a new and different tradition," a more promising endeavour than the fine-tuning activities emblematic of an automaton of an exhausted culture both self-aware and ignorant of its cynical foundation, putting humanity's existence at risk through a continuous series of upgrades? The difference between open and rational exchange is that a rational exchange is entangled in practical schemes promoting precisely the cynical conditions we object to, driven forward by an automaton while open exchange is not. This ought to be the core of our pre-methodological and fragmentary reflections and what will be developed cannot, no longer, be known beforehand. We can however propose a pre-organon, a pre-logic, that seems to be one promising starting point, moving into a logic of invention.

A logic of invention has yet to be invented: only such a logic can mediate between the reflective categories of philosophical thought and the pragmatic requirements of any empirical project, here the [artistic] project. It is a linkage that invents new philosophies and new [art]. Instead of the self-containment of the syllogism (in which conclusions are logically entailed in validly constituted premises), a logic of invention is necessarily expansive, ramifying, and expedient, producing not premises so much as techniques, not conclusions so much as solutions, not arguments so much as effects. Such a logic can never be regulative (distinguishing valid from invalid arguments) but is always descriptive (do this, then this, then this).[32]

28. Grosz, Elizabeth *Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space* (Cambridge Mass.: The MIT Press, 2001), p 92.

29. Deleuze, Gilles & Guattari, Félix *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia,* eng. transl. Massumi. B. (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2003), p 20.

30. Nietzsche, Friedrich *Human, all to Human*, transl. M. Faber & S. Lehmann (London: Penguin Books, 1984), pp 3-12.

31. Feyerabend, Paul *Against Method* (New York: Verso, 2002), p 223.

32. Elisabeth, Grosz *Architecture from the Outside* (Cambridge Mass.: The MIT Press, 2001), p 112.

Notes On Packs and Smudging

In the art of living, art penetrates philosophy without obliterating it; they exist in a de-creative relationship, negotiating where one ends and the other begins in an on-going *dialectic of friction*. Through the art of living, philosophy can be touched by poetry, and become aware of the status of language, the embodied self and the world as a collection of ambiguous becomings expressed by allegory, metaphor and physical articulation; [...] poetry touches the language of philosophy and dance provides it with a poetic body. As a result, philosophy accesses the continuous becomings of embodied minds in space and time, becomes *somatic*.[33]

My suggestion is that we should begin working as a pack of wolves rather than as a group of administrative civil servants, begin smudging the boundaries between thought disciplines. This is a first movement toward *open exchange*, toward *logic of invention*. Hence let me characterize what I mean with *packs* and *smudging*.

33. Nilsson *Non Serviam*, p 37.

Let's begin with viewing ourselves as what we are, as multiplicities and the multiplicities we are part of are not measurable, their perimeters go beyond thought disciplines, beyond the singularities working within different thought disciplines. Through smudging we can zigzag the spaces our disciplines traditionally proclaim as being bounded. Through smudging we can wrestle bounded spaces from the grips of common sense, releasing them into becomings, view them as part of multiplicities conveniently called littoral landscapes inhabited, made and travelled by amphibians who are part of these landscapes as much as these landscapes are being part of amphibians. I prefer the concept amphibian to post- or in-human and among other things we should recognize the following as parts of our amphibian bodies: computers, cell-phones, cars, microwave ovens, cities, all-inclusive with software, walking sticks, crutches, glass eyes, hearing aids, wheel chairs, wooden legs, paintings, poems, Immanuel Kant's three critiques etc. etc. As amphibians we are multiplicities, packs. In a pack everyone is alone, a singularity taking care of him- or herself but also at the same time part of a pack. I regard Elias Canetti's writings on packs as a starting point for how to view us as pack amphibians in our prematurely initiated littoral landscapes of coming projects.

In the changing constellation of the pack, in its dances and expeditions, he will again and again find himself at its edge. He may be in the center, and then, immediately afterwards, at the edge again; at the edge and then back in the center. When the pack forms a ring around the fire, each man will have neighbours to the right and left, but no one behind him; his back is naked and exposed to the wilderness.[34]

This means that we all are both leaders (centres) and pack members (at the edge) depending on what smudging we're into at each moment. However, when we as a pack are sitting around the fire, gazing forward (since we are forward directed, we got to keep movin'), having neighbours to the right and to the left (neighbours being packs too), we behind our backs have no wilderness, only packs. We are surrounded and that's why we should choose our packs with care. Our pack performs dancing in which every amphibian moves from centre to edge and back again, smudging boundaries between disciplines, smoothing, folding, unfolding and making spaces, bringing the far near. Further, Deleuze and Guattari writes that "the Leader of the pack or the band plays move by move, must wager everything every hand, whereas the group or mass leader consolidates or capitalizes on past gains."[35] As packs we have no past gains in the way groups have. This as a consequence of putting pack thought, creative imagination, in the front seat while using critical thinking as a way to evaluate committed actions even if standards, practical schemes, of evaluation, past gains, strictly speaking are lacking. We use

34. Canetti, Elias *Crowds and Power,* transl. C. Stewart (New York: Viking Press, 1963), pp 29-30.

35. Deleuze & Guattari *A Thousand Plateaus*, p 33.

critical thinking as a means of boot strapping, i.e. to pull ourselves up by our boot-straps engage in open exchange, work in a logic of invention instead of turning into up-graded post-humans. History is with us but we refuse to let it determine our future, we refuse to overlap the future with practical schemes from common sense produced in the past. We're practitioners of arts of living and as noted by Alexander Nehamas:

As in the acknowledged arts, there are no rules for producing new and exciting works. As in the acknowledged arts, there is no best work — no best life — by which all others can be judged. As in the acknowledged arts, that does not imply that judgment is impossible, that every work is as good as every other. As in the acknowledged arts, the aim is to produce as many new and different types of works — as many modes of life —as possible, since the proliferation of aesthetic difference and multiplicity... enriches and improves...[our] life.[36]

This is why we should proceed by smudging, a term described by Lepecki in connection with the choreographic piece *Frequency* by Robin Rhode. "Indeed, if Deleuze saw 'blurring' as the operation that defigures the intrusion of the normative in the tracing of a figure in Bacon's painting, we can say that the verb-effect-event that best describes Rhode's athleticism as he creates his art by zigzagging in between a multitude of genres, media, support, is to smudge."[37] Smudging; open exchange, logic of invention, movements of packs.

Moreover I want to question the proposal in favour of the death of the author suggested by Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault and others. Let's keep the author, sometimes at the edge, and sometimes in the centre of the pack. What we should question is the identity of the work itself in order to avoid it turning into series of up-grades of previous works. The work, or works, I suggest will have a pack identity, with one or other pack leader as author and other pack members as co-authors but the identity of the work itself is smudged.

We can for instance consider how contemporary dance and choreography, together with visual art, film, architecture and philosophy can add to reflections on Deleuze's, Spinoza's and Nietzsche's political, ontological, ethical, but for us more importantly, aestheticist question: what can bodies do? How far can they reach? Serious questions today concerning for example sex and gender, the role of information technology, social medias and how integrated they are and might become with amphibian bodies; i.e. smudging the limits and boundaries between the virtual and the actual, between technology and body,[38] between gender.

I here would like to invoke Georges Bataille, the renegade surrealist as Rosalind Krauss calls him, and bring to attention his dictionary entry *formless*, published in *Documents* in 1929. Krauss writes: "There, announcing that words should have jobs rather than definitions, he says that the job of *formless* is to 'déclasser,' an action that simultaneously (1) lowers or debases objects by stripping them of their pretensions—in the case of words, their pretensions to meaning—and (2) declassifies, or attacks the very condition on which meaning depends, namely, the structural opposition between definite terms."[39] Inspired by *formless* Krauss takes Giorgio Giacometti's sculpture *Suspended Ball* (1930-31) as an example of a *categorical blurring.* "For in that object, the sexually suggestive sliding of a cloven ball over a recumbent wedge sets up the activity of a caress between organs whose gender identity is wholly unstable, seeming with each swing of the pendulum to change associations: the wedge altering its 'state' from female-labial to male-phallic condition; the ball transmogrifying to play heterosexual partner to either of those identifications or—buttocks-like—allowing for homoerotic possibilities or, again—suggestive of the eye in either Bunuel and Dali's *Un Chien Andalou* or Bataille's own *Story of the Eye*—setting up conditions of an ungendered sadism."[40] Formlessness, as well as categorical blurring are singularities of the

36. Nehamas, Alexander *The Art of Living* (Berkely: University of California Press, 2000), p 10.

37. Lepecki, André "Drawing With Feet, Walking on Hands: Robin Rhode's Frequency" in *Planes of Composition: Dance, Theory and the Global*, ed. A. Lepecki & J. Joy (London: Seagull Books, 2008), p 241.

38. Codrescu, Andrei *The Posthuman Dada Guide: Tzara & Lenin Play Chess* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009).

39. Krauss, Rosalind *Bachelors* (Cambridge Mass.: The MIT Press, 2000), p 5.

40. Krauss *Bachelors*, pp 5-6.

same kind, but different from each other as well as different from smudging and what is at stake here is that the art object is wrenched out of the hands of common sense and brought to the realm of thought, brought from the actual to the virtual and then re-entering the actual through a logic of invention, with a different understanding of categories, it becomes blurred rather than strict.

Here we have provisional parts, bits and pieces, fragments of new projects and I would like them all to rotate like the air streams of the northern and southern hemispheres, cogging into each other, smudging the boundaries between them, spreading their venom, leaving automatons out. Whatever the work becomes depends upon where *your pack* makes up the boundaries, how they fold and unfold, keeps the far far away or brings it near and in that I will not aid you. We just got to keep movin,' out from our universities, departments and institutions, become illegals, refugees from an old exhausted culture and civilisation in order to enter into our newly made spaces capable of folding and unfolding, bringing the far near rather than entering an endless duration of the present. We got to keep movin', there's always going to be hellhounds on our trails.

Tomáš Žižka

Recycling the Concept of Site-Specific

Since 1996, the civic association mamapapa o.s., has been working with the relationship of people to place in their artistic projects. Using their site-specific approach, they have uncovered and made public countless individual problematic situations. In this way they have helped civil society to look for and find new attitudes towards its socio-economic changes. Many of these projects came about in a spontaneous manner. They were and are detectors of the socio-cultural climate, with all its negatives an positives. As such, site-specific projects offer new ways to investigate and find points of reference in times of social, cultural, and political change and transformation. Their value lies in their direct, non-bureaucratic and noncommercial reasons for original artistic work.

These interventions into non-theatrical places, environments and communities are a direct reaction to the social and cultural climate, and they can be seen as impulses for public conversations, and also as a conversation objects.

What are site-specific projects? They are a hybrid of architecture and event, where the place and what happens in it interfuse and create another order of existence – something like a "place-event" (McLucas).

This term began to be used more frequently in the 1990's, it came to us from Western Europe. The meaning comes from the use of the word 'site' as "place, point-of-view," with the ending 'specific' meaning "special, certain, concrete, characteristic." These kinds of acts and expressions were around before the Czechoslovak Velvet Revolution and they were in evidence as part of alternative artistic and social acts which were responding to the state of things in the socialist system. Beginning in the 1970's, the Czech and Slovak cultural underground developed their own version of what we now call an alternative culture – which was by extension site-specific. Although in this case it wasn't a programmatic search for alternative spaces for artistic creation and presentation, led by an innovative idea, but rather it was a virtue created out of the necessity of finding a place where it was possible to meet and experience non-official art.

These art activities were not really emphasized by the artistic community itself, as much as they were by the STB (secret police), and so they were viewed as a kind of heroism, which had a political as well as a socio-cultural impact. And so it is certainly possible that this habit of tense, self-conscious hiding-out has been held over in our personal and civic participation to this day. Of course, still speaking from the viewpoint of the Czecho-Slovak context, now these so called "alternative art forms," can assert themselves much more easily and loudly, and their motivations can have open initiatives, even though they may be looked at askance by the public. In terms of the views of experts in artistic practice, theory or critics, the situation around this remains unclear.

Alternative culture after the Velvet Revolution was a reaction to the former established, highly politicized culture. And thus it created a new, reactive platform for civil society and filled a complex cultural spectrum.

Site-specific projects come about in those moments when something has lived out it's usefulness, and something else is coming up, but no one yet knows what it will be. There is tension in the time and in the content: site-specific projects are short termed ones, and as such they have the ability to make their own regime, to accelerate and express their elemental qualities according to where there are tensions in the transition from one instance to another and from one state to another. This presence really pushes home the social element, beyond the aesthetic. The Aesthetic side – or, the realm of emotions – is always connected with social aspects and is defined by given social norms, values or functions.

The transitory nature of site-specific projects can often be crowded out by real estate developers and their profit motive. So it is important that site-specific act not as simply as an impulse introducing ideas and possibilities which can be impetus for intentions and change, but also so that this progressive direction should be more appreciated by the specialist community.   If that were to happen, then perhaps things wouldn't end up, time and time again, as just another mega-store or supermarket.

Empty spaces and premises don't merely offer a free space, but also a new kind of storytelling and style of creation. The artists, aside from discovering this space, also arranges it and cleans it . The first phase of work consists of researching and probing the space. During this kind of research and cleaning one finds many things previously hidden, and also connections. One can also find in one's self reserves, in regards to what is found and what is understood; there are many personal and social relationships connected with place, environment and circumstance. The activities of these creative groups and individuals attract the attention of the people living near the property.

Where are the main localities for site-specific presentation?

Everywhere where citizens feel the need for public cultural-societal processes, expressions, and reactions. The work is not limited to predefined, localized ("safe") localities; it flows out of the needs and necessities individuals have to express their views, minority opinions, and also the views of culturally different groups. This puts attention on our civic responsibilities. The number of audience members who see this work is most of the time not a measure of its quality. At the same time, it is important to note that within alternative culture and in its expressions of site-specific, you can divide these expressions into good and bad ones. But in any case, alternative culture has less of a problem getting audience members than most established cultural centers and theaters, which is also thanks to the fact that these projects take place in an authentic environment.

Although in the beginning it was not supported by the state spontaneously (not in its inception), alternative culture has become part of official state culture. Also significant is that, in this milieu, when many projects were arising which were focused on the genus loci, site-specific projects also promoted new views of culture and education, and of the creative process itself. The mamapapa organization and Four Days in Motion worked to have this phenomenon of site-specific accentuated not just in theater critics' vocabulary, but also in the grant committees for the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, and in specialist and academic circles. This didn't come from an antagonism towards artistic conventions, but a wish to make positive contributions to the artistic and social climate. Gradually, this phenomenon of nontraditional environments and situations for creation is becoming understood as a integral and essential part of our process of integrating to European standards, precisely because of its regional specificity, community attraction, and acceleration.

In our balance-sheet report, in the form of the book, *Site-specific*, and in our presentations in specialist forums, we present projects which mamapapa has created. Looking back over the past decade, the principles of creating for site-specific spaces, environments and specific situations are revealed. This book has a more informational and consultational character, because theater critics so far don't react very much to site-specific. As was previously stated, long before the Velvet Revolution there was a definite and concentrated cultural-societal opposition, which created the basis on which the new cultural tendencies were understood in the revolutionary and post-revolutionary period. This new, progressive direction was commercialized in the years following the revolution and stripped of its political and social meaning in the grip of criminalization and in the disinterest of local governments in alternative culture. A living retrospective provides insight, using an analytic prism to see methods at work, where we can see individual projects sketched out and can confirm the contribution of different approaches towards a place for artistic creation. The projects, which belong theatrical, fine arts, and other genres are presented in a time-line fashion with their accompanying historical context. The first site-specific project was 3WW3 (1998) in Bubecenska Treatment Plant. Here the potentials of this live art were spontaneously verified. The concept for a site-specific project is ideally created in the frame of, and with an awareness of the context, and the dynamic structural interactions - and thus, the constellation. It is an interaction not only with place, but also with society and its parameters.

In the next project, Demolition (1999), the problematics surrounding developers' demolition activities inside the city of Prague and in the wider Czech context were accentuated. The conflict of personal and civic responsibilities is the starting point, and the individual or group who comes into contact with it must consider this as a creative expression, as a signal about the state of things in society.

