INTERSTICES

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Contents

Introduction:
Consensus versus Disagreement

A.-Chr. Engels-Schwarzpaul

1. Rancière calls the "distribution of the sensible the system of self-evident facts of sense perception, that simultaneously discloses the existence of some-thing in common, and the delimi-tations that define the respective parts and positions within it. A distribution of the sensible, therefore, establishes at one and the same time something common that is shared, and ex-clusive parts … based on a dis-tribution of spaces, times and forms of activity that determine the very manner in which something in common lends itself to participation, and in the way in which various individuals have a part in this distribution" (Rancière, 2004a:12).

Post-millennium consensus politics are, to French philosopher Jacques Rancière, everything but a model of "social peace". On the contrary, they suppress the struggle constitutive of the political (*la politique*), destroying the space of the political (*le politique*), and producing various forms of identitarianism, and gloom, as their flip side. Consensus politics re-established racism and xenophobia (Rancière, 2000: 119). Consensus reduces people to populations, and rights to facts, and incessantly works to fill in the gaps between things (2006: 6), denying what makes them different. This filling-in and ironing-out is also the concern of the *police*, which is, for Rancière, not identical with the uniformed arm of the State executive but a

> partition of the sensible characterized by the absence of a void or a supplement: society consists of groups dedicated to specific modes of action, in places where these occupations are exercised, in modes of being corresponding to these occupations and these places. In this fittingness of functions, places, and ways of being, there is no place for a void (2001: Thesis 7).

In the space of the political, the *police* and the political confront each other as regimes of visibility, which strive to police the current distribution of the sensible or, respectively, to disrupt and re-partition it.[1] Their confrontation and conflict is a disagreement (*mésentente*) about what it means to speak, and over the distribution of the sensible that delimits what can be said, and determines the relationship between seeing, hearing, doing, feeling, making and thinking: "Political litigiousness/struggle is that which brings politics into being by separating it from the police that is, in turn, always attempting its disappearance ... Politics is first and foremost an intervention upon the visible and the sayable" (Rancière, 2001: Thesis 7). Politics is about altering the visibilities of places and "abilities of the body in those places, … the partition of private and public spaces, … the very configuration of the visible and the relation of the visible to what can be said about it" (2003: S5). Art and architecture can have a part in politics (certainly, they are not apolitical), but correspondences between aesthetic and political virtue are difficult to ascertain. There are no criteria "for establishing an appropriate correlation between the politics of aesthetics and the aesthetics of politics" (2004a: 61). Aesthetics has its own politics of changing perceptions and asserting invisible rights: for instance, the right not only to labour and suffer, but also to observe or take part in a spectacle. And, "to read what was never written" (Hofmannsthal in Benjamin, 2002: 416).

As this issue of *Interstices: A Journal of Architecture and Related Arts* goes to print, stages being set up – and up-set – in Aotearoa/New Zealand highlight this predicament. On 15 October 2007, abc NEWS reported on "the first [anti-terrorism raids] under New Zealand's tough new anti-terrorism laws" (2007, 15 Oct). The

same day, New Zealand's TV3 news broadcast *The "Terror" Plot* about the arrest of 17 activists. The report openend with 2005 footage of Māori activist Tama Iti challenging members of the Waitangi Tribunal before the beginning of the hearings at Tauarau Marae (Ruatoki, Tuhoe; TV3, 2007).[2] Iri Akarana-Rewi said of this event, that it took Māori culture, which had become "catalogued and contained on performance stages", into the valleys, roads and streets as "a functioning part of everyday life" (Indigimedia, 2005). According to Iti, the performance, of which the challenge was a part, sought to make the Tribunal "feel the heat and smoke, and Tuhoe outrage and disgust at the way we have been treated for 200 years" (Indigimedia, 2005).[3] "Remembered most for his outrageous protests" (TV3, 2007), Iti honed his theatrical sensibilities in *The Tempest*, a collaboration with the *Mau* dance troupe, in early 2007 – at a time when Professor Paul Moon found interest in the Treaty of Waitangi at a dangerous low. Now on remand in Mt Eden Prison, Iti explores further the "delicate interstices of constitutional law" (Jackson, 1999).

Writing, itself, is partitioned by a blurring and contested interstice. Through disagreement, politics and writing can open up new ways of perceiving. The printed word has a mobility that frees the "orphan letter" to wander aimlessly around, to talk to anyone, to undermine the sensible co-ordinates of a current aesthetic regime (Rancière, 2004b: 14). As an artistic practice, writing intervenes in the "general distribution of ways of doing and making, as well as in the relationships they maintain to modes of being and forms of visibility" (2004a: 13). Printed text stages a theatrical "partition of identities, activities and spaces", exhibiting fantasies capable of disturbing the status quo to "a community of readers … formed only by the random circulation of the written word" (14). However, as in politics, where those who previously had no-part will inevitably take part in Rancière's *police* (once they succeed in making themselves heard and becoming a part of society), writing can institutionalise, legitimise and control perception. However tentative, written words make permanent a new distribution of the sensible. This tension is a galvanizing and productive one. *Interstices*, as an academic journal (and particularly in its refereed section), is implicated in this force field. We invite readers to disagree, and thereby be part of this tension (and perhaps contribute to the next issue).

Michael Ostwald's "Dissent and Dissensus: Politics and Labour in the Architecture of Brodsky and Utkin", which opens this issue, is about the impact that blurring and changing lines between police and politics have made on the reception and critique of two representatives of the Russian paper architecture movement: Alexander Brodsky and Illya Utkin. Their work became internationally known in the wake of *glasnost*, and was immediately perceived as a form of rebellion against the authoritarian Soviet state. Ostwald questions the ways in which it was constituted as an aesthetic affront to the communist state, and investigates the nature of Brodsky and Utkin's defiance. In the force field between architectural aesthetics and politics, was their position one of juridical opposition (dissent), or a political dispute (dissensus)? Only the latter would make their practice one of Rancièrian disagreement proper. When can disagreement even take place? In "Travel in Tropical Islands – Enemies Co-existing in Peace", Tina Engels-Schwarzpaul explores the potential for creative conflict at the *Tropical Islands Resort* at Brand, Germany. Set in the ruined surrounds of a former Soviet military base in the Brandenburg province, it now stages a 'One-world-village', with a *Samoan Fale*

in the centre of a *Tropical Village* that conjures up dreams of Pacific life styles. Do visitors and operators recognize historical and current conflicts in the politics of display between locals and foreigners, former colonial power and colony?

Carl Douglas' "Barricades and Boulevards: Material transformations of Paris, 1795-1871" is about a clearly conflictual and tumultuous series of configurations. Spatial operations of barricading effected a redistribution of the sensible as they transformed Paris in different ways. The city's materials, spaces and activities are not a neutral surface. Rather, they make the city what it is, prescribe who inhabits which parts, and how. Barricades and boulevards are provisional metaphors for politics and police, for those who have no-part and those who want to control what they have. In Haussmann's Paris, middle-class individuals and the mob were allocated different spaces. In Australian refugee camps, says Hélène Frichot in "Striving for a Coming Community and the Question of a Life", architectural practices disregard inmates' personal characteristics to create artificial, categorical groupings. Architecture can augment, as well as diminish, life in geopolitical conflicts, and Frichot argues for an ethico-aesthetic striving toward a coming community, a future people and a life, to suggest modes of acting collectively, beyond the isolated point of view of individuals who believe that what they do can make no difference. Frichot draws on concepts by Giorgio Agamben, Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, Jean-Luc Nancy and Maurice Blanchot to outline alternatives to a spatial organization where refugees, strangers and others are segregated in the midst of a global body politic that is increasingly fragmented.

Leonhard Emmerling engages with a politics of recognition that is not identity politics, is even explicitly opposed to it. In "PLZKLME", he stages disagreements between him and himself. Starting with a quote by bell hooks, he reflects on the relationship between the global art business and identity-art. To Emmerling, the art business perpetuates the assimilation, instrumentalisation, incapacitation and paternalism that Western colonisation has inflicted on the rest of the world. In identity-art, it does so by providing a stage for the restitution of identity, as compensation for that which is, in reality, denied: redress of injustices, equal rights and the realisation of an undamaged life. A reticence that Emmerling finds lacking in identity-art, with its eagerness to expose and demonstrate, made Linda Walker and Stephen Loo consider the role of writing in, "And the open bridge: labour, enchantment, *There Forever*", their reflections on a 2007 Ephemeral Public Art Project in Adelaide. Explorations of Rancière's writings are interwoven with poetical vignettes describing the events, spaces and objects of this project. No community is taken for granted, the role of the political only tentatively circumscribed, as writing itself is tested to see how much it "conceals itself in the flesh", and how much it "openly reveals itself as the disembodied condition of any glorious flesh" (Rancière, 2004a: 60). In any event, writing applies a different language to the languages of the unwritten, and may even stand in the way of reading what was never written.

In the non-refereed section of *Interstices* 08, contributors take issue with architects and academics, juries and judging and books and buildings. The first two papers are from, and about, East Asia. Hong-Chi Shiau's, "The Glamorous, but Doomed, Bamboo Forest" narrates Tsai-Ho Cheng's competition winning memorial project to the victims of the 1999 earthquake in Taiwan. Shiau reveals misalignment between intellectual and local desires and interpretations, and shows how a lack of consultation with locals led to the project's failure. Tom Daniell, in "The Letter of the Law", explains how Tokyo's volumetric building regulations shape an unusual skyline of steeply angled roofs. Daniell shows how, in the pursuit of interesting urban form, it is possible to manipulate the regulations to good effect.

Bill McKay, in "A Short Venting of the Spleen on the Subject of the Architect and Science", reflects upon what scientists have learnt about spherical planets and gravitational forces over the last 500 years, and wonders why these discoveries have not filtered through into architectural thinking, drawing and practice. In "The Myth of the Nation", Andrew Leach targets New Zealand's architectural profession, and suggests that local architects embrace an overly simplistic understanding of this country's architectural history. Celebrating "exquisite apartness" and myths about New Zealand-ness, they ignore recent scholarship and alternative possibilities. Similarly, Paul Walker finds a lack of awareness in *Architecture Inspired by New Zealand* (2006), a book on houses in New Zealand landscapes, pointing to naivety in its conceptualization, and reliance upon clichés in its realization. In contrast, Peggy Deamer's re-creation and analysis of "Dick Toy's Last Lecture", presented during the 2007 Auckland Architecture Week, demonstrates the desired levels of both complexity and nuance. Following, Julia Gatley, in "New Measures for Other Moderns", navigates a path between historiography and pedagogy, reflecting upon the past, present, future and historiographical implications of the Measured Drawing course at the University of Auckland.

Kerstin Thompson Architects and Architecture Workshop's competition entry for the Waitangi Precinct on Wellington's waterfront (2005) is a scheme that warrants a more substantial place in the published record than it has been given to date, the local contributors having earned their place in the international field of entrants. Finally, Tim Adams' translation of Daniel Payot's "Le Jugement de l'Architecture" ("The Judgement of Architecture"), is concerned with criticism in the broadest sense, and architectural criticism in particular. One of Payot's key points is that all criticism is ultimately positive.

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Refereed Papers

Rancière and the Metapolitical Framing of Architecture:
Reconstructing Brodsky and Utkin's Voyage

Michael J. Ostwald

Architecture in the post-political world

For Kenneth Frampton (1992: 8), the construction of architectural history generally relies on a consideration of architectural polemics. However, of even greater importance are the "socio-economic or ideological circumstances" shaping the production of architecture. Most histories of architecture in the service of politics are founded on the assumptions that political systems are innately ideological, and that architecture produced under these regimes reflects the values and beliefs of the political system (Millon and Nochlin, 1978; Dovey, 1990; Schumacher, 1993). While the proposition of a causal reflection of ideology in design has been questioned, the premise that political systems necessarily possess an identifiable and stable ideology remains largely unchallenged (Findley, 2005).

However, in the last few decades conventional political belief systems (like socialism or fascism) are being supplanted by governing structures which do not strive to achieve some social ideal or uphold a moral principle. Instead, their goals are expressed through economic or managerial concepts including growth, transparency, productivity and security. This is not to suggest that contemporary politics lacks ideological values; rather, these values are hidden, repressed or subservient, and are rarely apparent in the artefacts they produce. Similarly, these systems are called post-political, not because they are no longer concerned with steering a nation state, but because they have arisen in the aftermath of failure in a dominant ideological system. Thus, the post-political condition encompasses both the apparent loss of ideology and the lacunae that results from regime failure.

Jacques Rancière and Alain Badiou argue that in the post-political world any association between a system of governance and the physical artefacts produced under its guise (like art or architecture) is more complex, and contingent, than it is under more overtly ideological and stable regimes. For this reason, the interpretation of architecture requires new concepts and techniques. A case in point is Russian architecture since the demise of communism in the 1980s when, significantly, a regime failure occurred and an ideologically based system was replaced with a managerial one.

Conventional interpretations of early 20th century architecture in Communist Russia draw clear programmatic and formal parallels between the ideology of the state and the designs produced by its architects; between aesthetics and power

(Khan-Magomedov, 1987; Papadakis, 1991). This direct projection of ideology into space, form and materiality is supported by Constructivist manifestos (Kopp, 1970; 1985). However, the same method of historical interpretation permits a different, equally ideologically inspired reading of the neoclassical architecture authorised by the soviet state in the 1960s (Brumfield, 1991; Bown and Taylor, 1993). Moreover, these techniques are problematic when applied to the post-communist architecture that arose during the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

For instance, Alexander Brodsky and Illya Utkin produced their most famous unbuilt designs in the years immediately following the liberalisation of the Soviet economy, during the era Badiou describes as the "death of communism" (2004: 126). A canonical interpretation of the place of Brodsky and Utkin in world architecture – in *Sir Banister Fletcher's, a history of architecture* – describes Brodsky and Utkin's formative years as a precursor to "developing the confidence to" use architecture to "attack the defeatism and complacency of the professional establishment" (1996: 1444) in the Soviet Union. Variations of this interpretation – architecture as reaction to, and criticism of, the impact of a stifling political ideology on architecture – are repeated in the only monograph on Brodsky and Utkin, in the major catalogues of their work, and in newspaper articles.[1] Because their architecture appears to reject the values of communism, a conventional historical reading opposes their work to the dominant ideological position of the state. However, if Brodsky and Utkin's work is viewed as the product of either a regime change, or the rise of an apolitical system, then it cannot simply be defined in opposition to communism.

Using the theories and methods of Rancière, this paper develops an account of the political framing of Brodsky and Utkin's architecture.[2] Importantly, its purpose is not to formulate a counter history, but rather to offer an alternative understanding of the fabrication of history. The limited number of examples contained in the present paper does not permit a complete reinterpretation of Brodsky and Utkin's architecture. More importantly, Rancière's methods do not support the production of any definitive historical evaluation of any cultural artefact, in any political context. In his view, history is not fixed or immutable, but simply a story which presents itself as telling the truth (1994). Thus, studying the construction of history (the combination of unseen political forces, structures and orders) is more rewarding than reading history. Rancière's methods provide a range of mechanisms that are significant for the framing (interpretation or critical positioning) of architecture in a world where political systems are neither stable nor founded on traditional ideologies.

Rancière's Metapolitics

Jacques Rancière has written on the importance of intellectual emancipation (1991), social equity (2004a), the power of language (1994; 2004c), the problems of democracy (2007a) and, important to the present context, the relationship between *les arts plastiques and politics* (2004b).[3] While originally a supporter of socialism, Rancière rejected all mainstream political systems in the aftermath of the civil unrest in France, May 1968. He turned his attention instead to understanding the rules and mechanisms which sustain political structures. Badiou (2005) characterises Rancière's theoretical method as Metapolitical: a

philosophy of politics that does not come from a distinct ideological tradition, but which considers operations both within and across multiple governing structures. The challenge of Rancière's method is his awareness that his own arguments are necessarily part of the political structures he is analysing. This awareness leads Rancière to write in a manner which Hayden White characterises as "nonnarrative and nondiscursive, aphoristic, almost oracular" (1994: xviii). Badiou (2005) traces the origins of this use of language to Rancière's desire to speak only from within his Metapolitical domain—to avoid the artificial distancing that Metapolitical thought usually entails. In order to understand Rancière's recent theory of the relationship between aesthetics and politics, it is important to consider his earlier explanation of the rise of apolitical systems.

In 1988, Rancière presented the first of a series of papers which argued that particular spatial and philosophical figures are brought into focus by the "end of politics itself" (1995: 3). Rancière's, *On the shores of politics*, commences with the proposition that the relationship between philosophy and politics has historically been articulated through spatial metaphors. Accordingly, the failure of major political systems in the 1980s (in Russia, South America and Europe) corresponds to a shift away from conventional topographic distinctions (between left or right, socialist or fascist) towards a more contingent and operational model. The old boundaries that once divided political orthodoxies may no longer exist, but the topography of political boundaries is still in use:

> To speak of the boundaries of the political realm would seem to evoke no precise or current reality. Yet legend invariably has the political begin at one boundary … and end up at another … riverbanks of foundation, island shores of refoundation … There must surely be something of the essence in this landscape for politics to be so stubbornly represented within it. And we know that philosophy has played a signal part in this stubbornness. Its claims in respect of politics can be readily summed up as an imperative: to shield politics from the perils that are immanent to it, it has to be hauled on to dry land, set down on terra firma. (1)

Rancière's politico-spatial topography is aquatic and estuarine; it recalls Plato's division between the power of the Athenian political state, which is invested in its shipping fleets, and the philosophical foundations of its governing structure, located in the terrestrial urban forum. For Rancière, the problem of approaching politics from a philosophical perspective is that it involves leaving the shore and "surrendering … to the whims of tides and mariners" (1995: 2). However, where once political vessels set out to cross borders in search of "isles of utopia", in the last decades of the 20th century they are no longer so ideologically motivated, and are more concerned with "the art of steering the ship and embracing the waves, in the natural, peaceful movement of growth" (1995: 5-6). In Rancière's terms, this is the era of the "death of politics", the "end of political divisions, of social antagonisms and utopian projects" (1995: 3). In its place has arisen a time of growth, capitalism and trade. With the end of politics, the philosophers' role to guide or ground utopian voyagers is rendered obsolete. Instead, they must look within what remains of the political structure, to uncover and expose its component parts, its processes and outcomes.[4] In order to do this, Rancière develops an alternative understanding of political systems in terms of the "distribution of the sensible".

4. Badiou is critical of Rancière's retreat from the consideration of ideological politics because it leads to "taking up political results by cutting them off from the processes that give rise to them. This practice ultimately relies upon what [Rancière] himself highlights as a philosophical imposture: forgetting the real condition of one's speech" (2005:121).

5. Badiou defines his own Metapolitical theory as being reliant on the "the state of the situation"; a term he uses to describe "the correlation between the counting and non-counted" (2005: 116). Regarding the strong parallels between his own theory and Rancière's, Badiou argues that his own preceded Rancière's and is ultimately more useful for its underlying ontology; something Rancière has been criticized for lacking. Rancière, in a rare footnote, acknowledges some indebtedness to Badiou but counters that his "distribution of the sensible" has critical differences (1995: 37).

White argues that the key to understanding Rancière's "distribution of the sensible" lies in the proposal that:

> participation in politics hinges on conceptions of membership in communities whose pedigrees are either confirmed or denied by an appeal to "history". But this "history" is a construction of those who already enjoy membership and indeed privileged positions in already formed communities (1994: ix).

For Rancière, every society is constructed upon a "system of self-evident facts of sense perception that simultaneously discloses the existence of something in common and the delimitations that define the respective parts and positions within it" (2004b: 12). Rancière refers to both a system of organisation (a delineation of elements), and the extent to which an individual has a voice in this system. Rancière's word "sensible" relates to what is seen or enabled; it refers to the actions or expressions a society finds acceptable. The relationship between art, architecture and politics is necessarily concerned with the distribution of the sensible (2007b), and defined by the "delimitation of … the visible and the invisible, of speech and noise" (2004b: 13). The invisible, by its very nature, has little impact on the set of rules or values of a society,[5] its "police order". Just as the distribution of the sensible encompasses a wide array of modes of operation (not just rights of membership or expression), the police order is more than the uniformed officers of the state: it includes everything from the media and social mores, to theological values and cultural practices. Indeed, the "essence of the police … is not repression but rather a certain distribution of the sensible that precludes the emergence of politics" (2004b: 89).

One final and significant dimension of the distribution of the sensible concerns the nature of opposition or disagreement. Actions, events or representations which diverge from the police order are examples of "dissent". Actions, events or representations which seek to radically alter the distribution of the sensible are examples of "dissensus" with political intent. Simplistically, the former is the breaking of a law, while the latter is the advocacy of widespread lawbreaking. In part, the difference is between disagreeing with the distribution of the sensible and actively seeking to subvert or change it. However, the distinction between dissent and dissensus is more complex; it is also context sensitive. Thus, it relies on the extent to which a transgression of the distribution of the sensible is made apparent; as Rancière reminds the reader, politics necessarily "revolves around what is seen" (2004b: 13). The same transgressive event that occurs in private, but is later broadcast through the media, can potentially shift from dissent to dissensus as it becomes more visible. However, when interpreted in a different police order (a context with different social and cultural values) this same event may not be transgressive at all.

The key here is in the way the event is positioned or made visible, not in the event itself. Rancière rejects any assumption that there are correct, ideal or necessarily authoritative interpretations of events. Each successive framing must be viewed in its own terms. Nevertheless, the rules for understanding the distribution of the sensible remain constant across political topographies, even if the values embodied in the police order vary. The essence, as White observes, is not "what are" the facts or events, but "what can count" (1994: x)? Facts or events matter through

their visibility and framing, their being counted. Rancière's methods allow relational framing to be dissected without recourse to political ideology, and his understanding of political systems, through the distribution of the sensible, provides a method for investigating the dominant interpretation of Brodsky and Utkin's architecture.

Children of Stagnation

In 1988, when Rancière was lamenting the loss of political will to seek utopian isles, Brodsky and Utkin were completing a project appropriately entitled *A Ship of Fools*. This project, which has strong resonances with many of Rancière's concepts, depicts a "merry group of friends carous[ing] on the roof of an unsteady skyscraper in a sea of smoking chimneys" (Rappaport, 1994: 138). The "fools" are caricatures of Brodsky, Utkin and many of their fellow Paper Architects, "who performed a version of this merry ritual to help them survive the years of stagnation" (Boym, 1992: 38). In the single etching comprising this project, Brodsky and Utkin symbolise, in the form of the timber, ship-like skyscraper, their own architectural endeavours over the previous decade. Every beam and column, every shadow and surface is rendered with care. As the skyscraper sways beneath their feet, the architects bravely celebrate their achievements while feigning ignorance of the precarious nature of their existence. Like the Soviet state at that time, which was, to use Rancière's metaphor, sailing without direction but with a newfound commitment to the trim of the rigging and the luff of the sail, the *Ship of Fools* is rudderless but exquisitely detailed. While Rancière, the philosopher, laments the need to enter ideologically charged waters at a time when political mariners have lost sight of their destination, Brodsky and Utkin are depicted as oblivious to their course. Without the guiding charts of ideology, the celebrations of politicians and Paper Architects soon shift from being the traditional socialist "banquet of equals", to being a gluttonous wake for the lost navigator (Rancière, 1995: 65). As Badiou argues, "Rancière tends to identify politics in the realm of its absence, and from the effects of its absence" (2005: 122). In Brodsky and Utkin's project, the significance of politics is precisely that it is absent. *The Ship of Fools* is an architectural vessel for the post-political era; its politics are not clear, in the sense that it neither criticizes nor supports communism, although its Metapolitical commentary on the state of architecture adrift in society is. This project is one of many where the canonical interpretation of Brodsky and Utkin's architecture (as critical of the Soviet state or the architectural profession) is unconvincing. Therefore, how did the political framing of Brodsky and Utkin's architecture occur? The first stage in tracing this process involves positioning their work in relation to the traditional, ideologically understood, history of Russian architecture.

Alexander Rappaport traces the end of architectural freedom in the Soviet Union to the 1930s. Since then, "the architecture of the Soviet Union had been if not actually dead, then at least considered to be so … and any exceptions were eliminated through the system of state and party control" (1994: 129). Mikhail Belov similarly asserts that, from the 1930s, there is "a blank which lasted for fifty years" in the architectural history books on Russia (1988: 6). Initially, this absence could be traced to Stalin's predilection for repetitive neoclassicism. However, in 1957, Nikita Khrushchev famously denounced Stalin's advocacy of neoclassical design, calling instead for the party to endorse a utilitarian, modern architecture. The result of Khrushchev's action was, as Alexey Tarkhanov records, that the
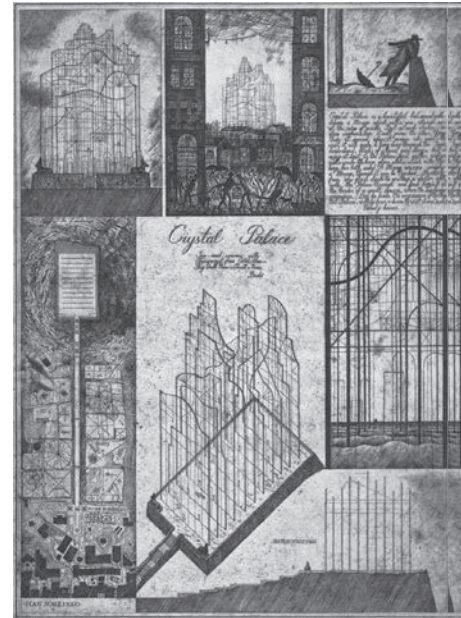
Brodsky & Utkin, A Ship of Fools, 1988/90 (Plate produced / Plate printed) from Projects portfolio, 1981-90, 35 etchings, ed. of 30, 43 x 31 3/4 inches (F). Courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York. Photo by D. James Dee. [Originally drawn in 1988 and published in 1989]

Brodsky & Utkin, Crystal Palace, 1989/90 (Plate produced / Plate printed) from Projects portfolio, 1981-90, 35 etchings, ed. of 30, 43 x 31 3/4 inches (F). Courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York. Photo by D. James Dee. [Originally drawn and published in 1982]

communist party resolved to abandon "excesses in design and construction" and to outlaw officially "nearly everything which had motivated architecture in the preceding twenty years: historicism, orientation to Classicism, richness of material and abundance of detail" (1994: 123). This impacted on the localized distribution of the sensible, changing what could be appropriately seen, spoken of, or propagated as architecture. By abolishing the production (the act of making visible) of a particular architectural approach, and by banning pedagogy associated with this aesthetic, the connection between the power of the state and its symbolic or literal depiction is manifest (Cooke, 1988). As Lois Nesbitt notes, from that point in time the communist party in Russia considered "aesthetic discourse of any kind … unnecessary and immoral" (2003: n.p.). It is against this political backdrop that Brodsky and Utkin's architecture is viewed and interpreted in conventional architectural histories.

Brodsky and Utkin commenced their studies together at the Moscow Institute of Architecture in the mid 1970s. With few exceptions, they were taught by staff who had little choice but to support the architectural ideals of the state. After graduation, Brodsky and Utkin found that architectural practice was even more circumscribed, and there were few legitimate outlets for their creative energies. It was amidst this stifling professional atmosphere that they began to compete, illegally, in international ideas competitions and, in 1982, won the *Japan Architect* journal's "Central Glass Company" competition. Brodsky and Utkin's award winning entry, *Crystal Palace*, presents a towering glass structure sited at the edge of an unnamed town. From a distance, the structure is reminiscent of a grand expansion of Joseph Paxton's prototypical modern structure of the same name. Yet, to reach the seemingly magical Palace, travellers must venture into the decrepit margins of the city. Once they have crossed the urban wastelands, they soon discover that, instead of being a large enclosure filled with a cornucopia of delights, the structure is illusory. The Palace, which is constructed from a series of vertical "glass plates, stuck into the huge box of sand", is a mirage (Brodsky and Utkin, 1982: n.p.). It promises the viewer a wondrous destination, which "proves on closer inspection to be an illusion built on a municipal rubbish heap, and the flowers growing out of the urban litter turn out to be the blooms of dashed hopes" (Rappaport, 1994: 138). Like the majority of Brodsky and Utkin's works, *Crystal Palace* is presented on a single page and is rendered in dense black lines against the sepia surface of the paper.
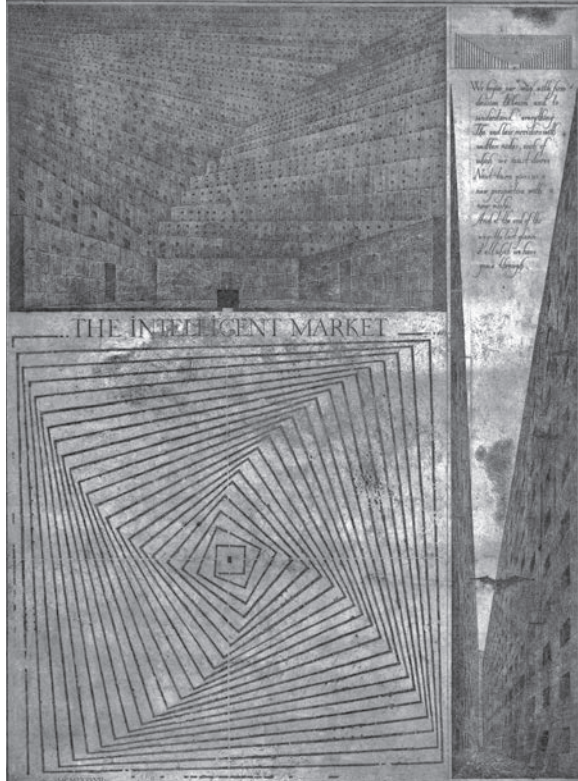
Brodsky & Utkin, Town Bridge, 1984/90 (Plate produced / Plate printed) from Projects portfolio, 1981-90, 35 etchings, ed. of 30, 43 x 31 3/4 inches (F). Courtesy Ronald Feldman Fine Arts, New York. Photo by D. James Dee. [Originally drawn and published in 1984]

In 1984, Brodsky and Utkin completed a project, for an architectural competition, entitled *Town Bridge*, which featured a colossal arched bridge spanning a meandering river in a bucolic landscape: a place reminiscent of Gustave Doré's early etchings for Dante's *Divine Comedy*. The bridge is structured like a hypertrophic Ponte Vecchio: hundreds of townhouses, towers and steeples line the bridge creating a singular city. In the arcadian foreground, a traveller surveys the grandeur of the bridge. A later project, *Hill with a Hole* (1987a), offers a variation on this theme. Once again, it is sited in the mythical "landscape of old painters". However, this time, the inhabited bridge is more explicitly explained; it "doesn't enclose the landscape behind [it], being a kind of frame for it" but connects the "[p]ast and the [f]uture" (1987a: n.p.). Such projects are typical of Brodsky and Utkin and the Paper Architects' "dark etchings" (Rappaport, 1994: 135) in general. A hint of ennui tinges many of these works, as does a strong sense of irony. Thus, what is it in such works that allows them to be positioned as clearly political?

Constantin Boym (1992: 36) suggests that the *Crystal Palace* project is a criticism of post-war Moscow master planning; yet, there is little evidence in the drawing to identify the city as Moscow, or even modernist. It would be equally possible to read the *Crystal Palace* as a criticism of the vacuous nature of Western consumer society. The *Town Bridge* and *Hill with a Hole* projects certainly exemplify a desire for the rich urban fabric of historic cities. If there are conventional political intentions at all, they are present only through their absence. The projects evoke urban settings far removed from the everyday reality of the socialist state. The same equivocal dimension prevails in *Columbarium Architecture*, which calls for the construction of a "Museum for Disappearing Buildings" as a storage vault for discarded architecture. The drawings describe a funereal chapel, where miniatures of "[e]ach disappearing building, even the most unprepossessing" are exhibited (Brodsky and Utkin 1984: n.p.). This project seems to call for a memorial for all buildings, and their associated architectural styles, that had been destroyed by Communism. However, it also infers that there is an equal need to protect the neoclassical buildings of the Stalinist state. This is further dramatised in the project description, which proposes that capitalism may be the primary cause of the destruction of historic buildings. In none of these projects, all typical of their oeuvre, is there clear evidence of an assault on the police order. Brodsky and Utkin's architecture may not conform to the state's aesthetic values, but that does not necessarily make it an architecture of rebellion.

Retracing the Voyage

The manner in which Brodsky and Utkin's architecture first became visible, or sensible, undoubtedly shaped its initial historical framing. Accounts of Brodsky and Utkin's careers typically stress that, in the early 1980s, it was still "illegal" for Soviet architects to seek international forums for their work (Boym, 1992: 36; Cruickshank, 1996: 1444). Thus, participation in the event, which rendered their work sensible, was, by definition, a form of opposition to the state. Also, Brodsky and Utkin's architectural aesthetic did not conform to the modernist approach authorised by the state and supported by the architectural profession. As Rappaport argues, the Paper Architects' initial crime was that, in their aesthetic approach, "they allowed themselves to do whatever they liked" (1994: 129-30). This led historians to read Brodsky and Utkin's architecture as a rejection of the police order, and therefore as a sign of opposition. However, in 1982, the Soviet state was already signalling its intention to embrace the administrative and economic reforms of *perestroika* and, in so doing, to join the post-political world. *Perestroika* and *glasnost* heralded new freedoms, and the first changes in the distribution of the sensible in Russia since the 1950s, certainly in terms of architecture. Thus, Brodsky and Utkin's architecture may have defied the law, but the police order had already begun to shift to accommodate a wider range of conditions and actions.

There is a substantial difference between a rejection of the law, which is – as a juridical dispute – one of many dimensions of and within the police order, and an attack on a political system. Juridical disputes, as instances of dissent, do not challenge the distribution of the sensible. In contrast, political disputes challenge the distribution of the sensible, resulting in dissensus. Dissensus "creates a fissure" in the "established framework"— it challenges the foundations of police order by questioning the partitioning of the sensible (Žižek, 2004: 85).

Politics may have a particular aesthetic, and the arts a political agenda, "[b]ut there is no formula for an appropriate correlation: it is the state of politics that decides" (Rancière, 2004b: 62). *Les arts plastiques* in themselves cannot constitute an attack on a political system, and there "are no criteria" for the work of art, or the aesthetic impulse, to be a subversive action. Instead, "[t]here are formulas … whose meaning is often in fact decided upon by a state of conflict that is exterior to them" (2004b: 61). Thus, for Rancière, it is the role of the political system, or of opponents to the system, to frame an aesthetic work as constituting dissensus in relation to the police order.

These distinctions suggest that the relationship between the early architecture of Brodsky and Utkin and the Soviet state was one of dissent. How, then, did the canonical reading of Brodsky and Utkin's architecture as dissensus arise?

Ironically, it was the Soviet state that initially placed Brodsky and Utkin's work into a political framework. The state sought to capitalise on a rich underground practice of architecture in Moscow that was beating Western designs in international competitions. In 1984, the official Soviet Union of architects decided "that international recognition [for Paper Architecture] was advantageous to the State" (quoted in Boym, 1992: 21). It sponsored a modest exhibition of the Paper Architects' works in the offices of *Younost* in Moscow, where the state tacitly pardoned minor instances of dissent and presented the works as the products of

Soviet ingenuity. As a result of the visibility provided by the state, more exhibitions soon followed in Europe and the United Kingdom and, in 1988, the *Deutsches Architektur Museum* staged a major exhibition that later toured North America. Thus, it was not until four years after the initial exhibition of Paper Architecture that historians began to frame the work in opposition to the Soviet state.

Heinrich Klotz records in the *Architektur Museum's* catalogue that, when he was initially confronted with the work of the Russian Paper Architects, he supposed that the projects had grown from the era of *glasnost* and *perestroika*. Yet, when he questioned the architects about their designs, they claimed that their ideas had formed throughout the Breshnev era. It "was under Breshnev's rule that all those rigid, large buildings that have disfigured Moscow's image were erected" (1989: 7). This led Klotz to propose that it was their brutal, totalitarian environment that lead these architects to "rebel against the petrification and to mobilize counterforces on paper. Their 'paper architecture' [is] a protest against a corrupted state architecture of former years" (1989: 7). Klotz's sentiments are echoed in Belov's assertion that these works "are not yet the fruits of *perestroika* – these will be harvested in the future. Rather, they are all the 'children of the stagnation', who have grown up in spite of it" (1988: 6). Rappaport argues that the work is a reaction against socialist attempts to create a utopian cityscape. The nature of totalitarian architecture, he states, "lies not only in gigantism or in the cult of power but also in a normative monotony which evolves in the course of a systematic realisation of utopias" (1989: 12). In 1990, eight years after the work first became visible, Nesbitt effectively cemented the canonical interpretation of Brodsky and Utkin's architecture as a "response to a bleak professional scene" in which only state authorized work could be constructed. For this reason, she concludes that Brodsky and Utkin's work "constitutes a graphic form of architectural criticism ... an escape into the realm of the imagination that ended as a visual commentary on what was wrong with social and physical reality and how its ills might be remedied" (2003: n.p.).[6]

In this canonical framing of Brodsky and Utkin's work, the relationship between it and the dominant police order gradually shifts from one of dissent to one of dissensus. Their position develops from a personal rejection of the power of the state, to a more visible criticism of the distribution of the sensible in Russia during the previous fifty years. While this seems a plausible interpretation, reality may be more complicated: the canonical reading falsely assumes that the ideological values of the Soviet state did not alter substantially throughout the 1980s. It also largely ignores the increased visibility of Brodsky and Utkin's architecture, which was promoted by state exhibitions in 1984 and 1987, as well as the later financial support which allowed them to show their work to the world. This leads to the supposition that the canonical interpretation may be reliant on the manufacturing of dissensus.

To account for the visibility, or sensibility, of Brodsky and Utkin's architecture in the late 1980s – in terms of the distribution of the sensible in Russia from the 1950s to the 1970s – Western European and North American writers constructed a peculiar history of their work. Lacking reference to a dominant political and ideological context, historians chose the one that was most closely aligned with the formative years of the architects. However, in terms of the distribution of the sensible, this misalignment may say more about the West's desire to promulgate

6. It is important to note that the framing of Brodsky and Utkin's position in architectural history is complicated by two things: first, their close involvement with the Paper Architecture movement and, second, the relative paucity of their own writings. Brodsky and Utkin speak through their architecture, not through manifestos or polemics. However, there is a clear tendency to ascribe to Brodsky and Utkin, as prominent members of the Paper Architecture movement, views and opinions expressed by other members. This paper suffers from the same two flaws. Particularly significant here is the reframing of their architecture via its framing by secondary sources. This, however, is precisely why a Rancièrian analysis of the distribution of the sensible holds more promise than conventional historical methods.

a heroic vision of the architect rejecting the will of the Soviet state, than it does about life in Russia during a time of great political change.

Arguably, Brodsky and Utkin's architecture did not disturb the distribution of the sensible in either the East or the West. Rather, it was framed by both sides in terms of their own opposed political positions: the former as an example of Russian ingenuity, the latter as a reaction to state oppression. These framings are examples of what Rancière calls the "politicization" of a work (2004b). Without a clear ideological context, the production of history relies on localized framings, which often reveal more about their own methodological biases than they do about the architecture they are considering. Seen in this way, the canonical interpretation of Brodsky and Utkin's work is problematic, precisely because it lacks a critical awareness of its own construction.

Running aground

The *Ship of Fools* project is the closest Brodsky and Utkin come, in any of their works, to a personal commentary. While many of their etchings offer a similar level of sublime beauty, only this project provides clues to the social and cultural reality of their endeavours. Two short extracts from poems, almost hidden in the etching, assist in this regard.

The first stanza is written on the vessel itself; the second half-concealed in the smoke above the city. The first reads:

> Come Here, brothers, idler men!
> We are sailing on a ship
> To Land of Fool's around the world,
> But here—hay! We run ashore! [sic.]
> (Brant, S. "Ship of Fools" quoted in Nesbitt, 2003: n.p.).

Remember that, according to Rancière, the purpose of philosophy is to drag the aimless vessels of politics "to dry land" (1995: 1), to force wayward apolitical mariners to confront ideology once more. The *terra firma* on which the *Ship of Fools* has run aground is a bleak, overcrowded, industrial city, "magnificent in [its] gloom and density" (Boym, 1992: 38).

The second fragment of poetry is, fittingly, from a poem by Pushkin entitled "A feast during the plague". It describes a gathering raising their glasses to toast the epidemic: a final act of bravado. With these additional fragments, the earlier interpretation of the work is expanded. The ship is not sailing through an urban ocean, as Rappaport obliquely suggests, but it has finally left behind its aquatic meanderings to confront the real world. This is not an heroic image; it acknowledges the challenge ahead at the same time as it bids a mocking farewell to the past. There are no political apparitions in the etching: the ship has not found a utopian isle, it has run headlong into the reality of the post-political world.

The year 1988, when the *Ship of Fools* project was completed, effectively marks the end of the Paper Architecture movement. At that time the work of the previous decade was collected, widely exhibited and indelibly recorded in the history

books. While the members of the movement, including Brodsky and Utkin, separately went on to produce more substantial architectural designs, the framing of their earlier works has remained largely unchanged since then. The *Ship of Fools* presciently marks this shift: it is the last work of a group who knew that they were no longer so isolated or constrained. Their work had reached an international stage, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union was barely two years away. Unfortunately, within a few more short years, the interest in these great works of paper architecture would also wane, and the histories that had already been written would lie undisturbed.

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Travel in Tropical Islands:
Enemies coexisting in Peace

A.-Chr. Engels-Schwarzpaul

An 1851 *Punch* cartoon of the London World Exhibition shows a "European rider with a spiked helmet" racing closely "behind the African elephant and next to an American Indian" (Kaiser, n.d.). They waste no time on taking notice of each other, but scramble furiously towards the finishing line. Meanwhile, contemporary debates nurtured pious hopes that intercultural encounters at the exhibition would further mutual understanding and world peace. Likewise, Sigfried Giedion optimistically remarked of the Exhibition: "To take a turn about this place … is literally to travel around the world, for all nations have come here; enemies are coexisting in peace"(in Benjamin, 2002: 175-6).

In 2006, a *Tropical Village* at the *Tropical Islands Resort* at Brand, 60km southeast of Berlin, features several houses from tropical regions, a Samoan *Fale* in their midst. Set on an oval, elevated platform, the *Fale* signals the South Seas' eternal sun and balmy breezes. Its handcrafted Pandanus mats, carved posts, weaving and lashing details tell of an imaginary place where time moves at a different pace. As part of the €70 million themed resort, the *Fale* is sheltered under a 360 meter-long steel dome: indeed, an ex-CargoLifter hangar.

THE GREAT DERBY RACE FOR EIGHTEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY-ONE.

Punch 20 (1851), p. 208.

Both scenarios stage notions of progress, nostalgia and exoticism. In their creation of global public spaces, both combine labour and leisure in peculiar ways, so that Giedion observed enemies coexisting in peace, while the *Tropical Village* has been labelled a "One-World-Village" (*Eine-Welt-Dorf*). These tropes orient experience, shape perception and activate knowledge. But which knowledge? The *Punch* cartoonist and Giedion registered competitive conflict and peaceful coexistence in the same setting. And while Chinese-Malaysian multi-millionaire Colin Au planned the resort to satisfy a Germanic yearning for sun (unmatched by expendable incomes and geographical location: "I've done my research and I know how the Germans tick"; in Connolly, 2004), some disagreement accompanied *Tropical Islands*' establishment, as will be discussed later. What is visible of the *Fale* today says little about its origins; and Germans, it seems, have forgotten about their past involvement in Samoa.

Jacques Rancière and Walter Benjamin share an interest in the relationships between different modes of art and politics: ways in which perception and language set up pictures of the world; and in the productive potential of conflict to open up new spaces of visibility. Thus, they may offer pointers regarding the potential of *Tropical Islands* to aid or prevent the appearance of different forms of relationships.
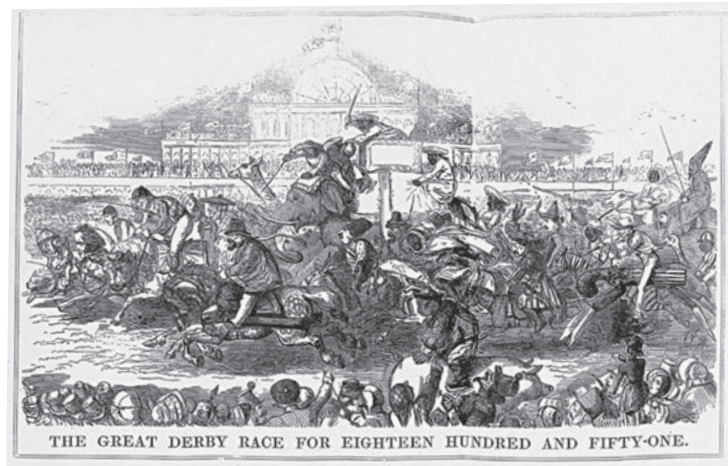
1. "… politics is … an aesthetic conflict. Not at all in the sense of the aestheticization of politics analyzed by Benjamin, but in the sense that politics in general is about the configuration of the sensible, about questions such as what is given, what is terrible about it, who is visible as a speaker able to utter it" (Rancière, 2003a: §5). Rancière's assertion that Benjamin treats art and politics as separate entities seems overstated: "What we may register in Benjamin's juxtaposition is both an account of the partition of the sensible within a given artistic practice and an investigation of the effects of an artistic partition of the sensible upon a political one" (Toscano, 2006). See also Benjamin (1969c: S VII).

2. For a critique of Pièrre Bourdieu, see Rancière (2006: 3-4) and Hallward (2006: §37).

3. Rancière (2004: 6) opposes the *police* (as the administrative apparatus defining appropriate "ways of being, doing, and saying") and politics (as actions that call into question the existing divisions between common and private, or visible and invisible). See also Ostwald's contribution in this issue, page 8.

4. Through this account runs Aristotle's distinction between "those who possess language and those, like slaves, who can only understand", having only "cries of hunger, rage, or hysteria" (Rancière, 2004: 5): there are those who are visible, because they can argue, and those who remain invisible, because they cannot. Their relationship is one of *mésentente* – of "'the fact of not hearing, of not understanding' and 'quarrel, disagreement'" (5). Perhaps Rancière settles too quickly for the translation of *mésentente* as 'disagreement'. The German translation, *Unvernehmen* or *Unstimmigkeit*, is more multivalent. 'Disagreement', as one element of politics as dissensus (as opposed to the consensus in contemporary regimes under the rule of *police*) may not account for certain processes where no engagements occur, where "a dispute over the situation itself, … over what is visible"

Regimes of visibility: Aesthetics and politics

Rancière sets apart his approach from Benjamin's notion of the "aestheticization of politics": he sees the assumption that politics are not originally aesthetic as false.[1] This setting-apart rests on his definitions of aesthetics and politics. For Rancière, aesthetics is not a theory of the beautiful (opposed or complementary to knowledge), but an intrinsic dimension of knowledge (2006: 1). When art suspends "the ordinary coordinates of space and time that structure the forms of social domination", shapes "a specific sensorium", it is political (2005). Correspondingly, a (Kantian) disinterested aesthetic experience, with its temporary deferral of normal social conditions, can enable a different way of seeing (2006: 2):[2] "Spectacles which disassociate the gaze from the hand and transform the worker into an aesthete" (9) have the potential to disrupt the consensus of an established order.[3] Then, politics happens through disagreement, through an "aesthetic conflict" over the "configuration of the sensible", the "visibilities of … places and abilities of the body in those places, … about the very configuration of the visible and the relation of the visible to what can be said about it" (2003a: S5).[4] In political dispute, the argument is often "first of all on the legitimacy or even the reality" (Holmes, 2001) of what configures disagreement.

Similarly, Benjamin wagers on disruption, against consensus, to change a status quo that is really a continuous state of emergency. Conflict between what is and is not, or can and cannot be, is, for him, the very energy driving the endless renewal of language (1969a: 320; 1969b: 79). Conflict, but also complementation and redemption, is part of the vital relationship between an original and its translation. As the original's afterlife, a translation releases, in a different language, what remained repressed in the original (1969b: 80). Changed and non-identical, it represents and expresses "the central reciprocal relationship between languages" (72). Thus, in diverse ways, languages configure the experience of perception. Aesthetics, as this experience, derives from "*aisthesis*: the appearance of that which, of itself, shows itself" (Mersch, n.d.: S3), and is "perceptive by feeling" (Buck-Morss, 1992: 6). Sensory perception (taste, touch, hearing, seeing, smell) "refers to symbols" (Benjamin, 1996: 92) which, like language, configure differently what can be said about the sensible. Thus, aesthetics constitutes an historically specific mode of visibility and intelligibility, not of art alone. Politics impacts on visibility by creating a theatrical space for new and disparate things to appear; it sets up a stage where the hitherto unconnected may be connected (Rancière, 1999: 88). Art and politics share an uncertain reality, and movements from the political to the aesthetic are inherent in the political itself. Metaphorical displacement may shift a community's perception of "the relation between a situation and the forms of visibility and capacities of thought attached to it" (2006: 9), so that new objects become visible and thus available to thinking. Once such changes have been reintegrated into a "generally accessible mode of reasoning or form of language", a collective creative reconfiguration of the common world of experience becomes possible (2000a: 116).

With respect to both art and politics, *Tropical Islands Resort*'s status is uncertain. For instance, as with many other non-European art forms, that of the Samoan *tufuga* (master builders) was long denied the status of art within Western frameworks. On the other hand, claims to the status of art are increasingly made in the entertainment industries.[5] It would be impractical and elitist to rule out the

possibility that some phenomena at *Tropical Islands* may qualify as art: they may indeed shape a specific sensorium, suspend the ordinary coordinates of space and time, open up new ways of seeing, and reconfigure a common world.[6] Do they, however, lend themselves to politics? Does *Tropical Islands* afford potential for creative reconfigurations through conflict or disagreement?

According to Rancière, it is the conflict about what can or cannot be expressed that allows a controversial world to be polemically framed within the given one. In contrast, consensus, far from simply being an agreement between political or social partners about shared interests, "properly means the dismissal of the 'aesthetics of politics'" (2003c). It suppresses the need of the outsider to create "another way of seeing than that which oppresses them" (2006: 3).

From World Exhibition to Theme Park

Consensus, like politics, is produced: for instance, during the heyday of imperialism it was important for imperial nations to create internal consensus by appealing to national pride in progress and technological achievements. Thus, French national and municipal bodies gave away to workers hundreds of thousands of free tickets for the World Exhibitions (Benjamin, 2002: 186), and French workers' delegations were sent to the 1851 London World Exhibition (188). Benjamin called the exhibitions "training schools in which the masses, barred from consuming, learned empathy with exchange value. 'Look at everything; touch nothing'" (201). Those who entered were distracted by the phantasmagoria of a "universe of commodities" (8) contained in an interiorized world. "Cut off from the will of man," the commodity performed "as an actor on a phantom stage" (182), and visitors themselves shared much with the commodity. Surrendering to the manipulations, they enjoyed their alienation from themselves and others (2002: 7).[7] Perception as much as thinking was affected, as reality was adjusted to the masses and the masses to reality (1969d: 223).

The interior of the 1851 Crystal Palace was designed for an exhibition of the world in a village (see Kaiser, n.d.) – for a global public from diverse social backgrounds and numerous countries. However, what was staged in the village was, predominantly, English and French industrial displays – in contrast to performances of the simple life of 'natives' from the colonies. This strategy would be employed repeatedly at later world exhibitions and smaller shows. Exotic displays, compensating for a widely felt loss of authentic tradition in Europe, played out a series of spatial tropes (DiPaola, 2004: 328-31), which structured the experience of the strange, and changed European perceptions of self and other. A *trope*, of course, is a rhetorical device. From the Greek "a turn", it shifts our perception and the way we make sense of the world. Thus, in nineteenth century German literature on Samoa, a *strange exterior space*, exotic and abundant nature, morphs into interior space, a zoological or botanical garden, to be filled with homely elements and commonplace exotic images. In a *strange cultural space*, childlike, happy and naïve noble savages wait to be civilized. These tropes are overlaid and interlaced by a *space of erotic power* where fragments of the strange woman blend with fruit and flowers, and the strange colonial territory is appropriated metaphorically through the sexual act between colonizer and native woman.[8]

and over "which visible elements belong to what is common" cannot take place. While Rancière registers a growing demand for consensus in Western societies, obscuring the "contestatory, conflictual nature of the very givens of common life" and replacing political difference with "police-like homogeneity" (7), he does not address configurations where a lacking common world precludes sufficient political conflict, which could then re-organise the "division of perceptible givens" (6) to transform "one world into another" (7).

5. "At the end of the day, video games … are pieces of art" (*The Mark of Kri on Playstation 2* 2003).

6. The "autonomy staged by the aesthetic regime of art is not that of the work of art, but of a mode of experience" and "the object of that experience is 'aesthetic', in so far as it is not—or at least not only—art" (Rancière, 2002). Depending on the reference framework, art could be either "political to the extent that it is merely art", or, "to the extent that it is art no longer" (2005).

7. Regarding workers' delegations, Rancière (2003b: 73) gives a somewhat different account, emphazising that, on the scene, a spectacle of machines was staged while, offstage, the workers were dispossessed of their work and their lives.

8. These tropes (described by DiPaola for German literature of the time) appear, for instance, at the 1896 Samoan Show at the *Zoologischer Garten* in Frankfurt (see Steffen-Schrade, 1998) and survive into current tourism marketing: "South Seas paradises replete with tropical fruit, naked women and free love" (Beuchelt, 1987: 98). In the 19th century, zoological gardens were, along with dioramas and panoptica, preferred venues for the exhibition of exotic natives. Their performances, choreographed with elaborate dramaturgic effects, were inserted into exotic dreamscapes, and the zoos' architectures increasingly alluded to the animals' places of origin, for instance in Berlin during the 1870s (Goldmann, 1987: 88-89).

Tropical Islands Management GmbH

9. Some confusion prevails about what the "indigenous areas" are: a *Sunday Times* reporter believes the restaurants are of "Thai, Malaysian and Indonesian architectural style" or, simply, "oriental". These exotic spaces are further interiorised by filling them with homely elements, for instance with "plenty of German beer and wurst" (Eames, 2006). A global space for the public is created and filled with meaning in ways reminiscent of DiPaola's tropes.

10. Performers had to submit "reference letters from their pastors" (Leaupepe, 2005).

At *Tropical Islands Resort,* too, the world is brought into a vast interior. Signs such as, "Welcome to the One-World-Village" and "Peace Camp" make reference to global unity and peace. Exterior and interior morph in the resort's promotion as an "Island of eternal summer" (Allmaier, 2004). *Village*, *islands*, or *world* suggest topographies organized by different thresholds of inside and outside, but all contained by the resort's huge dome: Bali lagoon and South Sea; rainforest; waterfalls; rivers and spa pools; "several islands plus a sandy beach" (Eames, 2006). In a strangely familiar *'strange exterior space'*, visitors stroll along "1.2km of jungle pathways … and enjoy cultural shows by 160 performers from the six indigenous areas" (dpa, 2004).[9] However, which particular indigenous areas they are remains unclear, and a general multicultural con/fusion prevails at *Tropical Islands Resort*.

In the 2005 show "Call of the South Seas", more than eighty 'indigenous' performers further confused the *strange cultural space*: the all-Samoan troupe purported to represent all Pacific Islands. The scenario was staged by Samoan Tourism Authority's (STA) general manager Lesaisaea Reupena Matafeo, who convinced the organizers that it was unnecessary to involve several smaller groups from different Pacific Islands. Matafeo claimed that the Samoan troupe was able to perform all the dances: "We all know that our island dances differ slightly from each other and we don't look too different from each other" (in Leaupepe, 2005). It is not that the effects of visibility do not matter to the STA. Whilst rather generous on the multi-cultural side, the Samoan organizers ensured that only performers with a history of "good conduct" represented Samoa.[10] However, their efforts to control regimes of visibility from a Samoan perspective - namely to have their culture portrayed in accordance with their own values while excluding other Pacific cultures – was frustrated by the *Tropical Islands* website designers' creation of a *space of erotic power*. The video, "Holiday and Night", exposes fragments of strange women from a mix of cultures, a topless glimpse included, all to the soundtrack of 'Pacific' music. Many Samoan contributors or observers would be dismayed to hear 'cultural' shows staged at *Tropical Islands* described as extravaganzas with "feathery headdresses, spangly bikinis and bottoms like J.Lo" (Eames, 2006).

A politics of aesthetics concerns the "partition of the sensible" (Rancière, 2000b: 8): historically and geographically specific modes of distributing time and space, and of visibility and intelligibility. Aesthetics provides in its image-spaces (interstices between immediacy and rational abstraction, appropriation and distance; see Brüggemann, 2002: 14, 51) a space of freedom from normal conditions and images of the possible. However, as long as objects and subjects are missing from the stages of globalized and virtualized environments (from nineteenth century world exhibitions to contemporary theme parks); as long as disagreement cannot take place, the question of whether or not enemies coexist in peace in these theatrical spaces is a mute question.

Outside *Tropical Islands Resort*, the region is marked by conflicting histories that are still apparent, and which have introduced a great deal of 'third world' in the first. Successive and different imperialisms placed the hangar, like an alien spaceship, in the territory of what was formerly the largest military airbase outside the Soviet Union. Inside, with hardly anyone noticing, a former German colony makes an appearance: to Germans, if they can place it at all, Samoa today seems just like any other tropical island. Only an hour away from the re-established German metropolis Berlin, the resort is in many ways light years and worlds removed. Following German 're-unification', 1990s economic restructuring has left the region crippled and, as Europe is restructured within a global context, unemployment in Brandenburg has soared to around 21%. Xenophobia is rampant. In the current order of consensus, while the resort's employees welcome visitors with smiles, in its surrounds, often at bus or railway stations, foreigners are regularly attacked by neo-Nazis.

Strangely, on a late mid-winter afternoon in 2006, the entrance area gives precisely the impression of an oversized railway station. As at airports, x-ray machines guard access to the theme park proper. Rancière's *police* needs technologies of counting and discounting.[11]

In this simulated miniature world, visitors' experiences are monitored and controlled in advance: at the entrance gates, they are equipped with electronic chips on wristbands. From the Balinese Gate, where the *Tropical Village* begins, to the Bali Pavilion, the Borneo Longhouse, the Thai House and the Samoan *Fale* they travel around the tropics within minutes.

Two stages provide near-constant entertainment and glimpses of exotic worlds.[12] Only glimpses: what was invisible to the sun-searching Germans the performers entertained during the show "Call of the South Seas", was that the Samoans were freezing in a climate they were neither accustomed to, nor properly equipped for. Working exceedingly long hours, unable to leave the compound or their hotel, they eventually did not even earn enough to travel through Germany in summer. The resort's image space allowed visitors to see nothing but projections of their own desires. With the end of their contract, the Samoans' visibility faded away and was overlaid by a succession of new stimuli. In the website's video, the intelligibility of the fragments of their show has since diminished even further, and so has that of the *Fale*.

While the *Fale's* physical presence remains, the way in which it is staged obscures its historical and geopolitical context. On the website, it is described as a "typical Polynesian straw hut", "a sort of 'community house' for several villages". "It is particularly large and each of the 28 beautifully carved wooden posts represents one of the participating extended families" (*Samoa Fale. Open Houses for living in the South Seas*, 2005). The reference to harmonious community life is as unmistakable as the nostalgic flavour in the description of the *Tropical Village's* architecture: it was "built with authentic houses from 6 tropical regions of the world. They were constructed on site at Tropical Islands by craftsmen from their respective home countries" (*The Tropical Village*, 2005).

Claims to authenticity are often paired with realism in representation.[13] Similarly, a bad translation is frequently characterized by excessive accuracy. However, Benjamin remarks, a translation must, rather then trying to resemble the

11. The "affirmation of 'objective givens' handled by the 'experts in power' is precisely the negation of the political; it defines what I have proposed to call 'the police'" (Rancière, 2000a: 124). Migrant workers, like the Samoan performers, are fragments of "the erstwhile worker" as much as the racists outside, "on whom sociologists significantly pin another color label, 'white trash'" (Rancière, 1999: 119). About the (police) desire to control conflict and shape a harmonious collective body, see also Buck-Morss (1992: 28).

12. Since its opening, *Tropical Islands* has featured Pacific, Brazilian, Cuban and Carribean shows.

13. Excessive realism in representation, and the will to control and contain, characterised the Egyptian exhibit at the 1869 Paris world exhibition (see Mitchell, 2002). A street made to resemble Cairo was painfully rendered in medieval decay and chaos, with even the façades made dirty. The streets were crowded, not only with make-believe Orientals, but fifty imported Egyptian donkeys. The mosque, like the whole street, was built as a façade. "As for the interior, it had been set up as a coffee house, where Egyptian girls performed dances with young males, and dervishes whirled" (Muhammad Amin Fikri in 1892, quoted in Mitchell, 2002: 497). Benjamin noted that during the 1867 Paris World Exhibition, "the 'oriental quarter' was the center of attraction" (2002: 189-90).

Entrance flanked by x-ray machines. Photo: Author, 2006.
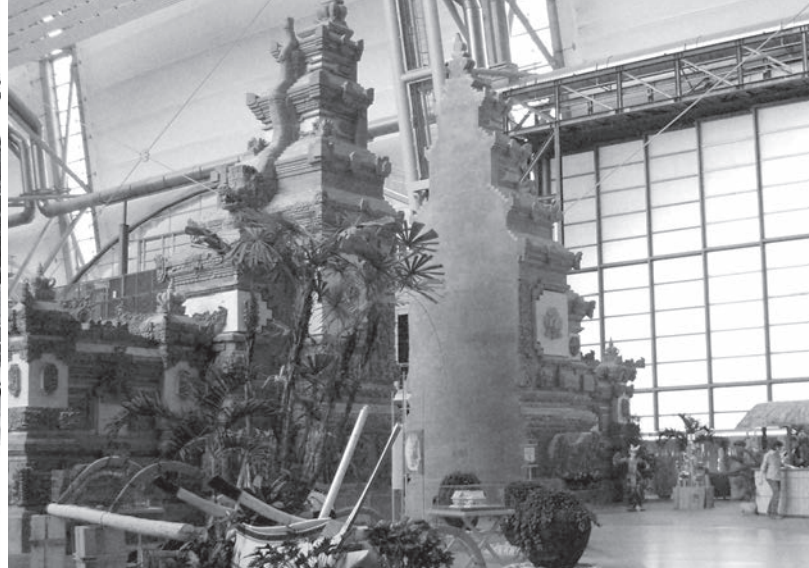
Bali Gate. Photo: Author, 2006.

14. A good translation does not cover the original (Benjamin, 1969b: 79), touching it only lightly and at an "infinitely small point of sense" (80).

15. This "altered world" can, by being seen by all visitors, assume "the position of objective fact" (Buck-Morss, 1992: 22-3) and become social norm. Contemporary theme parks as 'experiential worlds' have been interpreted as counter-design (Hendry, 2000: 7-8), as escape phenomena, or as instances of McDisneyization – which can all intensify specific fantasies and social practices (Schlehe, 2004).

original, "incorporate the original's mode of signification, thus making both the original and the translation recognizable as fragments of a greater language" (1969b: 78).[14] To preserve the state a translator's language happens to be in, is a principal mistake (Pannwitz quoted in Benjamin, 1969b: 81). The potential that lies between the lines of the original text cannot be recognized when reverence for one's own language and culture is greater than that for the "spirit of the foreign"; when the desire to control and contain is greater than the willingness to abandon oneself to the other (82). "Allowing his language to be powerfully affected by the foreign tongue", a translator must "expand and deepen his language by means of the foreign language" (81).

While realism suggests correspondence with the world, certainty of representation simultaneously relies on the "difference in time and displacement in space" separating "the representation from the real thing" (Mitchell, 2002: 501). This is ensured by the exhibition's distancing of observer and object. A logic of consensus, which portrays a global community in which, "unfortunately, some groups or individuals still stay behind or accidentally fall astray, as traditional forms of social bonding tend to loosen or vanish" (Rancière, 2005), is likely to reinforce the dividing line between "what is in and what is out". These groups and their material cultures are then drawn into the production of phantasmagoric appearances of reality, which both extend and numb the senses through technical manipulation (Buck-Morss, 1992: 22). Objects and performances are 'real enough' at *Tropical Islands*, but their setting-into-scene requires enormous logistics of construction, engineering, transport, environmental and operational control, media presence and finance. To allow viewers to forget about the background of the display, to make a narcotic out of reality itself,[15] labour occurs back-stage and the performance seems joyous. Thus, the audience, seated for dinner along the South Sea's sandy beach, watches the evening show on the island across the water, while technicians, cooks and cleaners remain in the shadows.

Ultimately, the simulated encounter with the exotic, and the fascination with commodified leisure or experience, is likely to disappoint. Rancière notes that, for Benjamin, "the arcade of outdated commodities holds the promise of the future" only if it is closed, "made unavailable, in order that the promise may be kept" (2002: 103). A world of total visibility leaves no room for appearance to occur, to "produce its divisive, fragmenting effects" (1999: 104). When everything is on display and up for grabs, a visitor is "called on to live out all his fantasies in a world of total exhibition", in which everything seems possible, "meaning, of course, doomed to disappointment" (120). There is a price to be paid for bringing the distant too close without a willingness to go out of ourselves (Taussig, 1992: 23ff). Perceptibility suffers when experience is made impossible, when images and

Samoan Fale. Photo:Sylvia Henrich, 2007. *Samoan Fale in the Tropical Village. Photo: Author, 2007.*

episodes constantly demand to be taken as one's own personal fantasies and dreams. Productive distance is obliterated, and the conflict between what can and cannot be said is suppressed.

At *Tropical Islands*, some of the carefully selected Samoan performers had to be recalled home following "constant disorderly and drunken behaviour" (Sio, 2005, 25 May), perhaps induced by the "24/7 of fun" environment at the resort (*Tropical Islands*, 2005), or by their living and working conditions.[16] Turned into objects of European fantasies, some Samoan performers may have preferred to disappear.

Taking a Turn: When can disagreement take place?

Tropes, turns, travels … what they share are changing vistas and aspects, which will, however, be perceived in different ways. Travel in *Tropical Islands* is not literally to travel around the world. Not all that have come here coexist in peace: neither are they enemies. There is no apparent consensus about a common world: neither is there obvious disagreement. If experiences are the "sensible configuration of [a] lived common wor[l]d", as Rancière holds (2003a: S4), then they seem out of step here. Disputes about what one sees and feels – "how it can be told and discussed, who is able to name it and argue about it" (S4) – which could lead to a common re-configuration of the sensible, do not take place. Insofar as the *Tropical Village*, the Samoan *Fale* and the show "Call of the South Seas" are translations of a foreign original into a local idiom, they could, potentially, express what remains repressed in a Samoan context. However, the configurations at the resort tend to obscure the common world rather than make it visible.

Interestingly, as Jean-Louis Déotte suggests, Rancière seems to overlook aspects of difference and dissonance (*mésentente*) that occur outside of situations in which speakers use the same terms in different ways. Within Western societies, voices that were previously unheard can indeed suddenly appear on the scene, forcing society to deal with their demands,[17] so that those who had no share in politics "end by taking part" (2004: 81), since they belong to "a virtual community beyond social divisions … made up of anyone and everyone" (86). Thus, the neo-Nazis with their violent dissensus, and the dissent expressed in the press regarding *Tropical Island Resort*'s planning and implementation, are sometimes visible and audible.

However, Rancière's perspective is distinctively philosophical, and to an extent Eurocentric. It cannot account for "cases of intercultural *différend*, for which there

16. They may have suffered a similar degradation to that of the Egyptians in Paris, 1869, which "seemed as necessary to these spectacles as the scaffolded facades or the curious crowds of onlookers. The facades, the onlookers, and the degradation seemed all to belong to the organizing of an exhibit, to a particularly European concern with rendering the world up to be viewed" (Mitchell, 2002: 497).

17. See Deranty (2003).

18. Symbolic apparatuses and industries (Déotte, 2004: 79) institute a political and cultural order that cannot be challenged from outside. They rely ultimately on a silently shared assumption that voice and visibility depend on articulate deliberation, argument, logos. Other forms of elaboration, narrative or revelation, find no place to be shared here (88). Emancipation à la Rancière, therefore, will defeat those other forms which will survive as an ever growing remainder (88).

19. See also note 4 above.

20 For a distinction between dissent and dissensus, see Ostwald's contribution to this issue, page 11, par 4.

21. The re-structuring appears to be based on a better understanding of the target market and has sadly led to an environment familiar to Germans from saunas on the outskirts of cities: factory halls filled with plaster and *trompes d'oeuil* of Mediterranean isles for the longing of the soul – all bound together by tons of tiles for the hygiene of the body.

22. I am using Hallward's adapted translation.

would never be a common scene of interlocution" (86-7), and translation cannot even begin. In such situations, those outside (invisible and inaudible) not only have to accept the discursive norms of the 'virtual community' they are confronting, but also to explain themselves by them. They must also divide the sensible according to rules or laws that are alien to them (87).[18] Rancière does not seem to consider the role of the *différend* as a cause of *mésentente*.[19] Besides, disagreement seems impossible, almost by definition, with an exotic that one loves to visit briefly and look at, but whom one does not want to become lastingly involved with (Beuchelt, 1987: 100).

Further, we tend to assume that everyone wants to be part of *our* virtual community of disagreement. What if they prefer not to? When discussing *Tropical Islands* in Samoa, sometimes I had a distinct sense of withdrawal: rather than disagreeing with *Tropical Islands*' handling of contracts or the use of the *Fale*, two interviewees (from quite different positions within a spectrum of opinion) placed responsibility with the resort's management, but preferred not to elaborate.[20] On the other hand, Colin Au, who believed *Tropical Islands* would be successful because he knew "how the Germans tick", sought little involvement with locals in order to understand its context. Many Germans hunger for the tropical sun, but they may not care about cultural specifics and even be less interested in authenticity than Au believed. The visitors' interest in exotic cultures, beyond fleeting allusion, was not strong enough to sustain the resort as a viable business venture. At the end of 2006, *Tropical Islands* was restructured. While the notion of the world in a village is maintained, the village and the *Fale*, next to the children's fun park, are diminishing and the scene begins to look like an assembly of props.[21] While to different degrees and in different roles, people have always participated at *Tropical Islands*, in the future it is likely that there will no longer be foreign 'villagers' with whom visitors could agree or disagree.