It became clear that this method which was being formulated was becoming something that was interesting for experts, schools, and humanities oriented institutions (museums, galleries, the Academy of Sciences, Institute for Contemporary History, and CVUT Research Institute), for whom we began to present a series of lectures, hands-on workshops, and eventually, to create projects together. In this spirit, over years we have created and placed projects, acupuncture-like, in pressure-points around the country - in over seventy places in the Czech Republic - and thus contaminated professional and amateur work with site-specific methodology.

Internal growth is always influenced by external conditions and especially by the attitude of interested parties. The conflict of personal and civic responsibilities is the starting impulse, and so the individual or group who comes into contact with this should consider it to be a sign about the state of things in society. Supporting and establishing these expressions in their early phases breaks down frustrations, and can eliminate the risk of unwanted negative reactions.

At the Academy of Fine Arts (AMU), in Prague a new program has been created, which is focused on training in making theater projects in non-traditional spaces. This program is part of the OP PA program which focuses on re-qualification and new work opportunities. Here the students get opportunities to apply their authorial approach. This process is an expression of one's individuality, but at the same time it is constantly necessary to work within a collective.

Here, theater isn't understood as a building or as a material place, but as a social act. For theater as a social act to take place, locations must be looked for and found; sociological studies also form a necessary part of the devel-

opment of this creative educational process. So the training necessary for these kind of projects goes beyond the framework of the study of scenography, acting, production, or directing and dramaturgy. It is true that in the past there have appeared in closed theater spaces phenomena such as communal theater, urban theater or para-theater – but most of the time these types of activities are concentrated outside of the theater buildings themselves. Most of the time, theater buildings are neutral spaces which change and can be changed depending on the situation they encounter. They don't need a genius loci. Theater doesn't belong only in these specially adapted buildings, the history of theater has shown us this since its beginnings.

This is why it is important to find analogies in our teaching for these new needs.

In recent decades, many artists have been searching for spaces which give the impression of being non-theatrical. And so theater appears in places where just visiting them can be an adventure, or an interesting "excursion". Most of the kinds of theatrical activities for which this typology of place is important need an authentic place, a place which itself contains its own meaning. And most importantly, this place should itself be full of real events, stories, people and genius loci.

Coming out of the protective shell of a traditional theater space brought and brings with it new kinds of artistic and civic responsibilities. This is because sending your projects out into the galleries, garages, cellars, holy places and prisons, into industrial architecture, into the streets and into nature, this introduces a kid of activism as a prerequisite for a site-specific project - a performance for a concrete location in the art of action. You can also feel this spontaneous reaction to change at the theater academy. Teaching performance on the academic soil is no longer feasible, not for theater specialists nor theoreticians either.

The history of art certainly has examples of a thematization of place, understanding the genius loci, sanctification of a concrete space, and valorization of space. We can find most of the basic elements of contemporary avant-garde theater in ritual. This is also the basis for site-specific, participatory and community theater. In ritual there is no division between performer and audience. It is about involving all those who are present – each individual participant is taking part in a social act (in rituals, basic community issues are addressed – initiation rites, changes engraved in the social covenant...). In the past, rites used to take place in public places, in the main plazas, and in this way they were consecrated – not just the thing itself, but the thing as it was seated in the main and holy place in the town, in the community. Thus, the history of rites holds great meaning in the context of development of public spaces, and also for the development of participatory, community, and site-specific theater.

Liturgical plays from the middle ages have elements of ritual in them, especially in their sacred compositions. A ritual without a holy place is an anachronism. Sanctifying a place and a community are pivotal moments, out of which site-specific arises, not for the desire to have a lavish spectacle.

In the late medieval period, spectacles were a strong component in the manipulation of peoples' worldview, and also a way of involving the wider public in community life. It is enough to remember the character of public religious theater and it's localized ceremonies, situated in specific spaces. All of the guilds took part in the preparations, which were public displays of their great wealth and social position. Although during the middle ages the emphasis on individual consciousness was not so pronounced (a living faith in God determined a person's place in the whole and suppressed individual expression),

guilds and groups filled the role of the individuals. The individual expressed themselves through their group. When games began to play a bigger role in society, and began to have some independence outside of their purely sacred form, they were banned – they had became dangerous in the freedom of expression they allowed, and in the role that they played in allowing participation in community life.

In the Baroque and Rococo periods there were more billboard-like spectacles in non-traditional spaces, where theatricality penetrated into the landscape, gardens, parks and fields. In the Renaissance and in particular the Baroque era, there were Jesuits and other orders making a whole spectrum of court productions, para-theatrical activities, celebrations and tributes in castles and in other noble residencies and their properties. This was more of a backdrop or scenery of the day.

Productions in authentic, non-theatrical spaces found their zenith as an outstanding echo which resonated as part of the social, political and cultural mix, which brought about the Russian revolution.

Participatory theater, theater as a liberating element and theater as a tool of public action, as instrument to change the world with, to change ourselves with. Theater as an act in space, even as agitation which is seeking the "right" places, places with memory and efficacy (the Winter Palace, stadiums, and Red Square...) Schlemmer's tendency to trace the universum in Bauhaus, and the modular relationship between object and space (body and thought), which brought many important artistic discoveries, experiments in general methodology and advances in artistic science theory. But at the same time it depersonalized the concrete place in communal situations, and also the position of the individual. Even the great development and use of Bauhaus techniques by Meyerhold in his Biomechanics which developed the range of movement and animation dance-function of humans in and with spaces. But here Meyerhold lost touch with the particularity and individuality of the person and ther place in the center of his artistic vision. M. Duchamp appeared, a timeless personality, whose observations of the proportions of place with the spirit and the attitude of humans to space, grew beyond DADA. He created his anti-art by proclaiming everything around him to be art. His readymades were things which were already complete which he elevated to the status of art; this unprejudiced decision by the author gives this opportunity to everyone. Everyone can present the art around them. Everyone can become a creator, to be active as a explorer – creator – maker, to simply be and observe.
It is a time for freedom, to liberate one's self – individualization, consciously or unconsciously inspired by history, is a property of the infiltrating site-specific. On the other hand, concentrating on acting on society as a whole, right here and right now, connecting individuals with their roots and with society, this is an ability to articulate place. Now is a time for global responsibility, to think globally. But the only way to do this is to act locally. This is the thesis behind which site-specific projects become activist projects and sometimes political acts. The social function of common experiences are more important than their esthetic value, which if it is present, or destructive, it is used to strengthen sheared ideas, catharsis. Here it is possible to speak of A. Artaud as a source of inspiration as well as certain body artists.

Fluxus continued in the direction of destroying the romantic myth of the artist as a lonely creator. Fluxus presented a performer who is creating acts, animating situations in the atmosphere of a happening or in an environment. We cannot forget the whole rebellious wave of the 1970s and 1980s, with its activism and political art, which was on one side of the wall, anti-consumer and openly and boldly occupying (squatting) in "free-abandoned" locales, while on the other side of the iron curtain there were underground communities in

the socialist bloc, like a hidden platform which helped people to be able to psychologically withstand the conflict between the individual and the totalitarian system, with its proclaiming masses. You can follow the inspirational attitude, giving outlet to site-specific projects as means of possible anarchistic and anti-establishment expressions.

The founder of the Theater of the Oppressed, the "Brazilian visionary" Augosto Boal is another source of site-specific work, although he himself wasn't aware of it. For him the place where the accident occurred, the collapse, the misalignment, his "Invisible Theater," which took place in a public space and was open to being governed by circumstances, to be led by the environment and the relationships in it – and afterwards, there was a moderated dialogue between actors and participants. This situation can also be a static one, an unconditionally engaged live element – the actor. The principle and the goal are the same – to focus attention on a certain problem (social, political, ecological, etc..), and to provoke a public discussion about the problem. And so Boal is using site-specific art installations in public spaces followed by discussion or community reflection.

But our contemporary problem is the constant confusion and the unclear, delicate borders between public and private space, the borders of spontaneity and property. And so, for this theme, our space is in many cases unclear, not competent, and not owned. And so site-specific acts have curative effects on this sealed off space. In connection with this ownership and caring for a place, regeneration takes place. Figuratively speaking, when a place is revitalized, the strength of a community is renewed and connections are forged to a specific space.

In the previous two decades, residents of the Czech Republic have had to contend with many radical changes in society as a whole. After the political changes in 1989, these changes included a reconstruction of industry, suppression programs, restitution and privatization, development of new manufacturing technologies, as well as efforts to develop ecological thinking and practice. Of course, the positive changes have had their dark side as well. There were thousands of industrial buildings, sites and commercial properties which in the short term lacked perspective, and were left empty, crumbling and useless. Many historical sites also need to find new uses, whether it be solitary buildings or large complexes. At present, the Czech Republic is facing the world wide wave of the economic recession and its effects, more business failure and unemployment.

It is perhaps because of liberalization and society as a whole moving away from monopolies, that the theme of globalization and industrialization has brought with it a return to uniqueness, to specificity as seen in the opposition to mass trends from pop-culture and from conventional cultural strategies. There is a wider seeing of reality, which doesn't mean that it is necessarily superficial, seeing only the cheap attractive concepts. So there is all the more evidence, then, that these projects, created anywhere and anyhow, don't signify carving out a space for professions or for artistic movements. It is more like peripheral vision – perhaps confirming this art's current meaning in society and in communities.

European civilization has just experienced a controversial postmodern era, which was cursed by some, admired by others, and which still others are still living in. Today people speak of a post-industrial era.

In recent years, the arts in many ways have developed eclectically – in a postmodern sense, where old things are transformed, they get new meanings by being introduced into new contexts. Parts of the whole are revitalized by mutation and blending. Rediscovered values, opportunities, and connections

can be used to change points of view. Creation isn't simply a process of creating new values anymore, but it is creating or discovering new and forgotten relationships, contexts, meanings and uses. Similar principles apply in the spheres of organizing culture and in its analysis.

And so the groundwork for the development of this site-specific phenomenon can not be ignored or underestimated. We find in the dynamics of not just the cultural opposition, but also as a contrast in times of economic crisis and neo-normalization, and as an artistic and cultural vent for artists, theater makers, action artists, who through these projects become a living powerful force. There were even attempts, years ago, by the Prague City Council to rein in these projects and alternative culture in general, by squeezing these phenomenon into excel tables and profitability, and to thus set on them the reins of commerce.

If we want to commercialize live art or alternative art and appreciate it only in terms of its economic profitability and build on the gawks of tourists, its effect will be 0. It is something else entirely, to strive to create conditions for cooperation and confrontation on an international and interdisciplinary level for these specific alternative arts, and projects which contribute not only to the Czech scene, but are also interesting for the international public. Globalization has its dangerous and superficial formulas for culture, and that is why a deep understanding of the specifics of one's own alternative culture benefits an understanding of and respect for things outside one's own, currently known territories. Keeping free creation, original thinking, and the uniqueness of individual identities alive – these are known categories in the EU's grant politics. Of course these are also connected to the processes of life long learning and science in the field of culture.

So the controversy: what is beyond the conventions of stage creation and what belongs there? This central theme is itself becoming indefinite and obscure, as is the case with the difference between the terms 'scenography' and 'stage design'. Even the search to understand and grasp both these words takes us to places covered in riddles. So what will we do with place, space and environment of action and thought?

When scenography grasps and understands place, space and environment, there are many graphic marks left, certain contours and concrete compositions, as opposed to scene design which expresses itself in a presumption of of described contours and shapes. Scenic design expressively shapes mechanics, effects, and esthetics for dramatic acts. But neither one word nor the other is complete in itself. That is why the scenographic-designer profession had to come into existence and announce their own uniqueness as a craft and an art. And therefore, if we decide to see site-specific as a self-contained art – in our muse-ical scale we will discover a synthesis of a live and authentic shape, and we will be once again excited at the beginnings of faith and ritual.

One of the ways to contribute to the solution of the problem described above, is to lead a focused dialogue between space and the environment so that we create a "performance" which is non-transferable and immobile - and not to just simply find new uses for these abandoned places and people. It isn't just a question of preventing specific physical devastation and destruction. An integral and equally important part is finding new definitions for the cultural and social function of these places – a relationship of the inhabitants to the given place, village, city or regions. We are standing face to face with new values and personalities – a dialogue with instance, place, space and environment. In the meantime, another important facet of this instance which is also worthy of our attention is the "organizational" base, in the person of the organizer and animator.

The architect thus becomes part of this activity, and not a solitary artist with no vision.

Sepideh Karami

I Interrupt

Four Letters on interruption and architecture

> Like the postcard, the letter belongs not to its place of origin, reproduced as image, nor to its recipient, but to its reader, i.e., to no one.[1]

As a contribution to Prague Paper One proceedings, I am writing this epistolary essay consisting of four letters about interruption as architectural practice. The letters are written around the subject of *interruption*. Using the form of the letter-writing instead of a conventional academic paper, opens up the discussion and turns it into a dialogue. This form renders the ideas as discussable and questionable. It invites the reader to think with the writer and to get into an intimate relationship that is vulnerable and risky. As an interruption to the established form of academic writing, epistolary essay does not contribute to representing and enforcing knowledge but it poses questions. It is a political form of writing that blurs the borders between public and private. Instead of constructing facts it exposes and embraces uncertainties.

The absence of responses to the letters creates gaps and ruptures in the flow of conversation Those ruptures become the grounds of imagination, where various sorts of questions and discussions regarding the issues raised in the letters could be imagined. In this way the reader becomes actively present by his very absence.

Like the postcard, which is both image and text, the epistolary essay combines the private and public, the letter and the essay, monologic and dialogic discourse.[2]

Inspired by Jacques Derrida's *The Post Card: Socrates to Freud and Beyond*[3], a visual essay, as series of postcards, accompanies this piece. Postcards with short messages, complement the discussions raised in the letters.

Letter 01

*24 October 2015,
Plane Prague to Stockholm*

Dear *friend*,

How in your opinion are we to construct the language of interruption?[4] Prague was pleasantly crowded that October afternoon. I had spent the whole day in a black room discussing various sorts of practicing architecture together with a group of educators, researchers, practitioners and students before taking a stroll to the center. The room was painted in black, rough, imbalanced with a red velvet sofa located a bit off its center. The scene had become quite dramatic with the oblique of light casting in through the ajar windows. The roomgave me a sense of performing on a stage, while talking about *interruption as a performative critical practice of architecture*; I touched briefly upon becoming a dissident through applying various tactics of interruption. That afternoon, saturated in various hopeful discussions, yet persistently de-

1. Herrmann , A. (1986), "Intimate, Irreticent and Indiscreet in the Extreme": Epistolary Essays by Virginia Woolf and Christa Wolf. *New German Critique*, no. 38, pp. 161-180. P. 169

2. Herrmann , A. (1986), "Intimate, Irreticent and Indiscreet in the Extreme": Epistolary Essays by Virginia Woolf and Christa Wolf. *New German Critique*, no. 38, pp. 161-180. P. 169

3. Derrida, J. (1987).*The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

4. This refers to the well known question by Virginia Woolf in her *Three Guineas* where she asks: 'How in your opinion are we to prevent war?'

spaired by the ongoing wars, violence and worldwide environmental, social and political degradation, I surrendered myself to the pathways of the city. Thrusting my way through the crowd of tourists on Charles Bridge over Vltava River, I took a pause, leaned on the stone fence, took my dark-red notebook to pen: "It's the time of *poetry*"; then the pen fell into the river; the page remained empty...

That very night you wrote me about the incapability of dissenting bodies to overcome the institutional violence in our world. With despair in your tone, I despaired the world would collapse and only love might soothe us while intensifying our experience of collapse. And what language could build such intensity? I gathered myself and wrote you back: "We need a poetic language; poetic as a potential to interrupt the language of tyrannies." I said: not to overthrow but to perplex it. You said: to make it stammer, to obstruct its perfect image. I said: by inventing a language of interruption. You said: 'a minor use of the major language'[5]. You said: it's the aesthetic of glitch. And I reheard sparks of life in your words.

When my eyes were following the pen taken along the river flow, I remembered our first encounter. If you recall, the train crashed, as you foretold, in the middle of an assumingly clammy industrial landscape not that far from the sea. But we could only *imagine*, the white of tiny waves in distance, reaching us but ebbing instantly in the pitch-black night. We both looked outside, yet the view was disturbed by the reflection of the bright interior. The train was moving back and forward as if a saw was to split the earth, shaking the passengers inside, as if a giant was discovering the creature of the industrial era. We never understood the cause of that event. In fact the crash hurled us, immediately to the level of creation, or imagination in total insanity, to humor. Is that true that creation occurs in a destroyed and trembling field? We created something of unique characteristics; of the quality of *glitch* to the established institutions.