Given their interest in art and politics, perception and language, and the potential of ruptures and conflict to open up a space of visibility, it is not surprising that Rancière and Benjamin were also interested in the theatre and the stage. Rancière even defined politics as a theatrical performance of:

> the gap between a place where the *demos* exists and a place where it does not … Politics consists in playing or acting out this relationship, which means first setting it up as theatre, inventing the argument, in the double logical and dramatic sense of the term, connecting the unconnected (Rancière, 1999: 88).[22]

Benjamin recalls the final scenes in some plays, where actors enter the stage, fleeing. Brought to a standstill by their appearance on stage, they enter into "the visual field of nonparticipating and truly impartial persons [which] allows the harassed to draw breath, bathes them in new air". Correspondingly, there must be "a place, a light, a footlight glare, in which our flight through life may be likewise sheltered in the presence of onlooking strangers" (1934/1986: 91). The onlookers can actively and knowingly engage with the spectacle, precisely because they never wholly identify with it but, rather, draw on their own experiences, from a critical distance (Hallward, 2006: §13). These notions of the stage and its power are very different from what, currently, can be observed at *Tropical Islands Resort*. Closeness and distance, degrees of engagement and reflection, will play a role in creating the

conditions under which disagreement becomes possible, and the partition of the sensible might change.

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Barricades and Boulevards:
Material transformations of Paris, 1795-1871

Carl Douglas

"Destroying and constructing are equal in importance, and we must have souls for the one and the other".[1]

Large-scale urban violence is a tumultuous, messy and distressing affair. Materials and patterns of everyday life are blown apart. Amongst death and disarray, important spatial operations that take place in urban conflict are easily overlooked. However, the construction of street barricades and boulevards in Paris between 1795 and 1871 transformed the city. The struggles over these transformations can be described as both the disruption and the policing of what Rancière calls the "distribution of the sensible". [2]

The barricades built in the streets of Paris in the revolutionary years that followed the Great Revolution of 1789, and closed with the suppression of the Paris Commune in 1871, were not the first or the last artefacts of urban insurgency. Nor was Paris the only city in history – even European history – to be barricaded. However, in Paris, barricading became a revolutionary technique, the development and decline of which can be traced with some precision. Barricading served complex social purposes, of which defense was only one, and not always the most significant. Thus, barricades are also an ephemeral city-scale architecture occasioned by, and changing, the social.[3]

History and Tectonics of a Rubbish Heap

At first, the Parisian barricades were temporary barriers, or walls erected quickly across streets. They were built by anonymous groups of insurgents from whatever loose materials could be found nearby: carts, furniture, barrels and, most typically, paving stones torn up from the roadway. They were constructed *en masse.* In July 1830 there were over 4,000 barricades; in June 1848 there were as many as 6,000.

1. Paul Valéry, quoted in Pallasmaa (2003: 6).

2. For Rancière's political philosophy, see *Disagreement: Politics and Philosophy* (1998), and *The Politics of Aesthetics* (2004), which contains a useful glossary of Ranciére's terms.

3. The barricades' history is in some ways distinct from the history of ad-hoc fortifications (trenches, seige works, emplacements) in general. For the barricades, see Corbin and Mayeur (1997) and Mark Traugott (1993). In addition, nearly all historical accounts of the French revolutionary period mention the barricades, but few consider their significance in a sustained manner. For the general historical context, see Hobsbawm (1962) and (1975).
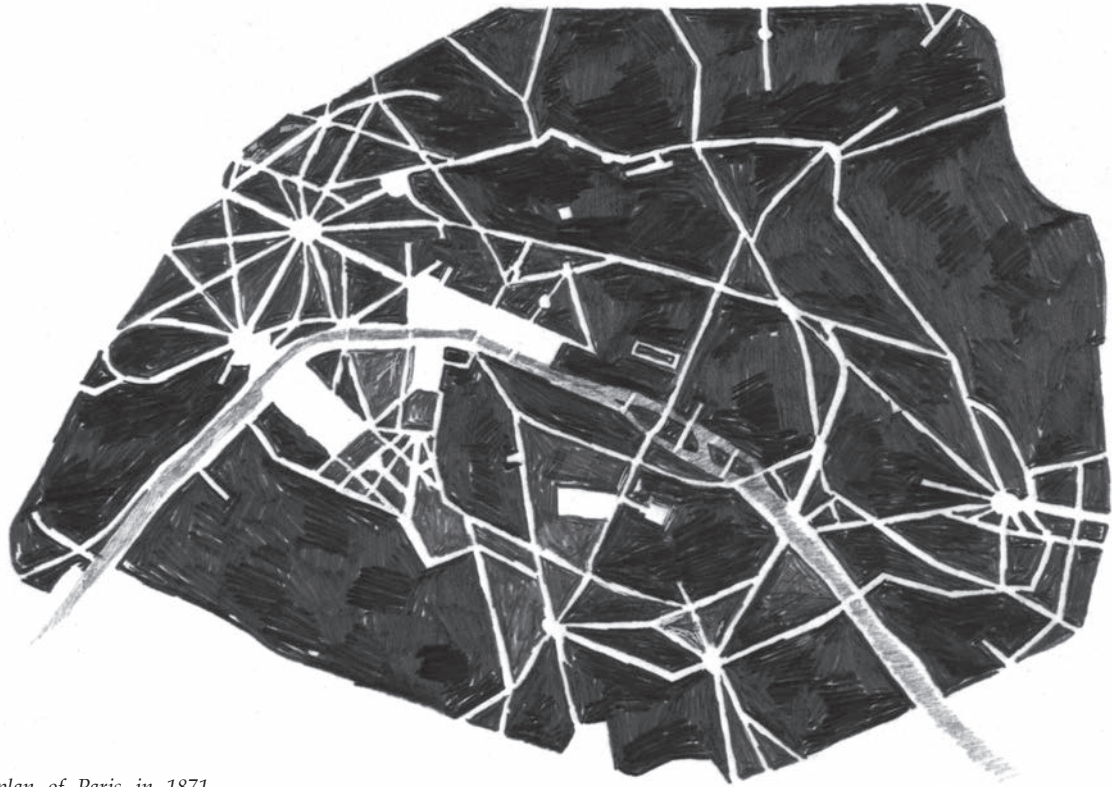
Schematic plan of Paris in 1871 following Haussman's works.

4. The French uprising of 1848 sparked others in cities across Europe, incluing Brussels, Vienna, Berlin, Munich, Milan, Naples, Budapest, Frankfurt, Prague and Dresden.

5. For Haussmann, see Jordan (1995). The barricades and Haussmann's boulevards are two of the key coordinates in Walter Benjamin's study of the emerging spaces and structures of the bourgeoisie. See Benjamin (1999) and (1986).

The first recorded instance of barricading in Paris occurred in 1588, when the popular Comte Cossé de Brissac lead Parisians in a rebellion in response to the posting of soldiers in the streets of the city. Chains were sometimes used to close streets to traffic, and these points of closure were reinforced with barrels *(barriques)* filled with stones to restrict military movement. In 1648, the arrest of a popular politician lead to the erection of over a thousand barricades in the city. Thereafter, barricades did not recur for nearly 150 years, playing no part in the Revolution of 1789. When they did reappear, with the Jacobin uprising of 1795, it was in a different context. While civil disobedience had previously been used as a way of gaining leverage over political leaders, the intention was now the complete overthrow of the state. Between 1795 and 1871, historian Mark Traugott records twenty-one instances of barricading (1993: 315). The most famous of these incidents were the July Days of 1830 (portrayed by Delacroix in his 1830 painting *La Liberté guidant le peuple)*, and the revolutions of February and June 1848. According to Traugott (316), while barricading, by 1848, had achieved "a genuinely international status as a tactic of revolt", it was already losing effect in the face of mobile artillery and improving military tactics.[4] In the streets of Paris, the last time barricades were used in a major way was during the Paris Commune of 1871, when the socialist government of the city declared itself independent of Versailles. Although barricades continued to be used in other cities in Europe, including Barcelona and Berlin, and reappeared in Paris in 1945 and 1968, barricading as a technique had ceased to be decisive in urban insurgency.

Between 1795 and 1871, when barricading was a common revolutionary tactic, France alternated between revolutionary governments and periods of centralized imperial rule. George-Eugène Haussmann's famous urban restructuring of Paris, which occured during one of the latter periods - the Second Empire of Louis Napoleon (1852-1871) - was, in part, an explicit response to the threat of barricades.[5] Haussmann cut wide new boulevards through the fabric of old Paris,
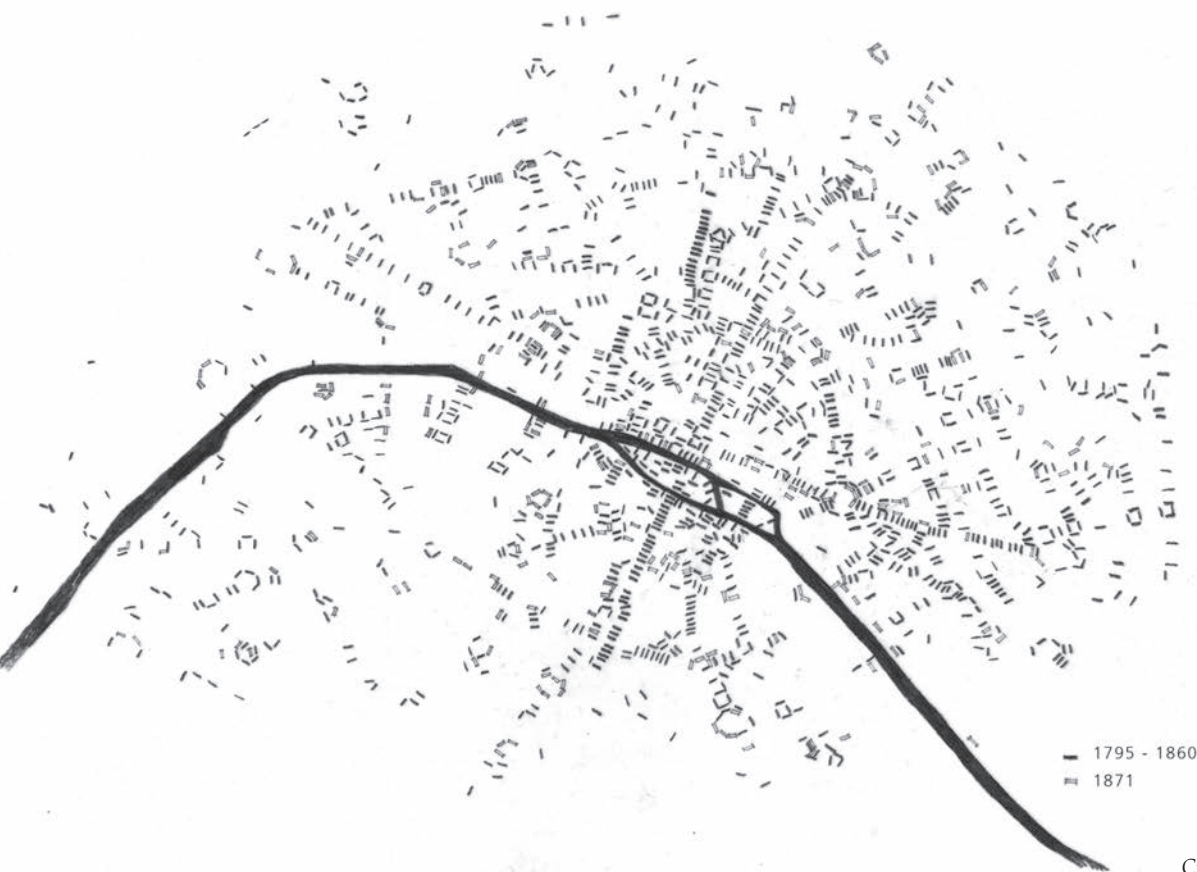
Cumulative plan of barricades, after Philippe (1989).

buying and demolishing whatever was in the way, setting up axes and monuments, and clearing space around buildings like Notre Dame and the Palais du Louvre. By cutting into the body of the city with his boulevards and promoting unimpeded circulation, Haussmann hoped not only to alleviate the social pressures which produced unrest, but also to make the construction and defense of barricades impossible.

Barricades and boulevards are conflicting regimes of materials, spaces and performances. Architecture does not merely mirror social relations: it acts to produce them. Henri Lefebvre describes how the production of social relations is already the production of a space for those relations, through practices and representations. Instead of acting as a container, within which all kinds of relations could take place, space defines subjects and the range of possible relations they can have with one another (Lefèbvre, 1991). Walter Benjamin recognised the reconstructing of the civic subject in the *Haussmannization* of Paris. He writes, only partly in jest: "The widening of the streets, it was said, was necessitated by the crinoline" (1999: 133). In Haussmann's Paris, the bourgeois subject of the boulevards is opposed to the placeless labourer, who does not truly belong to the city; and the reconfiguration of the city's materials and spaces reconfigures social relations.

It would be too simple to contrast *Haussmannization*, as the imposition of centralized state law on the city, with the barricades as exuberant or violent disobedience to that law. In his "Critique of Violence" (1986b), Benjamin argues that law and order cannot be opposed to violence. Rather, they must be seen as essentially violent themselves. Law is even an essential condition of violence, and violence is not the absence or failure of law; rather, it is a law being imposed: "Lawmaking is power making, and, to that extent, an immediate manifestation of violence" (295). In Benjamin's thought, the opposition of the destructive, violent space of the

6. "Man does not live by words alone; all 'subjects' are situated in a space in which they must either recognize themselves or lose themselves, a space which they may both enjoy and modify" (Lefebvre, 1991: 35).

barricades to the lawful, constructive space of Hausmann's Paris is false. In fact, he notes that Haussmann referred to himself as an "artist-demolitionist" (1991: 128), and gathers Second Empire sources who describe the scale of destruction involved in *Haussmannization*. Similarly, the violence of the barricades contains the violence of a new lawmaking. Destruction and construction are equally capable of violence insofar as they both mark the operation of law. If *Haussmannization* and the barricades are both recognized as material and spatial transformations of the city, then they must both be appreciated not only for their violence, but as conflicting impositions of law.

Jacques Rancière articulates a theory of politics which is Benjaminian in its understanding of conflict. The city's materials and spaces do not simply bear the imprint of politics, and the city is not a neutral surface which is only inflected and marked politically. Instead, the very perception of there being a city – what a city is, how it is assembled, who inhabits it – is the result of "a distribution of spaces, times, and forms of activity" (Rancière, 2004: 12). If lawmaking is conflict for Benjamin, for Rancière, conflict is a dispute over the distribution of what can be perceived within a given regime. This distribution of the sensible *(le partage du sensible)* is described by Rancière as an "implicit law" (1998: 29).

Rancière's distribution of the sensible closely parallels Henri Lefebvre's production of the space of social relations. The production of space is the production of the ground against which social relations can be seen to resolve. Social relations, argues Lefebvre, cannot exist except in and through the production of space.[6] For Rancière, social relations are rendered conceivable only through the distribution of what can be sensibly apprehended.

The work of maintaining a certain existing distribution of the sensible is carried out by what Rancière calls "the police":

> The police is essentially, the law, generally implicit, that defines a party's share or lack of it ... The police is thus first an order of bodies that defines the allocation of ways of doing, ways of being, and ways of saying ... Policing is not so much the 'disciplining' of bodies as a rule governing their appearing, a configuration of occupations and the properties of the spaces where these occupations are distributed (1998: 29).

Benjamin also describes the role of the police in upholding the law, not simply enacting laws: "Rather, the 'law' of the police really marks the point at which the state ... can no longer guarantee through the legal system the empirical ends that it desires at any price to attain" (1986b: 287). Policing marks the edge of law, the line at which practices or bodies are brought under law.

Following Benjamin, if we see the barricades and the boulevards as equally violent practices of law-making and, following Rancière, we see lawmaking as the policing of a distribution of the sensible, then new questions can be asked of the actual, material transformations of Paris between 1795 and 1871. How did barricades and boulevards redistribute materials and spaces? Thus, what became visible? How did the lawmaking and share-allocating roles of the police work on the transformations of Paris in the period in question?

The following sections stage a conflict between the barricades and the boulevards, with a view to the performative nature of the barricades in their historical context: the ways in which the material configurations of barricades and boulevards produce certain kinds of perception; and how perception renders subjectivity.

Eugène Delacroix, 'La Liberté guidant le peuple', 1830.

Historical Performances

Romantic images of the barricades, like Delacroix's *La Liberté guidant le peuple*, reflect the important symbolic role of the barricades. An obvious observation about Delacroix's painting is that the greatest mass in the image is made up of human bodies: heads, arms and bayonets blend into the dim depths; bodies anchor the image on the left, underline it, and are silhouetted against the smoke in the centre. Architecture, as materiality, is reduced to an emblematic presence: in the distance, at the far right of the frame, a row of houses and the towers of Notre Dame emerge from the smoke. Human figures are not constrained or enclosed by buildings, even though the streets of Paris in the 1830's were notoriously narrow. The paved surface of the road is visible only along the bottom. The barricade itself is barely more than knee-high and mostly obscured. Some paving stones are heaped up with pieces of lumber, but they certainly do not form a wall. There is no sense that the barricade is a blockage; rather, it is little more than a dais for Liberty to stand on.

Narrative accounts of uprisings suggest that a barricade was a space in which dramatic events were performed. Great anecdotal importance is attributed to what happened 'on the barricades', where figures harangue the mob, and people find noble or appalling deaths:

> Baudin stepped forward to the barricade and said, "Stay there a
> minute longer, my friend, and you'll see how a man dies for

7. See Traugott (1978), in which he sets out his position regarding social movements; and (1985) for an example of his empirical method.

8. In one anonymous photograph, taken on the Rue des Amandiers, we see a barricade of paving-stones, covered with earth dug out from in front of the mound, and with castellations for the cannons. All along the barricade stand men in a semi-regular uniform. To the far right of the frame, observers have gathered to see this spectacle. The camera provided a means to expand the symbolic reach of the barricades. By posing for photographs, the Communards reinforced the performative role of the barricades. Jeannene Pzyblyski writes "the Communards posing on the barricades explicitly laid claim to the theatricality that is intrinsic to photographic reality, to the performativity that is the counterpart to its opticality" (Przyblyski, 2001: 64).

twenty-five francs." A column of soldiers approached from the Bastille and rushed the barricade. Baudin was killed (Duveau, 1967: 163).

Thus, the barricades were rhetorical constructions, not only military-strategic devices. Friederich Engels, in his introduction to Marx's *The Class Struggles in France, 1848-1850*, considers the successes and failures of urban insurgency, and concludes:

> Even in the classic time of street fighting, therefore, the barricade produced more of a moral than a material effect. It was a means of shaking the steadfastness of the military. If it held out until this was attained, then victory was won; if not, there was defeat (1934: 14).

According to Engels, the barricades' effectiveness declined partly because "the spell of the barricade was broken". Whereas before, soldiers facing the barricades would be convinced that they were not merely facing a gathering of individuals, but a manifestation of 'the people', once the rhetorical spell was broken, they saw only "rebels, agitators, plunderers, levelers, the scum of society" (14).

Traugott consciously seeks to lift this 'spell', in order to reveal the production of social movements from collective actions.[7] He argues that barricading became, with each repetition, an increasingly ritualised act loaded with "symbolic and sociological functions" (1993: 317). Each new instance of barricading was also a re-enactment of previous barricades. During the Paris Commune, the Communards were eager to have themselves photographed with their barricades. In doing this, they reinforced the spectacular and performative nature of their constructions.[8]

A barricade of the Paris Commune, on the rue des Amandiers, 1871.

Haussmann spent the years leading up to 1871 converting Paris into a network of linked monuments, which were cleared and set apart, freed from their engagement in the fabric of the city. An image space was created for viewers to stand back and see the monuments as free-standing sculptures: Paris became a monumental gallery. In contrast, the barricades aligned more closely with

Benjamin's description of the new arts – the mass media: they were reproducible, and their ability to function even depended on their reproduction. For Benjamin, like architecture generally, they were perceived in a state of distraction, as a background or stage for events: "A man who concentrates before a work of art is absorbed by it ... In contrast, the distracted mass absorbs the work of art" (1999: 232). As performance, the barricades were oriented towards the masses, whose interpretation and participation was invited. In contrast, the boulevards divided the city into segments, in which preselected art objects could be apprehended with the gaze of the gallery patron.

Material Constructions

Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables* (1862) includes a fictionalized account of an uprising and descriptions of the monumental barricades of the 1848 June Days, of which Hugo was an eyewitness. The Saint-Antoine barricade was three storeys high and seven hundred feet long:

> It ran from one end to the other of the vast mouth of the Faubourg – that is to say, across three streets. It was jagged, makeshift and irregular, castellated like an immense medieval survival ... Everything had gone onto it, doors, grilles, screens, bedroom furniture, wrecked cooking stoves and pots and pans, piled up haphazard, the whole a composite of paving-stones and rubble, timbers, iron bars, broken window-panes, seatless chairs, rags, odds and ends of every kind – and curses ... The Saint-Antoine barricade used everything as a weapon, everything that civil war can hurl at the head of society ... a mad thing, flinging an inexpressible clamour into the sky... It was a pile of garbage, and it was Sinai (Hugo, 1982: 989-990).

An 1848 military reconnaissance report similarly notes mounds up to five metres wide and of widely varying heights (Price, 1996: 90). Their basic material was the street paving, which was torn up and piled, stacked or mounded. Mounding was typically supplemented by piling up whatever material was to hand: construction materials, furniture, rubbish, carriages, and the whole of Hugo's heterogeneous litany. Sometimes, barricades stretching part-way across the street were staggered, permitting revolutionaries to pass without needing to climb over. The patch of bare earth left by tearing up paving stones was occasionally dug out to form a pit in front of the barricade. Some barricades were built as walls with eyelets, firing slots, or larger holes for improvised pipe-cannons and appropriated artillery.[9]

In contrast, the two-storey barricade of the Faubourg de Temple was built with military precision:

> A view from above enabled one to ascertain its thickness: it was mathematically even from top to bottom. Its grey surface was pierced at regular intervals with almost invisible loopholes, like dark threads. The street bore every sign of being deserted: all doors and windows were closed. The wall, erected across it, a motionless, silent barrier, had made of it a cul-de-sac in which no person was to be seen, no

sound heard. Bathed in the dazzling June sunshine, it had the look of a sepulchre ... immaculate in design, flawless in alignment, symmetrical, rectilinear and funereal, a thing of craftsmanship and darkness (Hugo, 1982: 991).

For Hugo, these two constructions expressed two aspects of the revolution: defiance and silence; the dragon and the sphinx; "a roaring open mouth" and a mask. These oppositional pairs align with the two poles of barricade construction: the mound and the wall.

Barricades disrupt the proper relations of the city. Things are displaced and repurposed, weaponised and, as Hugo puts it, hurled at the head of society. Engravings of the fighting in the region of Saint-Antoine show the air filled with cabinets, tables, chairs and paving stones. On the second and third floors of buildings overlooking the barricade, armed insurgents took up position and fired or threw material down onto the heads of advancing troops. A network of supporting passages was established through gardens and houses, disused land and alleyways. Interior passages were made by breaking through the walls of the houses alongside the barricade, so barricaders could move up and down the street rapidly under cover.

Barricades and boulevards produced two distinct regimes of perception in the city. Under the regime of the barricades, the city became visible as a continuous field of material: a landscape. In 1915, Irish revolutionary James Connolly, recommending barricading as a tactic, argued that the city was, strategically, a landscape: "A mountainous country has always been held to be difficult for military operations owing to its passes or glens. A city is a huge mass of passes or glens formed by streets and lanes" (1915). Under the regime of the barricades, divisions into tenancies and properties were no longer respected. Space and materials were appropriated, shared and stolen as the barricaders converted the city into a continuous field of urban matter, to be traversed or tunnelled through. In view of the city as a continuous field, previously obvious partitions and distinctions suddenly appeared irrelevant, incomprehensible.

In the wake of 1848, the boulevards were the state power's forceful response to such disruption, reinforcing civic order and shoring up the existing distribution of the sensible. Everything was allocated its proper place in the new urban structure, a place determined according to imperial coordinates. If the distribution of the sensible acts to allocate places, to determine what is visible and invisible (what can be perceived or apprehended and what cannot), then how did the boulevards determine social relations? In his memoirs, Haussmann wrote with pride about having erased certain locations from Paris: the Rue Transnonain, site of a massacre in 1834, and the Rue de Rempart, where Haussmann himself had been caught in the fighting in 1830. In their place, his works made visible the sites of centralized power. The Rue de Rivoli, for example, was extended to form a broad road and a line of sight from the Courbevoie barracks to the Place de la Bastille in the region of Saint-Antoine, that hotbed of discontent. Visual axes and perspective served as focussing tools. On the boulevards, people were subjected to vanishing-points made to coincide with the monuments of power. A joke of the period was that the Avenue de l'Opéra was positioned to afford patrons a view of the Emperor's gatehouse (see Jordan 1995: 185-210).

The new city privileged the shoppers in the arcades, the opera patrons and all who had leisure to stroll the boulevards. At the time of Haussmann's work, some described the latter as being like deserts.[10] The new spaces of Paris – broad, open, gas lit – and particularly the new meeting-places, such as Charles Garnier's Opéra, not only made individuals visible, but showcased them.

Haussmann perceived the city as a body to be operated on. To him, civil unrest was an urban malaise, a sickness resulting from a cramped and insalubrious urban fabric.[11] Under the fresh autocracy of the Second Empire, Haussmann cut strategic routes that separated out and surrounded troubled areas, relieved pressure points and alleviated density. The lines and crossings of the new boulevards set the parts of the city into proper relations. Long perspectives connected distant parts of the city into a well-defined figure. As the state took on the role of oversight and action, a distinction became apparent between those operating in the city, and those operating on the city.[12]

Collective subjectivity

On the other hand, the barricades produced a view of the city which rendered visible a collective subject, as a communal construction. The number and anonymity of the barricaders, and the speed at which barricades were constructed, lead to a tendency amongst historians to refer to instances of barricading as almost spontaneous eruptions: "barricades were springing up all over" (Duveau, 1967: 167). The barricades were not just individual structures but formed an architecture at the scale of the city. Their distributed nature and anonymity enabled those behind them to say 'we' at an urban scale. During barricade construction, passers-by were each invited to contribute a paver. Construction became a means of engaging the disengaged, of converting observers into participants.

No wonder Haussmann was suspicious of the masses. A document from his office describes them as, "a floating mass of workers … of nomad renters ... an accumulation of men who are strangers to each other, who are attracted only by impressions and the most deplorable suggestions, who have no mind of their own" (in Jordan, 1995: 217). To him, only cultured individuals counted as citizens of Paris, and he complained of the displaced masses "who compromise the signification of the vote by the weight of their unintelligent votes" (334). Since the masses could not articulate their democratic voice correctly, they were a burden on Paris, fouling up the democratic process. As long as people remained part of the "floating mass ... attracted only by impressions and the most deplorable suggestions" (217) and without a mind of their own, they could not appear as individuals.

Gustave Le Bon inaugurated one of the most influential nineteenth century theories of collectivity, crowd psychology, which arose from his studies of the Great Revolution of 1789. In *The Crowd: A study of the popular mind* (1895), Le Bon writes:

> Under certain given circumstances, and only under those circumstances, an agglomeration of men presents new characteristics

10. Le Corbusier writes of Haussmann's reception by the Chamber of Deputies: "One day, in an excess of terror, they accused him of having created a desert in the very center of Paris! That desert was the Boulevard Sébastopol" (cited in Benjamin, 1999: 129).

11. "The urgency of urban renewal infused the language of critics and reformers - the discourse of salubrity, cleansing, aerating, movement – with political meaning. Paris was sick, moribund, suffocating" (Jordan, 1995: 185).

12. Haussmann "did not make a practice of visiting the various municipal projects except on ceremonial occasions, when he conducted the emperor or some visiting dignitary around a building site. His plans for the city were realized abstractly, geometrically, on a map. His working map was not a physical map of the city, with buildings and monuments depicted, but an abstract expression of the space occupied by Paris" (Jordan, 1995: 174-175). But all of Haussmann's labours could not prevent the barricades of the Paris Commune in 1871. "What Haussmann's destruction of the rabbit warren of streets in eastern Paris had done was transform barricades and urban insurrection from a cottage industry to a substantial and sophisticated undertaking" (Jordan 1995: 181). The barricades of the Commune clot the body of Haussmann's city, obstructing the flow of pedestrians, vehicles and commerce; and disrupting the structure of public and private space once again. On cleaning up after the barricades, see Chauvaud, 'L'élision des traces. L'effacement des marques de la barricade à Paris' in Corbin and Mayeur (1997: 267-281).

very different from those of the individuals composing it ... A collective mind is formed, doubtless transitory, but presenting very clearly defined characteristics ... It forms a single being, and is subjected to the law of the mental unity of crowds (Le Bon, 2001: 4).

Le Bon regards the subjection of the individual personality to the psyche of the crowd as an actual physical effect. The body enters a primitive state of suggestibility close to hypnosis. By "the mere fact that he forms part of an organised crowd," a man descends several "rungs in the ladder of civilisation. Isolated, he may be a cultivated individual; in a crowd, he is a barbarian – that is a creature acting by instinct" (Le Bon, 2001: 19). A crowd attains its mental unity at the expense of individual civility and intelligence. It is an act of barbarism to resign one's individual will in order to participate in a crowd, and there is no communicating with a barbarian. Le Bon's theory of collectivity invalidated the voice and presence of collectives, and helped police the existing distribution of the sensible.[13]

Rancière refers to those who are assigned not merely a subordinate role in society, but the role of voicelessness, as the *sans part* - "the part of those who have no part"(Rancière, 1998: 9). The *sans part* are those rendered incomprehensible by a given distribution of the sensible. In the boulevards, it was for 'the mass' to play this role: there was no place assigned to collectives. 'The mass' was not strictly the poor, although the two often coincided (money being one of the key mechanisms for gaining purchase in the city and attaining the status of an individual). Although subordinate within the structures of Imperial Paris, the poor were thinkable as objects of charity, crime, or labour. It was the collective that was unthinkable, *sans part*, in the boulevards. The partition of the sensible, Paris' material urban elements, was distributed to assign places to individuals, not to masses or crowds. However, with the barricades, the collective, as *sans part*, rose and insisted on its ability to speak.

The ends of barricading

The barricades instituted an active, participatory and dynamic version of the city. In contrast, the boulevards policed a static and hierarchical order. The barricades were what Rancière calls a moment of politics, a disruption by the *sans part* of the distribution of the sensible that excludes them. The boulevards were on the side of the police, of the implicit law that reinforces the existing distribution of the sensible.

In staging the conflict of the two regimes here, they are compared on more or less equal terms. However, this is not fully representative of the situation. While Haussmann's regime persisted into the twentieth century, the regime of the barricades only ever lasted for short intervals. Sometimes these intervals ended with the overthrow of the state, and the substitution of an alternative order, and sometimes they were brought to an end by failure.

After 1871, the barricades' strategic function had lost much of its effectiveness. Although Haussmann's interventions had not been able to prevent barricading,

they had certainly made the city less hospitable towards it. Also, military techniques and tools had improved. Few barricades could hold out against artillery and regular infantry. Nevertheless, the barricades maintained a symbolic afterlife in Communist writing and practice. Barricades always had a literal and strategic, as well as a metaphorical, performative function. By 1871, the balance had shifted significantly towards the metaphorical.

Metaphor exists in the passage from the literal to the figurative (see Goodman, 1968, and Grey, 2000, for example). When meaning is carried over from a concrete context to a non-literal one, it disrupts the familiar and generates new perception. To remain effective, as Goodman puts it, "metaphor requires attraction as well as resistance" (69). It is only in the interchange between attraction and resistance, between the literal and figurative contexts, that metaphor enables us to see differently. In Rancière's thought, according to Brian Holmes, "the place-changing action of metaphor – one thing or person for another – is what allows the creation or extension of a community of speaking subjects" (Holmes, 2001).

In Rancièrian terms, the large-scale spatial contention in Paris in the nineteenth century was "a conflict over what is meant by 'to speak', and over the very distribution of the sensible that delimits the horizons of the sayable" (2004: 4). The conflict enacted between the barricades and the boulevards is a conflict over what 'the public' is: how it is visible, and what ability it is accorded to speak. This specific instance points to the role of architecture in general. What is it, if not the arrangement and distribution of spaces, times and forms of activity? Architecture engages in distributing and redistributing the sensible: making visible, audible, perceptible. The city is not merely a reflection of a political conflict that occurs at another level; and the ephemeral architecture of the barricades effected a redistribution of the sensible, of a material politics that was not merely the mirror of an abstract politics occurring elsewhere.

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Striving for a Coming Community
and the Question of a Life

Hélène Frichot

Introduction

The concepts of the coming community, which we discover in Giorgio Agamben's work, and of a future people, treated by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in *What is Philosophy?,* appear to be utopian formulations of community. They seem to forestall, indefinitely, the arrival or satisfaction of community, making it an impossible project. Yet, to assume the perpetual deferral of the coming community does not allow for the ontological and ethical striving that participates, not in a fixed idea of community, but in a fluid structure that opens up the possibility for new forms of collective sociability. I would like to argue that the striving for a coming community, and the formation of a future people, is an ethico-aesthetic activity suffused with an affirmative joy that we can associate with Deleuze's treatment of the concept of a life. The insistence on the indefinite article, *a* life, determines that no life in particular can be denominated, but that the singularity of any life can participate in community. While admitting that utopia is not the best possible word, Deleuze and Guattari stress that utopia as an idea can become useful through an active engagement with contemporary geopolitical problems (Deleuze and Guattari, 1994: 100); for example, the question of refuge.

Within the specific limits of the discipline of architecture, how can we frame a utopia (no-where) for the problems (now-here) of the present? The architectural theorist, Reinhold Martin, has recently speculated on what he calls utopian realism as a means of transforming feelings of helplessness. This vision is directed not at the distant, inaccessible future, but suggests that in the present things can be otherwise (2005: 5). With such a vision of hope in mind, this essay will address ways in which the concepts of a coming community, a future people and a life can be activated as a practical utopian attitude; an attitude that helps to confront the problems of present architectural discourse and production in a globalized world, where socio-political relations have become increasingly fraught. This essay cannot offer a fixed answer to the question of what kind of architecture will solve the problem of a coming community. Instead, what I attempt here is the articulation of different philosophical constructions of community, to suggest ways in which architecture might reframe its material and theoretical projects.

1. In a similar vein, Agamben insists that the concept of a life constitutes a pressing problem for a coming philosophy, one that can be returned to a practical calling (Agamben, 1999: 238).

2. An alternative term for composition developed by Deleuze and Guattari is assemblage. Different assemblages, for instance, machinic assemblages and collective assemblages of enunciation, combine bodies, actions, passions, and acts, statements and incorporeal transformations respectively. See Deleuze and Guattari (1987).

3. In the English translation by Anne Boyman, we find the term beatitude diluted by being replaced with the term, bliss.

The Structure of the Coming Community

The structure of the coming community allows us to address contemporary problems, which remain with us as part of our legacy, which demand our attention in the present, and which threaten to pass into the future unresolved unless we take up their challenge. To do so, we need to think, using creative, conceptual processes in the ever mobile and elastic present. As Deleuze suggests: "to think means to be embedded in the present-time stratum that serves as a limit: what I can see and what I can say today?" He adds: "thought thinks its own history (the past), but in order to free itself from what it thinks (the present) and be able finally to 'think otherwise' (the future)" (1988: 119). To frame a practical philosophy, Deleuze turns to 17th century Dutch philosopher, Benedict de Spinoza, for whom the theme of a life evolves through the diminution and increase in our power to act in a world. The greater our capacity to act, the stronger our force of existence, and the more open we are to being affected. Of our relations and acts of creation across a common plane of immanence, Deleuze suggests: "it is a long affair of experimentation, requiring a lasting prudence" (125).[1] The ethico-aesthetic task of inventing a new people, and a new future, is never one that can be satisfied once and for all.