Now on the plane back from Prague, I thought the *interruption* in that short trip lured me into an *impossible* mission of tearing down the capacity of the world, of myself, of what connected us, perhaps... of you too. Born with an interruption, grows through actions, inhabitation, destruction, new connections. Is interruption always a destruction? Perhaps it is; destruction of norms, of routines. It is an *event*, isn't it? A sudden burst of unfamiliar spatio-temporal ruptures that become the outset for an emerging scape. A *scape* in an infinite mist; you want to catch it it slips. You build bridges, stairs, you hurl ropes, all to connect to the unknown; and through all these actions, longings, encounters is that the scape is taking shape, but never completed. And it is the incompleteness that gives us new subjectivities.[7] We *become* someone *new*.

Yet I ask what is interruption? What is that thing in its operation that could make it an affective mechanism of change? From that sudden fall of pen, from the sudden crash of the train, from the despair in your voice, from this no-future era, let me ask you again, how are we to construct the language of interruption?

Warmly
Sepideh

5. Deleuze, G. (1998). *He Stuttered, Essays Critical and Clinical*. London: Verso. P. 109

6. Refers to Deleuze and Guattari who "place creation in the field in which it is destroyed and trembles. Stuttering, where it cracks and fractures, enables us to see the door to the rabbit hole that leads not to what is beyond, not to the transcendental, but inward, to the immanent. It is the act of creation, the necessary act of architecture – in its singularity – that can retain the access to this door." In Elfassy, in dialogue with N. and Roche, F. (2010). 'Stuttering'. *Log* 19.

7. Lazzarato, Maurizio. (2011). 'The dynamics of the political event: process of subjectivation and micropolitics', European institute for progressive cultural policies. Available at <http:// eipcp.net/transversal/0811/lazzarato/en> (accessed 06.05.2014) This refers to the quote by Lazzarato where he says: "The event gives us an open, unfinished, and incomplete world, and in so doing calls upon subjectivity because we can inscribe our actions and exercise our responsibility in this incompleteness, in this non- finitude."

Letter 02

Dear Friend,

Sitting at the kitchen table, the pink tulips are shining against the newly painted grey wall in front of me. It is this late January promising sunlight that strikes the cord; I decided to write you. Your letter arrived a week ago. Hope you enjoy the mountains and cherry trees.

The conversation we had before your trip still lingers around in my head. When we were discussing you reminded me of the fact that we are constantly interrupted by demands of our consumerist society; life interrupted by commodified moments; love interrupted by rules and regulations of capitalist society. It was when we were closely reading Kafka's The Castle that we arrived at that quote longing for an undisturbed place of an impossible love; a space '*without interruption*'. You asked me how "my" interruption is different from strategies of interruption applied by dominant systems? How my interruption is different from the oppressive moments of control?

The interruption I am talking about is more of a tactic. I very much like how Michel de Certeau defines tactics as "clever tricks", "knowing how to get away with things", "joyful discoveries, poetic as well as warlike"[8]. I have borrowed this tactic from the literary technique known as critical fiction. It is about injecting micro-narratives to the established grand-narratives. As I understood the term is inherited from feminist studies. But I think it has a wider potential of applicability, as a way of engaging with the world through constant claim of cracks in a dominant system to amplify the voice of the one who does not speak against the one who speaks[9]. So it creates spatiotemporal gaps to change from within but against.

But yes, the way I understand it, is of course critical. But different from the way *critical practices* perform; it should be without critical distance. Let's imagine interrupting practices in this way: they reside in and overgrow what they criticize. They are like *fiction*, always having one foot in reality; but perpetuating the rules and regulations of what is rendered as real. I think the fictional characteristic of interrupting practices is what that can make them powerful tools of change.

I took a walk after I read your letter two weeks ago, thinking that although revolutions or historically radical changes have not been wholly successful, but they have legitimized many rights that were deprived at the time and now are counted as natural. So as you said, interruption is momentary and the resumption of main systems of governance is inevitable. However don't you think that the resumed system would change, even though slightly, by interrupted moments, by realized moments of dream? A couple of months ago I read Immanuel Wallerstein's "Utopistics or Historical Choices of the Twenty-First Century". His term utopistics[10], is a substitute word for utopia, and refers to the traces of historical realization of our dreams. Echoing Wallerstein the change might be of no difference in the beginning but diverges sensibly in long term. The interrupting moments in history, either big revolutions or micro revolutions, as moments of realized dreams, pause the normalcy of the historical evolution and change its trajectory.

You asked how to make them happen? How to make these changes realized? I have been working with these questions during the past years even before starting this specific PhD research. And I have found and experienced such amazing moments in street politics, where these moments of interruption

8. de Certeau, M. (1988). *The Practice of Everyday Life.* Trans: Rendall, S. University of California Press. p. xix

9. Ranciere, J. (2011). 'The Thinking of Dissensus: Politics and Aesthetics'. In P. Bowman (ed.) *Reading Ranciere: Critical Dissensus.* London: Continum. P.02

10. Wallerstein, I. (1998). *Utopistics or Historical Choices of the Twenty-First Century.* New York: The New Press. P.05.

are bravely realized. I am clearly talking about the revolutionary moments, the moments of breaking free from the existing possibilities and stepping into the impossibilities; the moments of fiction if you like. There are a lot to learn from these moments and the people *making* fiction in the streets. Their act, their voice their dreams their laughter and cry have always made my pen leave traces of thought on the paper, have made my fingers move on the keyboard and click the shutter in a camera, have induced my curiosity to read a book, the appetence of knowing the unknown. They have become the glasses through which I look at architecture, the courage and enthusiasm of imagining a new world; a world that is growing before our eyes with every sigh for its absence, with every step towards it, with the valiant effort to make it realized.

And yes how to make them happen? What is the materiality of interruption? What could be the interrupting architecture then? Thinking of material architecture in relation to street politics, I imagine a collapsing wall of a prison. When the people in the street hitch the walls in, and the prisoners inside hitch the walls out. For me architecture becomes that collapsing wall, that line of pressure. And I keep on thinking who is the architect of that collapsing wall? Who is the architect of a prison, in which its prisoner has opened up its corridors to the world outside? Who is the architect of a prison, which has an escapee?

Warmly
Sepideh

Letter 03

19 February 2016,
Tehran

Dearest friend,

Sun is shining today in Tehran. I am finally in the garden surrounding the prison. I step in. Piano plays amidst the cheers; one takes over the other. The espresso machine puffs. Within some seconds Adele's voice prevails; it fills the space: 'I let it fall, my heart, And as it fell you rose to claim it, It was dark and I...' lyrics fades in the sound of spoons stirring in teacups, in chats, in chairs hustling back and forth, strangers, familiar faces, sounds, gazes, smells, noise, words, memories, metal doors roaring, voice dropping in the middle of a cabin visit, fingers completing the last sentences on the glass; it was once a prison.

I took your letter to Tehran, sealed and unopened; a delay of joy. And the books you sent me, Jill Stoner's *Toward A Minor Architecture* and Neil Leach's *Architecture or Revolution* are the perfect combination for my recent thoughts. Thank you for that. See how one can put them in dialogue: Here is what Leach says on page 116 about the impossibility of subversive architecture:

The very presence of architecture gives it a social impact, so that any 'negativity', any critical capacity within architecture, is all but cancelled by the 'positivity' of its presence. The very physicality of architecture always threatens to install a new status quo, and undermines its capacity to be 'subversive'.

And Stoner although agreeing with Leach on complicity of major architecture with dominant power, finds a bit of hope in the Kafkaesque shadows of the very presence of major architecture. She thinks that there are possibilities for the minor to take shape in those shadows. Not complicit with it but upon it. Within it and against it. On page 02 she writes:

Political and economic powers set forth conditions of complicity in which major architecture are made. But once made, buildings can be challenged to relinquish their share in this

complicity. Though appearing to reside comfortably within the language of the majority, buildings may provide a medium within which a minor architecture might be situated. In this context, a minor architecture will operate both upon architecture's grammatical construction of (virtual) power and within its physical, material form."

In this sense architecture, instead of being about adding to the world becomes the act of liberating space, through selectively transforming parts of an existing structure. Decolonisation? Deterritorialization? Changing from bellow? Aiming at staying in minor position rather than achieving the major language. Yes, because as soon as it becomes major it becomes complicit with power. It interrupts the language of major. Hence interrupting architecture is situating a minor architecture in the language of majority. So my question: can interrupting techniques then bring radical criticality back to the architecture practices?

I'm writing these words from a prison turned into a museum and recreational center. Before sitting in the café, Café Markov - also known, as Café Architect - that I assume I had talked with you about, I strolled among sycamore and cypress trees in the garden. The central watchtower and the original main door of the prison are still there. It was only in 2003 that the prison was shut and in 2007 it was decided to be a museum and a recreational center. An amazing example of what Leach suggests about the political content of architecture that is not inherent in its form but it's 'merely grafted on to it by a process that is strictly allegorical.'[11] Initially a royal palace in 1789, turned into a prison by Nikolai Markov the Russian-Iranian architect due to the increasing numbers of dissidents in the country, and now a museum, a park, a café, a restaurant. Fascinating metamorphosis. I agree that this complex is an asset to a highly populated and densely built city like Tehran that suffers from the lack of open public spaces as such. But I cannot ignore the instrumentality of the whole project as masking the parallel fact of existence of political prisoners in the country.

The retrofitting project of Qasr Prison Garden-Musuem manifests some efforts of playing with material and aesthetic to produce a liberating space born out of a state proposal. Applying layers of light and transparent walls in contrast to the massive walls of the former prison is done elegantly to aesthetically debilitate a solid and closed architectural structure. Yet it's not valiant enough to expose the paradox of the whole project and what it tries to hide.

11. Leach, N. (1999). *Architecture and Revolution: Contemporary perspectives on Central and Eastern Europe.* London: Routledge. P.118

But I should say that there is a more interesting part in the whole complex. The more recent building in the complex, a modern brutal gray building at the far end of the garden, is left almost intact or with very little design. Although the other brick building, the older one, attracts more visitors, this part, it's roughness, represents a doubt, represents a state of suspension. It's what I sometimes think of the profession of architecture and about how much it can do by not doing. Architecture should sometimes, to put it very mildly, *pause*[12], instead of trying to add to the world, to complete worlds.

So to your question, yes, what I am trying to talk about is still architecture. But speaking of the role of architects, I'd rather talk about an interrupter than an architect.

12. Karami, S. 2015. "Pause: A Device for Troubling Routines". *Drawing On Journa*l. Issue 01. http://drawingon. org/issue/01. Accessed 15 March 2016.

I love the trembling handwriting in your letter. What an amazing materialization of your train trip. Enjoy your stay in company with mountains.

Warmest
Sepideh

Dear friend,

You said the cherry trees are blossoming. You said the mountains are covered by snow. You said the sea devoured your notebook while you were working along the beach. You said you've started disliking the sea as it's greedy, as it's devouring its guests, as it's drowning its travellers. I review these everyday and wonder how this project of interruption can ultimately operate in a wider context.

I am still working with those three modes of actions that we sketched together that evening in the kitchen: passive resistance, revolt (violent confrontation) and dissidence (underground actions). We have done them all in real life, haven't we? But now I want to investigate these through the lense of *architecture*. So no, I don't want to divorce myself from architecture. I'd rather apply architecture both as method and material to construct practices of interruption. And I have been thinking how architecture as an action can be part of the practices of interruption? Where are the limits of architecture in this project? I think the recognition of those limits becomes part of the architecture work. This recognition in fact opens architecture up to other modes of practice; not-defined-yet and unnamed. Architecture in its established form is hardly ever the answer to the project of change. I think, on the contrary, its withdrawal from the domain of action becomes its most important contribution in many occasions. Now I want to take this statement further and say that the answer could even be found, sometimes, in *destructing* architecture. This oscillation between *to interrupt* architecture itself, to constructing an architecture that can interrupt is the journey through which I try to develop an *interrupting practice*. Where and with what material? The existing major architectural projects and their elements, for me, are the sites, the context of action and the material for this practice.

And I would like to apply interruption as verb. To interrupt, hence, means creating spatiotemporal ruptures in an existing language that are not in favor of consuming gaze but of action. The interrupting tactics are architectural verbs that act upon/in/against/through/on architecture in order to transform architecture from a finished object into an unfinished site; in other words they keep architecture in a constant state of *architecting*. Architecture becomes architecting, interruption becomes interrupting; verb not noun.

What I like about application of prepositions is that, the choice of each proposition depends on the context. And this choice becomes part of the architectural work. This activity not only hints at time and location of interruption but also defines the materiality of the tactic. It produces new subjectivities; it introduces modes of action. You stand *in* the square for eight hours as a passive protest. You hide *behind* the walls as a dissident. You hit the hammer *against* the wall in a revolt.

So interrupting practices, derived from street politics are about opening architecture up to the forces that are not part of the discipline of architecture, but could transform it; could re-politicize the practice, could make it critical.

I can imagine once the interrupter is at work, acting upon/in/against/through/on architecture this could become her/his a task:

And next time come from the window,
Break the glass,
Ignore the doors,
Leave the mud inside
Stay
Cry a poem
Laugh
Leave
As you leave, laugh.
As you laugh, break through the walls.
Let your laughter echo forever in the room interrupted by collapse of the walls.

I close the door. Tape the windows. I caught it; your *laughter* is trapped!
"The room of laughter", I write down and start to draw.
The plans, the sections, the facades,
a perspective,
where you are about to disappear in the focal point,
but you don't.
You never do.
Because your laughter is haunted in the room. Because your laughter has haunted the room.

Yours truly
Sepideh

Dear friend,

This is the building I was talking about. An unfinished building in Liberty Street in Tehran in 1979 during the revolution. At the time people had climbed this building, watching as beneath a flowing tissue of crowded bodies replaced the street itself with moving, shouting individuals.

In this instance the building has become a static point that has absorbed the crowd and, at the same time, produced a new sort of street; a vertically folded street that provides a space for standing and sitting as an alternative form of demonstration. Verticality intensifies the energy present, accumulating it and turning the event into a 'tragic' moment.

So this is an example of "pause" as one of the interrupting devices that we discussed. As you see it has its origins in passive protests.

1979 Iranian Revolution. Liberty Street, Tehran, Iran

POST CARD

So where pause as a device is concerned, perhaps it is primarily in the sense of a post-production of space by means of occupation.

Sepideh
Tehran–fall 2014

Postcard 1

;

CARTE POSTALE

Ce côté est exclusivement réservé a l'adresse

Dear friend,
It's the quote from Franz Kafka, The Castle, that we found
together. I found this postcard in a kiosk today. Thought
you would love it.
Keep well
W.

'I can't think of any greater happiness than to be with you all the time, without interruption, endlessly, even
though I feel that here in this world there's no undisturbed place for our love, neither in the village nor any-
where else

;

and I dream of a grave, deep and narrow, where we could clasp each other in our arms as with clamps,
and I would hide my face in you and you would hide your face in me, and nobody would ever see us any more.'

Postcard 2
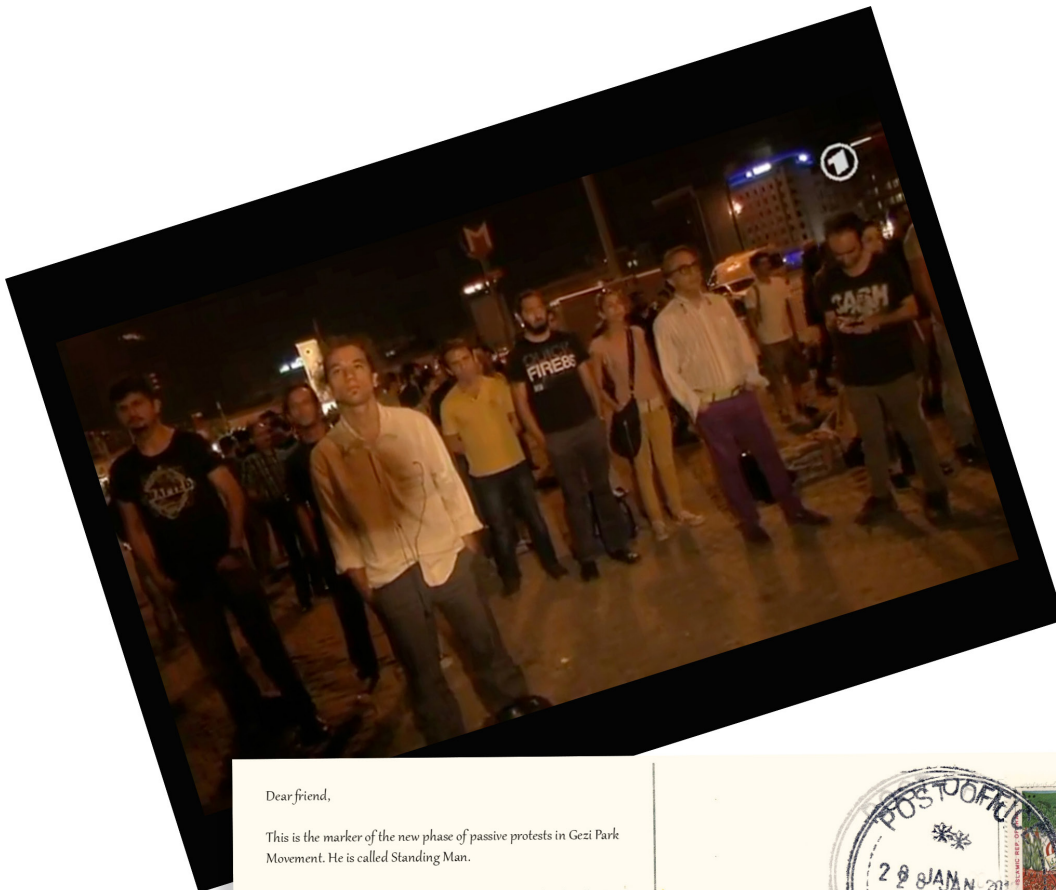
Dear friend,

This is the marker of the new phase of passive protests in Gezi Park Movement. He is called Standing Man.

On The Guardian blog on 20th June Kaya Genc (under the alluring title The standing man of Taksim Square: a latterday Bartleby) writes:

'(...) a young man wearing a white shirt and grey trousers appeared in Istanbul's Taksim Square. He walked towards Ataturk Cultural Centre, adjacent to the Gezi Park, which had turned into a battleground. But the young man didn't go inside the park. Instead he stopped in front of the Cultural Centre, placed his backpack on the ground, put his hands in his pockets and stared at the building for eight hours.'

As civilian security officers search him it is clear that standing still has become a crime in Turkey, and simultaneously that a disarmed body standing in a public space can be threatening. While it seems unimaginable that silence or inactivity could be used as a weapon in an increasingly mobile, integrated, high-speed society, the standing man causes us to pause.

I think pause could be a technique for troubling routines, a tactical device for change capable of disturbing established flows. What comes out of this disturbance is, of course, contingent and unexpected, but it is critical to have an image of it. Metaphorically, it enhances the "stammering" moment, in Deleuze's terms, the moment of dysfunction. Pause interrupts, but it also connects through new and undefined connections; this is the 'infrastructural behaviour' of the pause.
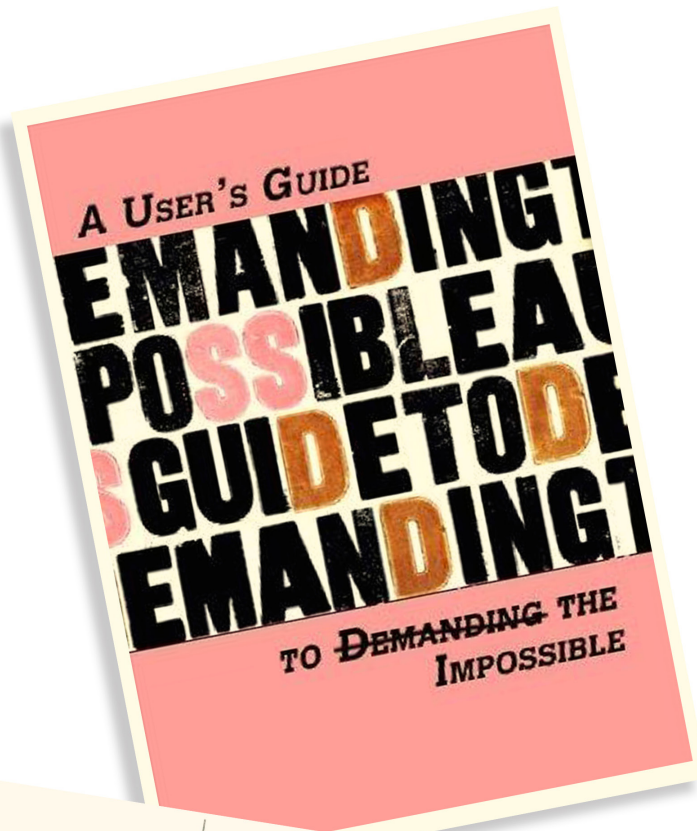
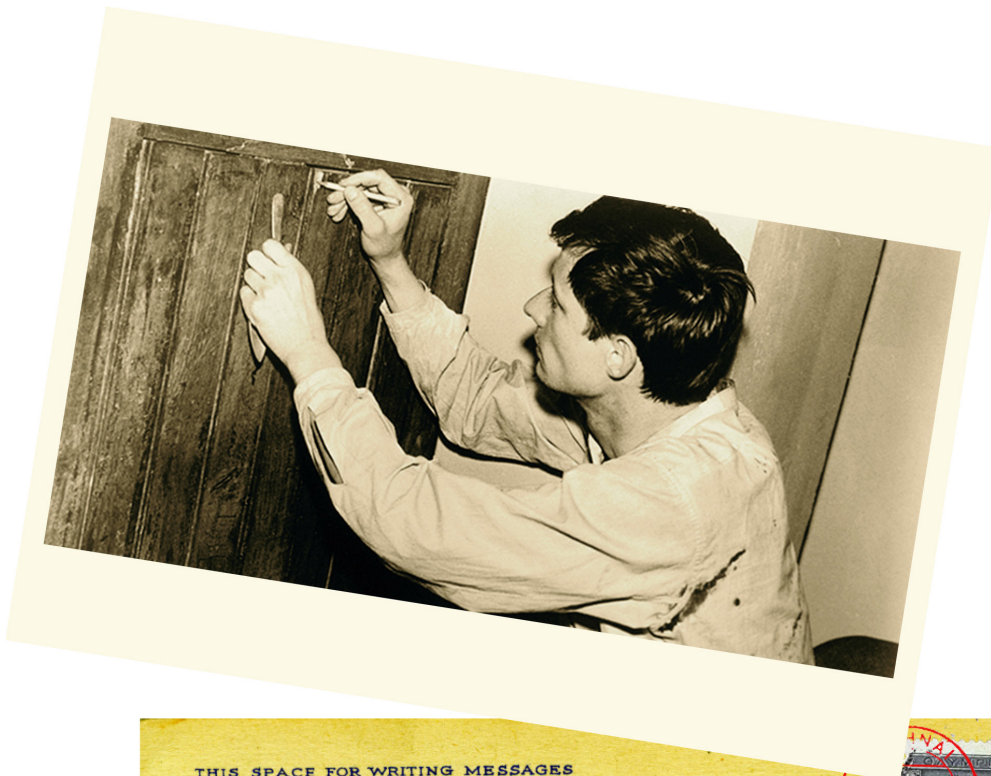It's defenitely something we can develop in relation to the 1978 building in Tehran. Let's talk!

Wxyz

Standing Man- Gezi Park Movement Istanbul- Turkey- 2013

Postcard 3

A User's Guide

EMANDINGT
POSSIBLEAU
SGUIDETODE
EMANDINGT

to ~~Demanding~~ the Impossible

Dear friend,

I was reading The Ticklish Subject by Slavoj Zizek, where he talks about the 'art of the impossible' as 'authentic politics'. And I was thinking that most of the operating dominant systems, even the most authoritarian ones, leave some spaces of freedom that renders the resistance possible to some certain extent. These spaces operates as safety valves and in fact are necessary for the power to sustain. These spaces are spaces of 'possibilities'. However to acheive a change one should step out of the existing possibilities into the land of impossible.

I am thinking 'interruption' should be the art of the impossible. It should push the walls of existing possibilities to step into the impossibilities.

I also found this book by Gavin Grindon. I managed to have a breif chat with him when I visited the exhibition 'Disobedient Objects' at V&A musuem.

I'll give you the book once we meet.

Sepideh

User's Guide to ~~Demanding~~ the Impossible- Gavin Grindon

Postcard 4

THIS SPACE FOR WRITING MESSAGES

Dear friend,

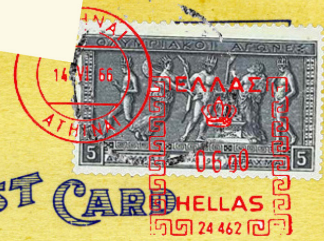You asked me who is the architect of a prison
who has an escapee?

I was watching the movie A Man Escaped by
Robert Bresson. In this movie Fontaine who is
the prisonor plans to escape from the first
moment he is arrested. He constantly takes apart
his surrounding. And I am thinking when ar-
chitecture becomes the act of taking apart, Fon-
taine becomes a master of this architecture; he
becomes the architect of his cell. He uses what is
at his hand -or what arbitrarily and accidentally
arrives in his cell- to cut his environment. His
language with surrounding objects is cutting. He
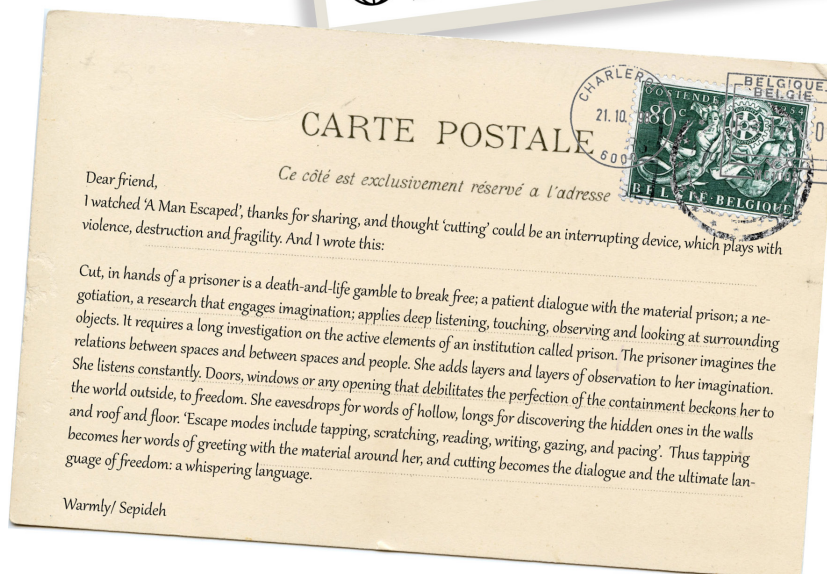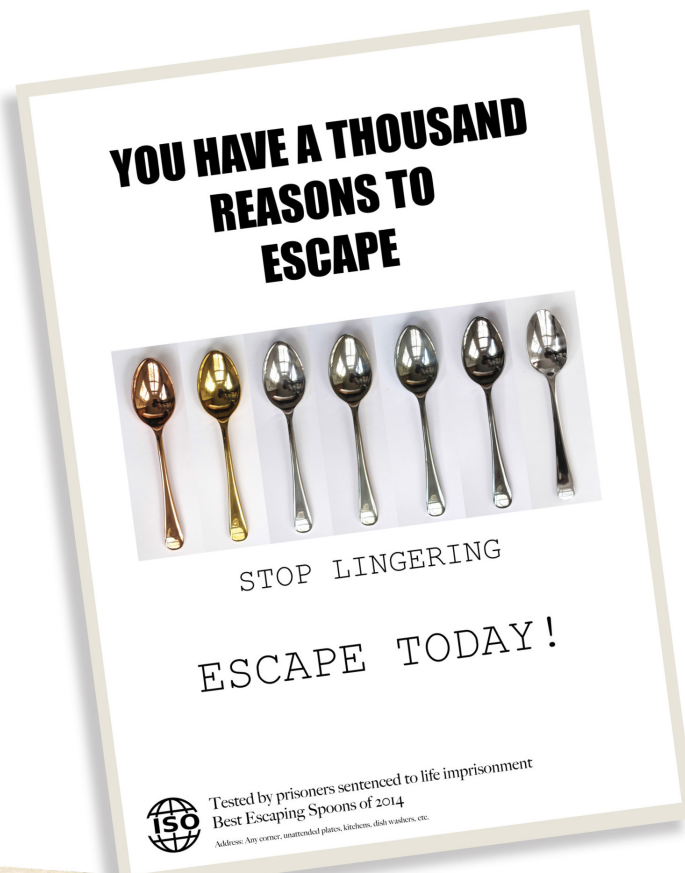turns whatever surrounds him to either devices of
cutting or objects to be cut.

Make sure to watch it! You will love it!

Wxyz

Still from 'A Man Escaped' by Robert Bresson - 1956

POST CARD

HELLAS

Postcard 5

YOU HAVE A THOUSAND REASONS TO ESCAPE

STOP LINGERING

ESCAPE TODAY!

Tested by prisoners sentenced to life imprisonment
Best Escaping Spoons of 2014
Address: Any corner, unattended plates, kitchens, dish washers, etc.

CARTE POSTALE

Ce côté est exclusivement réservé a l'adresse

Dear friend,

I watched 'A Man Escaped', thanks for sharing, and thought 'cutting' could be an interrupting device, which plays with violence, destruction and fragility. And I wrote this:

Cut, in hands of a prisoner is a death-and-life gamble to break free; a patient dialogue with the material prison; a negotiation, a research that engages imagination; applies deep listening, touching, observing and looking at surrounding objects. It requires a long investigation on the active elements of an institution called prison. The prisoner imagines the relations between spaces and between spaces and people. She adds layers and layers of observation to her imagination. She listens constantly. Doors, windows or any opening that debilitates the perfection of the containment beckons her to the world outside, to freedom. She eavesdrops for words of hollow, longs for discovering the hidden ones in the walls and roof and floor. 'Escape modes include tapping, scratching, reading, writing, gazing, and pacing.' Thus tapping becomes her words of greeting with the material around her, and cutting becomes the dialogue and the ultimate language of freedom: a whispering language.

Warmly/ Sepideh

Postcard 6

Dear friend,

Here is another historical example of 'pause'. Do you know Emily Wilding Davison? She was a militant suffragette who died after throwing herself in front of the king's horse at the Epsom Derby. When her body was crashed under the king's horse hooves, the whole event of epsom Derby was interrupted. The crashed body is a strong manifestation of biopolitical affect of pause.

Search her on Youtube, you will find a short documentary about her where this tragic event is also documented.

I think you can benefit alot from performance art and the discourses around it.

Take good care...
Wxyz

Emily Wilding Davison at Epsom Derby- 1913

Oren Lieberman

we make differences in the world
...that matter

we make our way while walking

In order for transformative learning to take place, I believe that we need to engage in a shift in how we understand the world and how knowledge, and basically the world, comes to be. I have been trying to make this shift by focusing over the past many years on performative spatial practices in the learning/teaching and making of architecture. My belief has been that the education of architects is overshadowed by what I call its projective cast, that is, by its predominant focus on proleptic renderings and representations of anticipated outcomes, and is not really commensurate with the world's complexity. In this projective mode, architecture anticipates but does not fulfil the desire of something constructed; it is the apparatus of represented speculations. Of course, this mode is certainly extremely important; indeed, architectural representations can be understood to have a materiality in their own right and are important discursive practices which participate in the making of the world. Such speculations have the potential to participate in the transformation of individuals and communities, to set dreams in motion, and to instigate/trigger new imaginings and meanings

However, focussed as it is on representation, and representation's primary mode of meaning making through embedded discursive and semiotic relationships, the projective is deeply implicated in what Bourdieu calls "strong discourses" such as the deeply representationalist binaries of all descriptions, such as the either/or, us/them/, male/female, etc., and the bio-politics of what remains a white male-dominated profession, the strong discourses about public space, the city and other territories, about marginalised communities, about the oft-complicit embrace of neoliberalism and architectural production, about gendered or and racially exclusionary implicit policies, about precarious conditions of survival. These discourses are particular 'distributions of the sensible': they have a significant role in bringing things to bear, of making the world.