What is required is the understanding that we are never separate from our common world, and that we do not know in advance what we are capable of, nor what good or bad compositions of the socio-political we might enter into. Deleuze argues that there are "laws of composition and decomposition of relations which determine both the coming into existence of modes, and the end of their existence" (1990: 211). Every thing, person, institution, comes into being through a series of relations, and is transformed in response to encounters, new situations and the admixture of further materials and relations. "When a body encounters another body, or an idea another idea, it happens that the two relations combine to form a more powerful whole, and sometimes one decomposes the other, destroying the cohesion of its parts" (1988: 19). From an architectural point of view, it is important to apprehend that these compositions are not only assembled from the socio-political relations between people, their thoughts and actions.[2] In the midst of these relations, different kinds of architectural materials and surrounds, and different kinds of human and other bodies intermingle. Architecture can augment forms-of-life by recognizing that its material is animate *and* inanimate, made up not only of steel, concrete and glass, but also of the social relations between people. New compositions arise through explorative experimentation. Existence becomes an ethical test, though not to determine what is right or wrong. Rather, it determines whether life is augmented or diminished, depending on what compositions it enters into (Deleuze, 1988: 40-41). Whether at the scale of the single cell, the human body, the building, or the institution, these formations are made coherent by relations and compositions, or decompositions, in response to different situations.

Beatitude is a perplexing Spinozist concept, or, rather, a state of being, which is of especial importance in Deleuze's late essay, *Immanence: A Life … A life*, or that which participates in absolute immanence, is said to achieve complete potential, and complete beatitude (Deleuze, 2001: 27).[3] An entire chapter of Deleuze's *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza* is dedicated to this important concept, which frequently confuses secular audiences. Through the concept of beatitude,

Deleuze and Guattari describe how Spinoza gives infinite movement to thought: "there he attains incredible speeds, with such lightning compressions that one can only speak of music, of tornadoes, of wind and strings" (1994: 48). While this paper aspires to arrive at the conceptual moment of beatitude, a turn in experience that transports us to an image of thought, it will in all likelihood, and perhaps necessarily, fail.[4] What I will focus on is the ethical striving for, and composition of, the coming community, and a future people, which is driven by a striving toward beatitude, or what is also known as Spinoza's third kind of knowledge. To achieve this I will, alongside Agamben, and Deleuze and Guattari's work, pass briskly through Jean-Luc Nancy's concept of the inoperative community.[5] Aside from an orientation directed toward a future, Deleuze, Agamben, and Nancy all describe a circulation of singularities in their formulations of a community to come. I propose that architecture is at the same time composed of singularities, and can be seen as that medium in which further singularities co-mingle.

Giorgio Agamben's Whatever Singularities

Agamben's coming community is presented to us as a series of fragments, more affective than effective in their argumentation. Agamben does not even give a description of the coming community, which we are to conceptually place in conjunction with a coming philosophy and a coming politics. Instead, he intimates that there is no such community, that it is perhaps nowhere, and, as such, utopian. The coming community appears to be without a place; what's more, it appears to be a community that has never been. Resisting identification as this or that thing, the coming community is patched together out of what Agamben names 'whatever singularities', co-mingling and without identifiable attributes (Agamben, 1993: 85). A difficulty arises here with respect to what can be said about architecture if it cannot be ascribed attributes.

The 'whatever singularities' composing Agamben's coming community own no common ground, no set of beliefs or practices that conjoin them; they merely appropriate belonging as such, according to a structure of being-*such* (1993: 2). Agamben argues that this is the greatest threat the coming community can level against the state-apparatus. If the state has no means to identify the outlines of this community, how can it placate, order and contain it? We might add that this does not necessarily stop the state from denominating identity. For instance, a community of suspect others may be manufactured on the basis of perceived threat, as in the war against terror, or in the treatment of refugees in the Australian context. In contrast, the striving for a coming community requires that the citizen learn to acknowledge the refugee that he or she is. In *We Refugees*,[6] Agamben goes so far as to suggest that our political survival depends on the recognition that we are all, in one way or another, refugees: "The refugee is perhaps the only thinkable figure for the people of our time and the only category in which we may see today … the forms and limits of a coming political community" (2000: 16). We slowly realize that the so-called citizen has, in a global state of exception, or emergency, become as vulnerable as the refugee.

Agamben asks us to look in the direction of the camp and the figure of the refugee (rather than the nation-state and the figure of the citizen) to begin to imagine

4. Through the concept of beatitude Deleuze and Guattari describe how Spinoza gives infinite movement to thought: "there he attains incredible speeds, with such lightening compressions that one can only speak of music, of tornadoes, of wind and strings" (1994: 48).

5. I will not directly address Blanchot's unavowable community, which is made in response to Nancy. Though Blanchot's murmur might still be heard asking whether it is possible to belong to any community at all, especially that community to which we are obliged to avow our allegiance.

6. This essay is translated as "Beyond Human Rights" in Agamben (2000). Its original title, "We Refugees", is inspired by an essay written by Hannah Arendt, also called "We Refugees" (1943).

a community to come (2000: 16). But how might we begin to imagine a coming community which – as Mark Holland suggests regarding Blanchot's concept of community – may "never constitute a community except in this mode of 'yet to be'"? (1996: 188). The formulation of a coming community as a state for which we might yearn, but which remains always just out of grasp, only appears to deny the very immanent particularities of a here and now. The permanent flux inherent in the concept of a coming community is akin to becoming, that is, a transformative metamorphosis that draws us into the sphere of life, so that new forms-of-life might be created. Architecture can contribute here, not so much in terms of fixed attributes of durability, beauty, or utility, but by opening up a flexible and responsive material field for new forms-of-life to emerge. Encompassing an intimate relationship with the present as it passes, and expanding into the past as into the future, the coming community does not have to be located in an evasive 'yet to be'. Finally, the coming philosophy must take the concept of life, or *a* life, as its pressing concern (Agamben, 1999: 238).

Jean-Luc Nancy's Singular Plural Being

In contrast, Nancy's coming community has always already arrived. Paradoxically, this does not mean that the necessity of heeding its coming is in any way diminished. In his essay *The Inoperative Community*, Nancy argues against the most ancient myth of the Western world: the conception of a lost community as a lost capacity after which we still yearn (1991: 9). For Agamben, the coming community has never been; for Nancy, community has never been lost, and there is no such person as the one who has nothing in common. Even in the extreme context of the concentration or extermination camp, where we discover the "will to destroy community", we can also discover resistance (35). From time to time, such resistance has become visible in Australian refugee camps; for instance, through acts of arson, hunger strikes, lip sewing, or successful and unsuccessful attempts at escape.

Nancy identifies community as a "resistance to immanence" (1991: 35): "It is precisely the immanence of man to man, or it is man, taken absolutely, considered as immanent being par excellence, that constitutes the stumbling block to a thinking of community" (1991: 3). This move away from immanence seems to pit Nancy against Deleuze. However, the immanence Nancy critiques places the human subject at its centre. On Deleuze's plane of immanence, neither subject nor object is given prominence, but relations between different moments of becoming appear briefly only to fade away again. Nancy's community is about *compearing*: an event of singularities, or singular beings, appearing together, a co-appearance that exposes us to our very finitude (1991: 28). Equally, it depends on the concept of *partage*, a sharing out or division of singular being: "at the limit, the exposition of singular beings to one another and the pulse of this exposition: the compearance, the passage, and the divide of sharing" (1991: 38). An incomplete passage of sharing conjoins at the same time as it splits us apart, by turn distinguishing us, and making us indistinguishable. Nancy calls this an "exposing-sharing" (29), that is, the paradoxical construction of the singular plural. Nancy's community, which has never been lost, while at the same time never achieving completion, participates in a coming: "And what remains thus, or what is *coming* and does not stop coming as what remains, is what we call *existence*" (Nancy, 1997: 132). As such, the passage of the coming community

remains inconclusive (35). Importantly, community is not a work to be produced, though it might be imagined through the creative impulses of writing, art or architecture. These creative practices should not be concerned with erecting monuments, but with facilitating action for the time being. For instance, in a striving for community, the monumentalizing impulse of architecture would have to be redirected to more provisional ends. Despite his questioning of immanence, Nancy shares with Deleuze a belief in the emancipatory promise of the creative act, as well as a formulation of community that does not anticipate a moment of completion. In unison with Agamben, Nancy is also insistent that community owns no essential attributes, but, instead, is an ongoing activity.[7]

The Ethico-Aesthetic Practice of Concept Creation

Like Nancy, Deleuze and Guattari believe that what a future people have in common is resistance: "their resistance to death, to servitude, to the intolerable, to shame and to the present" (1994: 110). Importantly, a resistance to capture, in a movement of absolute deterritorialization (101), provides the potential for a new earth and a new people. Deleuze and Guattari use the concept of utopia as a figure of political promise, as a critical point from which the present milieu can consider itself and its pressing problems. They appropriate Samuel Butler's formulation of *Erewhon* (utopia) to designate not only no-where, but also now-here: the patch of new earth where we can pitch our tent for the meantime. A provisional architecture, modest in its aspirations and durable only for as long as the immediate circumstances dictate, could provide a space of potential for this kind of realist utopia.

The coming community of a future people circulates around the construction of new concepts and the identification of contemporary problems. Unlike Nancy's inoperative community, it seems to have work to do. Deleuze and Guattari tell us that a concept is acquired by "inhabiting, by pitching one's tent, by contracting a habit" (1994: 105), but concepts can also be repulsive, and some tents become despicable in their distribution and use. Concepts, much like built architectural forms, can create life possibilities but can also restrict forms-of-life. In any event, the creation of concepts calls for a place where philosophy and art, life and concept can converge, a place to which we can proceed according to a practical, ethico-aesthetics and where the coming community can engage in what Deleuze describes as "the problem of the work of art yet to come" (Deleuze, 1990: 248). This work must constantly resist the deadliness of banality, and the insistence of opinion and cliché. We can work through the power of concept creation as an ethico-aesthetic activity, but first we must increase our power so that we are capable of creative activity.

One of the most radical aspects of Deleuze and Guattari's creative philosophy is that concept creation – as well as the construction of affects and percepts of art, the propositions or functions of science, even the framing capacity of architecture – constitutes ethical and properly political activity. Foucault wrote of Deleuze and Guattari's first collaborative work, *Anti-Oedipus*, that it was a work of ethics, the first book of ethics to be written in France for quite a long time (1983: xiii). The last book Deleuze and Guattari collaborated on was *What is Philosophy?*. In pursuing the restless question of the title late in their lives, they were not merely reflecting

7. The temporal orientation of Deleuze and Guattari's future people, or a people to come, also sets us upon a passage toward the future, but with less passivity than evinced by Nancy. Parenthetically, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri argue in their influential book, *Empire*, that Deleuze and Guattari have not gone far enough here. They suggest that the pair manage to articulate a future people "only superficially and ephemerally, as a chaotic, indeterminate horizon marked by the ungraspable event" (Hardt and Negri, 2000: 28).

8. Passive, though passionate passage.

9. Community incorporates singularities in corporeal mixtures and through the circulation of incorporeal effects. For Agamben these are whatever singularities, for Nancy they are singular beings, or singular plural beings as distinct from individuals. Finally, for Deleuze, singularities are less to do with singular beings, as they contribute to both physical states of affairs and to incorporeal, immaterial events: "Singularities are turning points and points of inflection: bottlenecks, knots, foyers, and centers; points of fusion, condensation, and boiling points; points of tears and joy, sickness and health, hope and anxiety, 'sensitive points'" (1990: 52). Singularities are not to be confused with the individual, the subject or the object. For instance, Deleuze tells us that very small children, who might be viewed on the one hand as all alike, have singularities, "a smile, a gesture, a funny face"(2001: 30). Singularities are turning points between affections and processes of creation and contribute as much to the constitution of community as they do to the question of a life. Manuel Delanda, commenting on Deleuze, insists upon a scientific account of singularities that takes us back to Henri Poincaré (2002: 14, 15). Singularities, for Delanda, suggest the long-term tendencies of a given system and lead to new ways of viewing the genesis of physical forms. While Delanda's definition might prove reassuring to some, it is worthwhile remembering that even if the genealogy of Deleuze's use of the concept of singularities can be returned to mathematics and geometry, the philosopher is far more interested in what concepts can do once placed in contemporary assemblages.

10. As well as the parallel passage of thought (mind) and extension (body), and the parallel movement of theory and practice.

on lives well lived, but laying out a new plan for ethical becoming. In Deleuze and Guattari's shared project, creativity and ethical activity operate simultaneously. Their project requires a double becoming, a zone of exchange between philosophy and non-philosophy that enables the constitution of a people to come, and a new earth (1994: 109). Though, at first, the temporal structure of the coming community might appear to require perpetual deferral, the ontological and ethico-aesthetic striving we experience toward the constitution of community should not be under-estimated.[8]

In response to Deleuze's essay, *Immanence: A Life …*, Agamben argues that Deleuze's attempts to account for a life remain thwarted. A life is not something that can be represented, only intimated. A life is impossible to approach directly, for it shies from our face-to-face confrontation. Yet, something happens on the approach to this question that is inextricably interconnected with the problem of a coming community, a future people and a new earth. With respect to the question of a life, Deleuze writes: "the life of the individual gives way to an im-personal and yet singular life that releases a pure event freed from the accidents of internal and external life" (2001: 28). However, we should not forget that the "singularities and the events that constitute a life coexist with the accidents of the life that corresponds to it" (2001: 29).[9] Our passivity and our passions, the life we lead, make up the necessary length of the passage toward community, and toward the profound stillness of Spinoza's third kind of knowledge, beatitude. For Nancy, this passivity is non-productive; for Deleuze (after Spinoza), we find it is a matter of progressing from passive to active affections by conjoining life and concepts; that is, it is a matter of becoming active and creating concepts that enable us to enact very material tests on the world in which we are immersed.

Deleuze and Guattari suggest that the passage from joyful passive affections to active affections (Spinoza), or from the inadequate (yet adequate enough) ideas and images of the imagination to the adequate ideas of reason,[10] is more akin to the uncoordinated leaps of a dog than the explanations of a reasonable person. Caught up in haphazard movements, we proceed through an apprenticeship, which advances in a futural direction not only toward an increase in the power of corporeal and intellectual being, but toward the construction of signs of art that help inaugurate the emergence of another world. Thus, we take a passage that will eventually lead us toward Spinoza's beatitude, as a third kind of knowledge, and through a network of passages along which one becomes, in turn, both lost and found. We will always find ourselves amidst sad and joyful passions. Power constitutes a passage, or point of conversion, the capacity to shift from passions to actions at a moment where "we stop striving to think the world and begin to create it" (Hardt, 1993: 59). We – however this 'we' is differentially composed – arrive at a hiatus of sorts, a pause in our striving, only to continue again into the active creation or construction of concepts, an ethico-aesthetic activity that is fundamental to the ongoing creation of community. Finally, the task is never complete; neither is community, as such, identified through determined attributes. By striving to create new kinds of social relations, and new forms-of-life in relation to environmental situations, community perpetually unfolds.

The Architectural Problem of the Contemporary Refugee Camp

As an ethical test of our existence, and the ramifications of our modes of being and becoming, we can begin to apply the above to real spatial coordinates. As Deleuze explains, this is not a moral test, but rather like the way in which "workmen check the quality of some material" (1990: 317). Ethics, in this context, is opposed to moral judgment, which determines in advance, according to a fixed code or imperative to act, how a situation will be assessed (Deleuze, 1988: 40). Applying the ethical test of existence is a difficult task, for there are no clear assessment criteria; we are grappling with contemporary problems in the midst of things. We are to remain attuned to how we affect others, and are affected in turn, and that we are never separable from our relations in and with a world. Agamben expressly includes the refugee in the midst of this 'we', and Deleuze allows not just for human, but animal and other bodies. In addition, Martin points out that: "we cannot use the pronoun 'we' to denote a self-consistent, geographically, culturally, or economically unified agent" (2006: 15). Any coming community is composed of diverse relations, compositions and decompositions. It is a matter of aspiring toward the best possible composition, given the situation at hand.

From the midst of things, which situates us upon a plane of immanence, the Australian processing and reception centre, that country's local rendition of a refugee camp, presents a contemporary problem. It could be argued that the camp does not constitute a problem in the arena of architectural endeavour. On the contrary, I would insist that it is part of the task of architecture to recognize the extent of the imbrication of the built environment with modes of life. The body, in its compositions, can be thought of in spatial terms; that is, that the body includes the coordinates of the architecture through which it moves. Within architecture it may discover itself captured in a bad composition, one that leads to its disintegration, or its decomposition.

If the desert camp at Woomera, South Australia, was a bad composition, the *Immigration Processing and Reception Centre* at Baxter, in the same state, is even worse. From the relative appearance of temporariness at Woomera (composed of so many tents and reterritorialized existing military infrastructures), a permanent and rigid, spatial structure has evolved at Baxter. This purpose-built desert camp, five hours drive from Adelaide, is arranged as a series of nine rectilinear compounds with chamfered corners, expressing a spare architecture. Further, each compound is organized around a grassed courtyard, turning upon its own independent universe, operating in isolation even from the desert setting. The detainees are further fragmented, isolated into groups based on gender, ethnicity, or on whether they can be collected in a family group, or whether they are a threat to themselves and others. The community composed here is arranged so as to form non-communicating cells, and attributes are forced upon the inmates as ready-made templates inhibiting active community formation. Relations between peoples and spaces is regulated and coagulated. The fragile compositions formed are apt to decompose.

Similar socio-political, and very real, material compositions, are also to be found in the midst of Australian cities; for example, in the suburban camps of Villawood

(Sydney) and Maribyrnong (Melbourne). They exemplify Agamben's intimation that the contemporary city is increasingly indistinguishable from the camp. At the end of tramline 57, the *Maribyrnong Immigrant Detention Centre (MIDC),* currently the only federal detention centre in Victoria, is set in the gradually, but obviously, gentrifying and redeveloping suburb of Maribyrnong. The briefest of histories of the site reveals different successive compositions, which suggest ways in which a coming community is either welcomed or rejected from within the body politic. Initially, the site was home to British and other migrants who used the original *Maribyrnong Migrant Hostel* as a transitory refuge before establishing a permanent home in Melbourne. In sharp contrast, the detention facilities today occupy a small wedge of land, a much reduced area of the former allotment. The larger part of the original site, now owned by Victoria University, houses a somewhat ramshackle student village into which the historic buildings have been seamlessly transformed. On either side of a high security wall, mandatory detention and student accommodation are set in a curious adjacency, while the land to the west is being developed into a housing estate.

Inside the razor wire fence of the camp, building works continue to cramp the living conditions of the mostly invisible inmates (see Frichot, 2006). An ethical test applied to the potential composition of a coming community fails here on a number of counts. The camp is spatially segregated, which means that singularities are rendered immobile, thwarting the promise of new expressions of subjectivity. The identity of the camp's inmates is over-determined; they are figured as unwanted others, and a possible threat to the broader community. The potential of the coming community, as it pertains to the Australian context, is diminished exactly through this architectural process of exclusion and stigmatization. Thus, the camp reflects directly on the Australian body politic, negatively determining its attributes. However, this reflection is difficult to perceive for much of the body politic, due to successful attempts to render this suburban camp invisible. The architecture is resolutely non-descript, without expression, generally blank where it faces the outside world. The entire complex is set back from major roads and hidden from view.

From its inception as a migrant hostel after World War Two, to its present day composition of student village and detention centre (the latter surrounded by a double layer of fence and under constant electronic surveillance), the architecture of the site reflects the political attitude at our current socio-political juncture (see Frichot, 2006). It is important to remember that architecture never acts alone in such instances; it remains entangled with the actions effectuated by government policy, material infrastructures existing and new, the migrations of peoples, emerging subjectivities and so forth. Relations that circulate amidst a future people and a coming community have the potential to allow for the creation of socio-political compositions that augment life. In contrast, a composition such as the Australian camp generally removes the capacity to create, and particularly to imagine and create new forms of sociability and community. As Martin suggests, the architectural imagination needs to remain open to the promise that this is not the only possible world, and certainly not the best of all possible worlds (2006: 15). How might architecture, as a specific set of activities, create more positive compositions?

In the situation of the contemporary refugee camp, we discover the maximum of sad encounters, not just on the part of the asylum seeker, but on the part of those who seek to capture, contain and isolate them, even from their fellow inmates. Thus, the question of the composition of the camp, which decomposes the singularities captured within its confines, and impacts upon the ways in which a coming community might be imagined, becomes an ethical question in the Australian socio-political context today. Therefore, the test is how to concatenate joyful passions, passions that may facilitate common notions that orient active affections or joys toward the positive power of creation and even beatitude. The architectural theorist, Martin, has suggested two simple tasks for architecture: one aesthetic and the other territorial. Architects have the capacity to participate in the aesthetic creation of new built environments that participate in new forms of community. Likewise, architecture can participate in the reconsideration of territorial boundaries that presently dispossess those on the inside as well as those on the outside (Martin, 2006: 21). Yet, there can be no hard and fast moral or ethical rules, as these work against the possibility of responding to the particularities of each new encounter as it presents itself. Hardt suggests that Deleuze "posed the common notion and its process of assemblage as part of an ethical project (becoming active, becoming adequate, becoming joyful)"; but, he asks, "how can we recognize this project in properly political terms?" (Hardt, 1993: 108). If only we could learn to create our mixtures, and form our compositions with some confidence, for as Spinoza frequently reminds us, we are more apt to sad passions. Success or not, it is important to recognize that there are no lasting instructions toward the best possible way of composing community, nor of composing an architecture that responds to the promise of a future people. And since there is never just one approach to a happy life, a form-of-life, a people, a community, our compositions depend on a combination of chance and necessity. We will always wind up with something different, something that could not have been imagined beforehand, for we do not know in advance what we are capable of, nor what good or bad compositions of the socio-political we might enter into.

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PLZKLME

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Ross Liew, Please Kill Me, B/W photography, 2005.

And what I feel unites you and me is: we can locate in one another a similar yearning to be in a more just world. So I tried to evoke the idea that if we could come together in that site of desire and longing, it might be a potential place for community-building (hooks, 1991: 83).

I.

These sentences are from an interview with bell hooks where she discusses problems of female and Afro-American identity. What I find remarkable in her statement is the implicit idea of a universal notion of justice, and of overcoming potential or actual differences (between individuals, different genders, classes and ethnicities), toward a (utopian) realm of yearning and desire as "a potential place for community-building".

The realm of longing and desire for a more just world can be opposed to the world as it is (and, with little nuances, probably always has been): divided by ethnic, cultural, religious, economic and political differences, which affect some simply as an accumulation of economic and thereby political power; and others, since the twentieth century, as continuing economic and cultural depravation, prolonging colonization and imperialism.

Of course, one could dismiss bell hook's ideas as utopian, in the face of an accumulation of violent conflicts, waged in the name of 'justice' and, like the conflict in the Middle-East, cruelly ending in an almost infinite spiral of violence.

1. Nussbaum (1999: 129). On the same topic of *Female Genital Mutilation*, see Michael Ignatieff's surprisingly relativistic position *Human Rights as Politics and Idolatry* (2001: 72). He comments on Chinese politics: "The Great Leap Forward in China, in which between twenty-three and thirty million people perished as a result of irrational government policies implacably pursued in the face of their obvious failure, would never have been allowed to take place in a country with the selfcorrecting mechanisms of free press and political opposition. So much for the argument so often heard in Asia that people's 'right to development', to economic progress, should come before their right to free speech and democratic government" (90). Regarding the problems of "honour killing", or *namus*: in its name, six women were killed in Berlin in 2004, within six months. Until 2003, Turkish civil law, amended in 2005, provided in Art. 462 for mitigation in cases of provoked killings. In rural areas of Turkey, honour killings still hardly attract punishment. See also Schirrmacher (2007) and Böhmecke (2005).

2. See Anderson (1999: 115): "The claim to universalism is a shame. Universalism is mere globalism and a globalism, moreover, whose key terms are established by capital." See also Pollis & Schwab (1979: 1): Human rights are a "Western construct of limited applicability".

And, of course, there are valid arguments against the universalism (in the name of cultural diversity and different, culturally relative ideas of justice) implicit in hooks' text. From the perspective of liberal democracies female genital mutilation, honour killings and forced marriage, human rights violations in China, the caste system in India, etc., do not jell with the idea of a more just world, although they are often defended with reference to a particular cultural identity, or to a specific evolutionary situation.[1]

The assertion of universal human rights can also be rejected using the argument that they represent nothing more than the continuation of colonial expansion, the pursuit of class interests,[2] the globalization of Western Enlightenment principles, or the realization of a global 'internal politics', dominated by the West. However, this could be controverted by the juridical argument that the signatory states to the Declaration of Human Rights are obligated to accept and respect it, as a common law at least, and that by no means only Western delegates were involved in its drafting. There were also representatives of a multitude of ethnic and religious groups (see Morsink, 1999), which means that the colonial argument fails. In turn, this could be refuted by stating that Australian Aboriginals, American Hopi or New Zealand Māori (and an infinite number of other ethnic groups and indigenous nations, whose identity was, and still is, overarched by a post-colonial government) hardly had the opportunity to express their opinion of this document, let alone have it included.

Whereby the colonial argument regains its relevance. And so on. And so on.

There is no way that this text could solve what legions of lawyers, politicians and scholars could not. Therefore, I prefer to move on to my core subject and, having now sketched its approximate horizon, become more concise.

II.

What interests me is to explore how bell hooks' statement is relevant to the field of visual arts. I am a critic of 'identity-art' which centres, with tiresome obstinateness, on one's own particular cultural conditioning (or even simply one's own biographical background). No examples necessary. At each Biennale or Trienniale, curators compete to present new artistic examples, and to demonstrate the theme's topicality. Globalization, migration, identity: in a globalized and migrating art business, these are the central catchwords that many exhibition concepts hinge on.

The underlying, and constantly rehashed, formula can be described as follows: with 'globalization' as a rather diffuse but looming backdrop, an attempt is made to describe, or at least briefly illuminate and exemplify, the loss and reconfiguration of identity, and the conflict between different and specific cultural concepts of identity. The basic pattern: here, we find a multi-faceted and fragmented field of different ethnicities, cultural micro systems and individual biographies – a myriad of minorities fighting against oppression, depravation, razing and extermination; there, an aggressive, globalized and monolithic capitalism of Western provenance, whose expansion is accompanied by endangerment, colonization, if not effacement, of non-European concepts of life, self and world.

The art business dedicates itself to this undoubtedly serious struggle with a kind of preventative and simultaneously belated admission of guilt. Thus, it repeats, knowingly or unwittingly, what the colonialist West (who first produced the art business) has already inflicted on the rest of the world: assimilation, instrumentalization, incapacitation and paternalism. The resulting impression of a bad conscience does not seem to be without reason. The very same imperialist and colonialist West that, globally, caused endless, literally murderous, and still ongoing conflicts generates a concept of art, and especially a concept of modernism, which annexes without residue what assimilates itself to it (and radically expels as local, traditional and "anthropological" all that is not compatible). The art system is Western; the concept of art is Western; the concept of modernism is Western; the concept of contemporary art is Western. The big circus of the Bienniales touring around the world disseminates these concepts, with philanthropic missionary zeal and downright uncompromising, totalitarian commitment to the Good, until even the remotest archipelago has been reached.

Within the realm of art, as a realm of the 'As-If', the West provides platforms for the restitution and re-configuration of identity (and barely an artist rejects the offer to present him- or herself). The West allows – as a way to relieve its own guilt – what in reality continues to be denied: the right to be heard; the actual (that is, comprehensive and, particularly, economic) rather than the symbolic redress of colonial injustice; equal rights; the realization of an undamaged life. Because charges can be laid there, no justice has to be served here.

The realm of the 'As-If', of autonomous art, is exclusively legitimated by and beholden to its own laws and is independent of commissioners. In its autonomy, this art leaves the society it criticises ultimately unchallenged (Adorno, 1997: 226). However, this is exactly the problem of autonomous art, and of politically/ socially committed art, which is the poorer the more it wants to be directly involved. The relationship between art and society, between art and the problems it deals with, is reciprocally analogous to a fraternity sword-fight.[3] While the latter, staged in the realm of the 'As-If', has consequences in reality, the former confrontation is staged because the lack of consequences is guaranteed. Not even the little scandals about elephant's dung on paintings of the Virgin Mary can belie this fact.[4] And that provocations are still possible does not refute the argument that art, in its autonomy, is only very indirectly related to the real of society.

Therefore, in art business, the game with identities is precarious, and whoever has decided to play the game has decided to play the game of the West. 'Identity' is itself a Western idea, central to European philosophy since Aristotle, challenged for the first time by Nietzche and psychoanalysis, and, subsequently, shattered by deconstructivism and post-structuralism (see Hetherington, 1998). According to Lacan (1977), a rift passes right through us: nothing can heal it, just as nothing can heal us from the desire to close it. Without the notion of the self, without the notion of identity, the individual cannot exist. However, one can differentiate between the concept of personal, individual identity – as an anthropological necessity – and the concept of cultural identity – as a system of imprints we experience more or less passively, which we affirm more or less actively, and which we question, criticize, reject or endorse.

3. Lorenz (1974: 94). The English translation of "Comment Kampf", which Lorenz used in his text "Das Sogenannte Böse" (Vienna 1963) as fraternity sword-fight or "Chivalry" does not transport the meaning of the French "Comment" which can be translated as "Like…". It nevertheless transports the meaning of "Comment" as a rule of behaviour, especially in groups, which are defined by class distinctions.

4. In September 1999, the Brooklyn Museum of Art displayed an exhibit called "Sensations", in which a work by Chris Ofili was shown, a depiction of a half naked Virgin Mary, covered in elephant faeces. In October 1999, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani said that the BMA should have its funding pulled and should not be sponsored by the City of New York.

III.

5. This, of course, is also the case with theatre, literature and music.

6. See Emmerling (2006: 5).

7. See Garrett (2007: 46).

If I consider the work of art as an autonomous system that follows its own rules and objectifies subjectivity through the law of form, then this art work contains, on the one hand, more than the author could have intended. On the other, in the art work that generates objectifying propositions, she or he dissolves as a life-world subject. The art work is situated in a different frame of reference from any statement with non-artistic intentions, even if it is only by being positioned in the context of Art – that is, the entire institutional framework of art.[5]

Whoever positions his or her work in the context of Art (and where else should or could it be placed?) can no longer go back. The work is out there, contextualized by exhibitions, texts, interpretations. It is now, not only the product of objectification, but an object, a fact. The author's identity as a person – her/his individual and cultural identity – is irrelevant in the face of the work. What counts is the form into which the artistic subject has diffused.

This might sound as though the viewer and the work could enter into a relationship that is not disturbed or burdened by external (historical, political, cultural) differences and their inherent problems of understanding; as though the pure, completely transparent work existed on one side, and the completely unconditioned gaze on the other; as if, between the work and the viewer, an all but pure, uncontaminated flow of information and perception existed, in which every contingency has been extinguished. Of course, this is not my opinion; iconography, iconology and iconics (or what is now called *Bildwissenschaft* – science of the image) have demonstrated to what extent it is necessary to draw on all kinds of information (biographical and artist related information included) to be able to embed the work in a horizon of understanding and, thus, to make it accessible. However, this is relevant particularly for the arts which have become historical and, with the passing of time, have become records of their time. In contrast, what is required from a contemporary work of art (beyond the effort of understanding it) is to critique it. The more it is simply a symptom of its time, the poorer it is. What we may ask for, with good reason, is that the work of art provides us with an image of our time, or the opportunity to think the present in the mode of the concrete (Amman, 1997: 40f). This could almost be a definition of 'contemporary art'. When it comes to the determination of quality, a decisive criterion might be the degree to which this thinking of the present in the mode of the concrete succeeds, and with what degree of complexity and density. To assess this is not an authoritative act, but a taken-for-granted, and permanently demanded, capability of orientation in the present.

To clarify: it goes without saying that works like Francisco de Goya's, "Desastres de la Guerra" (1810–1820); Théodore Géricault's, "Raft of the Medusa" (1819); Otto Dix' graphic cycle, "The War" (1924); Peter Robinson's, "One lives" (2006);[6] or Michael Parekowhai's, "The Indefinite Article" (1990)[7] - and this is a quite random collection - partially gain their strength, as well as their appellative and emotional power, from their frames of reference. However, they owe this power primarily to the density by which they render formally objective subject matter, or the information contained in their frames of reference: that is, to the clarity of their elaboration.

Contrast this with art to which the buzzword 'relational aesthetics' (Nicolas Bourriaud) is often applied. This art operates quite differently: it derives its legitimacy entirely from extra-aesthetic categories, such as sincere political convictions, or the indictment of economic, political, or cultural grievances. Works by the Hohenbüchlers, by Thomas Hirschhorn,[8] or by the Long March Project claim legitimacy, not as autonomous works, but as 'committed art'. It is unclear what renders them formally different from the hands-on work of a street worker, and it is unlikely that these activities would attract much attention, were it not for the sleight of hand of locating them in the arts milieu (Auckland Art Gallery, 2007: 112-23). The infamy essentially consists in making temporary interventions that poke fun at severe minority problems through, for instance, funny architecture competitions and exhibitions for the notoriously humanistic art audience: in the end nobody stands to gain but the artist himself. He or she then moves on to the next critical engagement, a superficial globetrotter of starry-eyed idealism. Formally trivial and morally questionable, the artist uses the benefits both spheres provide – that of art and that of social and political engagement. In the sphere of art, he or she poses as a critic of the art work and as an agent of a new concept of art; in the sphere of politics, he or she purports to be an honest humanist and fighter for minority rights. I don't know what else to add, except that both the ethics of the arts, and the ethics of a social engagement that is lastingly committed to its object are, in the end, betrayed.

IV.

My objection to identity art is that, all too easily, it plays the game of the West, and all too compliantly accepts the 'As-If' compensation proffered by the art business. Willingly, one plays the trump card of minority-identity (against which there is no argument to win the trick), while the migrating, globalized art business unfurls, with a sorrowful face, the post-colonial backdrop and paints it black. Discussion about an art work as autonomous is hardly possible since, from the outset, the game is contaminated by a discourse of power.

It is not only that the post-colonialist discourse suffers, as does half the world, from the fact that colonialism survives in countless disguises (of which globalization is surely one) but it now involves new players. Nations like India, China, Iran and Northern Korea are among them and, in different ways, form our perception of the world while other, older protagonists play only modest roles. Not only has colonialism dropped its poison in every zone of contact, this demon is also passionately nurtured in the realm of the 'As-If' because nobody has to make real efforts to solve real problems: the art business is a palliative.

In his re-reading of Freud, Lacan has stringently elaborated the corrosion of substantial notions of identity that were initiated by structuralistic linguistics. For Lacan, desire is motivated by the subject's suffering from its insufficient capability to get hold of itself completely. The rupture between *je* and *moi* suffered by the subject fuels the endless play of longing and desire; and as the desired wholeness of the subject (which could claim identity beyond discourse) is continually missed, the conversation between *je* and *moi* never stops. It is this inherent difference that tears us apart, forces us to speak, even if this speaking is only fantasizing and prattling.

8. See Hirschhorn (2004: 133-148).

However, the concept of identity deployed in the art business operates with an ideal of substantiality, not with systems of difference, no matter to what extent the post-colonialist discourse of identity insists on difference. In identity art, difference, located by Lacan within the subject, can never be found in the individual or cultural subject itself. Difference is used only as a means to constitute otherness. This otherness is always conceived of as essential, block-like, monolithic and unhistorical: unhistorical, because identity art holds fast to the idea of a substantial identity, despite all recourse to historical developments. However, substance can only be conceived as not deformable by transformations that occur because of economic, political or cultural changes.

Even if Makere Stewart-Harawira insists that her description of traditional onto-logies and principles of indigenous knowledge is not intended to be essentialist (2005: 155),[9] I am at a loss what to see in it if not an essentialist generalization of indigenous knowledge, eyeball to eyeball with its mirror image of an essentialist, generalizing criticism of Western scientific principles (which certainly deserve criticism for many reasons). When I place Stewart-Harawira's sentence, "the important task was to find the proper pattern of interpretation" (155) in relation to René Descartes' idea that the most important task is "rightly to apply (the) vigorous mind" (1986: 3), I see it as an indication of how close both systems of knowledge are with regard to claims for universality. And did Adorno and Horkheimer (1969) not show that the possibilities for both freedom *and* barbarism are founded in exactly this idea: the "right" use of the "right" principles?

In a secular world, the substantial I (*Ich*) is the atrophied form of the soul; hence the martyr's, the prophet's and the saviour's gestures are deployed in the 'As-If' realm of art business, when the tales of the world's problems, grievances and salvation are spun.

However, if conversation, discourse, language and speech are not only motivated by the difference between the subject and all others, but also by the difference between me and myself; between what I am and what I know about myself (and also between what I know about myself and what I long to be); between *je* and *moi*, then the assertion of a substantial I (*Ich*) in identity art is radically anticommunicative.

Thus, there is a question about how communication can be conceived of in this constellation. As a leaning of the viewer towards the work, to listen and learn from what it, and the subject behind it, might say? As an opening of boundaries, a transgression of limits, a change of habits of reception? This is how scholars have defined the task of contemporary art for decades – a passepartout that sounds seditious but is really no more than a bourgeois bonmot.

When taken at its word, identity art does not seek communication, but simply posts statements. It is conservative in its continual delineation and consolidation of what has already been said, thought and asserted. It is affirmative, hermetic and (despite its pronouncement of substantiality) an art of the closed surface, not of plastic dimension.

The substance behind this surface is accessible neither to vision nor to discourse. Two surfaces clash which cannot enter into any form of communication because they are hermetically sealed.

The subject of identity art has always taken hold of itself, even if as imperilled. It is hieratic, lonely, fragile and tragic, and demands to be taken seriously. What imperils it never lies within itself, but always outside, with the Other, which it claims to be: one Other as monolithic as the other Other.

V.

The game of identity art is to establish an ambivalence that always impresses the stain of power on the Other. In terms of a substantial I (*Ich*), identity art produces a monadic closedness and ideal intactness (or evokes it in the image of damage) in which every threat to its integrity is blamed on the outer world. In a perfidious and paradox manner, identity art closes itself off from the world, while, nevertheless, shifting all the blame onto it. Because of these structural attributes, identity art is the perfect medium for the art business as a system of the 'As-If'. All too willingly, the artist intervenes where he or she has nothing to contribute, nor wants to contribute, to the solution of the problems he or she juggles with.

Identity art as a conservative art, as the manifestation or evocation of "This is me!", is incapable of unfurling the utopian horizon bell hooks and Adorno speak of. Utopia, not as a state that could be achieved offhand, right here and right now, if only everybody were full of good will and best intentions; utopia, rather, as a state, which to give up as impossible to achieve, even facing the uttermost improbability of its achievement, would simply mean to declare that the world, as it is, is the best of all possible worlds.

Identity art insists on 'difference' but does not incorporate it. In this regard, it differs significantly, in two respects, from what contemporary art can do and what is only fair to expect of it. It affirms prevailing circumstances without unfurling a horizon which would allow us to think beyond the current state of affairs. Identity art also suffers from a lack of self-reflexivity, which it tries to compensate for by an excess of moral appeals. This excess is fed by references to the discourse of power.

Moreover, in its insistence on 'difference', identity art is probably opposed to what Richard Rorty described as an indication of some form of progress – progress being defined as "an increase in our ability to see more and more differences among people as morally irrelevant" (1998: 11). When the discourse of 'art' and the discourse of 'power' intersect, difference becomes a moral category, and differences become morally relevant. Therein lies the tragic aspect of identity art. Beyond doubt, the West has deprived uncounted nations and peoples of their right to self-determination, their cultural integrity, their identity, and their economic potential. And, without doubt, art and cultural praxis can be a medium to restore this damaged integrity. However, I doubt that art is the appropriate arena to fight the fights that should be fought in the spheres where the real grievances still prevail: politics and economics.

VI.

My own arguments, too, suffer from an underlying universalism: the application of certain criteria, hopes, ideas in connection with art, which collide with other

10. "From a theoretical point of view, the very notion of particularity presupposes that of totality (even total separation cannot escape the fact that separation is still a type of relation between entities - the monads require a 'pre-established harmony' as a condition of their non-interaction). And, politically speaking, the right of particular groups of agents - ethnics, national or sexual minorities, for instance - can be formulated only as universal rights. The appeal to the universal is unavoidable once, on the one hand, no agent can claim to speak directly for the 'totality' while, on the other, reference to the latter remains an essential component of the hegemonic-discursive operation. The universal is an empty place, a void, which can be filled only by the particular, but which, through its very emptiness, produces a series of crucial effects in the structuration/destructuration of social relations. It is in this sense that it is both an impossible and a necessary object" (2000: 58).

11. "If rights conflict and there is no unarguable order of moral priority in rights claims, we cannot speak of rights as trumps. The idea of rights as trumps implies that when rights are introduced into a political discussion, they serve to resolve the discussion. In fact, the opposite is the case. When political demands are turned into rights claims, there is a real risk that the issue at stake will become irreconcilable, since to call a claim a right is to call it nonnegotiable, at least in popular parlance. Compromise is not facilitated by the use of rights claim language. So if rights are not trumps, and if they create a spirit of nonnegotiable confrontation, what is their use? At best, rights create a common framework, a common set of reference points that can assist parties in conflict to deliberate together" (2001: 20). Cf. Ignatieff (2000: 22 and elsewhere).

criteria, hopes and ideas, which in turn demand and deserve, if not universality, then at least unconditional respect. My argument against the essentialism of identity art is itself based on a concept of identity (Lacan), which can be criticized as essentialist and ahistoric, or transhistoric or a-temporal. In its radical criticism of an essentialist notion of the I and identity, Lacan's concept of identity is itself essentialist.

And even if Butler's concept of performativity (1990) could offer a way out – how could I be sure that this concept is not essentialist (nor, in this context, colonialist or imperialist)? The same question applies to Habermas' concept of discursive rationality (1981), Laclau's idea that all universalisms are subject to constant negotiation (by definition, incomplete and necessary at the same time) (2000),[10] or to Michael Ignatieff's concept of deliberation (2001).[11]

The only possible option seems to be to keep the discourse going, the argument or conversation between particularity and universalism. It bears affinity with the conversation between the *je* and the *moi*, it arises from a desire: the desire to understand (not to possess); the desire to be at home in a world, which is less characterized by boundaries and 'difference' but more by the quest for commonalities.

VII.

Assuming that the globetrotting curators' sophisticated diagnoses are right and we do live in a globalized world, then their much favoured identity art is a strange relic. It is also dishonest, hypocritical and bourgeois: an agent of political correctness in a world of the 'As-If'; a totalitarian instrument for the production of silence; the death-knell for all thought that moves outside the institutional framework; the end of communication.

Rather, what is needed is a culture of curiosity, of not-knowing, of constant questioning. In the place of the cult of identity, a culture of communication, of the insecure, of the debatable, of desire. A culture of doubt, of consultation, where identity is as precious as the dirt under everybody's fingernail: a bit that is left, impossible to get rid off.

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And the Open Bridge:
Labour, Enchantment, *There Forever*

Linda Marie Walker and Stephen Loo

The bland does not utter the things of the world – does not paint the world – except at their point of assimilation back into the Undifferentiated, where they shed their distinctive traits, integrate their differences, and give reign to their propensity for fusion. An imponderable quality … blandness is, of necessity, fugitive … (Jullien, 2004: 91).

Introduction

This essay draws upon a project we were both closely involved with - as curator and project manager - titled *There Forever*.[1] It was an ephemeral public art project, commissioned for a local community festival, namely the inaugural Port Adelaide Festival in April 2007. The project, made possible by a grant from Arts SA (the South Australian government's arts funding body) involved the curating of eight artists from the city of Adelaide, several of whom knew the local situation in Port Adelaide from living there, but all of whom were aware of the significant and enigmatic suburban history of the port within the context of the city.

Writing a paper by drawing upon a project, in this case an ephemeral art project, raises critical issues of 'use', and, for us, this idea of 'use' carries with it a feeling best described as 'reticence'. This reticence is about writing itself: what it is, what it does, how it can be 'voiced'; and how it is productive of a politics between what can be sensed and how that appears as work. In this essay, two different voices literally come together (there was no pretence at conventional composition), to operate together: left aligned, Linda Marie Walker, right aligned, Stephen Loo.

A question of use

The Project was, and is, at the mercy of what 'use' is: what 'use' is 'impermanence' (what 'use' is death); what 'use' is investment – money, time, space, thought – in the fleeting, the temporary, the virtual (in other words, life). And integral to The Project was: how to 'use' the given conditions; to think with continually, and to make a set of independent ephemeral artworks, with limited means, limited space, and limited days, so as to form an event without resolution; or, in other words, to form a substance, an awkward or elegant shape, a community of voices, or/and a gathering of moods. Last night Teri Hoskin, an artist in The Project, read from her writing-work for The Project. The piece she read came from the evening of Day 8:

Waterways around the world are changing – artists and academics sink their teeth into these rich sites of transformation, often funded by developers, local government and councils – cynically one could say we are moved in to make smooth the transformation – yet something else happens which will take a little longer than this time to unfold. The story goes something like this: as sites of transformation post-industrial areas present a rich ground of competing forces of global capitalism, urban renewal, changing work/leisure practices, the impact of new technologies, memory, memorial, etcetera (all those labels that roll so easily off an academic tongue).[2]

The Project's institutional *raison d'être* is overtly political: to find other ways to commission public art than memorializing (literally) through monuments in space; to tap into the affectual register and thus reify the singularity of the architectural remains of an historic port, as justification for the conservation of place; to engage with a community (and they are not one) whose identity is inscribed in 'historic Port Adelaide' as a name, and so forth. If one has to write The Project as an historical event, how can this writing remain within Jacques Rancière's notion of politics as a process of democratic emancipation from the structures of policy (laws, codes, governance) that deny equality, when writing itself cannot escape from appearing as the material effectuation of/as policy? More importantly, how can I, as project *manager* – one already charged with the task of mobilizing policies belonging to sanctioned codes of practice, which in turn relate to 'proper' activities by stakeholders (the governmental art body who funded the project, or the State road and transport authority whose mandate is to police the 'correct' use of public infrastructure) – write The Project as political? The political force of the project is not an identifiable community (The Project does not 'represent', as such, those who have been dispossessed or forced to relocate by rampant urban rejuvenation of the Port), but rather it is the population that has been variously named, and therefore has the possibility of being misnamed (the generic other that each time falls outside a particular distribution of the sensible, whose identity is being invented, or is not yet invented). These are highly specific categories of the public which, paradoxically, exist because of a certain partitioning in the way things can be seen and spoken, internal to institutionalization or governmentality; a public, who by being named, is continuously negotiating its equal status within a given space of community. It is through the subjectivization of the variously and continuously changing public, as a never ending site of verification of equality, that the political emerges (Rancière, 2004b:93).

To remain so-touched

Listening – as the almost-accidental curator of The *There Forever* Project – reminded me of the duty (the love for what is created) one has toward something as delicate and tenuous (and tenacious) as this project was – and still is. Overall, The Project, as a work-of-art named 'ephemeral', had a permanency similar to, but at odds with, the named 'permanent' art-work (it is 'there', permanent, and then vanishes). The ephemeral work offers its absence, its afterwards, as 'real': it appeared; it disappeared. One could fight for its sites

2. The writing goes on to say: "The question is: how do these sites become choral? Chora – the filter – is an unnameable, unfigurable device (a metaphorical concept invented by Plato and developed by Derrida and after him [Gregory] Ulmer … through which questions can be framed in such a way that the questions themselves activate thinking action around problems specific to a place and a time." Teri Hoskin's daily venue for her writing was two-fold; first it was the site she chose at Port Adelaide and visited twice a day (dawn/dusk) and recorded as digital images; twice a day she published a set of images and the writing produced by the commitment to the 'work' of visiting (travelling from her home in the city to the site of The Project, the port) on a web-site *(B Part Renaissance:* http://ensemble.va.co.m.at/9days/about.html).

3. James Geurts' work titled *Bridge Drawing Water* went through several iterations due to weather; the work eventually became an almost-imagined work; a public bridge was opened by negotiation, a number of ordinary events occurred as a consequence, a very small 'sound-situation' on the water passed beneath the open-bridge, and then the bridge closed (just as it has been doing for decades).

4. Here Rancière is outlining the contradictions inherent in Deleuze's poetics: on one hand Deleuze hopes for an "innocent" multiplicity in texts, on the other he installs the figure of the eccentric as the hero of this multiplicity. For Rancière, the political stake in literature is in the multiplicity in writing's incarnation that arrives from the non-preferential but haecceitic movement of the text in the specific (named) public and text.

so-touched to remain so-touched (a lighthouse, a bridge, a building, a wharf, a basement, an archive): they would be 'afterwards' works. (They do remain, in some shape or other, although vaguely 'touched' forever). A site is imagined (the rowboat did not have to be seen; it became sound);[3] the touched-site is elemental, it continues to be 'the work'. The ephemeral art-work's passing does not make it any less visible (or desirable); its variable duration is not unlike 'an exhibition' in a gallery – it's scheduled, and then it's gone – a minute, twenty five years, or forever (it passes).

> Perhaps it is only through a Rancièrean disagreement that I can arrive at the political in writing about the politics of The Project: that is, to enact an interruption to the distribution of the sensible. We do not set out a disagreement of known political positions, nor are we enacting an oppositional practice, but rather a 'dissensus' over the givens of a particular situation made visible by a particular distribution of the sensible. Touching lightly, the writing(s) enact disjunctions and conjunctions between what is meant to speak and to understand, between the visible and the invisible, the audible and the inaudible. Writing about The Project affords an encounter which causes the objects and utterances to be deterritorialized from their original contextual space of discourse and temporal designations, so that thinking, as reterritorialization, can begin (again). Thinking is always a *rethinking* (Rancière, 2000: 120).

Fading

It was critical that The Project did not cohere into a single state or objective: its times of 'openings' and performances varied; its physical locations were multiple; information was delivered by invitation, website and word-of-mouth. These were not deliberate complications; complexity emerged as forces of containment faded (immediate structure, overarching mood, clear meaning).

> In such rethinking is the question of relations and their implicit repetitions and tensions, as manifest in the following conditions: firstly, the elusive material presence of The Project (there were many who claimed that they were unsure if they had missed it altogether); secondly, its presencing as writing, whether representational or otherwise (Rancière would say that writing is always on the way to an incarnation that lies ahead of both writer and reader: "the population of the novel [writing] is also the promise of a people to come" (Rancière, 2004a: 157)[4]); and thirdly, the present, the *here and now*, given by this essay as an evental site.

To unravel The Project would make of it what it did not have the propensity to be; it would impose upon it an 'atmosphere' ruled from elsewhere: the world of art; the world of local-interest; the world of politics (re-development, tourism, business, for instance).

Isabelle Stengers, writing about the "passing fright that scares self-assurance", says that even though fright makes "an interstice in the soil of good reasons" it does not mean "fright is sufficient" to know how to proceed in order to provoke thought and slow down (so as to become aware of "the problems and situations mobilizing us"). Because, "[i]nterstices close rapidly" (Stengers, 2005: 994-996).

Johnnie Dady, The Cardboard Piano Shop.

The Project kept its diffuse beginning, but with exuberance: talk, disquiet, meetings, excursions, eating, etc. It gathered over time to see what could appear, and to see how not to, if possible, exhaust oneself, and in so doing exhaust the project, the place, the subject; although exhaustion did occur, as did inexhaustiveness - to see what else could be done, with what was understood and by making, performing, and exhibiting the works.

The category of art, as work, whose visibility is primarily given by the image of material instantiation – there-being (of) something on the ground – is frequently appropriated to uncover, represent, enunciate, the politics of public space. A corollary question is whether a work of art can inherently be political? It seems the question of the aesthetics of a work of art can be found to hover between the enactment of the politics, and being political in its enactment, resulting in a certain irresolvable undecidability in the politics of aesthetics. It is this *meta*politics which Rancière says gives art work its possibilities (2006: 45).

The dream to remain

That is, 'the work' did not complete itself; it just came to a specified date, a pre-set hour. The permanence of the ephemeral is 'contained', in this instance, in its slowness to sustain a continuation (of making), and to fade from the 'governance of art to manifest non-process, non-transitoriness. The dream to remain, to stay (alive), is not an avoidance of product or market, but is an

James Geurts,
Bridge Drawing Water.

5. "A dissensus is not a quarrel over personal interests or opinions. It is a political process that resists juridical litigation and creates a fissure in the sensible order by confronting the established framework of perception, thought, and action with the 'inadmissible', i.e. a political subject" (Rancière, 2006: 85).

6. The artists: Johnnie Dady, Julie Henderson, Yhonnie Scarce, Angela Valamanesh, Michael Yuen, James Geurts, Teri Hoskin, Jessica Wallace; with Bridget Currie as Research Assistant.

7. They are also not artists who meet the "… market's need for 'spectacle'" (Rancière, 2007: 262).

acknowledgment that what arrives at the set-hour is, wonderingly, on 'the way' to something/where else. Therefore, it is implicit to honour what appears by giving it as good a chance as possible to stay-alive (venue, empathy, curiosity, context). For the artist who has taken to heart, or is in the midst of, issues of community, conflict, sadness, anger, loss, and their political effects, determinations, and arguments, 'dissensus' rather than resistance (as a stance, or reaction, in the form of an artefact) is a possible mode of thinking:

> … a way of reconstructing the relationship between places and identities, spectacles and gazes, proximities and distances. … The problem, first of all, is to create some breathing room, to loosen the bonds that enclose spectacles within a form of visibility, bodies within an estimation of their capacity, and possibility within the machine that makes the 'state of things' seem evident, unquestionable (Rancière, 2007: 261).[5]

Within the modernist paradigm of public space, the politics of art work is collapsed into the 'public' as an inherently political category: public art effectuates the public politics. Under this regime of effectuation, the concepts of 'public' and 'politics' *per se* remain coherent, their integrity unquestioned, and they are, in this way, able to afford aesthetics a visibility, as they make available the ground for structuration (for speaking, showing, writing, and making – of essays, research, sculpture, design and architecture, etc.). However, the ground as a place for (other) types of structures, or movements of labour, is never felt or experienced.

Degrees of freedom

The artists[6] in The *There Forever* Project combine mediums – sound, text, drawing, video, objects, light, painting, weaving, photographs, performances. They are not 'multi-media' artists, nor are they artists who primarily work as 'public' artists.[7]

The world has laws of circulation, and degrees of freedom,[8] and it appreciates the placement of one's feet on the ground: "… of knowing what one is doing in a particular place, in a particular system of exchange. One must find ways to create other places, or other uses for places" (Rancière, 2007: 263).[9] The rest of my writing for this essay consists of eight fragments written during the making of The Project, to help 'feel' my feet on the ground.

(1) The Labour Of Others

An expanding practice, where one thing leads to another – a proliferating practice that affects the relationship between things – everything for/to itself, gaps and separations, exact places for thought … looping to the outside world, the way the body does (connecting to the air); the performance done …

Perhaps the question becomes: how can we make the ground, as the movement (literally, as *kinesis*) of labour, political? Or, how do we work with accepted structures and institutions to create new movement structures, ones which are of non-representative politics?[10] What The Project is (in search of), is a politics of movement not already inscribed with a partisanship, or militancy, or citizenship, but one without a recognized political subjectivity. In The Project, the politico-aesthetics of movement arrives not from planned demonstrations and orchestrated performances, but from the general capabilities of the human being (for example, the ability to communicate, improvise, hold dissonant beliefs, etc.), as it labours in moving from one definition or name, given in governmentality, to another.

… or not done, the risk is elsewhere, in how we dress, labour, the appearance of labour as art, as the past before us, that things are not over, ever, the making of arrangements, the stories we tell each other, are artefacts, there is no secret,

8. "Freedom is not about breaking or escaping constraints. It's about flipping them over into degrees of freedom. You can't really escape the constraints" (Zournazi, 2002: 222).

9. "The idea of emancipation implies that there are never places that impose their law, that there are always several spaces in a space, several ways of occupying it, and each time the trick is knowing what sort of capacities one is setting in motion, what sort of world one is constructing" (Rancière, 2007: 262).

10. As Deleuze says of intellectual work relating to institutions (he was talking about mental asylums to Foucault), "representation no longer exists, there is only actions – theoretical and practical actions which serve as relays and form networks" (1977: 206-207).

a) Yhonnie Scarce, Fanny Graham.
b) Teri Hoskin, B Part Renaissance.
c) Jess Wallace, Buoyancy.

nothing missing, and we float out, away, we can do this, bringing enchantment to the ground of matter, of using the body uselessly (weakly), our own labour (working) with the labour of others.

Why is constructing new political forms from movement, or giving political form to diverse experiences of movement, an important concern for public art as an aesthetic practice? To answer this we must return to the partitioning of the ways we can say and speak, which regulate the governance of social, economic and psychical configurations. We need to find political forms that possess new consistencies, because the uncertainty of our affectual relations, owing to the circulation of the sensible, makes us succumb too easily to the security afforded by forms of institution and the State. More specifically, we need to understand that these political forms are immanent to the search, as processes which interrupt the current distribution of the sensible, not by establishing other partitionings that need to be policed, but by throwing in to the distributive mix other names, categories and structures, to make visible the ('wrong') names (Rancière, 1999: 21-42) that have been imposed on the public. Names, as the 'wrong', summon the *dēmos* – the 'common' identified as outside of the names imposed, plebeians supplementary to the named democracy – who, in the events that make up 'public' life, will challenge their exclusion by the 'wrong'.

The 'wrong' brings us to the limit of politics, not to get to the other side (the 'other' is after all identified by the 'wrong' names which are set in place by particular distributions of the sensible), but to inhabit the constant to-ing and fro-ing between outside and inside as a kind of non-teleological labour. Such

movement is work that needs to be done – an obligation imposed by the metastable system of individuation (Simondon, 1992) as we negotiate belonging to a space. Our citizenship of public space is reliant upon the contingent experience of *kinesis* (from work associated with drifting migration and emigration, to experiencing artwork, to the use of certain infrastructures and not others, etc.).

11. "*Flash* … is a new ephemeral public work by Michael Yuen. At this place and time: a large flash of light and burst of sound." Michael Yuen, Artist's description, *Flash. Port Adelaide, Australia, 22 April 2007, 8:02 pm*. at http://ensemble.va.com.au/thereforever

(2) The bridge watching us

The world comes into view; the things of the world come into view to be acted and touched upon, to be worked 'with', in concert, so as to bring about through constellation, conjunction, intersection, something else again, slight, to the side, upward, or more centred, an image, a slowing of time, a bringing of silence, to listen, to make-out a figure, a boat, who/what that might or might not be, to feel it as oneself, as the self that brought that to its moment, movingly, the aspects, the stopping, the pausing, the resuming, our breath, our willingness, our sadness, our aloneness, and the extreme force of each aspect (a flash, like lightning) – the weight and mechanism of the opening bridge, the pleasure of the bridge-controller, the lights lining the bridge, the sirens and bells, the cars waiting, the rain, the deep currents, the lighthouse weirdly behind us, and the sound of the rower in the boat, passing, and (perhaps) seeing the tiny star-flash of the man on the bridge watching us watching.

(3) Without brief(s)

There was no brief, no document intended to guide the artists in the project. There were already many shaping conditions though: location, time, festival, money, mediums. And the job was to bring work into existence, from the location itself, work that arose in response to the environment of The Port.

The public gathered in the square, well before time, anticipating a large flash. After all, this was the name of the work: FLASH. PORT ADELAIDE, AUSTRALIA, 22 APRIL 2007, 8:02 PM. There was going to be light, and sound.[11] The space of this almost instantaneous work, and thus the public space in

Angela Valamanesh, New Metaphors.

which the work occurs, is registered by a one-to-one correspondence between light and sound. At 8.10pm, 8 minutes later than expected, the sensuous experience of the work – its movement contained to a couple of seconds by this correspondence – was over. The audience remained motionless for quite a while. 'Did I miss something? Is there more; should there be more [experience]? Can I move; should I move? I am unsure, as this is an art work; but this is public space; and so on.'

At 8.18pm, it happened again, unplanned. Many were caught unawares. The sound triggered sensuous registration: the flash was not fully perceived, but experienced nevertheless in a non-sensuous way; it was *presumed* to have occurred with the sound. Here is the work's actual durationality: the space-time disjunction that is felt in the anticipation, then dissipation, of the work; the shifting of bodies in the crowd, the walking away and turning back again; the disturbance of the idea of a beginning and a completion of the work; all of which call into action the public's general capacity for improvisation, non-linguistic communication, adaptation and alteration of the environment. This sort of (in)attention of public art and public space is politically non-affirmative, figural rather than figurative, and it is felt rather than known. A new political composition unfolds, owing to an interruption from within the institutional structure.

(4) The open labour

As a practice, it (a thought), tried to stay open (unlike the bridge that had to close again), to offer, as an invitation the chance to change, alter, stop, re-make, or break the work – at the moment of viewing or encountering. To offer the

Port Adelaide.

invitation, carefully, to an-other to be/come with the work, as the work, as an aspect of, a component … (interrupted) … of framing room for another to enter so as to assist, and therefore assist (and change) 'the work', the labour (of the aesthetic) of the work.

(5) Community of communities

The Project was not a community-art 'project'. However, it was hoped from the start that there would be contact with communities from the area. At the same time though, there was no imperative to engage, literally, at the 'community' level. Community was a question.

There are strong and deeply loved historical roots, ones that temper the entire sense of the place: working class, maritime, football, abandonment and so on. Respect was required, but more - deference, honour - so as, at least, no grand impositional 'artworks', from the 'outside', would come to bear, show-up, and undermine, or overmine perhaps, the 'ground' of The Port. This, also, was not a 'rule'.

> The political is the negotiation, not to negate the governing institution, but to embrace it in the search for the conceptual networks which cause reality to appear, and in creating fictions using the signs that belong to a local reality which show up their contingency.

Jess Wallace spoke with locals about the pollution of the river. She was dissuaded from diving. She shot her video in a public pool in another suburb: the people involved came to The Port to see the work. Other viewers recounted their stories of the Port River as a playground and as a place of death. Julie Henderson spent ten weeks with the radio club members. She attended their weekly meetings. She also met Rick, who works in the boat shed behind the Radio Shack, and recorded his stories. The radio club members agreed to open their Shack to the public several times, and helped Julie with her sound installation there. They provided special lights in the Shack as well as objects for display.

In this way The Project work *gives*. I am reminded here of Jane Bennett's notion of enchantment: "Enchantment is a feeling of being connected in an affirmative way to existence; it is to be under the momentary impression that the natural and the cultural worlds *offer gifts*, and in so doing, remind us that it is good to be alive" (Bennett, 2001: 156). Enchantment is valuable for ethical life because it can supplement, though not replace, a code-based approach to ethics, providing it with a motivational basis and a spirit of generosity that moral rules cannot generate on their own.

'Deano' worked closely with Julie, supplying spotlights and a generator for her performance on the wharf, and then he spontaneously joined in her performance on the night so as to 'help' her cart the water bottles from the shack to the wharf. Rick built Julie a frame for the door to his shed so she could install a tv and video-player to show her film of him talking about his work and the development of The Port. Julie placed an advertisement in the local newspaper calling for old tvs. She received an Aster Plymouth and two lamps, one a small desk lamp. The Astor and the desk lamp became key components of her installation at Headquarters (HQ).[12]

Johnnie Dady's cardboard pianos gently protested against (the) tension that exists between The Old Port and The New Port: aspirations, renaissance, new-life coming from an old-life. You will need a baby grand, surely. And if you're poor, a cardboard one will 'do'. The seven pianos became a community, and they were silent. What does a community have to turn itself into so that you will hear its worth; what does one have to become (beautifully poorly grand) to have a say?

(6) The worry of being worried

The surface of the space within which this project makes itself and shows itself is not a public or a 'common' space. Unless a specific space is 'designated' a public one 'for art' – agreed upon officially, and then officially offered for the reception of a public work of art that must, to a large extent, meet predetermined interests (monument, commemoration, general good, environmental message) – the surface of the earth, the bits one can find to work with, are subject to highly regulated (impossible) conditions.

What The Project gives are the signs, which give visibility to the sensible, a visibility that is not necessarily there: an image. These signs do not go towards the remembering of historical events. To Jean-Luc Nancy, the image is a re-presentation of the thing to which it owes its ontology, but which competes with the thing in its showing. The image interrupts the self-presencing of the thing, by bringing the latter to presence; the image is essentially *monstrative* (Nancy, 2005: 21), a force which deforms the things it shows. An image, in the presentation of itself, forcefully differentiates itself, and the thing it demonstrates, from the chaotic pool of entities or beings.

Everything is, from the outset, approached from the position of 'trouble'. And when one speaks of it, worries what to do, responses are, surprisingly, that this 'trouble' is expected-trouble. The surface, or 'field', upon which one works – to

produce from and for – appears amidst appearances and is a plane upon planes; it is, actually, dynamic, transitory and replete. The 'public' is a weave of immense complexities: each complexity is an instrument that rules and regulates; each addresses important issues of danger, damage, injury, liability, not issues to ignore, and issues that one must care for; issues for discussion and generosity, not contention and contestation. There is only police/d space.

(7) Trying to speak

Julie Henderson (and Michael Yuen) spoke to a group of students. Julie talked about the men and women of the radio club (at the Radio Shack), and how her work is slow, and may not have an outcome, even though a performance is advertised for 8pm, 26th April on Fisherman's Wharf. The talk was part of the performance; the artwork is scattered, made of un(in)determinate things and events of different substances that dissolve and spread. Jean Luc-Nancy writes: "Sense is in the exscription of the book, sense is that sense does not stop coming from elsewhere and going elsewhere …" (1997: 191).

> There are many signs given by The Project – images of community, place, history, ecology, architecture, life/lives, death – whose work staves off revelation by signs. These are signs for forgetting, not through emptiness or the void, but by a forestalling of closure that restores the life to remembering. As Jorge Luis Borges says: in forgetting is the hope that there is nothing to reveal (there are no pre-empted relations), nothing but the revelation that itself does not come about (Nancy, 2005: 26).

The artist labours, is a labourer-artist who can labour differently; the artist can be "… along the surface of this coming of sense. … *praxis* is not lacking in him whether as reform or revolt, migration or habitation, pain or joy, invention or routine, or as decision endlessly replayed" (Nancy, 1997: 191). That is, there is 'free' labour, where one is truly (or thereabouts) in the-place or in-servitude (serving place), as one might think one's subject/audience/other is.

> But it is not so simple, even though, in all evidence, it is also not the reverse. For the moment, it remains – and it seems to me urgent – to say the following: let us not decipher the world in terms of our philosophical melancholy – no more than in terms of a maniacal optimism that is another form of the same thing. But let us learn to think *toward* the world (Nancy, 1997: 191).

Here, the relations are imminent, always coming, hovering.

(8) A man on an open bridge

A man walks halfway across a bridge
From a long way away someone sees a man walk halfway across a bridge

There were biomorphic pinnacles in a dark basement.
And two sun deck chairs.

13. Yhonnie Scarce's two black painted canvasses were slowly stitched with red thread (this thread pushed through the hard material surface, causing the whole hand to feel pain, and to have to find ways to manage this process; the stitches bear the inscriptions of various affectual forces related to the challenges faced by the artist in the duration of the work, including questions concerning the cultural nature of the work, and threats to the art-ist's personal security), following intuitively an inner 'track', based on her own indigenous family's itinerant story, and working the red lines back and forth; working on the floor in public for hours and days, and having to feel the presence of others attending to her work or ignoring her; and then these pieces being suspended at HQ on closing night, where they formed an internal shelter of some strange solid kind.

He stops to watch someone a long way away, across the water
he thinks someone is
watching him there

he thinks they see him

New Metaphors is an interplay between the enchantment by the image which
holds apart the actual landscape, and the interconnectedness of art and the
ecosystem in a best fit selection. In the first condition, the material
appearance of Angela Valamanesh's work may be read, rationally, as symbolic
images of an ecosystem.

As a man standing on a bridge he thinks of a boat
in the water beneath him

He stops to look across from him, to slow down, to see the other
one he thinks he sees
He hears around him what he has never heard before
it sounds like he is what he hears
that this is what he is, inside himself

In the second, the morphological transformations in the art work mirror an
ecology of practices involving environmental, social and mental systems, which,
owing to the constant presence of ambiguity in reading, create
conundrums in attempts at a Platonic theory of beauty associated with truth.

Perhaps it is Yhonnie Scarce, in her *Fanny Graham,* that demonstrates most clearly
the work of art as political, through its transformations between human
affectual or biological relations, and non-human materiality, not only in imaginative
terms, but also in terms of real relations, as actively constituting the places
in which we live.

He hears himself as a man on a bridge
Across the water someone hears what there is to hear that they have
never heard before
It is the sound of a man on a bridge
They think of a boat in the water beneath him

The red yarn, worked with, at times, difficult human labour[13] into a
material surface that itself bears the marks of human movement (being trod,
danced, tripped on), and the movement of the work itself (it was dragged to
various locations, folded and unfolded, hung). As the ground, surface
or terrain for movement that is the confrontation between what can
be sensed (by way of names, institutions, culture, habits) and the attempts
by the public to verify their worth, 'use', and, therefore, equality in such
partitionings of the sensible, the work of art emerges as a political agent with
which we, as the named public, are entwined, and it is complicit in the
emergence of our public places (its aesthetics is immanent to 'being-there'),
and the ways we comport to these places.

It sounds to them like something they've heard before too, somewhere else
They take a photograph of him, they take a photograph of the sound of a
man on a bridge, a man they think they see on a bridge
He takes a photograph of someone he thinks he sees a long way away, inside the
sound of himself, then he walks back across the bridge

(Everything else happens in the world)[14]

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Non-Refereed Papers

The glamorous, but doomed, bamboo forest:

The Western de/construction of local memory of the 921 Earthquake in Taiwan

Hong-Chi Shiau

On 21 September 1999, an earthquake measuring 7.3 on the Richter scale rocked the central part of Taiwan, killing approximately 2,400 people and severely damaging infrastructure. To locals, the event is known as the 921 Earthquake.

In 2003, following rehabilitation of much of the area, an international competition, for a built-operate-transfer (BOT) project to commemorate the dead, was instigated. It attracted 182 entries from 34 countries. That submitted by Tsai-Ho Cheng, a 23-year-old Amsterdam-trained, Taiwanese woman architect, who was allegedly inspired by the bamboo forests in Ang Lee's acclaimed movie *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000), was selected. Cheng's monument and bamboo forest were realized and the memorial was much celebrated in architectural circles.