In our work with students we have always stressed the need to entangle bodily and materially performative practices and the projective practices of speculative design and through making 'performative spatial acts' the students understand their own agency in elationship to the agencies of things and others.
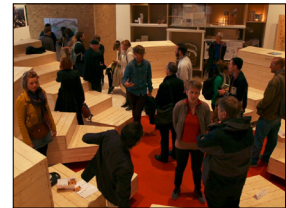
The case study I will present is of the LiAi, an example I believe of transformative learning and making, and one I would like to diffract though the notion of pedagogy as choreography.
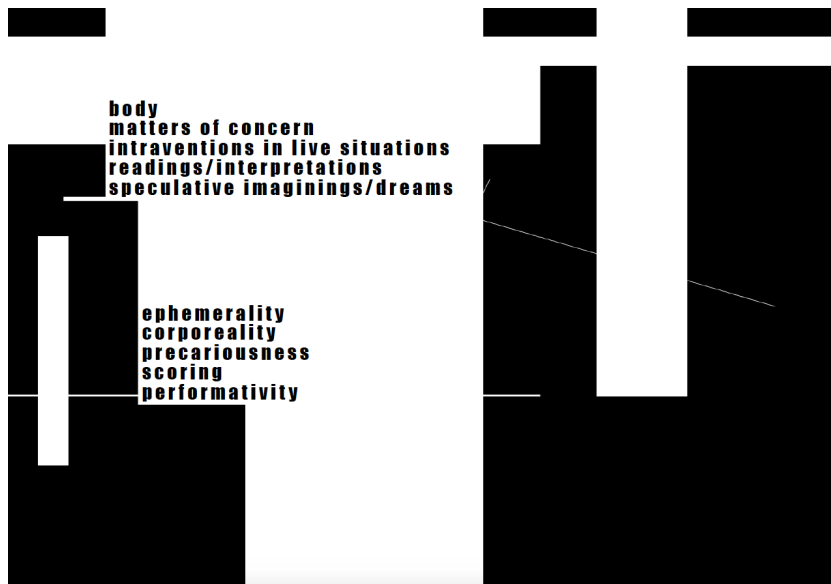

perfomative

projective

Laboratory of
immediate
Architectural
intervention
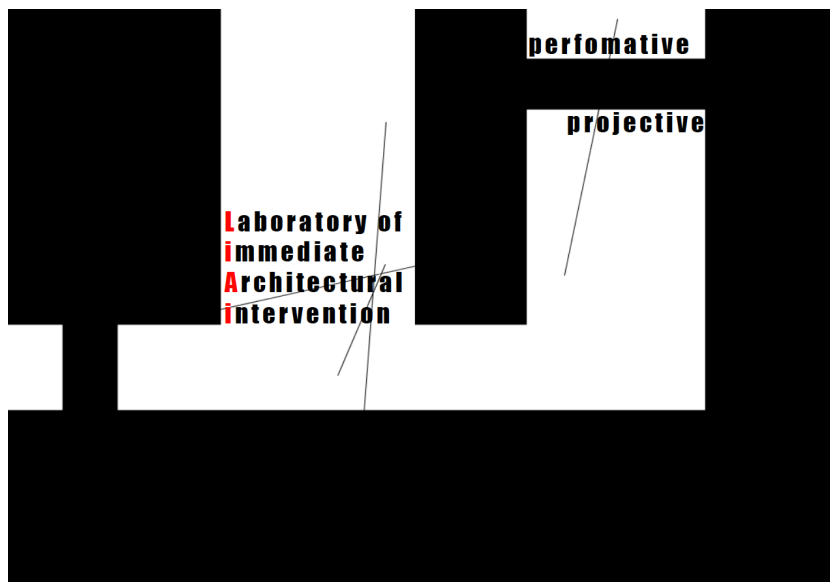
The shift which needs to happen to enable transformative moments is away from a mechanistic world view in which matter is understood be *passive* and *separable*. In this mechanistic frame, matter is understood to be able to react only to something from outside itself to make it move, to change it: it doesn't have agency. Humans (typically) are the agents who *use* matter to survive on *their* terms, to express themselves ...

And in the mechanistic ontology, matter is always something separable, in keeping, for instance with the Cartesian binary separation of minds and bodies, of subjects and objects. The havoc caused by this is extraordinary, not the least in terms of how we are inculcated with the understanding that that even *our* bodies are somehow separate from *ourselves*. Understanding matter as separable means that we can divide it *ad infinitum* into smaller and smaller bits; in an atomistic view, we can 'isolate' matter, locating it and subjugating it to our will (which resides in our 'heads'...). The assumption is that in this view, we can understand 'external' reality completely in that it exists out there, separated from us, and therefore reality is subjected to our rule.

So the shift is to an understanding that modalities of being and making, things, discourses and figures – or rather, events – are all entangled and together create the phenomena of life, including that of architecture.

body
matters of concern
intraventions in live situations
readings/interpretations
speculative imaginings/dreams

ephemerality
corporeality
precariousness
scoring
performativity

Within the mechanistic understanding, is the representationalist standpoint: Karen Barad succinctly captures this position as a belief in the ...

ontological distinction between representations and that which they [supposedly] represent; that which is represented is held to be independent of all practices of representing ... two distinct and independent kinds of entities: representations and entities to be represented.

I won't rehearse binary thinking's love of such representation, of the divisions of rightand wrong, of male and female, etc. Indeed, the mechanistic view and, as Barad says, "representationalism is so deeply entrenched within Western culture that it has taken on a commonsense appeal. It seems inescapable, if not downright natural". Challenges to this mechanistic and representationalist understanding of the world have come from "... feminists, poststructuralists, postcolonial critics, and queer theorists" and Barad notes particularly Michel Foucault and Judith Butler as protagonists of such challenges. Architectural practice and education has been is no less susceptible to the mechanistic and representational view. In transformative learning, the world cannot be reduced to this mechanistic viewpoint, but must be understood to be complex, and made up of many different actants: human, material, social, cultural, discursive, institutional, processual, animal, mineral, etc. all in what Barad has termed, *intra-action*. Or to paraphrase the poet Machado, 'we lay down the path while walking, making the world as we go'.

Attending to this cutting is vital for a critical pedagogical practice in architecture. With students, I often refer to this process as 'bracketing out/in'. We need to ask the questions: What are we including and what are we excluding? What discursive practices (cuts) are enabling or constraining? In our cuts, are we engaging in a 'redistribution of the sensible' (Rancière), or merely mirroring the given distributions? How are we restricting/expanding our purview through our intra-actions, intraventions?

The cut is a decision: it matters, in all senses of the word.

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modalities/things

discourses/figures
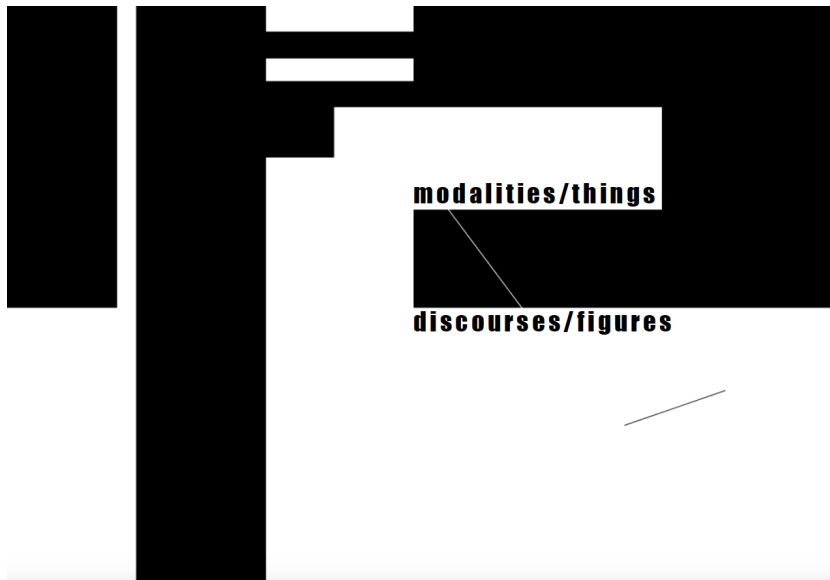
The pedagogy of the LiAi draws on the notion of choreography. The choreographic situates our work in the realm of performative action and transformation, and it does so with and through our bodies; also, it helps us frame the power of our intraventions, which aim at transforming the world through immediate, responsible and often fragile acts of engagement with matter, movement and life. It uses rhythms and relationships between modalities and processes and things, between scores for doing, and the doing itself, between the performative and the discursive practices of the projective.

Emphasising the performative, multiple and transformational dimensions of students' work, the pedagogy challenges the representation of wholeness/completeness that the words 'design', or even 'building' normally summon. This choreographic pedagogical practice echoes such key movement performance concepts as corporeality, ephemerality, precariousness, scoring, and of course performativity.

There are **five main modes** which shape our choreographic pedagogy: the body's role and development as a performative force in making; the discursive, graphic and diagrammatic development of positions/issues through expanding the purview of architecture, describing thickly, and establishing cuts and mappings with matters of concern; intraventions of bodies and materials and constructions in live situations;
preparation and discussions of readings aligned to the matters of concern; and the speculative imaginings and dreams of possibilities in projective designs.

In the first mode, the role of the body is scored through various exercises. For instance, one called "**take an object for a walk**" shifts assumed locations of agency, and attends the power of 'techniques' of bodies, materials and things. By walking with these things in the city in particular ways, students engage in processes of inquiry, experimentation and questioning that are driven by the score of the thing – not primarily by their own desires – and in doing so, they make space in ways they could/would not have done before.

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body
matters of concern
intraventions in live situations
readings/interpretations
speculative imaginings/dreams

ephemerality
corporeality
precariousness
scoring
performativity

Another mode in the choreography, one aligned with the notion of performative 'discursive practices', has two distinct movements. The first plays out in students using various methodologies to **expand** their purview of architecture. This movement has to do with being in the thick of it, developing **thick descriptions** (Ryle, Geertz, de Certeau, Goethean observation). We draw on various diagrams/notions of expansion, including Ingold's meshworks, Latour's actor networks theory, and Clarke's situational analysis. For instance, working with Clarke's analysis, students take some thing from their work they did with objects in the first phrase and make situational maps which
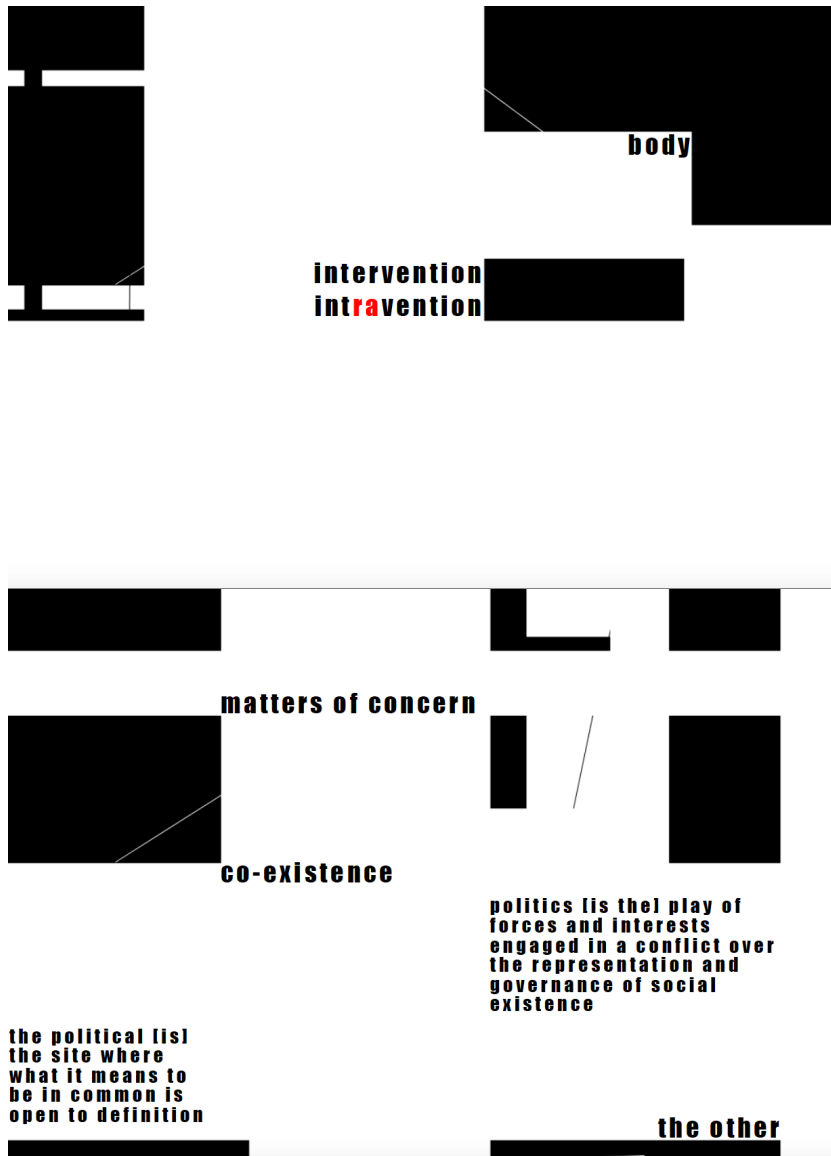
lay out the major human, nonhuman, discursive, and other elements in ... [a] situation of inquiry and provoke analysis of relations among them." (Clarke 2005:xxii)

The second movement in this phrase establishes cuts in this expanded field through our **matters of concern**, combinations of words related through the slash (/). Attending to this cutting is vital for a critical pedagogical practice in architecture. With students, I often refer to this process as 'bracketing out/in'. We need to ask the questions: What are we including and what are we excluding? What discursive practices (cuts) are enabling or constraining? In our cuts, are we engaging in a '**re**-distribution of the sensible' (Rancière), or merely mirroring the given distributions? How are we restricting/expanding our purview through our intra-actions, intraventions? The cut is a decision: it matters, in all senses of the word. Whilst these mark certain preoccupations, they also leave 'gaps' because students define them on their own terms, developing them through their own preoccupations and architectural directions. As discursive practices, these matters of concern are tools for exploring, mapping and delineating agendas and positions indicating as they do realms of perception, thought and action. But they also afford the exploration of the uncertain and the joy of speculative play. They are ways of approaching crucial questions about architecture and the world, about things that matter, and are heuristic apparatuses that invite us to work our way(s) through them and with them, exploring, discussing, speculating and testing. As apparatuses, they participate in the students' development of themes and positions, acting as the **'f' in the f(x)=y** of mapping of ideas and doing intraventions. For instance, a student might be developing thoughts, acts and design specula-

tions in relation to issues of migrant workers in Sweden and their spaces of work and inhabitation. Seeing those spaces and issues ('x') through, say, the 'function' of other/coexistence would establish certain specific material data which would participate in the making of that student's site.