However, local residents reacted against the scheme, lamenting it as a disjuncture, bizarre and surrealistic. They predicted that the bamboo forest would not grow on the site chosen for the memorial. Consistent with their predictions, after one year, the leaves on the trees in Cheng's bamboo forest started turning yellow. The agricultural department diagnosed a mysterious disease in the trees and, within two years of the installation, almost all the bamboo had died. After a series of appraisals, the local government decided to demolish the entire forest; it was removed from its site in 2007.

Chiu-Ping Yang, senior local correspondent for the *China Times*, summarized the events thus:

> I saw an incredibly brilliant idea mesmerizing global and local architects, who, subsequently, led everyone marching into a dead valley, as predicted by the local residents (Pers. comm. Chiu-Ping Yang to the author, 2007).

The emotional dissatisfaction of locals was never mobilized into an open protest; anger was eventually calmed and after the clearance of the bamboo forest, residents gradually came back during their leisure time and reclaimed the public space. On a sunny day, people run and play Frisbee on the newly "renovated" lawn, teasing each other about the enormous expense of this piece of lawn. "It is a new start," a local resident commented as he was walking with bare feet on the lawn.

In contrast to the design, the leaves of bamboo forest withered, turning yellow. While Cheng found her project poorly executed, the contractor attributed the failure to an inappropriate planting methodology and a poor choice of species. Photograph by Chiu-Ping Yang.
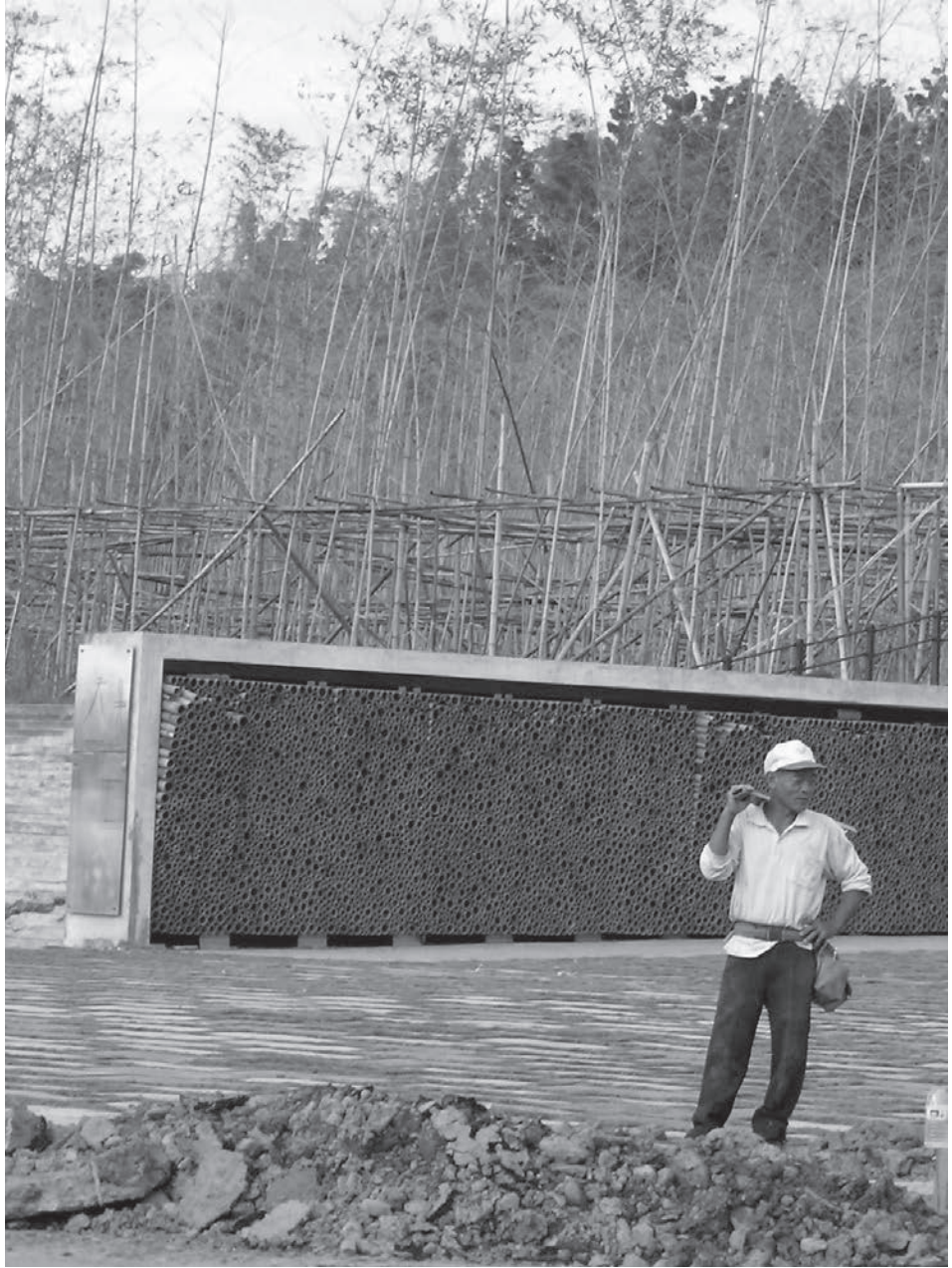
This paper explores the multiple, dialectic, global processes through which the local memory of the 921 Earthquake collides with the internationally endorsed memorial landscape BOT project. The paper considers juxtaposition and collusion between the global and the local, attempting to illuminate how the political, economic and aesthetic agents wove multiple institutional processes into a doomed contemporary memorial landscape project. The paper relies on historical testimonials and documents as well as interviews with local residents, community leaders and local reporters in Nantou. Efforts to interview several key informants were unsuccessful: the local architects who had endorsed the project allegedly wanted to "keep it in low tone" and "let go of it". As a result, it was not possible to include their reflections on the project or its failure.

The 921 Earthquake and the Bamboo Forest Memorial Park

The 921 Earthquake was Taiwan's first national experience of this kind of natural disaster. In the aftermath of the quake, to facilitate a rapid return to normalcy, immediate efforts, both public and private, focused on sheltering the displaced residents and restoring local economic activity. Two main parties were involved in the initial reconstruction: central government and NGO-affiliated voluntary agencies. However, the two have been involved in a longstanding struggle: the centralized public sector programmes are resourceful but inefficient; while the

The bamboo planting expert examining the withered leaves, before concluding that the trees were suffering from a mysterious disease. Photograph by Chiu-Ping Yang.

NGO-affiliated sector reacts more efficiently to local needs but is poorly funded (Shieh & Chang, 2005). The 921 Earthquake Recovery Foundation (ERF) was established to develop a coherent approach to addressing the gap between the two sectors. The 921 ERF was proactive in planning for post-disaster recovery management to establish critical priorities and objectives, traceable milestones, essential leadership and community commitment for recovery (Shieh & Chang, 2005).

By 2003, most of the reconstruction work had been accomplished and the 921 ERF agreed on a plan to construct a memorial landscape installation. To terminate, symbolically, the entire recovery project, it began soliciting project proposals from across the world.[1] It is clear that the central government intended to address the meaning of trauma through the installation of a large-scale, internationally recognized and memorable contemporary landscape.

Farrar (2004) has examined sites that commemorate famines, wars, genocides and terrorist attacks, arguing that these sites have often appropriated traumatic experiences to reproduce sovereign power. However, he also believes that these sites are potentially subversive, empowering people to contest nationalism and rethink their relationship to the state. In the same vein, Jordan (2005) analyzed officially designated memorial sites, discovering not only changes and continuities in the forms and contents of public representations, but also the changing relationship among a state, its people and a collection of officially approved objects in urban landscapes (Farrar, 2004; Lennon & Foley, 1999; Gough, 2000).

1. The international BOT project solicited applications on the Internet and thus encouraged architects, landscape architects and designers from across the world to participate. Some of the official event-related documentation remains accessible on the Internet.

The 921 project was intended as a tribute to local residents, whose resilience and endurance had helped them through the traumatic experience of the quake. It exemplifies how the construction of a memorial can function as a site of negotiation entangled with the ongoing creation of historical narratives, official visions, local memories and cultural productions. With this event, the state intended to look for global players in shaping the meanings of an earthquake, resonating seamlessly with its political rhetoric. As an "internationally plugged and diplomatically isolated and unrecognized" state (Gross, 2006), the Taiwanese government initiated such a project to reinvent iself as a global economic and technological agent. In political rhetoric, the important agenda for the independence-inclined government, led by the Democraic Progressive Party (DPP), was to assure local and overseas commentators of the substantial legitimacy of the statehood. Over the past decades, the promotion of international economic integration has enhanced economic, technological and social interconnected-ness with global players, including foreign states and multinational corpora-tions. The imperative role that the state has played is to democratize, privatize and liberalize Taiwan's market, in order to attract global capital and become better connected internationally. These practices have been intended not only to sustain economic growth, but also to override the hurdles resulting from diplomatic isolation.

Under this political economic circumstance, the government and other semi-official agents involved in large-scale public construction projects were encouraged to pursue high profile international competitions. The 921 Earthquake Memorial Park was one project well-suited to an international competition. According to the Prime Minister, Hsih-Kuen Yo, "the global participation in creating the memorial park will definitely increase its global visibility and also ease the pains of the victims" (Architect's Forum, 2004). In order to present the competition as global, the bidding committee was chaired by Peter Walker, an internationally acclaimed architect, who also chaired the 911 World Trade Center Restoration plan. The jury had local as well as international representation.

Celebrating Bamboo: Global Associations

Tsai-Ho Cheng's competition winning project comprised a monument surrounded by a bamboo forest, complete with small walkways interconnected to enable visitors to walk through it. It was unanimously applauded by the committee (Ding & Yang, 2004). The global celebration was further endorsed by three well-regarded Taiwanese architects, who compared the proposal to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington DC, designed by Maya Lin, another woman architect of Chinese descent. For example, acclaimed Taiwanese architect and member of the BOT bidding committee Prof. Ming-Herng Wang commented: "I see Cheng as an uprising superstar in the field of city planning and design…. She will emerge like the second Maya Lin" (Ding and Yang, 2004). There are similarities between the two monuments: when approaching both, the ground slopes gently downward and the low walls appear to grow out of the earth (Brook, 2006).

The use of bamboo may have seemed like a logical choice to Cheng. In many tropical countries, entire villages, country houses, barns, and other structures share a common natural resource: bamboo. Bamboo is not only a strong and flexible material, it is also aesthetically appealing. In regions vulnerable to earthquakes, bamboo is highly resistant to collapse. The material is easy to obtain and is easily replaced when aged or damaged by weather. In this respect, bamboo is always fresh and affordable (Kakabadse, 2006).

Bamboo also has cultural associations: for example, from the perspective of Chinese elites and intellectuals, the iconography of bamboo is very positive; it is often associated with the integrity of intellectuals; it is both elastic and tough. Along with pine trees and plum trees, bamboo is thought to uphold moral standards in adverse conditions. In addition, the Western imagination often associates bamboo with East Asia or, in this event, with China in particular. This perception is perpetuated by the fact that panda bears live in bamboo trees. This latter association was also understood by Cheng and her fellow architects, who thought of bamboo as charming, lovely and oriental/Asian.

Cheng commented that she wanted her project to capture the mesmerizing charm of the bamboo forests featured in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon*. In her imagination, the greenness, the breeze and the shivering bamboo leaves would constitute a soothing and comforting landscape to create, symbolically, a sense of resilience and peace. According to one jury member, a particular strength of the project was that it did not passively emphasize the easing of the pain; instead, it rendered hope and encouraged people to look for things to be positive about.[2] A local agricultural officer who supervised the construction of the bamboo forest recalled Cheng saying that: "Bamboo has strong local presence and the residents should be able to relate well". Further, "the greenness and wind and mist should be loved by the residents" (Pers. comm. the agricultural officer to the author, 2007).[3]

For Cheng, bamboo also symbolized the central part of Taiwan. She had never visited this part of the island, but she had seen a wide range of landscape photographs of it. She understood the central part of Taiwan to be mountainous and cool.

Mourning Forests: Local Responses

The local dismay towards the bamboo forest emerged long before its demolition, even before its creation. The earliest animosity resulted from the clearance of the locally grown trees that had survived the earthquake:

> We lived with the trees, we saw most of them surviving the quake like our friends on September 21, 1999, and we burst into tears. I don't want to... No one has the right to claim their lives brutally, no matter how brilliant the plan is (Pers. comm. local resident to the author).

There were many other reasons why the bamboo forest was not appreciated locally. Firstly, there was a sharp discrepancy between the meanings that elites, intellectuals and Westerners associated with bamboo, and which were shared by the architects and the bidding committee, and those that were understood by

2. The juror, an acclaimed architect, is reported to have said this in an interview with a local reporter from the *China Times*.

3. The local agricultural officer was responsible for communication between the architect, the government and the contractor. Although reluctant to speak on behalf of the government, the officer said that the methodology of plantation had been modified several times to adjust to the local weather, land and temperature. During the process, every party was unhappy.

local residents. For locals, bamboo signifies "cheapness and low-maintenance" (author's interviews with locals, 2007). The local appreciation for bamboo is functional and instrumental: they like to eat and drink bamboo shoot, they want to buy bamboo furniture, but they do not in any way enjoy its presence in a large scale park. The local reaction to the bamboo forest was summarized thus:

> What we need is a space where people would walk in, but the bamboo forest looks Ying[4] (chilly). My feeling about a bamboo forest since my childhood has been ghost haunting. A few bamboo trees in my garden are romantic, but a bamboo forest is too intimidating. We dare not approach, not to mention our children" (Pers. comm. local resident to the author).

Another challenge that confronted locals was the transplantation, rather than plantation, of bamboo trees. The plan the local bamboo growers were required to follow was beyond the terrain with which they were familiar. Local wisdom, not requiring an expert on bamboo, states that, generally, bamboo should not be transplanted. Bamboo is allegedly tough, but it usually takes time to grow shoots. However, in Cheng's proposal, the concept of a "forest" was essential; to achieve an immediate forest-like installation required transplantation. From the perspective of professional local bamboo growers, transplantation was vulnerable and virtually unattainable in the typhoon season.

The difficulty of transplantation was exacerbated by the heterogeneous geography of the central part of Taiwan: "The site for the bamboo forest planting is dry and hot, whereas the site imagined by Cheng, and probably by the internationally acclaimed judges, was high up in the mountains, constantly saturated with fog and a cool breeze" (author's interviews with locals, 2007). Conflict was exacerbated when a typhoon swept across the region and a gardening contractor went bankrupt due, in part, to the high maintenance work required during the typhoon season. He lamented that the bamboo forest seen in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* was impossible to grow in the area. As another resident said:

> I see it as an expansion of the graveyard constructed in my neighbourhood. Somewhat creepy. … we used to take a walk in the field, but now the entire field is abandoned. Idiots know bamboo can't grow in the way they prescribe. You can just randomly ask a resident here (Pers. comm. local resident to the author).

It transpired that Cheng's decision to use bamboo might have been more realistic if the forest had been planted at a higher altitude.

The discrepancy between the global and local is further apparent in local folklore: a bamboo forest is frequently depicted as a place where ghosts and snakes mischievously hide in preparation for an attack on the innocent. It is a common belief that those who die of a natural disaster will not accept their fate, but haunt a forest, reluctant to leave. The ghosts harboured in the forest suffer immense anguish and sorrow, and will continue to wander around it as long as their wishes remain unfulfilled: "If each bamboo tree commemorates a death, the atrocity occurs when you kill the dead again. Ironically, it happens here and has reshaped our memories" (Pers. comm. local resident to the author).

Conclusions

This paper, focused on one specific event, has revealed differences between the intellectual and well-meaning agencies that worked to reshape public memories of a natural disaster, and their ill-considered local effects. The bamboo forest's failure demonstrates a lack of vision among the project's decision makers, primarily those in government who promoted global participation and ignored local wisdom, and in doing so compromised this high-profile international installation project.

The project provides grounds on which to reflect more generally on the interplay between the local and the global, a negotiated relationship that underscores a wide range of contemporary issues. It also sheds light upon attitudes towards, and the potential for, the use of renewable material resources in contemporary developments. In the global age, it is foreseeable that global agents will continue to influence the construction of landscapes and public representations, even when these projects are culturally bounded. Despite some good deeds, the BOT is neither a poison nor a panacea. The point is that members of a community must be given the chance to comment, based on past successes, on what constitutes a good solution. It is imperative, in these forms of memorial construction, to capitalize on opportunities to create and strengthen the social network of a community. As advocated by many architects across the world (e.g. Kakabadse, 2006), local wisdom is central to sustainable development. However, at the other end of the spectrum, it is also politically dangerous to depend solely upon local wisdom, which can be clouded by patronage and favouritism scandals. It is communication that is essential: between proponents and opponents; between initiators and converts; between experts and locals; between designers and makers. In the case of the 921 memorial park, such communication may have prevented the failure and subsequent clearance of the internationally acclaimed competition winning design.

The bamboos being removed from the site. The controversy ends with sorrow. Photograph by Chiu-Ping Yang.

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The Letter Of The Law:
## Constraints on architectural form in Japan

Tom Daniell

As exemplified by Tokyo, the Japanese city tends to be seen as an unrestricted laboratory for experiments in urban and architectural form. In reality, like most cities, the shape of Tokyo is influenced and determined by an invisible array of forces and constraints. Many of the city's unusual building profiles are simply the outcome of thoughtless compliance with building codes. Although severely limiting the architect's options, these legal regulations may also be consciously instrumentalized in the design process.

Although the visual incoherence of contemporary urban Japan has many sources, to a large extent it is the result of the firebombing campaigns in the final months of the Second World War. The sheer urgency of providing shelter, with scant resources, produced a haphazard, chaotic condition that became the basic template for future urban growth. This has long been a subject of both criticism and celebration. Despite the nation's rapid economic progress in the postwar decades, Tokyo was widely considered to have serious aesthetic and functional problems. However, a revisionist attitude that saw the disorder as positive and productive soon appeared. As early as the 1960s, architect Kazuo Shinohara asserted that postwar Tokyo had a unique vitality, and the visual chaos should be regarded as a kind of beauty. Shinohara's statements were an epiphany for many architects and thinkers in Japan, and became a theme that he and others elaborated on over the following decades. In a 1981 essay entitled "Towards Architecture," Shinohara described Tokyo as possessing a "progressive anarchy" (he used English for this phrase, in an otherwise Japanese text) that was the source of inspiration for his own architectural design:

> No other city has the diversity of buildings that comprise its streets, or the disorder of decorative surface colors and forms on their facades. Chaos is the only appropriate word to describe it. But I do not unconditionally dismiss this as chaos. In essence, chaos contains a portent of ruin. Yet in so many places within this "vast village" of a city before us, the streets are full of "vitality". Tokyo has now become one of the most exciting cities in the world…. In the design of a single building, the method of expressing anarchy as the theme can be established as an architectural logic (Shinohara, 1981: 140-141).

Published together with the essay was a design by Shinohara named the House Under High-Voltage Lines. Paradoxically, the house is a direct manifestation of – and obedient submission to – one of the city's many constraints: specifically,
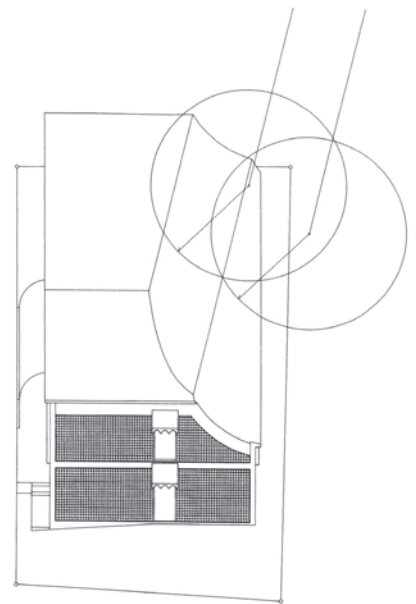
House Under High-Voltage Lines, Kazuo Shinohara, 1981 (courtesy office of Kazuo Shinohara).
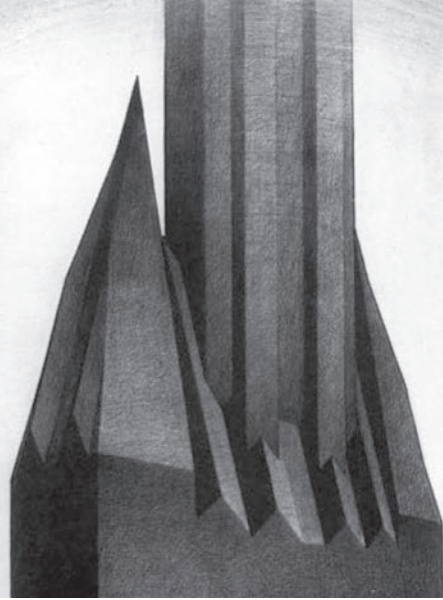
"a representation of the maximum mass…" Hugh Ferriss, 1929.
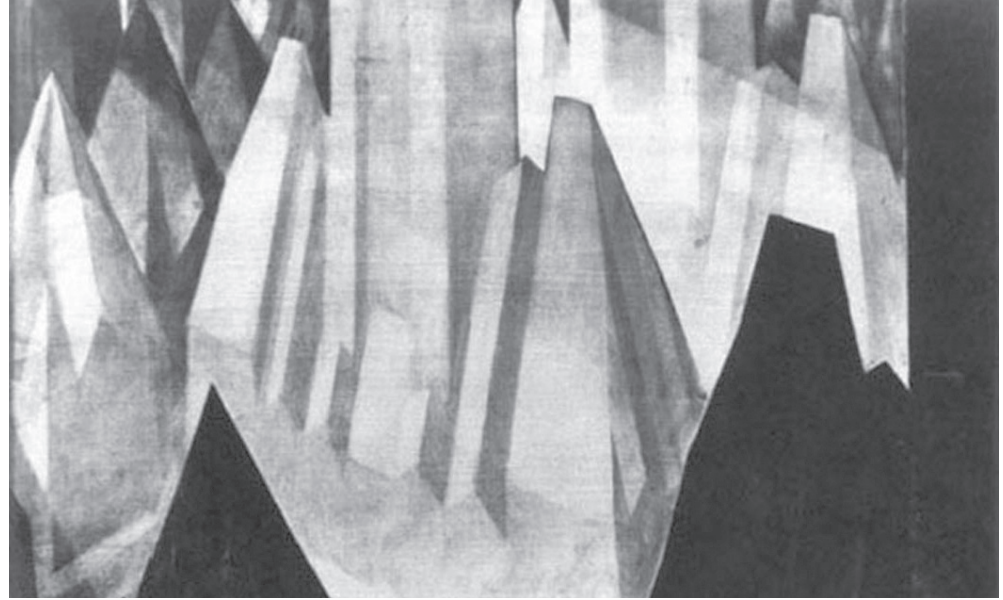
"… over all the blocks of a city." Hugh Ferriss, 1929.

1. Depending on location, there were five possibilities: one times street width; one and a quarter times street width; one and a half times street width; two times street width; two and a half times street width (Garvin, 2004, n.p.).

a regulation that stipulates the minimum distance a building must maintain from overhead power lines. This, in effect, defines an invisible cylinder along the axis of each cable, within which it is illegal to build. Shinohara located the nearby power cables, deforming the roof profile, and the interior spaces, in accordance with the code.

This approach to generating architectural form is, of course, reminiscent of a famous set of renderings by New York architect and illustrator Hugh Ferriss. In 1922, Ferriss was commissioned by the architect Harvey Wiley Corbett to draw a sequence of four perspective images, depicting the effects on architectural form of the pioneering 1916 New York City Zoning Resolution. Prior to the enactment of this law, there were no restrictions on the bulk or height of buildings in Manhattan. By forcing building profiles to step back diagonally as they rose vertically, the Zoning Resolution was intended to guarantee a degree of sunlight and air to the lower levels of the buildings and to the streets. The law provided simple formulas that defined maximum building volumes. The entire area of a given plot could be extruded vertically to a height that was a set multiple of the adjacent street's width.[1] Above this point, the building envelope sloped inward at an angle determined by drawing an imaginary line from this height to the centre of the street below, forming a sloping setback known as a "sky exposure plane". In the middle of each plot, a tower covering no more than a quarter of the site was permitted to rise without any upper limit.

Ferriss' four sketches became the core of his 1929 book, *The Metropolis of Tomorrow*, which contains many evocative architectural images extrapolated from the legally defined envelopes. Ferriss notes that the Zoning Resolution:

> … was based on purely practical consideration. … The law as a whole was directed to securing an increase in public safety, convenience, efficiency and health. From the viewpoint of Design, it is interesting to recall that the Zoning movement having its genesis in just such considerations as have been mentioned was not at all inspired by concern for its possible effects on Architectural Design (Ferris, 1986 [1929]: 72).

Yet, by defining maximum volumes within a context that implicitly demands maximization, the law had direct and immediate effects on the aesthetics of architectural form. Ferriss first drew the envelope of a single city block:

… a representation of the maximum mass which, under the Zoning Law, it would be permissible to build over an entire city block…. It must be understood that the mass thus delineated is not an architect's design; it is simply a form which results from legal specifications (Ferris, 1986 [1929]: 74).

He then showed what would happen "if the maximum masses which are permitted by the New York Zoning Law were erected over all the blocks of a city" (Ferris, 1986 [1929]: 82). As required by their clients, the architects of the time did indeed try to achieve maximum usable floor area while complying with the code, but in practice they built ziggurats that only approximated the angled setbacks depicted by Ferriss. The end points of the stepped profiles traced the invisible sky exposure planes.

New York was the first US city to impose zoning laws, but most others soon followed. In each case, local code variations led to differing formal results; a well-known example is the comparatively boxier skyscraper typology of Chicago, the forms of which are equally a product of zoning laws (Willis, 1995). Elsewhere in the world, legislation intended to ensure a fair distribution of natural light and air has given rise to characteristic architectural typologies: urban courtyard blocks, thin modernist slabs, terraced townhouses, low-density suburbia, or the residential complexes of Hong Kong's New Territories that comprise vast podiums supporting multiple residential towers.

In 1961, New York City introduced a new zoning ordinance based on floor area ratios (FAR, the maximum allowable floor area defined as a multiple of the site area). Although no longer mandating pyramidal forms, and indirectly encouraging the design of skyscrapers with straight vertical profiles and street plazas in front, the new code also entailed the first height restrictions ever imposed on Manhattan (albeit parametrically defined).[2] However, Tokyo currently uses setbacks very similar to the 1916 New York Zoning Resolution. The Japanese system was officially implemented with the enactment of the Building Standards Law in 1950, although it is based on Japanese studies of Western cities that go back more than a century. Having undergone several revisions, the code now comprises detailed regulations for the bulk, height and density of buildings, as well as site coverage, floor area ratios, street setbacks, side-yard widths, structural types, safety and usage. The volumetric controls are known as *shasen-seigen*, which literally means "diagonal line regulations" (although they are in effect planes rather than lines). Just as in New York, they were not conceived as aesthetic controls, but to prevent buildings from blocking sunlight and air from their neighbours. According to one source, the primary motivation for the *shasen* is to allow all citizens to hang their laundry in direct sunlight for part of each day (Nakamura, 1992: 85).

There are three basic types of *shasen*: from the north (*kitagawa-shasen*), from the road (*douro-shasen*), and from the adjoining sites (*rinchi-shasen*). They generally slope at 1:0.6 or 1:1.25 in residential zones, and 1:1.5 in commercial zones. In terms of effect on the built environment, the most important is the north *shasen*. It starts 5m above ground level (in residential areas; it can be up to 10m in commercial areas) at the northern site boundary, and then slopes toward the south. Naturally, most sites are not perfectly aligned with the cardinal points, so the north *shasen*

2. "In New York, the first finite limits on volume (and therefore on height) were imposed in 1961, when the 1916 zoning ordinance received its first major revision … the FAR formula effectively ended the standard setback massing, not because the new code prohibited it, but because sheer-walled towers in open plazas became more profitable." (Willis, 1995: 140-141).
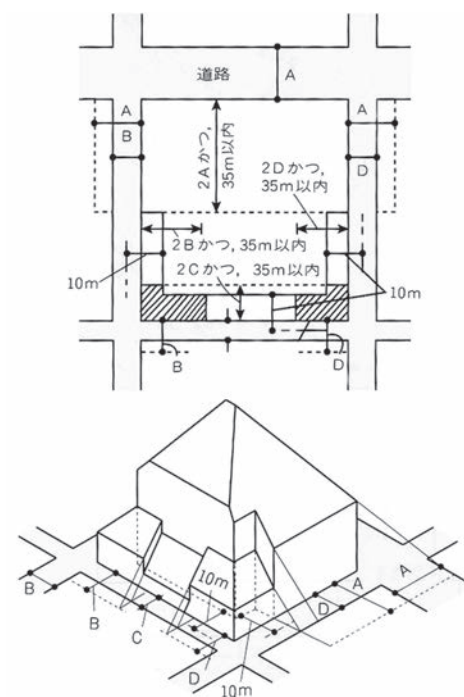
An example of the volumetric modelling required by shasen regulations (diagrams taken from the Building Standards Law Guidebook).
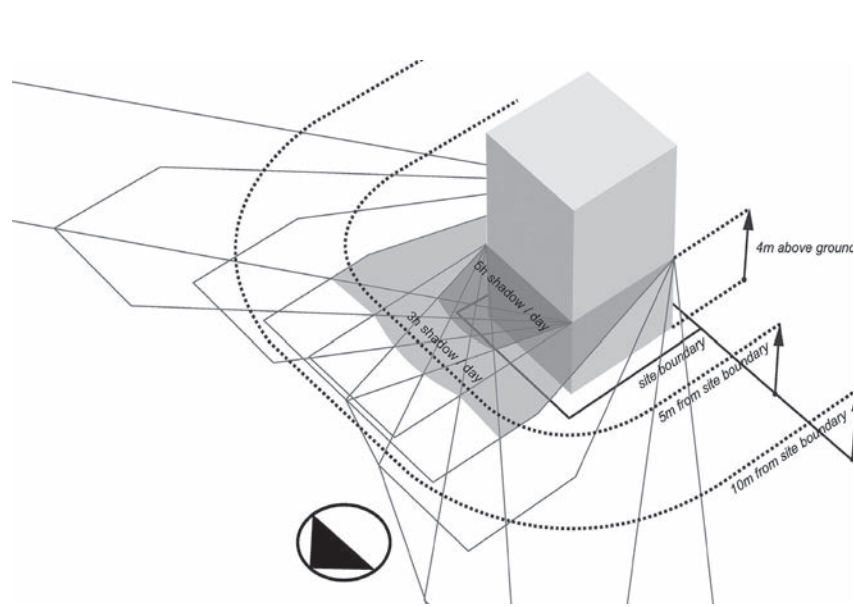
Shadow distribution limits according to the nichiei-kisei regulations (diagram by Tom Daniell).

Typical bevelled building forms in Japan (photo by Tom Daniell).

will also have some impact on either the eastern or western boundary. The road *shasen* starts from ground level at the opposite side of the adjacent streets. The wider the street, the less impact it will have on building form. If the building is set back from its own street boundary, the starting point of the *shasen* is shifted correspondingly further away on the other side of the street, and it is further affected by irregularities in road widths and intersections. Finally, the adjoining site *shasen* applies at every non-street boundary. It starts either 20m or 31m above ground level, and thus is usually irrelevant in residential areas.

While smaller elements such as balustrades and billboards are permitted to project through the *shasen*, as are penthouse towers of no more than 1/8th the building footprint, the Building Standards Law also sets overall maximum building heights (*zettai-takasa-no-seigen*). The height limit in residential areas is generally 10m, but above a height of 7m (or two storeys, whichever is lower) the *shasen* are supplemented by additional volumetric controls known as sun-shadow regulations (*nichiei-kisei*). These place further restrictions on the building volume, according to the amount of shadow it casts between 8am and 4pm (or 9am and 3pm, if it adjoins a road) on the winter solstice. Lines are drawn at 5m and at 10m from the site boundary line, at a height above the ground plane of 1.5m (residential) or 4m (commercial). The shadow cast by the building must not exceed these lines for more than a defined time period: usually, more than 3 hours of shadow should not pass the 10m line, and more than 5 hours of shadow should not pass the 5m line. If the shadows exceed these limits, additional chunks must be removed from the building volume – a common cause of irregular building forms in urban areas. To avoid an extended period of reiterated trial-and-error design, it is common for Japanese architects to begin by modelling the allowable building envelope, and then use this as the basis for design.

The limits for total site coverage (*kenpei-ritsu*) and total floor area (*youseki-ritsu*) are both given as ratios of the site area. Each district is assigned a pair of numbers that indicate maximum site coverage and floor area as percentages of the total site (e.g. 60/200). However, it is not uncommon for sites to span more than one zoning, in which case the floor area ratios are averaged for the entire site. In commercially zoned districts, it is often impossible to achieve the maximum allowable floor area within the volumetric constraints, so economic pressures mean that the allowable building envelopes are almost always filled. Unlike early 20th century New York, ziggurats are rare; the Japanese preference is to precisely follow the *shasen-seigen*, producing the ubiquitous wedge-shaped volumes of the Tokyo skyline. Private houses are less noticeably affected by *shasen*,

because in residentially zoned districts the floor area ratios are relatively low, and the maximum allowable floor area can be achieved without entirely filling the building envelope. A house that does swell to occupy the allowable volume will usually produce excessive floor area, and a common solution is to insert internal voids or exterior courtyards into the house volume.

Although the code might be expected to cumulatively sculpt a group of buildings on a given city block into a more-or-less coherent overall profile, anomalies in the *shasen* and other regulations mean that adjacent buildings often appear to be subject to differing sets of laws. In many cases, bizarre building forms are no more,

Below: decoding the effects of shasen regulations (courtesy Yasutaka Yoshimura).

Bottom: decoding the effects of nichi-ei regulations (courtesy Yasutaka Yoshimura).
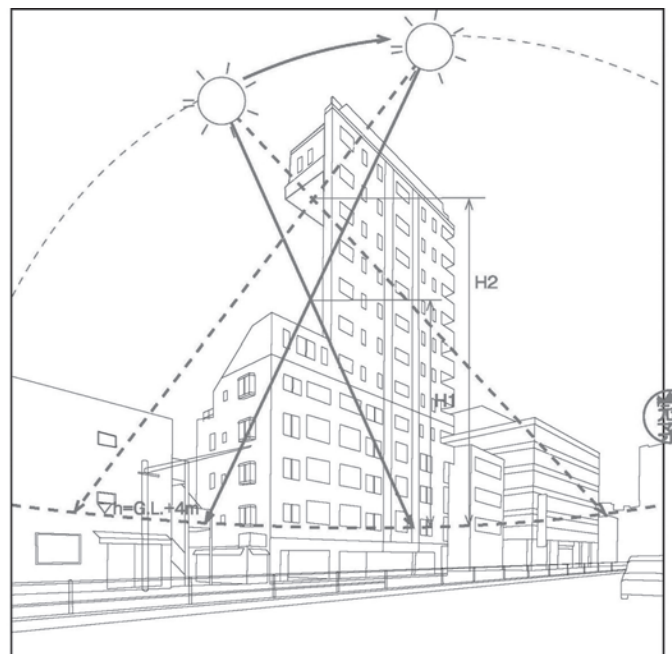
Prada Tokyo, Herzog & De Meuron, 2003 (photo by Tom Daniell).
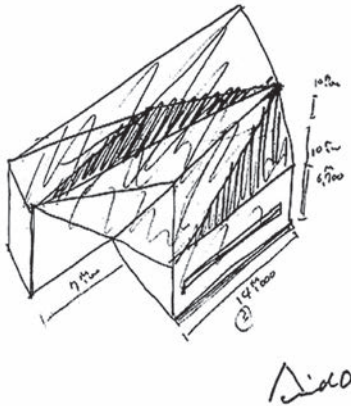
hhstyle.com/casa, Tadao Ando, 2005 (courtesy office of Tadao Ando).