We have found using these matters of concern engenders more inclusive, modest and respectful conditions for responsible, caring and curiosity-driven engagements with the world.
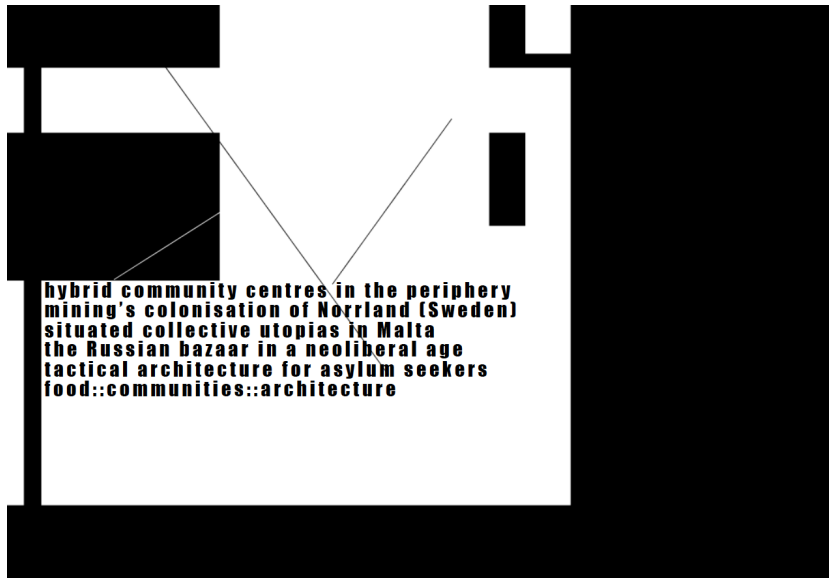
A third mode works through a set of texts related to the matters of concern. We select readings that we dedicate to one of the matters of concern (e.g., fragility/affinity) which students are asked to interrogate, present and discuss. They are asked to bring in examples of situations and experiences that relate to the texts, and to understand them as discursive practices which perform particular methodologies.

body

intervention
int**r**avention

matters of concern

co-existence

politics [is the] play of
forces and interests
engaged in a conflict over
the representation and
governance of social
existence

the political [is]
the site where
what it means to
be in common is
open to definition

the other

Intra-ventions in live situations are our main mode of engagement. Students take part, from the inside, in the construction and articulation of 'sites' – expanded conditions, ecologies, locations and actors of a phenomenon – in which we architect as responsibly as possible. The intraventions are where material bodies and discursive practices are so tightly entangled as to make differentiation difficult. These are sometimes relatively quick and relatively small actions and/or events which yield a certain breed of effects, and sometimes longer processes through which material rearrangements include the making of full-scale architectural constructions, the staging and curation of events, and generally the establishment of intense and enduring relations with various actors, institutions, apparatuses and other things. As potentially 'radical' performative phenomena, they question binaries and can effect profound changes. They materially generate previously nonexistent possibilities. They can participate in enabling communities of practice and establishing commons.

matters of concern

the other/co-existence
performative/projective
body/apparatus
agency/structure
transversals/micropolitics
aesthetics/the political
affordance/gift
fragility/affinity
diffraction/representation
discourse/event
documentation/judgement
making/sense

$$f(x)=y$$

These intraventions often dance with the **fifth mode: dreaming, imagining and speculating** about how the world could be and how it ought to be. This projective mode engages in the various themes/**positions** of the students through designs which interrogate, question and challenge strong discourses (Bourdieu) about public space, the city and other territories, about marginalised communities, about the oft-complicit embrace of neoliberalism and architectural production, about gendered and exclusionary spaces, about precarious conditions of existence. They are not reflecting (mirroring) future states but positing possible discursive practices and material conditions which could participate in creating particular phenomena, ways of transforming the world, in ways of living/being.

hybrid community centres in the periphery
mining's colonisation of Norrland (Sweden)
situated collective utopias in Malta
the Russian bazaar in a neoliberal age
tactical architecture for asylum seekers
food::communities::architecture

These modes are choreographed by interweaving their very clear and strict scores/instructions with gaps and spaces for improvisation and the incorporation of unpredictable quotidian worlding, or in Barad's terms, mattering. Some phrases of modes are sequential (e.g., 'taking an object for a walk' is the first score, and work on expanding the purview through, for instance, situational analysis follows it), whilst others occur in parallel (e.g., texts on the matters of concern punctuate the first 3 semesters, and run in parallel to intraventionist as well as projective phrases). A rhythm of intraventionist (bodily/materially performative) and projective (discursive practices) projects establishes dialogues between the two; mappings of the matters of concern occur at various moments throughout the 2 years. Through the interweaving rhythms students begin to understand and use the relationships between bodies/materials and discursive practices to transform their own positions and architectural practices.

We believe that this example of a pedagogical practice is indeed one of transformative moments.

Adam Gebrian

To be an architect?

Who is an architect?

I am not looking for an etymological explanation of the word and its origin at this moment, but seriously at the content of his activity and how is it understood by other people. Quite concretely, it is a person who through his drawings materializes the wishes and conceptions of his clients by utilizing his education and adding to it his own ideas about what is the best solution for both the customer and society.

Often I encounter the answer that an architect is a person who builds houses. However, at least in the vast majority of cases he is not. In the western world it is first of all a person who creates plans which somebody else builds.
For some people it can be a surprise that an architect could be associated with something different than building new houses, for example, with reconstructions, conversions or changes of a public space.

In the media we often meet with a concept of an architect in a more general, figurative sense. For the situation in the Czech Republic it is interesting that we encounter it almost always in the negative sense (an architect of the Iraqi war conflict, an architect of the final solution of a Jewish question, an architect of a renewed Czech – China friendship...).

The word Architect not only includes in it an organiser, initiator, and a person standing in the beginning of a process, but also a person who continually contributes to a change of a current state. It seldom indicates a person who just waits passively for a visit of a client who then checks up on his qualities through the work.
The students of architecture are often told that they are exceptional and unique during their studies. It is not very seldom that architecture is called a queen among the arts, and is seen as a connection of art and science. So often mentioned are the necessity to be creative, the ability to be empathetic to the needs of others, and also the need to understand all the fields and disciplines associated with the architecture. The last one mentioned often carries one substantial risk. The students and later the architects start quite often to do the work of other professions and consider it totally correct. Many architecture students are convinced they are great graphic designers, typographers (and some may be, but there are really only a few of them). Interestingly, it does not happen so much in the very technical (dangerous) subjects that are raising fear and substantially limit one´s perception about their own abilities. (An incorrectly engineered design could mean the collapse of a house. However, an incorrect choice of a font does not kill anybody.)

It is also odd how distinctively so much proclaimed creativity and searching new ways starts to shrink after finishing school. As a result of many interviews I have done, I came to a conclusion that there seem to be only two options for an alumni: either go to work for another architect or set up their own architectural office. And this automatically means that there is another third option – go to work for another architect first and set up his own office

after gaining some experience.
Any other option is often considered a failure and an incorrect dealing with one´s own education that should have prepared you for the beginning of precisely this career.

A short personal comment: In 2002/03 I studied at Academie van Bouwkunst in Amsterdam. At a public presentation of our projects for Amsterdam Noord tens (if not hundreds) of local people showed up. I did not understand why they were there so I went to ask one. He answered that he was interested in how young people thought about the place where he lived and he came to see what improvements we were offering. I tried to explain to him that those were just students' projects and none of them would be realized. Which means nothing concrete was going to happen and absolutely no improvement of the space he had lived could happen due to our activities (just a small example of my very limited perception that only something physical is important). The sympathetic look he shot at me and the answer that followed will stay engraved into my memory for ever: „Thanks for the explanation but naturally I know that."

Indifference to the architecture

The Czech Republic (at that time still Czechoslovakia) gained independence in 1989 and got out of the sphere of Soviet Union´s influence and changed from communism to a democracy. It moved from the society where one´s own opinion and its display was not required, or more precisely, what was required was the exact opposite, just mingle with the crowd as much as possible and become invisible. The newly acquired freedoms after 1989 therefore represented a gigantic change.

Above all, it was a switch from forced common ownership (everything belonged to everybody, private ownership did not exist, so inhabitants of a prefabricated house got together every weekend to clean and tidy up the space both inside the house as well as in its surroundings) to one´s own benefit, one´s ego orientation, towards „what I myself can influence and do not need anybody´s permission to do". People got interested in their clothing, cars, in what they eat, how the interior of their apartments look. What was common was not anymore of their interest. It is a difficult situation for architecture that should occupy itself with the common and should even while making a construction / project for a private customer solve its relation not only towards its immediate surrounding.

So I decided to try to help changing a little this situation with my own work – at least in the two years following the Fulbright scholarship as I was obligated (today the requirement changed to 8 years).[1] I decided to accept any offer that would enable me to speak or write about architecture, to raise public awareness about who are architects, with what are they occupied and what can they do for society. Perhaps the list of activities I managed to try during those 8 years will serve as the best explanation of what I meant.

Leading of a studio (Czech and American University),
Lectures „Introduction to architecture" for university students (Czech state and private schools),
Articles to professional magazines (Architekt, Era 2, Stavba, Projekt)...
Articles to newspapers (Lidové noviny, Hospodárské noviny),
Writing in social magazines (Respekt)
Writing columns in the newspaper Metro that is distributed free of charge daily in public transportation,
Lectures about architecture for everyone who requested them (elementary and secondary schools, preservationists society, tour guides, building companies, producers of light peripheral shells, employees of internet browsers, IT people, civic associations, theater companies,... I was often told

I was the first architect ever speaking at those types of events),

Regular performances on TV and Radio,

My own radio program about architecture, interviews with architects, theoreticians, artists, photographers, historians, designers, politicians, customers, officials, construction engineers,... (so far 220 episodes),

My own program on the internet TV (Stream.cz) that deals with critiquing current changes of a public space – not only in the Czech Republic but also in Germany, Slovakia, Great Britain, and Italy,

Organizing architectural competitions,

Moderating many debates about architecture,

Advising for private and public customers,

Participating in preservation and building committees of Prague,

Preparation on establishing an Information center about architecture for Prague,

Co-founder of „ Sounding Board" - an advisory organ of city council for the field of territorial development http://www.ozvucnadeska.cz/,

Active work in social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram): The social media phenomenon started to increase in volume after my return to the Czech Republic so I decided to take advantage of it by offering further information about architecture and about the qualities of the space we live in. A small indicator of that activity is the number of my public followers (Facebook 15.485, Twitter 5.462 and Instagram 4.372).

I am trying to list these activities not to brag, but more as proof of the fact that even a lazy person like me can do many different activities if all his time is not occupied by designing architecture and administrative work connected with it (like managing the office, dealing with offices and collaborating with specialists).

I was able to do all of that in previous years under one substantial condition. By personally resigning on designing architecture which means literally stop being an architect. At least in the sense used by the legendary Czech architect Vera Machoninová who lost the opportunity to design and realize buildings for a long period of time after she refused to agree with the Soviet invasion to Czechoslovakia and said: „The one whose buildings are not realized stops being an architect".

I stopped to do design because of several reasons. Firstly, everyone who does it knows how time consuming an activity it is and how much energy it takes from you. But I did it also because of the conflict of interests. It is very difficult to say in one sentence of your speech how meaningful and important architecture is and add just a little later that you are willing immediately to make improvements in favour of those who you are trying convince about the importance of architecture.

Another important condition of my activities is an effort to speak and write the way that everyone could really understand. I am not saying I am succeeding, but I am making an effort. I saw way too many architects who were ostentatiously despising everybody who did not study architecture, trying to demonstrate their superiority. They discouraged others from involvement in the debate.

The study of architecture brought me to the interests in architecture. I remember quite vividly the times I liked houses more than people. It makes me happy when I see a beautiful newly built house or a well reconstructed one. To be able to experience this happiness more often I decided to make an attempt to transfer my own excitement for houses and public areas, their beauty and importance to everybody else or at least to those who will show an interest. It is my work for a longer period of time and I think it will last me for a long time.

P.S.

In a figurative sense I perhaps remained an architect. I set myself the assignment. I did a short research and an analysis of the situation and I decided to suggest a change. I became my own project. I am not sure whether it is possible to consider myself an architect while doing that. Maybe yes. Maybe not. Anyway, I wanted to show some architecture students that it is possible also to do something else than just design houses and not feel as a person who failed at the same time. My activities helped me since previous years to meet and befriend a lot of people that I would most likely never have met as a person who designs houses . And I cannot be thankful enough for that.

Jüri Soolep

On Collapse

Part 1
The Testimony of a Passerby

> A passerby on that grey morning in March 1897, crossing, at his own risk and peril, place Maubert or the Maub, as it was known in criminal circles (formerly a centre of university life in the Middle Ages when students flocked there from the Faculty of Arts in *Vicus Stramineus* or rue du Fouarre, and later a place of execution for apostles of free thought such as Ètienne Dolet), would have found himself in one of the few spots in Paris spared from Baron Haussmann´s devastations, amidst a tangle of malodorous alleys, sliced in two by the course of the Biévre which still emerged here, flowing out from the bowels of the metropolis, where it had long been confined, before emptying feverish, gasping and verminous into the nearby Seine.
>
> Umberto Eco, *The Prague Cemetery*, 2011

The passerby on that hot morning in June 2014, having crossed, with no risk and peril, the canals and bridges of Venice, found himself, as usual after every two years, in Giardini, amidst the pavilions of Biennale. Not as usual - he found that Modernism had died. Silently. Forever.

The feeling of loss was inevitable and clear. The passerby remembered Erwin Panofsky´s words about pre-Gothic Middle Ages, which had left Antiquity unburied, and alternately galvanized and exorcised its body, as well as his words about the Renaissance standing and weeping at its grave, finally covered, trying to resurrect its soul. Renaissance itself never really died. It transmuted in *Danza Macabra* through several costumes, disguises, skins, muscles and bones into Modernism. Now it was time for Modernism to go. Its soul and body had been resurrected and exorcised as High-Modernism, Post-Modernism, Trans-Modernism, even Hyper-Modernism, but even these ghosts are now gone. It took the High Priest of Modernism Rem Koolhaas to dissect the body of deceased and deliver the autopsy report. It was called: *Elements*.

The passerby listened and a voice cried out: What a *blasphemare* - who says that Modernism is the Golem of Renaissance? Indeed, who?

Is it not the projections they share? It was Philippo Brunelleschi, *magni ingenii viri florentini,* who described in imaginary Cartesian space how man was the infinite and abstract singularity of vision behind the oculus of his painting of the baptistery of San Giovanni. It was he who dissected that space and produced projections, we today have simplified and trivialized into plans, sections and elevations. It was Leon Battista Alberti who suggested that the architect should describe depth when drawing the footprint of a building as *ichonographia* – meaning on the parallel plane of the horizon – *ex fundamenti descriptioni* and that the architectural drawings should be executed without altering the lines and maintain the true angles, exactly on the basis of controllable measures.

Is it not the authorship they share? It was Alberti, *florentini viri clariffimi Libri De re aedificatoria dece*, who described in the intellectual space how man was the finite and subjective singularity of authorship. When Brunelleschi said: this building is mine because I built it and got rid of *capomaestro* Lorenzo Ghiberti; then Alberti said: this building is mine because I designed it and forbid the architect from the building site. Which never really worked. It was Alberti again in *De re aedificatoria*, inventing the finality of the author's manuscript. The author became sacred: not a word nor a letter was to be taken away or added to the corpus of his work. It was Donato di Niccoló, known generally as Donatello, who added artistic arrogance and the stroke of a genius to the authorship, refused to be taken as an artisan and established himself as an artist – ready to destroy his own creation rather than sell it cheap. Good art became costly.

Is it not the isolation they share? - the isolation of a builder from an architect and then an engineer from an architect. This isolation not only specified the designer, but identified the builder and building industry. The latter have changed enormously in techniques and materials but the structure of the building process and organization is not much different from the time cupola of Santa Maria del Fiore in Florence was devised by Brunelleschi. It consisted of builders, materials and machines – these came together and the construction began according to the design drawings. These design drawings were also at the same time representations of the future unseen, road-maps to future and legal document between client, builder and designer.

All these, three shared fundamentals of Modernism and Renaissance that bound together the last five hundred years, have now changed in the new Age of Digital Production. There are no more drawings; in their stead is the code, entangled in the labyrinth of corporate licenses of software. The builders are not there anymore, as the code can print anything, in any time, in any material, in any place - wherever the web of signal and web of binary meaning can reach. The authors are no longer there as the copy and original have multiplied into infinite number of originals that can be copied infinite times. The digital manufacturing, parametrical design and end user participation diffuses the author into binary segments blown around the Digital Universe. Very soon everything there is, will be immediately known in digital form, in infinite number of Gutenberg Galaxies.

What a morbid day in Venice, thought the passerby on that hot morning. It cannot be - it's the city of illusion, spectacle, *teatro del mondo*, carnival, sin of wearing a masque, black feathers with red silk, eroticism of covered and exposed. It is *carne levare*, *carne vale*, *carrus navalis* – flesh in promise and flesh in abstinence, flesh in fresh and flesh in decay. Life in living. Is there a hope?

The evidence was there: *Elements* of architecture, taken apart, examined carefully, classified, exposed and commented. *Elements* of architecture: floor, ceiling, wall, stair, window, gate, toilet – what a naive and simple-minded idea - carried out in an unseen grandness of the curiosity cabinet. Was it *Kunstkammer, Encyclopédie, ou dictionnaire raisonné*, or really the body of evidence? Koolhaas can be accused of many of things, but not of naiveté nor of simplemindedness. The body of evidence deserved attention.

Firstly, *Elements* overwhelmed with empiricism. It looked as if it was not enough to search, describe and analyse the elements of architecture, which was also done to exhibit the time and energy spent. *Elements* had to be there physically, in the pure form of matter and existence. Grandness of passerby to touch balusters, to look at handles, window frames, urinals, roofs, machines working ... left a powerful feeling of abundance of things – the thingness of architecture. Renaissance had used this to get rid of High Gothic scholasticism, *Novum Organum Scientiarum* versus *Summa Theologiae*. The new in-

strument was the new inquisition dissecting nature and its matter to know its secrets. New instruments testing the window frames of future, polishing the door handles on the way.

Secondly, *Elements* overwhelmed with classification. The whole idea of Elements of Architecture, divided and manipulated, seemed Foucauldian – architecture as the order of things and things of the order as architecture. The matter at hand was seduced, forced, pressed and pulled into compartments predetermined by the typology of Koolhaas. Hundreds and thousands of measurements of balusters tabulated on walls. This was what we would have got a long time ago, if Carl von Linné had studied architecture in Uppsala. The classification extended even further into the restored library, which became a true prolongation of exposition. It remained unclear whether matter was shaped on the example of books or books imprisoned like the matter. The library with its empty auditorium with its empty chairs and *tabula rasa* screen, detached from a bubbly reception crowd had a strange feeling of a silenced mausoleum of knowledge. One felt the Foucauldian rarefication in full swing. The body of evidence twisted.

Thirdly, *Elements* overwhelmed with historicism. Koolhaas: "After several Biennales dedicated to the celebration of the contemporary, Fundamentals will focus on histories ...". History – oh yes, that treacherous path. Have we not been warned by Manfredo Tafuri how mystifications, brilliant eversions, historical and anti-historical attitudes, bitter intellectualisations, mild mythologies and what else mix themselves together? History – another fundamental of Renaissance and Modernism brought first together for art and architecture by Giorgio Vasari. Empiricism and historicity tend to be contradictory, but classification – the geometry of mind, matter and space so nicely binds everything together. One, though, can remember in the history of Venice the Council of Ten and Supreme Tribunal, with masked assassins. The passerby then imagined the historians of architecture as the Guild of Assassins. Disguised in the shadows of the past, covering their path randomly with myths and facts, they creep closer to stab the blade of past into the back of presence. We are lucky that they come from architecture. The real history is used as image and pretext for the missiles in Palestine, Ukraine and in so many other places. Modernism by the way had already managed to start the two World Wars - its time was definitely up!

The evidence was clear: on the fruitful decay of Modernism something entirely new is being born. It is also symptomatic that the Biennale tried to hide and mask the absence of image and the absence of digital. These have been carefully buried under the empirical, taxonomical and historical. But the careful observer noticed already in the exhibition prologue: in the case of ceiling, that the ventilation system was a camouflaged abundance of composition with the slight whim of Peeping Tom. And that was just the beginning. One can believe that with the Digital Universe taking hold of all there is and could be, its modes of imagery and digitality will build everything anew, but without drawings, authors and builders of architecture.

The passerby also noticed the immense shroud of Italy, numerous international trials in cacophonic chorus of requiems, known and unknown architects and critics, product placement of Rolex, bribing the press as well as, AkzoNobel, recruiting restorers of the colors of life, endorsed by the High Priest. Business as usual.
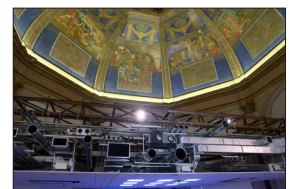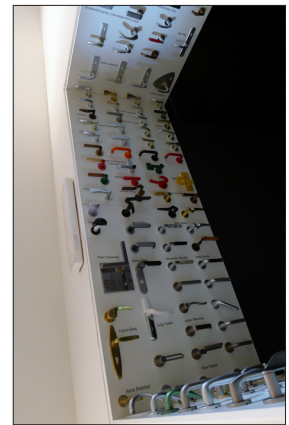
Then suddenly ... the passerby gasped ... there it was, in the front of the main pavilion: the Carcass of Modernism, after being dissected and picked clean like the bones in the desert, it was rebuilt in sustainable material, distorted by the new projections, forbidden to be used because of the public safety concerns – nothing more than a tombstone cast in the virtual cemetery of the Age of Digital Production.

Part 2
Legacy of Renaissance

The passerby's testimony is before you – now we should look in a more detailed way into the blasphemous speculation of the passerby about Renaissance and Modernism. The three accusations about projections, authorship and isolation can be brought into three arguments:

1. Architectural project, we still use today, is essentially a set of drawings describing the geometrical-analytical projections of the three-dimensional space we share.
2. Author of architecture owns the set of drawings, describing the existing and imagined three-dimensional space. In this case the author is owner of the architectural ideas described in these drawings.
3. Building is the copy of the architectural ideas described in the set of drawings and is usually built and owned by someone else than the author of the ideas and drawings.

These arguments became important in Renaissance and they still hold to some extent today, at the end of the period we call Modernism. In 1428 Brunelleschi made the drawing of Santo Spirito in Florence. It was off-centre perspective drawing which described in semi-realistic way the three-dimensional interior space imagined by the architect. The resemblance of the imagination and the final result are strikingly distinctive – thus paving the way to perspective drawings as special visual tools. Within the Brunelleschi's new geometrical-analytical thinking these drawings could be produced on the basis of plans and elevations only. Thus, if the plans and elevations were produced for a space imagined, it could be visualised. The perspective drawing was the enhancement of architectural working tool as were plans and elevations. Only after that came the section as a specific projection of the visual cone of perspective drawing, firstly used for investigations interior shadows of sunlight – the representation of passing time. Later all these drawings as representations of three-dimensional space were perceived as projections within the Cartesian space. The descriptive geometry paved the way to analytical description of space as a system of coordinates that was mathematically describable to the smallest detail. This understanding of analytical-geometrical structure of projections is mostly connected to Brunelleschi and can be localised at the beginning of 1400s. It is in concordance with other early modern developments:

The modern scientific revolution has consisted in relating movement not to privileged instants, but to any-instant-whatever. Although movement was still recomposed, it was no longer recomposed from formal transcendental elements (poses), but from immanent material elements (sections). Instead of producing an intelligible synthesis of movement, a sensible analysis was derived from it. In this way modern astronomy was formed, by determining a relation between an orbit and the time needed to transverse it (Kepler); modern physics, by linking the space covered to the time taken by a body to fall (Galileo); modern geometry, by working out the equation of a flat curve, that is the position of a point on a moving straight line at any moment in its course (Descartes); and lastly differential and integral calculus, once they had the idea of examining sections which could be brought infinitely closer together (Newton and Leibniz) (Deleuze 2013, 5).

The new ways of describing the world around us also changed the understanding subject. The Brunelleschi's experiment with the painting of San Giovanni Baptistery is a good example here. The painting could be compared with the view from a specific point in the portal of the Florence cathedral. Brunellechi's experiment with the hole in the painting and the mirror, to compare it with the natural view, constituted two important abstractions. It defined the horizon of view as an infinite and ideal horizontal line and reduced the observer to an infinitely small abstract point - "point of view" or the "counter eye" of observer known to be behind the mirror (Damisch 1994, 124). This abstraction of "I" into the "subject" of Descartes in the form of geometrical reduction and open to verification and measurement, started a new epistemological layer for the *perspectiva artificialis*.

Panofsky points out how in the paintings of Jan van Eyck, the picture frame transforms into a "window to the imaginary world" – it became a membrane or projection screen.

The picture has become a mere "slice" of reality, to the extent and in the sense that *imagined* space now reaches out in all directions beyond *represented* space, that precisely the finiteness of the picture makes perceptible the infiniteness and continuity of the space (Panofsky 1991, 60-61).

Here we can refer to the painting by Eyck (Portrait of Giovanni di Nicolao Arnolfini and his wife) from 1434. The perspective structure of the painting is inconsistent, there is no single vanishing point as geometrical construction. Instead of a vanishing point as the "counter eye" of the observer's
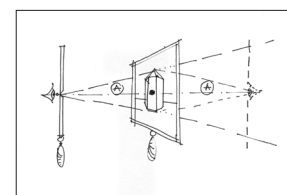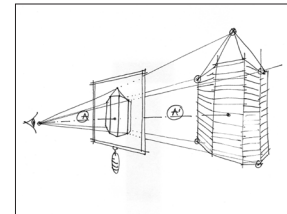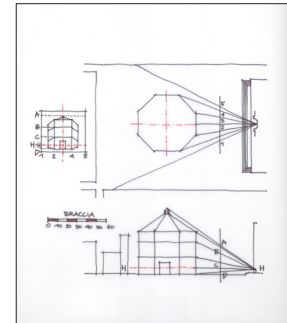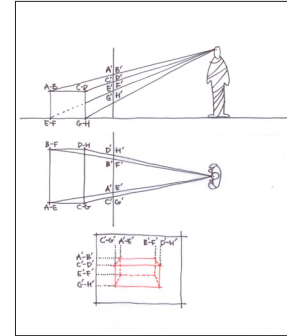
subject, there is the "legal subject" of two witnesses, reflected on the spherical surface of the mirror. The witnesses of the event are "behind" or at least in the same "space" as the self of the embodied observer of the painting (Panofsky 1991, 173; Damisch 1994, 130). The new epistemological compression of time and space can be understood when we imagine that the space of the witnesses was to be occupied by the painter when doing the painting. So for the observer 3 different time "slices" of the imagined space coincide: the point of view of the observer as self; the point of view of the painter; and lastly the point of view of the witnesses.

Perspectiva artificialis developed into an effective instrument for comprehending and changing the given reality of the world after several conceptual inventions. Kepler's theory of vision with the "optical image within the eye" created an understanding of an image that can exist independently of the observer. This was further developed by the use of *camera obscura*. Galileo assumed that the world is based on "fixed essences and mathematical laws deployed in a homogenous, geometrized space" (Perez-Gomez; Pelletier 1997, 55). Newton postulated the natural light as a compound that could be analysed into its component colors. This was the first step in disarming light of the divine quality that so far had always been the case. Contrary to the Medieval or Renaissance cosmology, where number and geometry were the link between human and divine, the post-Galilean number and geometry transformed into technical and instrumental devices for solving practical tasks.

This combination of analytical rationalism in describing the world with utterly artificial, one might say even creative tool of geometry, and mathematics with empiricism of Francis Bacon consisting of induction and experimentation; brought forward the true Modernism. The classification and presence of the artefact so well represented for architecture in the last Venice Biennale.

We can refer to the Renaissance also as the beginning of authorship and intellectual property rights of creation. This is the period where Brunelleschi, Leon Battista Alberti and Donato di Niccolo (Donatello) established the authorship of an artist or architect by personal example. Alberti wanted to go even further and fully isolate architect as an intellectual deviser of lineamenti from builders and ban him from the building site. Alberti claimed his authorship of the building by demanding that the design and building were to be identical and no alterations were possible (Carpo 2011). Alberti's model was derived from book-making practice. The manuscripts that were previously copied were often changed by mistake, interpretation or for other reasons by the copyists. The same happened to the buildings designed and described on the working drawings. So Alberti forbid any changes as in texts so also in the buildings erected on the basis of architectural drawings. For that reason the text and the drawings were to be exact and finished. Alberti thus foresaw the modern printing business or building project. This also had a major effect on authorship.

When the Medieval authors of buildings – master masons – were often known, their personality as sole author was not emphasised. Very often they were also just one in among several. With Brunelleschi and Donatello it became personal. Brunelleschi forced his way to be recognised as the only *capo maestro* and Donatello as author and artist instead of artisan[1]. They both championed that the building or piece of art were recognised as the product of their ingenuity. Alberti took it further – it was not the making of something but knowing and devising the piece of art – he was the author because of the design that was his. So for Alberti the authorship moved forward only if the drawings (or texts) were to be shown as identical to the building designed (or the meanings conveyed). This authorship is only questioned now when
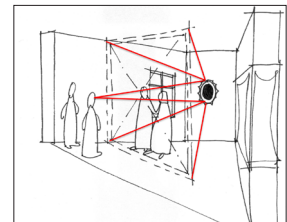
1. It is said that a Genoese merchant caused Donato to make a lifesize head of bronze, which was very beautiful and also very light, because it had to be carried to a great distance; /.../ Whereupon the merchant, thinking it too much, said that Donato had wrought it in a month or little more, and that this meant a gain of more than half a florin a day. Donato, thinking this too much of an insult, turned round in anger and said to the merchant that in the hundredth part of an hour he would have been able to spoil the value of a year's labor; and giving the head a push, he sent it flying straightway into the street below, where it broke into a thousand pieces ; saying to him that this showed that he was more used to bargaining for beans than for statues. Wherefore the merchant, regretting his meanness, offered to give him double the sum if he would make another; but neither his promises nor the entreaties of Cosimo could induce Donato to make it again. (http://members.efn.org/~acd/vite/VasariDon.html).

the problems of copy and original have obtained totally new dimensions in digital domain and digital production. Within the digital domain the essence of the author is being questioned. Digital platforms bringing up new methods of creation and in some spheres distribution already rejects the author entirely – with the parametric development of design and user participation, the authorship becomes questioned also from the theoretical and legal point of view.

As digital fabrication processes invite endless design variations (within given technological limits), and promise to deliver them at no extra cost, the question inevitably arises as to who is going to design them all. In a parametric design process, some parameters are by definition variable. This variability may be automated and machine controlled: /.../ But a third possibility cannot be ruled out: some parameters may be chosen, at some point, by someone other than the "original" author, and possibly without his or her consent (Carpo 2011:22).

All these developments exhibit possibilities for further change and advancement of architecture.

Part 3
Imagospheric Events Predicting the Collapse

I have a strong feeling that the paradigm we partly still live in – the Modernist/Post- Modernist paradigm – is collapsing. This paradigm started for architecture within Renaissance and transformed further with the first industrial revolution into Modernism and it seems it will end in the third industrial revolution[2]. We can see that the current system of education, the current financial-economical system nor the current political system in Europe cannot withhold the changes coming to us in an accelerating speed.

The reason for paradigm changes in architecture as well as in other spheres of culture can be found in the new stage of development in IT communication and media techniques. This new technology forming an omnipresent digital platform has transformed from quantitative changes into the new structure of quality. Through pan-digitalisation of every sphere of human life we find ourselves fully encountered with the on-line parallelism of multitude of possible digital beings.

Within visualisation and screening of pan-digitalised representational systems, the qualities like hybridisation, arbitrary juxtaposition, simultaneity and multitasking create totally new discourses in culture and now particularly in architecture. The remote sensing, digital markers and switches, large-scale screens, led lighting, etc. have created an epistemological membrane between the existential materiality and human visual and haptic sensing. Architecture is becoming more and more screen- like, screen-led and screen-made. In the lack of better term I would like to call this new condition: *imagospheric*. We are constantly surrounded and dominated by the sphere of images which constitute a totally new reality behind the screen, the *Looking Glass of Our Time* – the reality of digital multidirectional plenitude.

We find in a Latin dictionary the meaning of the word *imago*:

Figure, image, picture, representation, portrait, bust/.../ *imagines maiorum* wax figures or masks of ancestors/.../phantom, figure from dreams, vision, apparition, semblance/.../

But also: reverberation, allegorical picture, metaphor, view, manifestation

(Latin- Estonian Dictionary 2002, 538). The words *imagino, imaginatum, imaginare* also derive from this stem – to depict, to express, to reproduce.

While Latin culture uses the word imago, mostly in secular and descriptive way, it is not found in Greek culture. In Greek the meaning of picture and depiction nevertheless contained its sacred origin. Let us at this point consider words such as:

Εικόνα – eikona – picture, icon, reflection and imagination – μεταφ
Εικονικός – eikonikos – pictorial
Εικόνισμα – eikonisma – icon
Εικονογραφημένος – eikonografemenos – illustrated
Εικονοκλάστης – eikonoklastes – destroyers of icons, iconoclasts
Εικονοστάσι – eikonostasi – iconostasis – sacred wall of icons

Unlike Roman culture, the concept of imago was not de-sacralised in Greece and it continued to bear its sacred or magic meaning. More precisely, Greek culture transmitted Egyptian tradition, where, during Ptolemy's era, embalming disappeared and the icon appeared in its place – a portrait drawn on a wooden tablet. Early Christianity did not know either icons or the symbol of the cross. Icons are nothing more than pictures of the mortals Mary and the baby Jesus, or of saints. These pictures have become or been made sacred through martyrdom. It was precisely in evolving Byzantium that iconodulism – the worshipping of pictures – spread, and developed into iconoclasm. Later, the Protestant Reformation also went through a similar process. Nevertheless, icons have been preserved up to the present in Eastern European orthodox tradition. We see the tradition, extending back to Egypt, of honouring the portraits of the deceased in Orthodox and Russian cemeteries.