Sky Trace house, Kiyoshi Sey Takeyama, 2006 (photo by Tom Daniell).

and no less, than built diagrams of precise applications of the code. These have long been a source of frustration, and fascination, for local architects. Over the last few years Tokyo architect Yasutaka Yoshimura has had his students catalogue some of the odder examples, which he calls "super legal buildings," into a book of the same name (Yoshimura, 2006). Reversing Ferriss' method of extrapolating hypothetical building forms from the code, Yoshimura takes existing buildings and attempts to derive the code that generated them.

The raw forms of Tokyo are generally far less elegant than Ferriss' renderings of an imaginary New York, but in the hands of a skilful designer they can be manipulated to good effect, as in Herzog & de Meuron's Prada Aoyama Epicenter. To quote Jacques Herzog:

> We then started in earnest, checking out just how much leeway we had within the zoning laws. We discovered rather complex virtual machinery, which literally shaped the permitted building volume…. In early versions, we tried to move away from the zoning shape, but returned to it later when we discovered that we really needed every square meter of the given volume. As it turned out, it made a stronger impact than that of a fantasy shape. (Celant, 2003: 81).

Beyond mere compliance, the law can also serve as the basis for sculptural form making, as in Tadao Ando's uncharacteristically irregular hhstyle.com/ casa building. In its balance between conformity and experimentation, the Sky Trace house designed by Kiyoshi Sey Takeyama is exemplary. On a typically tiny site, the building simply delineates the three-dimensional zoning envelope, with one exception: the outward-leaning slice at the corner is a deliberate design move. With, quite literally, a single stroke, a clumsy code-defined lump has been transformed into a poised, asymmetric crystal of concrete.

Laconic yet iconic despite themselves, code-defined building forms are not necessarily the extrapolation-to-absurdity of a "datascape," nor merely a passive-aggressive display of frustration. At best, they are built diagrams of democracy at work (or even better, at play), mapping the interactions between individually motivated desires and collectively determined limitations. A confrontational compliance with the code will demonstrate the merits or injustices of the status quo, and delineate, by omission, the potential alternatives.

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A Short Venting of the Spleen
on the subject of the architect and science

Bill McKay

Here, on our little sliver of land, last vestige of terra australis, we live in a place the very existence of which has been the subject of speculation since the Western world realised earth might be round:

> But as to the fable that there are Antipodes, that is to say, men on the opposite side of the earth, where the sun rises when it sets to us, men who walk with their feet opposite ours, that is on no ground credible. And, indeed, it is not affirmed that this has been learned by historical knowledge, but rather by scientific conjecture… (Augustine, 413-426: n.p.).

Augustine should be the patron saint of architecture, not that doubter Thomas, because we architects, like him, crave above all else, solid ground and certainty. Augustine's certainty was not derived from science, and I have observed how architects, too, have hung on to an old fashioned notion of the universe, even when this puts us at odds with the scientific developments of the last few hundred years or so. This is in contrast to the other arts, which have been transformed by this new knowledge, and it is particularly the case in little New Zealand, where we still agonise about our identity, and our supposed distance from the rest of the world.

Augustine was discussing Terra Australis Incognita, the great southern land mass assumed to be necessary as a counterbalance to the northern continents. When Tasman touched our shore he called us Staten Land (South Land), assuming we were the western edge of a vast plain, the other coast of which was just off the tip of South America, where another glimpse of shore had also been dubbed Staten Land. Cook's circumnavigation was not so much a discovery of land, but rather a whittling away of European dreams of the Great Southern Land. He made a famous map of our islands, but erased much more: a continent. From the beginning then, New Zealand has been a disappointment, not just to explorers, but to hunters of moa and whale, missionaries, Wakefield's settlers, diggers of gold and amber, Māori, immigrants and almost everyone and everything else.

And we have continued in that dour tradition: New Zealand is a place where ideas come to die. Just when the world is giving them up, we buy them and plant them here: colonialism, monarchism, socialism, the garden suburb, modernism, the free market, post modernism, minimalism, motorways, stucco. ... New Zealand is a shaky land lurching from one crisis to the next. We mowed down our kauri forests to make farms; now our hills, nibbled raw by sheep, are falling into valleys. We planted new forests that are only good enough for pulp and paper. We can't get a grip on our climate: all our buildings are too hot or too cold or leak.

Here at Western world's end, we hang on to the techniques and beliefs of old Europe: we are like the last of the flat earthers. We deny our beautiful sphere, and our place in the impossible antipodes. As we make our plans, they lie flat with no hint of the earth's curvature; the tumble of terrain is combed into contours. Our plans are drawn looking down, we are obsessed with the ground; we sift through the entrails of the plan, our drawings never look up. With each plan we draw, we reiterate our belief that this object, this building, this earth is at the centre of the universe. Our earth is flat, stationary and immovable: all things revolve around it. We draw the sun rising in the east over our building, in a firmament revolving around our handiwork, then bowing, retreating, setting in the west. We are full of fake science, the precision of the ignorant engaged in old ritual; we reject the heretic Copernican system, we cling to the rock of geocentricity.

And, even still, we believe that gravity exists, a notion science dispensed with years ago. We architects believe that our precious earth emits some force of attraction that binds our buildings to it, as we stack floor on floor like a little kid balancing their blocks. We cling to the primitive celestial mechanics of the clockwork Newtonian universe: we haven't embraced the Einsteinian one. In general relativity, it is the curving of space-time, due to the presence of matter, that creates the effects of gravitation. The building doesn't sit solidly on earth; rather, through the twist of space-time, the two accelerate together. But we worship the static, the solid, the straight line; we eschew the geodesic, the complex geometries of the multidimensional multiverse. We will not abandon our little rock for the elusive shifting sands of space-time.

This is why we still like paper. We seek refuge in the gross simplifications and flattening effects of that medium; the way it reduces the multiverse to a couple of scratches in the dirt, absent of the complication of people: plan, elevation, section, detail. We have been drawing like this since the pyramids were piled up, and we do not acknowledge the reductive aspect, the limiting effect of this form of representation, on our conception of architecture. Then, we fold up our rectilinear buildings from the drawing; we turn two dimensions into three and think we have performed a marvellous trick, as Curnow (1943) said, of standing upright here.

Our architects are like butchers with brown paper. Before a building can be born into our world we flay the idea, we dissect the conceived body into separate elements, skins and bones, plans and details. What conception can endure this before birth? Like primitive surgeons we underestimate the effect our blunt tools of representation have on stifling life, on limiting our ideas and the scope of what architecture can be. We demand that every detail be stripped bare and scrutinized and when we, in our grimly deterministic way, put the bag of bones back together, we get frankensteinian buildings, the living dead. Sausages. Chops. Mince. That is our architectural diet here.

As Rem Koolhaas said, the art of working drawings is not to document, thoroughly, the building, but rather to put off the act of resolution to the last possible moment, and keep design alive. And as long ago as 1927, Werner Heisenberg established that one cannot be certain about both a particle's position and its momentum, not everything can be resolved and nailed down. This principle of uncertainty is at the heart of modern physics, has pervaded philosophy and the arts, but has not permeated the stony walls of architecture.

We are builders, we adopt a common sense approach to the world, and this suits our little Newtonian neighbourhood. But Darwinian intuition is out of step with the quantum universe, that vast expanding bubble. That a block can sit on top of a block, that a stone has a certain trajectory through the air, has been drummed into us through years of evolution on earth. However, local common sense and intuition have left us grossly ill equipped to conceive of, let alone deal with, the physical realities of the quantum universe. The top of a building, for instance, is travelling faster than the bottom; time dilates, those at the top will not age as fast as those in the street, time will pass more slowly. In a lift, in a car, in an aeroplane, these effects of space-time are even more pronounced, but we are blissfully ignorant of them. However, we don't live in an objective stream of time, we don't even live in a universe anymore, we live in a multiverse. Our world is constantly shattering, splitting into a multitude of possibilities, and none of this disturbs us as we plod along the old familiar path.

I work as a critic of contemporary architecture, and each week I walk into an office, and have to smile at architects, and nod over their drawings, and listen to what their little briefs entail. I want to shake them, wake them up to the world, open their eyes to the universe. We live with myths: that Australia is the closest country to New Zealand; that there is only one time zone in New Zealand; that Hillary conquered the highest point on the earth's surface. These are all untrue. We are living in the antipodes, an impossible place on the watery side of the world, where normal rules shouldn't apply.

This is a new land, a new world of possibilities. We spin around our star; we can walk upside down here. We are the antipodeans, the opposite footers, and even the indigenes can show us how everything is the other way round here: their word for the future means what is behind; their word for the past means in front; their word for south means above; their word for north means below (Williams, 2006 [1957]). To the first Europeans, the Pacific was a vast emptiness dotted with isolated islands, but to those who live here it is a rich and textured connective meniscus, whose currents and waves guide us home. Their vessels and buildings are just as fluid, permeable, flexible: impermanent, but real. Although science leads the way in questioning our conception of the world, both practically and metaphysically, these cultural notions of time and space can open our eyes to new alternatives too; together they can influence, and transform, Western ideas of architecture, time, space and our methodology, open up the possibilities of new architectural form, and enrich our understanding of how one can live in the unbelievable world of the antipodes.

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The Myth of the Nation

Andrew Leach

The search for a mode of architecture particular to New Zealand has been much prized for as long as architects have been building there, but it enjoyed a dramatic and popular resurgence in the wake of David Mitchell and Gillian Chaplin's 1984 book, *The Elegant Shed*. The nationalist genealogy – from "humble bach" to the experiments of Group Construction, Group Architects and their offspring, to contemporary modernist-revival celebrations – became well-rehearsed at all levels of New Zealand's architectural culture and was, at least until recently, firmly embedded in Auckland's two schools of architecture, and in Wellington's since the end of the 1990s.

The fundamental work of Justine Clark and Paul Walker, in *Looking for the Local* (2000), to extend further south the locus of the rhetorical marriage of nationalism to modernism, and to historicize the Architectural Centre's one-time selection of New Zealand's exemplary modern architecture, has lent a firm scholarly basis to a broad desire to isolate the seeds of a modern New Zealand architectural identity. So too have Douglas Lloyd Jenkins' unparalleled efforts to share a more complicated view of New Zealand's modernist architectural history with a wider readership, most notably in his *At Home* (2004), but also in the anthology *New Dreamland* (2005), and his articles in the *New Zealand Listener*.

Nevertheless, the broad tendency in New Zealand architectural culture is to dismiss this complexity in favour of a search for national origins, and for local innovations within international phenomena: a desire that mirrors much popular cultural commentary in New Zealand, and, in turn, the general outlook of any number of cultural settings that revel in the rhetoric of being "exquisite apart". That the popular architectural historiography of New Zealand has moved in this direction over the last two decades is understandable, and certainly has been beneficial for expanding, for instance, the hitherto overlooked worth of post-War architecture and urban planning, even if all but a handful of specialists follow a troublingly simplistic historiographical line, such as we find in the centennial history publication of the New Zealand Institute of Architects, edited by Charles Walker (2005). However, in the long-term practice of documenting and challenging the history of New Zealand architecture, it is not without its problems; this criticism holds true both within the academy and beyond it to professional and general audiences.

Peter Wood, in his article, "The Bach: The Cultural History of a Local Typology" (2000), works backwards from the "bach" – as the small holiday house in New Zealand is called – to a "birth of the nation" bound tightly to the ANZAC myth, anchored at Gallipoli, in order to argue alternative, cultural starting points for determining an independent, national, architectural character.[1] For Wood, the endurance of the bach as an architectural type owes much to the extent to which it is historically embedded in a widely appreciated period of cultural adolescence – in which the First World War figures largely. While Wood's explicit line of argument is that the broader context of the bach's emergence after New Zealand's participation in an Imperial war, under an independent Australasian banner, lends the history of this typology a relevance beyond architectural discourse – an admirable and important observation – he also entrenches the type by heaping national myth upon architectural.

Wood's typically speculative and instrumental approach to his topic does not, generally speaking, undermine the argument he advances for an "indigenous architectural nationalism in Aotearoa/New Zealand" (Walker, 2005: 246). He tells us what we want to hear: that the bach, as an architectural type, is more rooted than we imagined in the national psyche – a mentality that privileges industry, invention and isolation. For this, the bach is a perfect fit. As such, it acquires authority as an autochthonous architectural typology – and here I write both of Wood's analysis, as well as the popular uptake of this idea – which, in turn, reinforces the New Zealand-ness of those architectures that build upon it. In this sense, if Wood's essay is not wholly inventive, neither is it as damaging to the broader goals of architectural historiography – the slow filtering of evidence as a gradual test of historical narrative – as the knee-jerk, ill-informed invocations of this "moment" by professional discourse, as it cashes in on the values that Wood, and others, supply to it.

Few, beyond the profession, would disagree that Charles Walker's volume functions appallingly as a history of *100 Years of New Zealand Architecture*: a love letter, largely written in an obscurantist prose, from the institutional bastion of architectural practice to the myths that, like a moat, surround it.[2] It is not the job of architects to question the histories handed down by academics, Walker writes in his introductory essay: "Architecture is essentially about the future" (Walker, 2005: 12). Yet, with no effort whatsoever, the structure of Walker's book belies the projective under-pinnings of architectural practice, negating those aspects of its history that fail to conform to present day values. Of the fifteen chapters that add up to a history of the architectural profession in the century since the founding of its Institute, only the first considers that century's first four decades. This six-page contribution by Sir Miles Warren, "one of New Zealand's greatest architects" (Walker, 2005: 246), announces that "the period is best exemplified by three architects [Cecil Wood, William Gray Young and William Henry Gummer] whose work dominated each of their cities" (Warren, 2005: 18).[3] Among institutional histories, the book is atypical, precisely for refusing to offer a history of the NZIA's foundations, not to mention its smaller oversights: setting aside the once-close relationships of architects and planners; or considering the role of the profession in setting up the early twentieth century infrastructure of the country's towns and cities – libraries, court-houses, schools, and so on. Indeed, to be generous, those values represented by Walker's history belong squarely in 2005, and epitomize the mechanisms described more generally above. The Institute's former president Gordon Moller prefaces the book

by writing that, "the architectural profession has responded [to New Zealand's development] by developing a unique language for the built form for this country, in the way we inhabit our buildings, towns and cities." That this language is an unchallenged closed-code is a fault of decades' worth of academic historiography being lumped into two categories: that which supports myths, and is celebrated; and that which undermines them, and is ignored.

Queenstown architect, Ed Elliott, recently suggested in *Architecture New Zealand* (2007) that the bach myth had run its course. However, immediately, he turned to another architectural type, reinforcing the same simplistic qualities associated with the bach. Treating this "replacement" – back country huts – under the same terms as the bach brings the kinds of correspondences between cultural value and architectural type directly back to the task of "reforming" the origins of New Zealand architecture. He writes of "these stunning little gems … that take an architect back to the basics of Architecture. Pure forms, the essence of practicality, built with a limited palette of materials (that is, with whatever could be carted in), and with an absolute minimum of adornment" (Elliott, 2007: 93). Of course, in searching out its origins and floating the contenders for those examples, types, forms and materials (not to mention "spirit") that would satisfy the local architectural profession's thirst for histories easily absorbed – a thirst too often treated by extremely simplified forms of the academic architectural historiography to which the profession pays scant attention – the problem remains the same.

In his recent novel *Underground*, Queenslander Andrew McGahan (2006) describes the sinister, reactionary motives that are rarely far behind those forms of historiography that seek identity in moments of rupture, while ignoring both the conflicts inevitably found in "uniqueness", and the continuities that can exceed the event. McGahan's observations float to the surface of a novel that is both too cynical and too silly to take seriously. However, his underlying unease with the readiness with which a national culture – in this case a dystopic forecast of a right-wing Australia – can translate instances of national differentiation into moments of national formation, and thus into the range of measures that, on both sides of the Tasman, determine whether or not one can boast the simple hard-headedness and ingenuity of the ANZAC spirit, is pertinent to this issue.

Of course, the legends of Gallipoli feed parallel, and often diverging, values in the two countries that celebrate them, rather than values we might understand as thoroughly interwoven. Few would speak of an Australasian spirit, rather of characteristics firmly aligned with one nation or the other. In the same vein, few would lay claim for the origins of an Australasian architecture, and yet it is precisely this concept – of an open cultural exchange preceding the maturity of either country (Australia with its Federation in 1901; New Zealand with its new status as a Dominion in 1907), and of New Zealand as one of a number of interdependent British colonies in the South Pacific – that has been suppressed by the rise of a nationalist architectural historiography in both places.

Despite the various factors that render it sensible to differentiate between Australia and New Zealand as national cases, with their own histories and cultural specificities, there is good reason to turn back to a generously regional approach to their history. Does anyone really believe that what have become the national differences between the architectural histories of Australia and New

Zealand are greater than the formerly colonial differences between, say, Tasmania and Queensland, or New South Wales and Victoria (Australia's infra-national version of the more celebrated trans-Tasman rivalry)? The number of migrant architects travelling back and forth across the Tasman might be more than ever before, but the apparently seamless movement between South Pacific colonies that distinguished the profession's history for many of the nineteenth century's most important architects – which is not even to factor in the relationship of the Australian and New Zealand colonies to London – describes a decidedly *anti*-national reality to a history that has been sectioned off to suit later twentieth century narratives.

To conclude, these observations are simply examples of the more general challenges facing historians of architecture working in the present moment. My topic here has been the myth of New Zealand's "nationality", but it corresponds to any number of flimsy historical bases on which architectural culture – academic, professional and popular – builds solid edifices that, to invoke a well-worn idea, treat quick-sand as bedrock. The issue does not lie in the speculation and referential freedom that marked history writing of the 1990s, and persists in some quarters today, but in the way it lends the profession the tools with which to dig itself deeper and deeper into a mire of rhetoric and fables. It is at the very moment (now long since passed and thoroughly evidenced) that the profession needs this mire more than any kind of real contact with architecture's past that we have a problem.

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Architecture Inspired by New Zealand

Amanda Hyde de Kretser and David Sullivan

Review by Paul Walker

Amanda Hyde de Kretser and David Sullivan; photographs by Judith Holtebrinck, *Architecture Inspired by New Zealand* (Auckland: Mint Publishing, 2006).

The premise of this book is that the relationship between house and landscape in New Zealand warrants investigation and critical assessment. The words of Mike Austin are cited at the top of the foreword: "It is a step forward to have a discussion about houses that attempts to be analytic and precise about the relationship of the building to the site". How could anyone disagree? However, this book barely begins such a discussion. It is certainly neither analytic nor precise. Rather, what it does is to present a series of houses – mostly trophy houses in the current 50s-modernism-on-steroids style du jour – each in relation to its landscape setting. What landscape actually seems to mean here, would in other contexts be called 'scenery'. *Architecture Inspired by New Zealand* is a coffee-table book in the scenic New Zealand genre, distinct from the rest of its type because there are images of houses interpolated into the fore- or mid-ground in most of the photographs.

This cross-over of genres – between glossy tourist pap and glossy shelter rag – might have been interesting. Some provocative disjunctions could be imagined: photoshopped 'before' and 'after' shots, both inverting and updating the procedure of Repton's Red Books, so we could see if the landscape looked better with or without the architectural 'improvement'. Perhaps perforations around each photograph would have allowed an interactive reader to decide which they wanted: the house or the land, shelter magazine or coffee table scenic album.

However, the problem with this book is that those responsible for it do not seem to be aware that they are dealing with genres, consolidated myths, etcetera. All this twenty-five years after Francis Pound's book, *Frames on the Land,* so persuasively showed that New Zealanders look at their country through eyes conditioned, not by the local landscape and its physical attributes, but rather by a placeless panorama of clichés. In *Architecture Inspired by New Zealand*, this is most apparent in the landscape photograph that begins each section, and the breathlessly inane introductory text that follows. Thus, Queenstown is introduced by a panoramic image of lake, tussocky hillsides, mountains, clouds and sky, with the town itself seen as a distant fragment in the extreme right of the image. (This happens to be the only image in the whole book that includes anything remotely like a town: 'landscape' here is never urban.) Then we are told that the town perches "precariously on the banks of crystal clear Lake Wakatipu", and that its "picturesque scenery is framed by spectacular mountain ranges", rising at "a seemingly vertical angle out of the deep blue water". Meanwhile, Wanaka has "towering mountains", is "blessed with a continental climate", and is characterized by "glistening white peaks in winter, kaleidoscopic wild flowers of spring,

summer's scorched brown high country and rows of luminous golden poplars in autumn". And so on. It is as if the copy (attributed to David Sullivan), as much as the architecture, has sought to return to the 1950s.

However, the houses themselves are, of course, more knowing than this. We might be alarmed by what the architecture of the contemporary house in New Zealand implies when presented like this, en masse. New Zealand architects, the images seem to say, work for clients with lots of money and in most cases with no apparent individuality or identity: they have no children, no pets, no elderly parents, no disabilities, no books, no ugly heirlooms, no weirdness, no mess, no taste – except that bought by the metre according the prevailing dictates of *Home and Entertaining* and *Vogue Living*. Further, we know that, at present, they prefer fifties modernism built as if budgets don't matter. However, this is probably more the message of the pictures, and of how the houses have been dressed to be pictured. Actually, there are many interesting buildings here: the houses designed by Felicity Wallace, Hugh Tennant, Christopher Kelly and Mitchell & Stout, for example, all manage to reach through the clichéd manner in which they are presented to suggest that something is going on in New Zealand domestic architecture beyond an uncritical reverence for Neutra. And two of the houses actually entail a complete transformation of the landscape, into what is known as a garden: Ron Sang's Brake house in Titirangi (the only one in the book which has had any opportunity to weather) is shown surrounded by spring magnolia bloom; and a Waikato house by Nicholas Stevens and Gary Lawson treats the landscape as artifice, including an affectedly 'natural' arrangement of bromeliads and cycads in its swimming pool hall. There is even a reminder, in the form of a house by Melling Morse in a patch of Wellington bush, that architectural quality can be achieved in modestly scaled buildings on modest sites.

Each of the houses comes with a second text, that is presumably meant to deliver the analysis and precision that Austin's words lead the reader to expect. This material is authored by Amanda Hyde de Kretser. In each case, she has linked the design of the house to some landscape or site related line of inquiry or activity in design culture. Some of the suggested lines of thought are rather extraordinary, preposterous even. We are told that Felicity Wallace's approach to the design of a house at Wakatipu is an "architectural response" to the mountains around; this comment, banal as it is, is prefaced by a short discursus on what Viollet-le-Duc and Ruskin in turn said about mountains and architecture 150 years ago. This takes up a quarter of the brief textual space Hyde de Kretser has to work with, and her point seems to be that neither Viollet-le-Duc nor Ruskin apply in this case, as if the average reader might have erroneously thought that they did. Or this, of a house at Lake Hayes: "Like the Romans, who believed that the landscape was to be observed rather than entered, this house defines a viewing platform outside and a picture window inside, through which its occupants can command the view". Huh? However, in Hyde de Kretser's brief essays there is at least the sense that things are being tried out. It is a pity the book did not give more scope for this: the foreword discloses that she did not even have an opportunity to visit the houses (or the landscapes). This is a little like trying to read a book – the thought crossed my mind – without bothering to turn its pages.

Dick Toy's Last Lecture

Peggy Deamer

I am delighted to be asked to "deliver" Dick Toy's last lecture. It has provided an opportunity to engage with a figure of renown, here in Auckland, and to reflect on his legacy. It also has provided an opportunity to insert myself into a tiny piece of the history of Auckland, and find a happy role in this fabulous event of Architecture Week.

I should say that the word "deliver" is in quotation marks: in reproducing and condensing the lecture, it is necessarily a personal interpretation. Indeed, when given one page of notes and 53 slides to negotiate, this would have to be the case! But also, only part of my talk will be the outlining of Toy's talk; the other part will be my interpretation of the relevance of this interpretation for Auckland's future. If I have taken the opportunity handed to me, to think through this lecture in a personal manner, too liberally, it only comes from my enthusiasm for Toy's thoughts, and an affinity I feel I have discovered.

The Lecture

This lecture of Dick Toy's was delivered on 8 June 1989, just short of twenty years ago. It was given to second, third and fourth year architecture students at the University of Auckland, "by request of John Goldwater". It was twelve years after Toy had ceased teaching at the University. He gave it the simple title: "Talk about Architectural Structures: Pavilions, Squares, Bays".

The lecture falls into three main parts: the first having to do with what Toy refers to as "architectural language"; the second, with "opposing forms of earth-sky relationships"; and the third, with Auckland's formal bay structure. Throughout, he lays out his argument for contrasting spatial typologies, and the need for Auckland to adhere to its given, natural, own spatial typology.

Part 1

1. Toy begins his "architectural language" discussion with this map of Auckland harbour. He is interested in how the form of Auckland's bays – the relationship of water to earth; the hollow of the bay – gives rise to spatial imperatives.
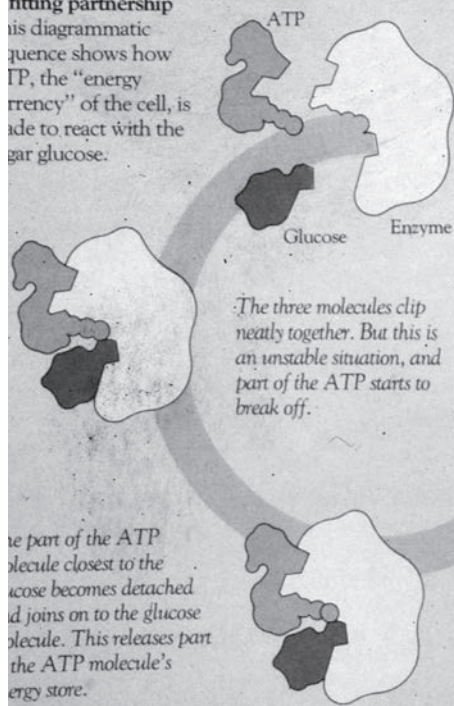
2. The spatial imperative is best captured by a corresponding diagram of the behaviour of enzymes: the "hollow" of the enzyme invites the ATP (the energy currency of the cell) and the glucose molecules into its sphere, thereby forcing these two elements together in a connection that allows for the exchange of an

1

AN ENZYME AT WORK

fitting partnership
his diagrammatic
quence shows how
TP, the "energy
rrency" of the cell, is
ade to react with the
gar glucose.

ATP

Glucose   Enzyme

*The three molecules clip
neatly together. But this is
an unstable situation, and
part of the ATP starts to
break off.*

e part of the ATP
olecule closest to the
ucose becomes detached
d joins on to the glucose
olecule. This releases part
the ATP molecule's
ergy store.

ADP

Glucose-6-
phosphate·

Enzyme

In the human body, millions of biochemical
reactions happen every millisecond, and almost
every one is controlled by an enzyme. Without
enzymes, many of these reactions would take
minutes or even longer—too slow for life to be
maintained.

Enzymes work through their structure. The
substances that are to react together slot into
recesses in the enzyme like a hand into a glove.
Once in position, their chemical structure is
put under stress by the presence of the enzyme.
The result is that they react, the crucial
rearrangement takes place, and the two
products disengage from the enzyme. The
enzyme itself is immediately ready for a repeat
performance.

*As soon as the transfer is
complete, the enzyme's hold
on the reacting molecules
weakens, and they fall out
of their respective slots. The
reaction depends on the
enzyme's structure being
exactly right. Just one
critical mistake in its amino
acid chain is enough to
prevent it working.*

2

ATP fragment onto and into the glucose fragment. In other words, the
hollow of the enzyme, like the hollow of the Auckland harbour, engenders a
system of communication and exchange: indeed, more than this, it, like the bay,
engenders "life".

3. Toy then expands from here to give examples of environments in which man sets
up meaningful relationships with the earth. At the most basic, pre-architectural
level, it is the child finding pleasure in both the security of the "hollows" of the
rocks at the sea, and the expansiveness that the water allows: a closure and an
opening; an inwardness and an outwardness.

3

1. outward

4. He then moves on to images of Māori approaches to building. It is not about the space of the "hollow", but it elaborates on other aspects of humans "grabbing" meanings in building form. Here, it is the construction of the threshold – that moment in which the body moves from outside to inside, from expansiveness to contraction. Here, the body's physical labour and the inscription of the body into the architecture indicate the care with which this moment is understood by Māori.

5. From here, Toy moves to the significance of light in more recent, less vernacular approaches to architecture, exemplified by Le Corbusier's chapel at Ronchamp. He admires the way that light hits and modulates form, but also how light is set up as an object of appreciation in the exterior and the interior. Again, it is an example of how man formally claims the offering of the heavens – light – and gives it meaning.

6. And then, on to the memorial to the victims of Armenian genocide of 1915 at Yerevan, Armenia, where the celebration of life (and death) at the top of the hill provides, in the vertical dimension, the outwardness and upness that comes with being at the top of a mountain, while also providing the shelter, enclosure and manipulation of light that comes with occupying the space made at the top of this mountain.

7. And in Peru, the same respect for the mountain as an object against which one builds towns, but in which one also finds enclosure, with the fulfilment of outward exposure, expansiveness and light.

Part 2

What follows in the second part, "Opposing forms of earth-sky relationships", is the explanation of two diagrams that are fundamental to Toy's understanding of built form. He is interested, it should be stressed, not just in how forms are set in relation to other forms, but how we, as perceiving human beings, receive and respond to these forms. The two principle forms or conditions, as we will see, are outwardness and inwardness.

8. In this diagram entitled "outward", the three diagrams show a progression from inwardness to outwardness in three dimensional, spatial terms, where an inner corner containing space transforms, through an intermediary stage, into an object building of only outer corners, deflecting space, but not towards it. "Outwardness" and its vectors correspond, on the right, to this last type.

9. Examples of this, at the architectural scale, are the pyramids in Egypt: at the urban scale, the Acropolis in Greece.

10. In contrast to this is the diagram of inwardness, in which space is confined and directed inward; in which space dominates over (is at the centre of) mass: mass at the periphery defines space.

11. An example of this, at the architectural scale, is the Parthenon in Rome and, at the urban scale, the piazzas of Italy, forming as they do outdoor rooms.

12. What follows, then, seems to be a contest, or as Toy refers to it, an explosion, witnessing a movement from mass-dominated, outward-type space-making to its reciprocal inward, space-dominated variant in various moments of architectural history, until, in modern times, we no longer find any reciprocity between these two formal types, but rather, only the object-oriented city that has no sense of space and hence, more importantly (as the human senses it), no sense of *place*.

Part 3

It is at this point, in the third part of the lecture, that Toy makes an interesting shift. He re-introduces his new and third topic, the Auckland bay form. Seemingly, he has left behind the paradigmatic spatial types described above, in order to concentrate on the specifics of this particular city, Auckland, and how it demonstrates these formal attributes. And he introduces Auckland in a most interesting way.

13. He shows New Zealand floating in an ocean-dominated world, saying: "Auckland is a watery city." He offers various examples of the particular bay forms that bring us back, immediately, to the "hollow" paradigm of the enzyme.

10

13

14. On top of this, he switches scales, showing us this same "hollow" – or perhaps more easily expressed as "transitional" – space of the typical Auckland bungalow porch: space that is both enclosed and yet open, is both inward and outward. He switches scale and locale again when he compares this to the Piazza St. Marco
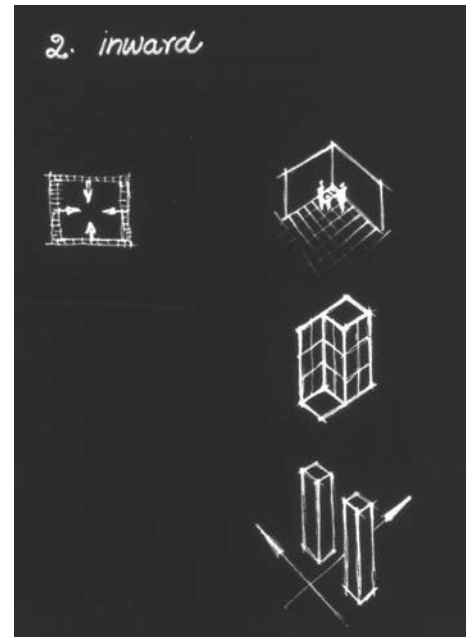
3. interaction
inward –
outward.

15

in Venice; again, a transitional space that is an urban porch, both part of the city and part of the water, both enclosed and open. Auckland and its bays, in other words, are introduced to us not by the specifics of the local, but by the most global of typologies.

15. He then pulls out his coup: that indeed, these are not just examples of Auckland's deployment of the two spatial types – inward and outward – but they constitute a third and ultimately (if you give this a Hegelian, dialectic reading, which it is hard not to do) superior type, the synthesis of the inward and the outward, the interaction of inward and outward, the "Bay" type. That he sees this as its own independent type – of which he assumes Auckland is the true possessor – is confirmed by the title of the talk: "Pavilions (the outward, mass-dominated type), Squares (the inward, space-dominated type) [and] Bays (the simultaneous interaction of the two types to form a third)."

16. He has written about the specifics of this bay type elsewhere, so we can quote him here: "From home to bay to ocean the water-filled hollows constitute a hierarchical structure connecting inward and outward, permeated through and through with this potential for human place and connectedness, too, and for fundamental social and psychological satisfaction."

17. This, then, becomes the opportunity to proselytize against what he sees as the ravaging of Auckland's natural bay type by modern development and land reclamation.

18. And he compares the natural, volcano/bay hollows that inspired Māori and original Pakeha settlers . . .

19a. ... to the modern day, which caters to cars, movement and development.

19b. The curving of the edge, so essential to the hollow, is replaced by the straight line.

20. Here, he then proposes a new, "utopian" approach to development in Auckland: instead of the linear development that privileges the isthmus over the bay, and development that grows along the isthmus' straight roadwork . . .

21. ... he proposes a development that privileges the bay as the communal centre, with pockets of sub-centres that support and are supported by it. He calls it "congruence", and he speaks of it (and diagrams it) this way:

22. Quote: "congruence would involve through going occupation of these bays so that the future city is mainly a decentralized complex of its immensely varied bays, each able to develop its own community identity to its maximum. Bay community would include not only residence but also other social services and functions, including decentralized work."