The function of the icon, however, is entirely different from the image or imago. The icon is a gateway to the magical and sacred world that is opened up by prayer or meditation. The meanings of generations that have prayed to icons can be experienced directly as religious ecstasy and their semantic field is relatively narrowly defined.

The imago and the imagosphere only marginally bear this kind of essence of the didactics of cognition. The archetypical meanings of the imagosphere are hidden deep between the modern, alienated surface layer and the nature of phenomena. These meanings also remain mostly hidden from the creators and cultivators of images. It seems to me that the **imagospheric world** is an appropriate name for the new age. Just as we are surrounded by the atmosphere, or as the lithosphere gives us support, so the difficult-to-penetrate and difficult-to-uncrypt imagosphere surrounds us here and now.

On top of the fragmentation the imagospheric condition has also brought forward several amalgamations and hybridisations:

1. The **plenitude of information** is quite different compared to the state of culture and economy that existed before imagospheric events. It threatens the traditional elements of current paradigm – labour, market, value and price. Plenitude of information deals with abundance, it can create, interpret, mutate and copy itself infinitely. It is increasingly difficult to keep it in the constraints of property rights, including the difficult intellectual property rights. Partly the digital domain has broken out of them already.

2. Digital platform has transformed the documents, fiction, advertisements and news into new unified forms. Firstly public and private divisions in politics, culture and space disappear. Secondly, the knowledge of reality and fiction of imagination have become intertwined. One can witness a strong **amalgamation of public and private, reality and fiction.**
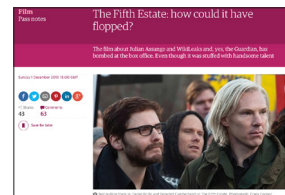
3. The Third Industrial Revolution has advanced the idea of Internet of Things (IoT, Web of Things, Internet of Food). It is based on the possibility of embedded digital devices and communication between physical objects. This creates a parallel digital universe, which gradually stops being parallel, as it becomes an integral part of the material being. One can witness a strong **hybridisation of material and digital**.

4. Biocular human vision and awareness of space allow us to sense the surrounding world in a stereoscopic way. Today due to the digital possibilities the difference between natural vision and 2D surface representing the visible is gradually disappearing. The military industry has already reached it in the form of Helmet Mounted Display System that has biocular vision. This means that the screen that has separated the digital and material worlds will disappear into a new kind of 3D human vision of augmented reality for the whole digital domain. One can witness a strong **hybridisation of informational and existential.**

5. The development of neuro-sciences and digital bionics/prosthetics might lead to the direct links between **digital and conscious.**

Ceci n'est pas une pipe

I have speculated that there are three major elements in this long-lasting paradigm that might be at the state of disappearing or collapsing due to the development in information, communication and entertainment technologies:

      - the representational system of architectural design,
      - the means of producing architecture designed and
      - the authorship of an architect designing.

Within the sphere of architecture these three elements of designing and building that are probably now undergoing substantial changes, constitute the possibilities for future development worth considering in architectural education and research.

These speculations and the possible large-scale paradigm change promote the need for much bigger experimentation in architectural education as well as in architectural research. Mainstream architectural education has left largely unexplored such spatial and clearly architectural areas as film-scapes, gamescapes and datascapes – the scapes of imagospheric plenitude. These virtual realities, especially with biocular interface, deserve the same architectural quality as do the spaces of life-world. It is not necessarily only the parametric approach that can fill (and has filled) this gap between actual and virtual. It can be imagined that traditional architectural approach in new mutations can also be of much use here when the new kind of 3D human vision of augmented reality becomes preferred interface with digital domain.

The experimentation is needed to transform traditional architectural design into the spheres of presentable, imaginable and virtual. The concepts of projects to be tested could be: **space as building, space as portal, space as imagination, space as screen, space as data, space as** mind ... .

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Aphorisms

Introduction

Jüri Soolep: Pandora's box is empty. The hope might be that when Pandora opened the box she remained there, transformed. Pandora's name means "all talent". She has all the talent. Pandora's box can be empty, but the image of Pandora will still remain. We can hope that architecture is still a talented discipline.

Tomáš Žižka: We have so much visuality and we lack haptic relation to space. When I am standing, to go means to go out of anchor, to collapse. To go to another place means to risk. It is good to breathe in, which is ecstatic body in theatre terminology. Oriental theatre is to be out of anchor. We should go back to our personal body. To renew the sense means to breathe in (to breathe in new information) and when we are making step and breath out, to speak out and stabilize. I like to be in the state of collapse.

Peter Kjaer: We are experiencing the collapse of a paradigm, but the paradigm is not the world, only the way we are experiencing the world. We just need to know that the paradigm we have believed in is collapsing and that we need to find ways of action in the new space. When we are in the virtual space, we add a dimension to our experience. But I am not really concerned about the concept of the virtual. If it is real or virtual space, the important thing is how we communicate, how we teach and experience. What I am concerned with is how we can use our bodies, how we can experience our bodies and how we can communicate through our bodies. It would be a relief if we could define what is the profession of the architect, what we understand by the production done by the architect.

The virtual / reality

Gunnar Parelius: You do not do the same things in the virtual reality and outside of it.

Aadam Gebrian: I heavily try to act the same in virtual reality as in reality. I have been moderating a lot of discussions. And I have discovered one thing. Even if you disagree, you can have a productive discussion if the other person for sure knows that you are listening to him. Then there is an argument that is really fine. But in virtual reality you do not know if he is listening, if he is reading what you have written. And then of course you suspect he does not. I try to persuade the other person that even though I am far away I read what he is writing.

Sepideh Karami: My main concern is that in virtuality we lack the risk of encounter. We are communicating, but we are not encountering. We are not being affected, or we do not affect the other in the virtual space, or we are not sure about it. The virtual reality erases the risk of encountering. You could see during last years these uprisings and revolutions characterized as a Twitter revolution or a Facebook revolution. But these platforms were not really helpful. I would even say that they helped to oppress those revolutions. When you are being active as a revolutionary only through Facebook, only through Twitter, you do not encounter in the streets. Facebook or Twitter may be helpful, as devices, but it is not the answer.

Oren Lieberman: It is the architect who can press those encounters, who can engage and entangle different things in a space that develops publicness and sharing in the moment of encountering.

GP: The architect should involve the client in the encounter. You have to risk the encounter, and then you create a community or society, instead of pushing a button when there is a crisis. You have to encounter the people.

Per Nilsson: The physical world is and will be there. The body will be there. We should keep in mind that we are working in the physical state. Young generation used to play in the virtual world. Now they are more living in it and the outside world is turning into a playground. Maybe we are turning the world into the virtual and the playground into the actual.

Vít Havránek: I think that the future of architecture is in the virtual space. Call of Duty mentioned in Jüri's presentation is such a virtual space. This space has no borders. Architecture will find a new role in it. Architects already use the software.

Igor Kovacevic: All the parts of our profession - industry, architecture practice, education - are talking about virtuality, but there will be still someone who needs to put in building piles by his hands. And when we are talking about education, do we stay conservative or go in trap of the fear of something that will maybe come, maybe not?

The Changing Role of the Architect

JS: The representation of the material on two-dimensional surface, sections, plans, elevations, that is all disappearing now. We are sending algorithms.

JS: If the design is out there in the parametrical world you can change it, anybody can change it. You can change it with your hands. You can change it by drawing. And the new product that comes out of this process cannot be called an authorized copy. Anybody would be the author. And nobody will be the author.

OL: The notion of an architect as the author is conceited. The idea that the authorship of a building is in one person is incorrect. The building comes about because there is a community of practice that makes things. If we talk about the building, then the authorship has never been in one hand.

JS: I am the author. I sign it. It is my drawings. This is going to change. There will never be my drawings that I can sign anymore.

IK: The position of the author is a purely political issue. If we as a profession are well organized, it is solved. The authorship is something that the profession should take care about. We have to start a political process, for example with establishing the chambers of architects.

VH: All the technologies you presently use as architects are under author's rights of others, which was not the case in the past. The exceptional or exclusive authorship of an architect is decreasing. Now, it is a question of renegotiating the authorship.

OL: I will make a different building if I use a different program or a different technology. The tool is a part of the thing itself, if there is a thing itself. Perhaps it is misguided that so much money is spent on securing authorship rights. It is misguided particularly with reference to establishing the common, a shared space, or communicating, listening, attending. We should understand authorship and the role of the architect in a new way.

IK: We had, especially in the post-communist countries, the experience with prefabrication. There was the same fear of architects as the one now raised in connection to 3D printing. I do not believe that the building process will change completely.

JS: The technology of the future production will eliminate the creations that are in place now. One of them is the authorship. It is not a moral question, nor is it a legal question. But if the technology develops, it changes the position of the architect. It dissolves it. Everybody will be able to do architecture. This was not possible after the Second World War. The reason is simple: The one, who could draw, had to have the knowledge of handicrafts. That was the basis of architecture. And after that came all the other things, including the position of a public intellectual. Anybody can make a house in 3D program now. And people make them. Some of the houses are obviously awful. But they can be printed. Push the button. And it goes.

Matej Kral: The key question is what are the specific skills of an architect. One such a skill is to see a space or a building and to be able to imagine how it might be changed, visually and structurally; and how it might co-function in that changed form with the lives of people present in that space or in that building. This is a skill independent of the technologies that enable one to create the factual object, be it by building or by printing. But perhaps with the new technologies, such as 3D printing, it will be even more difficult than now to demonstrate to the general public that the knowledge of the architect really affects how the space or the building functions and what it looks like. The real skills of a really good architect will be less tangible or visible, because the physical aspect of his or her work will be manageable by anyone.

OL: Every profession is striving to be a hybrid, still evolving as other disciplines. The assumption that architecture was of certain kind for certain number of years and will stay same is false. It is just a useful model, but it is not a notion of reality. Nature of the profession is a movable feast. The problem is that we try to pin it down to a stable state, falsely, which is all of a sudden in a state of collapse.

PK: Modernism made architecture a loose art. Modernism segregated art from the function. There are now tendencies to bring space back, maybe as a space of communication, a space of action, whatever it is, there is relation of individual and something else. Instead of seeing everything from above, we should go another way and insist on the esthetics.

VH: People still need shelter etc., and who is interested in an internal collapse and reevaluation of architecture if it does not have a consequence that is understandable? It needs to be more than an internal process to be interesting.

OL: It brings us back to the world. And to the understanding and recognition of responsibility and ethics, engagement in the world with the world and that we do make a difference.

GP: We should focus primarily on how we do architecture. We should focus on the internal collapse. We should focus on the lack of social conscience, on the machine-like thinking, on the rationality of commission, on the lack of aesthetical understanding. The problem is not the way of producing buildings, places, space, social arenas etc. and that architecture has a new role in it. The problem is the quality of the space. Imago sphere and narcissism are taking over. The question is how can production increase the quality. And the production does not have to be done by architects.

AG: What I have realized is that you can increase quality, if you pay attention,

if you look at things, if you think about them, if you are concerned about them, that is the way how you produce something. I do not believe in any other way.

OL: The question about architecture is how we attend to the things in detail and do things, which are incredibly complex. Nature of architect is being in that complexity. To be in it, to be with it, to attend it, to make something with it, which is not necessarily to make it coherent, it is about understanding that you are developing a kind of object.

IK: I wouldn't be so pessimistic about the number of architects, because if you go to Italy, they have the biggest hyper production of architects in Europe, and if you speak with people from there, from universities and academies, they will tell you that they are not producing architects, but they are producing renaissance people and it is important to understand that our profession is one of the last having such a complexity. It gives us advantage over other professions.

PK: I know that we see architects as builders, but for me the architect should be a public intellectual. We are reducing our profession. Architecture should be trans-disciplinary. We cannot accuse the printing of producing bad architecture. We can blame ourselves. It is only the way we think that comes out of the printer.

The education

OL: Part of the nature of architecture is its ability to think complexly, to make things transdisciplinarily, to understand and make connections. The very act of designing a building and constructing embodies this transdiscplinarity and complexity. We have to consider this in education.

PK: We should not leave it to the institutions to deal with the discussion of education, qualifications and competences – we need to engage and take responsibility. What kind of learning are we suggesting? If we are going back in history, with the danger of being pathetic, we saw the Greek academy produced a discourse. It was the interest of reflection. Today we are inviting students into a practice, into disciplines but not into a discourse. Universities are offering students a lot of programs without real relevance. The programs often mirror a reality that is at best reduced, but maybe never was 'the practice'.

IK: We should be careful talking about practice. In some systems students of architecture are send for one year to practice to finish their program. In this year they destroy what the students have learned for 4 years, they disconnect what they learned related to culture. The students are during that year used mainly as a free or cheap labor. So be careful what is regarded as "practice".

EH: Practice cannot alone maintain the educational issues. The discussion about the education cannot be in offices, but it must be somewhere else – where and how do we create new knowledge.

JS: Architects are teaching students what does not need to be there in the future. Students need all kinds of software, CADs, visualization programs and a bit of fashion lessons - superficiality is taking over. I am afraid that this is coming out and taking over reality of architecture consisting of painting, mathematics, composition, history, history of philosophy, color studies, drawing, history of poetry, sociology. All these things have disappeared, but maybe they should be here.

GP: It is important how we treat knowledge within the institutions. There is the open source university thinking. There are these MOOCs, massive online

open courses. They are coming in. It seemed like a good idea in the start. But what happens if we are naïve is that the people, who are doing it cheapest, are the ones winning.

PK: We cannot continue to define our profession as a set of independent disciplines. It is also wrong if you can pass examinations by multiple-choice tests. Regarding the virtual and the education, the information coming from the Internet can be difficult to validate. The information is just available for everybody, including the students. This challenges our understanding of epistemology. Can we still talk about epistemology? We probably need to develop new ways of education that reflect these conditions.

GP: Universities always want to have discussion based on facts. They do not care about the relevance of these facts – they discuss the facts they can find. This is how the truth is created for the students. This is wrong. You have to start with and in the discussion.

OL: It is about the question being asked. Once I approached a head of a consortium in medico biological research. It was a consortium involving a well-respected old British University, a Canadian University and a very big pharmaceutical company. They shifted the concept of research. They modeled proteins to develop drugs and gave the results away for free. It trips up the whole business model. I wonder where that shift would have happened if they hadn't traversed it if they had not raised new questions. Let's mark students on the questions they are asking instead of the unquestioned answers.

JS: I would like to comment on the issue of the research based second circle system, coming from the Bologna system. It builds on the concept of science coming from natural science. Some professions do not fit into this research system, like humanities. Architecture does not fit in it at all, because it is about doing things. The research based education has its dark sides, coming out of politics.

PN: Today everything is evidence based. What about experience – it does not count. Now everything has to be based on evidence to be scientific. The university became an institution for research, an institution educating people who do research scientifically. Then one brought the trade schools into university. They should be based on research too, like for instance the school of architecture. But based on research like natural science. At the same time the natural sciences should be regarded as a trade school. So now everything becomes a trade school based on a concept of research coming from natural sciences. Everything gets messed up. Universities are therefore not the place for the debate of where and what to develop in relation of architecture to practice and society.

GL: It is important to stay within the discourse of doing things. In some cases you can do some kind of simulated practice, but you also need to bring students out of school and into real situations. Because school should support a discourse reflecting new types of knowledge including local situations, local communities, local people and local cultures.

PK: We cannot rely on the institution as the place of education. It would not work. New ways of education will be requested in the future. Even the role of the teacher and of the student have to be redefined. The goal should be educating the architect as a public intellectual, as a person having integrity. The main goal is not to educate a business person, but an intellectual that can make and do things, that can make a difference in collaboration with local people based on culture and situation, a public intellectual that can go into dialogue with locals. Business will be applied to bring 'things' through.

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