23. This vision of a decentralized Auckland, that has the bay (space) as the centre of the city, in turn has implications for how to conceive of other formal aspects of the city, all in contrast to the pavilion/mass approach which, he sees, typifies current (at his time) development. On the left are the (bad) consequences of the
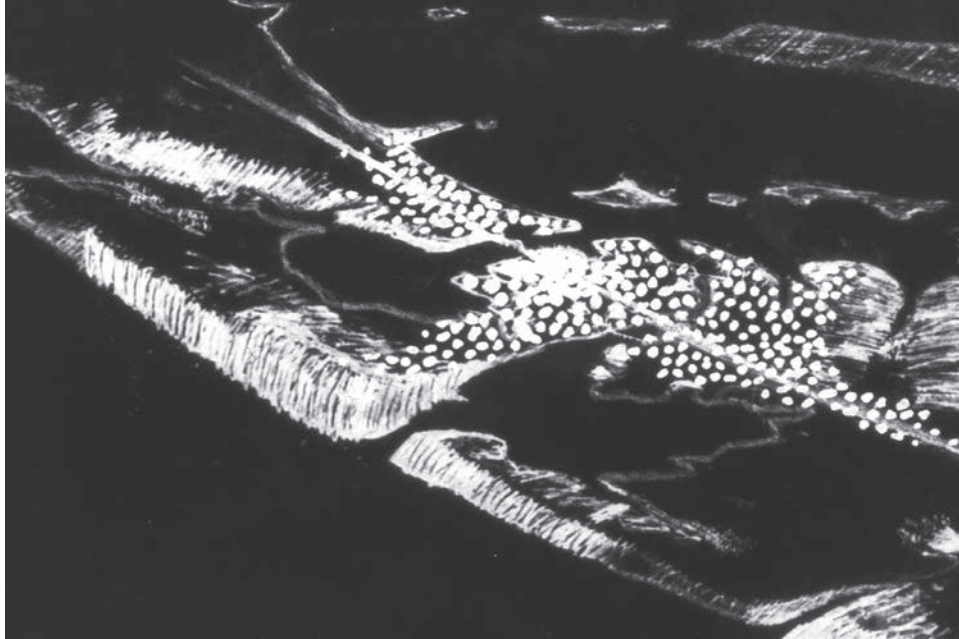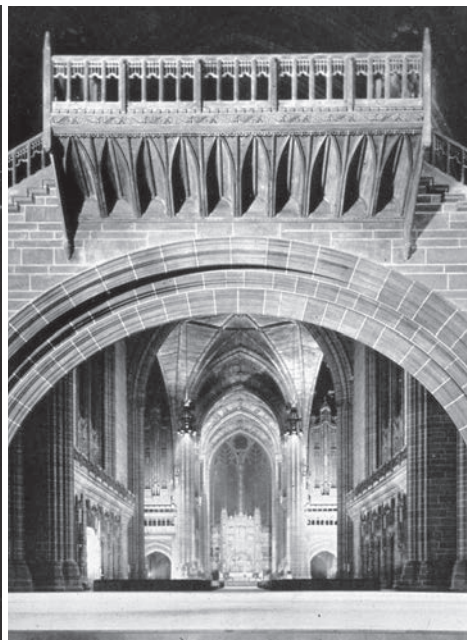
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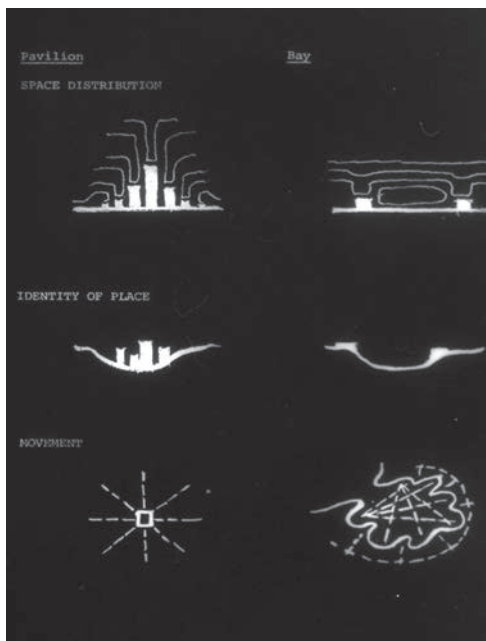
23

24

"pavilion" approach to urban form, and to the right are the preferred (good) consequences to the "bay" approach to urban design:

a). Space distribution: with the pavilion, space is reduced at the centre (filled by mass/buildings), and density, congestion, pollution and noise multiply; in contrast, with the bay, space (occupiable for public use and shared identity) is at the centre.

b). Identity of place: with the pavilion, movement roads run through sub-centres, ironing out identity and draining local character; with the bay, people are invited to occupy space and a shared identity.

c). Movement: with the pavilion, choice between public and private modes of transportation is limited, and suburbs are scaled solely on the car; in contrast, with the bay structure, the movement system across the water – lattice-like, not tree-like – allows all communities to be equally connected with a variety of modes of transportation, including walking and boating.

24. Toy then ends his lecture with this enigmatic image of a church. There are no notes indicating its reference, origin or meaning for him. But for us, the audience, it is a reminder of the fact that all these diagrams and all the formal analysis matter mostly at the level of the spirit.

The Analysis

One can, in all of this, admire the direction of this talk – the vision of a sympathetic place-based notion of development that takes into account the natural topography. He calls it utopian, but it is not hugely off the mark of what might be real. Rather than speculate about the value of this vision (which I think we all can appreciate), I would prefer to bring out other points that may not be as obvious, and which I think are important in considering the lessons that Toy gives us.

The first is that Toy, despite his concentration on the unique features of Auckland and his clear love of this place, is not a "regionalist" as we may have understood him to be: his examples, his typologies, his categories come from a universal understanding of formal paradigms (earth-sky; mass-space; inward-outward; pavilion-bay) which appreciate regional characteristics, but which do not celebrate difference for difference sake, nor insist on a local reverence or a kiwi essentialism. In his approach to formal absolutes, he envisions a need for us (kiwis) to see ourselves in the context of a shared, common, universal response of form.

Connected to this, much can be made of Toy's own art historical epistemology. I do not know his educational training, other than the fact that he got his PhD in Dublin, on the influence of universities on the development of the region. But, it is clear from his formal framework that he is versed in a Western tradition that not only reflects, as I have suggested, aesthetics as it is derived from Hegel – the historical movement from a blunt notion of mass (thesis), to a more complex and opposing one of space (antithesis), to one that transcends these both as bay/hollow (synthesis) – but also sets up a framework of polar opposites that allows him, and us through him, to see form in contrasting pairs: this is the tradition of Heinrich Wolfflin, August Schmarsow, Aby Warburg and many others. In addition, it connects us to a tradition of phenomenology that runs through not only many of these same German art historians, but its more modern variant in Christian Norberg-Shultz, whose work on the notion of place, as a supreme category of human well-being, we are all probably familiar with. I mention these connections to both formalism and phenomenology not to hammer home Toy's indebtedness or lack of originality. Rather, I bring them up because he brings to his work a "worldliness" that I feel makes his appreciation of Auckland that much more acute, and that much less provincial. I am trying to emphasize that his worldliness is both a part of his training, and a part of his global view of form – both making his observations more profound and far more reaching than a "regionalist" designation would imply.

Secondly, I want to emphasize that his designation as a formalist should not in anyway denigrate his importance, as we might be wont to do in this post-modern, post-structuralist, anti-formalist era. The observations, analyses and sensitivities to what he is seeing, and his ability to make us perceive things we would not

otherwise observe, is too impressive to be dismissed. More importantly, his formalism is not an end in itself, but is a link to our sense of humanity; that is, his notion of form is what I call "reparative", meaning that he believes that when forms are presented to us correctly, they heal our human spirit. In this, he enters the company of critics such as John Ruskin and Adrian Stokes, who read not just architecture but also nature and landforms as sources of deep psychological significance. Toy is, above all else, through his formalism, a humanist.

Indeed, I would say that Toy's gift to New Zealand architecture is this humanism, not his prescriptions for New Zealand forms, be they at the level of regional planning or at the level of architecture. To concentrate, as some have, on whether he has correctly interpreted Māoriness into his church forms, for example, misses the point. He taps into the kiwi spirit, not by telling us the essential nature of kiwi forms, but by reminding us (kiwis) of our fundamental humanism.

Finally, then (and here I am moving away from Toy), I would like to say that the gift that Auckland architects make to the world at large is, likewise, not their particularly regionalist spin on contemporary form, tectonics, sense of materials or attachment to the earth, but rather your profound humanity, your care for each other and your care for all those who live in and pass through your city. Auckland Architecture Week, Urban Spoiler,[1] and indeed your invitation to me to be a part of this, are an indication of an openness and a generosity that is not only unique, but permeates the character of this city.

1. Urban Spoiler was a second semester design studio in 2007, pursued at the University of Auckland School of Architecture and Planning, the AUT School of Art and Design, and the Unitec School of Architecture. It culminated in the construction of multiple temporary pavilions at Britomart Place and was opened after the Toy lecture on the closing night of Auckland Architecture Week.

New Measures
For Other Moderns

Julia Gatley

Bill McKay, in his 1999 paper, "A Possum in the Kiwi Bush", critiqued the role played by the University of Auckland's School of Architecture in the formation and promotion of one particular story of the history and development of modern architecture in New Zealand. This story centred on Vernon Brown and the Group, at the expense of a range of other players: Robin Simpson, Tibor Donner, Henry Kulka, Brenner and Associates, Vladimir Cacala, Rigby.Mullen, Mark-Brown & Fairhead, the firm of Newman, Smith & Greenhough, and others. McKay pointed out, quite rightly, that because the Auckland School was New Zealand's only school of architecture until the mid-1970s, the line taught there was widely accepted by the country's practitioners and educators, until well after the establishment of a second school. He has not been the sole critic of the Group-centred canon or its formation: Lloyd Jenkins (1998), Clark and Walker (2000), Clark (2004) and others have further elucidated the basic premise.

The purpose of this article is not to defend the School, its history or the canon, but to consider the latter with reference to one of the School's courses. In 2006 and 2007 I taught ARCHDRC 301 Measured Drawing, a third year elective that requires students to measure extant buildings and to produce a set of plans, sections and elevations based on their measurements. Many of the drawings produced by students enrolled in this course since the 1930s are accessioned in the University's Architecture Library. They form an invaluable record of many buildings for which original design drawings do not survive, as well as buildings to which changes have been made over time.

As the Docomomo New Zealand Registers Coordinator, I have a particular interest in the documentation and conservation of New Zealand's modern buildings. It seemed to me that Measured Drawing could be usefully focused on modern buildings, at a time when their heritage values are becoming increasingly recognized, locally, nationally and, indeed, internationally. The focus would ensure that the students would be experiencing and analyzing not just any old buildings, but exemplars of modern design, often with the clever planning that characterizes post-war buildings as a result of materials shortages and building size constraints. Positive roll-on effects would include a record of changes being made to the measured buildings over time and, potentially, the extension of the Library's existing collection of measured drawings through the production and acquisition of plans, sections and elevations for significant modern buildings not measured and drawn in previous years.

To achieve this, I needed a sense of what had been studied in previous years. I learnt that, to a certain extent, the Library's collection of measured drawings did accord with the thesis regarding the Auckland School's privileging of the Group. Up until 2005, the modern buildings that had been measured and drawn
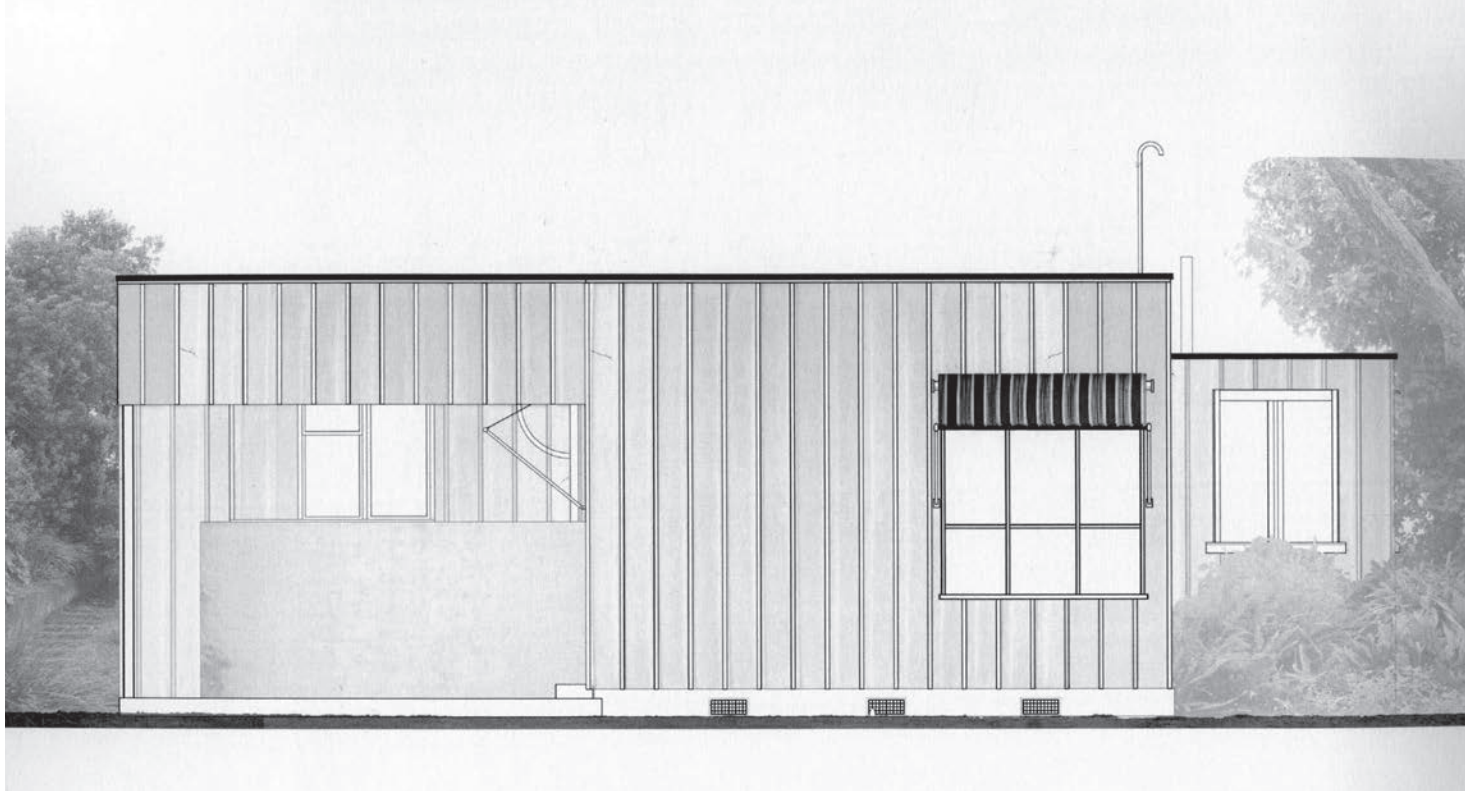
included seven houses by Group members: the Rotherham House (in 1983, 1990 and 1992); the Thompson House (in 1983); the First House (in 1984); Devonport Navy housing (in 1988); the Catley House (in 1993); the Mallitte House (in 1995); and the Worrall House (in 2002). Other architects associated with the Auckland School whose buildings have been measured and drawn include: Richard Toy's All Saints' Church, Ponsonby (in 1995); Mike Austin's Chapple House (in 1995); and David Mitchell's Music School and Gibbs House (in 1987 and 2000 respectively). Vernon Brown is a surprising absence from the collection. Other surprises, given the canon, include the presence of Tibor Donner's Ellen Melville Pioneer Women's Hall (measured and drawn in 1992 and 1995) and Savage Memorial (in 2000); Newman Smith & Greenhough's Wanganui War Memorial Hall (in 1994); and Mark-Brown & Fairhead's Newton Post Office (in 2000). Not enough to challenge the thesis, but just enough to complicate it. It should also be acknowledged here that more recent initiatives within the School such as Michael Milojevic and Sarah Treadwell's 2003 exhibition and catalogue, *The House*, and Charles Walker's 2005 exhibition and catalogue, *Models for Living*, have demonstrated a more inclusive approach.

My analysis of the Library's collection of measured drawings confirmed that there was plenty of scope for pursuing the measuring and drawing of modern buildings within the course. Thus, in 2006, three of the 14 buildings measured and drawn were modern: one at my suggestion, a second at a student's suggestion, and a third at another academic's request. These included the Robin Simpson House in Greenlane (1938-1939). A floor plan had been published in *Home and Building* in 1940, but it is believed that none of Simpson's original drawings have survived. Thus, the measurements and drawings by Daniel Bosher, Patrick Loo and James Pearce have a value above and beyond the learning objectives of a student assignment.

In 2007, I pursued modern buildings more overtly, writing to the owners of 15 such buildings (Group as well as non-Group), domestic in scale though not necessarily houses, asking if I could include their buildings in the course. I was delighted to receive eight affirmative replies. A student added a ninth building to the list. Those measured and drawn this year were: Tibor Donner's own house and studio in Titirangi (1947 and ca. 1950s respectively); the Second Group House in Takapuna (1950-1951); James Hackshaw's Thom House in Mt Albert (1953); Albert
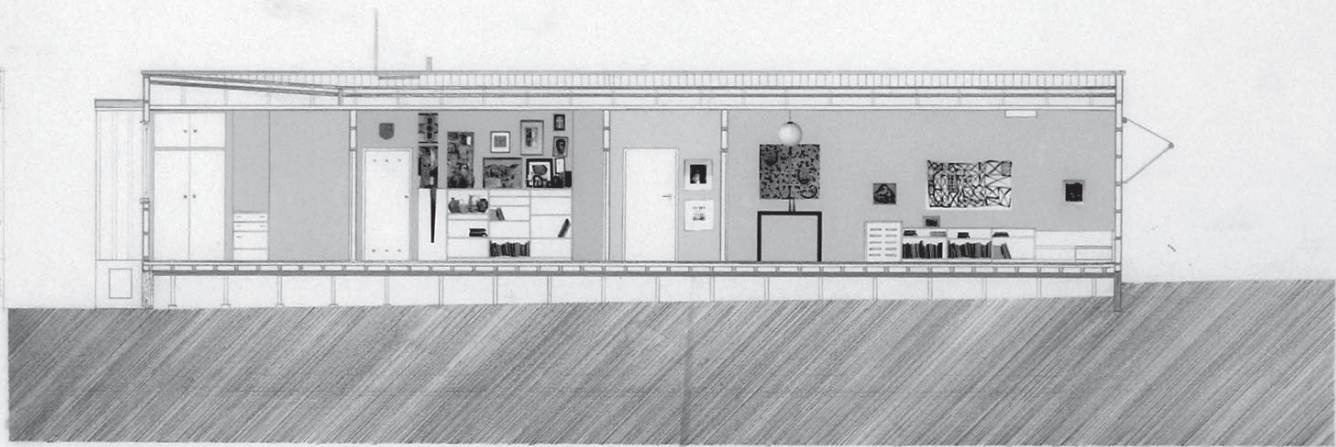
LONGITUDINAL SECTION
1:50

Robin Simpson's Own House, Greenlane (1938-1939). Measured by Daniel Bosher, Patrick Loo and James Pearce; section drawn by Daniel Bosher (2006).

and/or John Goldwater's Jewish Centennial Memorial Chapel in Karangahape Road (1953); Rigby.Mullen's Rayner House in Remuera (1954); Vladimir Cacala's Kay House in Remuera (1960); Lillian and David Chrystall's Yock House in Remuera (1964); and Marshall Cook's Howard House in Meadowbank (1969).

It is my pleasure to be able to publish a selection of the drawings here. Three students worked on each building, together producing a set of plans, sections and elevations and a range of details. I stipulated A1 sized paper, but did not impose traditional drawing techniques on the students. Rather, I allowed them the freedom to pursue the creative presentation that they enjoy in the design studio, including hand or computer drawing and the use of pen or pencil, monochrome or colour. For record purposes, I encouraged the inclusion of the main dimensions on the drawings and analytical annotations regarding design, materiality, additions, alterations and current condition.

There will always be varying degrees of accuracy in the measurements and a range of finesse in the drawings, but the work being produced in the course is already making a useful contribution to the Library's records of these individual places. I believe it has been a valuable learning experience for students to date, and I hope it will encourage further research in the future on modern architecture in New Zealand.

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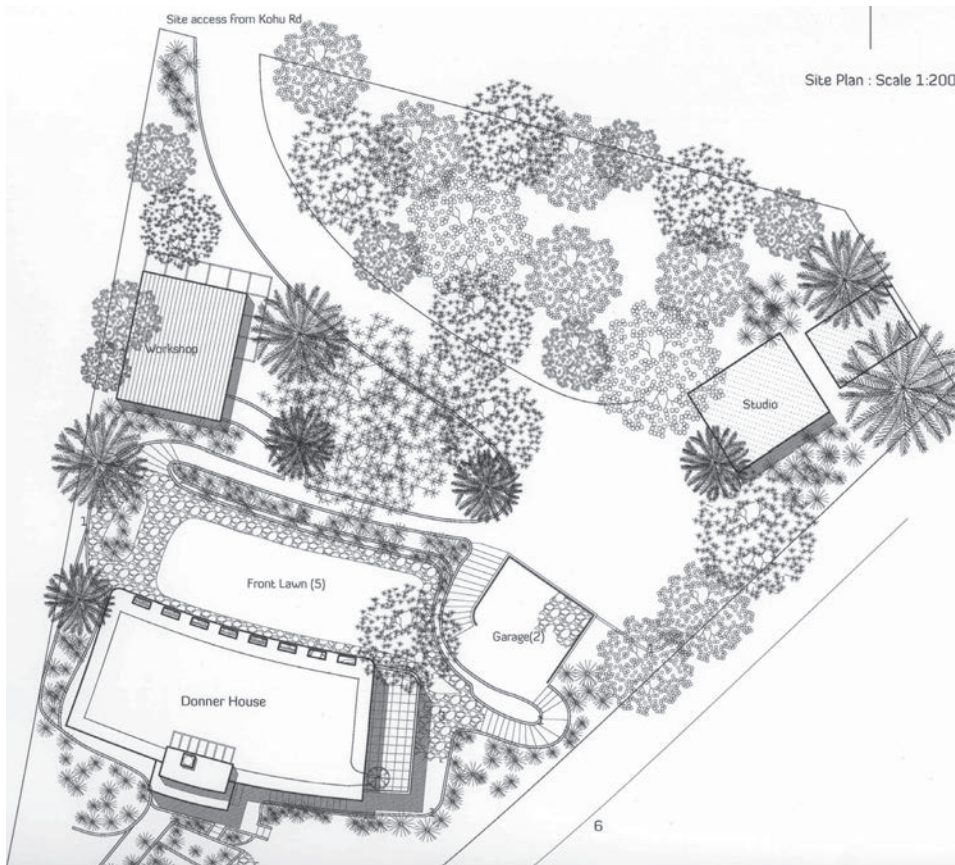
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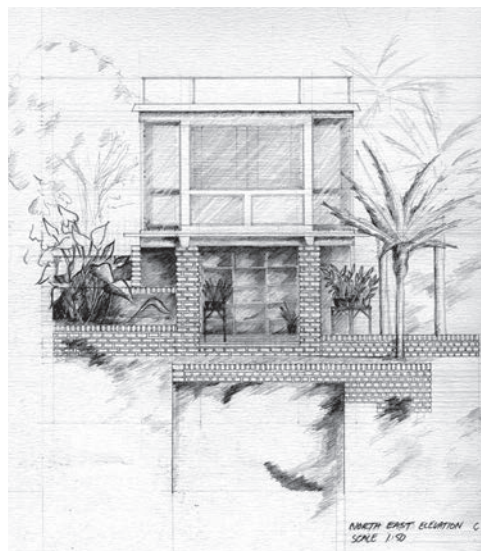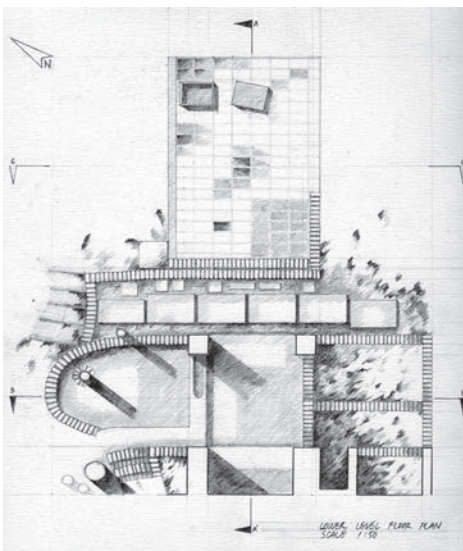
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Rigby.Mullen, Rayner House, Remuera (1954). Measured by Victor Eng, Tim Yun Yunny Luk and Derek Yichi Zhang; drawn by Victor Eng (2007).

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Remuera (1960). Measured by Kit
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Junpei Zhao; drawn by Dajiang Tai.

Waitangi Precinct:
Competition Entry, Wellington, 2005

KTAAW: Kerstin Thompson Architects, Architecture Workshop

Following an initial call for expressions of interest, five firms and teams were invited to develop entries for the Waitangi Precinct: Japanese architect Shin Takamatsu; John Wardle Architects from Melbourne; Oosterhuis_Lenard and UN Studio, both from the Netherlands; and the trans-Tasman team of KTAAW (Wood, 2005). John Wardle won the competition for Sites 1, 2 and 3 and UN Studio, for Site 4.

Architecture Workshop, in collaboration with Isthmus Group and Tonkin & Taylor, received both accolades and an NZIA Supreme Award for Architecture for their Oriental Bay Enhancement project in 2006, Oriental Bay being but a stone's throw from the Waitangi Precinct. These two urban design projects, both producing collaborative architecture and landscape architecture outcomes, demonstrate that the Wellington City Council, and its subsidiary Wellington Waterfront Ltd., are committed to improving the quality of that city's urban public spaces and the accessibility and experience of the Wellington waterfront, thus making the lack of comparable initiatives in certain other New Zealand towns and cities all the more noticeable. – Eds.

Architects' Statement: New grounds for play

Our proposal offers new grounds for play, for the city of Wellington. Imagined as an extension of Waitangi Park, it reconnects earth, sky and sea and strengthens the city and water edges of the precinct.

Our scheme provides a gentle topography held and framed by robust buildings, with new opportunities for living, working and playing. It achieves a balance between the development of the waterfront and its continued enjoyment by the public. The careful siting and scale of our suite of buildings and landscapes maximises the experience of the waters edge, while maintaining precious view lines from within the park and the city's north-south streets. This proposal offers a place from which to consolidate Wellington's position as the cultural capital of New Zealand, and new ground on which to play out the city's future.

Taking a stroll

Imagined as a promenade, in celebration of the established walking patterns of Wellington, the design traces a primary path from Oriental Parade alongside the historic sea walls of Port Nicholson Yacht Club, under and over our folded ground, past the graving dock, beside the Chinese garden, through our gallery up to the marae of Te Papa. The integration of buildings and landforms orchestrates a journey which frames the harbour and city, and provides intimate and open spaces for repose.

Celebrating city and sea

The proposal occupies two sites and each defines a key edge of the Waitangi precinct. Site 1/2/3 forms the waters edge and Site 4, the city edge. They are designed to be in conversation with each other across the park.

The waters edge is celebrated through our lyrical folded ground: a trafficable roof that gently rises up from Waitangi Park, forming a view corridor to the Tararua Mountains. A new horizon, it frames the harbour and creates an urban promontory to complement the field of the park. Underneath is a substantial portion of the program, including cafes, restaurants, a fish market and deli.

The city edge is defined by the gallery, a robust timber framed structure referencing local construction methods and the hardiness of marine structures. It is an exemplary demonstration of contemporary environmental design. As a carapace, it forms a climatic buffer to protect the heat and light sensitive galleries which are held within its volume. The gallery is urban in character, providing a major space

for cultural events, defining the city edge of the site, and also forming the primary edge to the view corridor from Tory Street to the harbour. The Hostel building addresses Cable Street.

New ecologies

With this landmark project, we have sought to use architecture and landscape to contribute to the larger sustainable future of the city. We propose a constructed environment: one that, as a sophisticated ensemble of buildings, landscapes and site infrastructure, forms a new ecology that supports events, people and place in a balanced relationship. Green features of the proposal exploit Wellington's climatic conditions for carbon neutral technologies.

City edge – environmental statement

Contemporary art galleries are energy intensive, due to the requirements for conservation and close environmental control. Our response closely integrates architectural design, the 'positively Wellington' climate, the natural sources of energy local to the waterfront site, and the organization and topography of the site elements. An 'eco-skin' is used to absorb heat in winter and to reflect heat in summer. Natural day-lighting is provided to the main circulation routes. The building will be heated and cooled using energy and water efficient reversible heat pumps, fed from the natural seawater gradient beneath the site, with bores for supply and recharge. The opportunity exists to interlink the plant and energy management systems with those of the main Te Papa complex.

## Waters edge – environmental statement

Energy use is minimized, by the use of double aspect apartments with winter garden balconies and maximum access to natural light and ventilation. The long-life building enclosure has best practice levels of thermal insulation, and low emissivity double glazing. Each apartment is also provided with solar hot water panels integrated into the roof structure. Water conservation will be encouraged by the use of ultra-low flow sanitary fixtures, and by roof-water collection and recycling for toilet flushing. Low energy lighting and appliances complete the strategy.

Green transport solutions will also be encouraged as the development forms an important boardwalk node in the pedestrian network of Wellington. Car parking will be minimized, within the commercial constraints of the development and, where provided, will be on a 'small car' basis. Secure cycle storage will be provided for residents, with additional facilities for the general public. The option exists to provide facilities for re-chargeable electric vehicles.
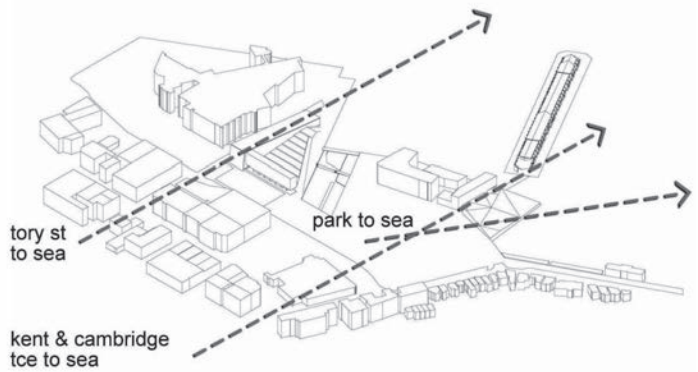
The design provides a new paradigm for mixed use development in Wellington.
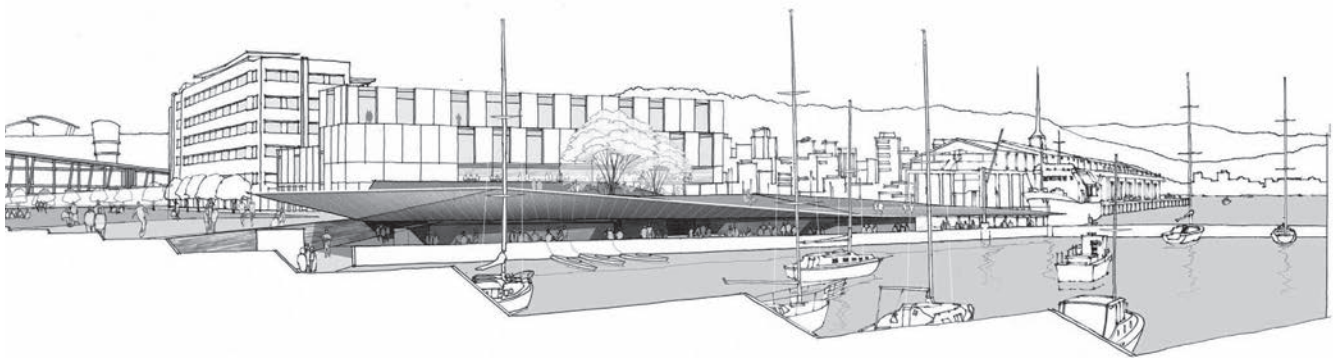
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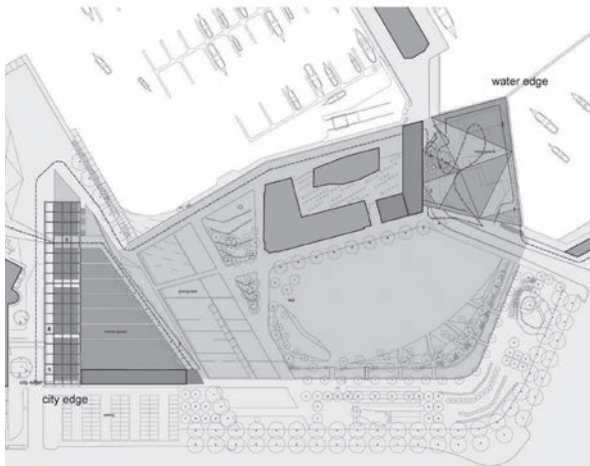
Site plan identifying the waters edge (Site 1/2/3) and the city edge (Site 4). The south-east corner (bottom right in the image) is now Wraight Athfield's award-winning Waitangi Park.
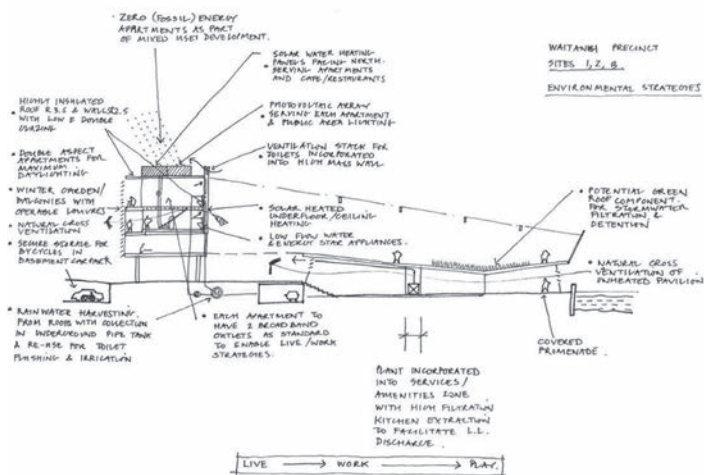

Site diagram identifying the two primary view corridors through the precinct.

The waters edge facilities, with the folded ground plane in the foreground, the old Herd Street Post Office and the Overseas Terminal behind, and proposed gallery building on the far left.
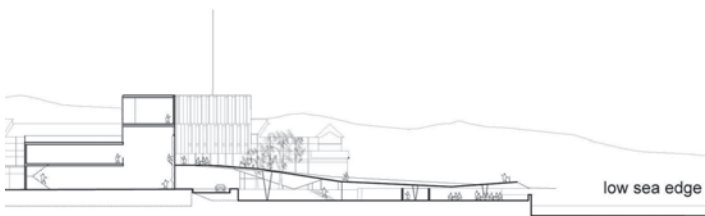
The section through the waters edge site shows reduced height near the sea.

Sectional diagram showing the environmental strategies incorporated into the folded ground plane and apartment building, including solar and photovoltaic panels, rainwater harvesting, insulation, double glazing, natural cross ventilation and bicycle storage.
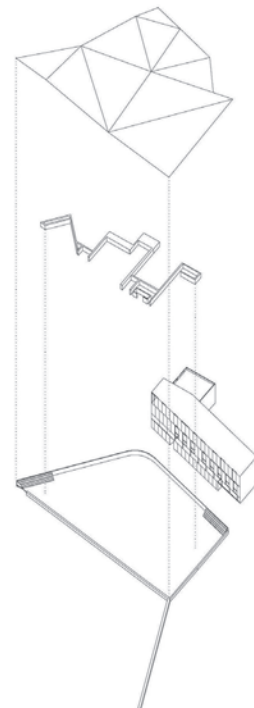

Exploded axonometric of the key elements of the waters edge site: sea wall; declaimed land; apartments and commercial outlets; the 'program wall' with fish market, deli, restaurant and recreational hiring facilities; and the folded ground plane, filtering the light to spaces below.

Eco-skeleton

Four Gallerys / Circulation
Ceremonial Route

Hostel

Retail / Function Centre /
Chinese Garden / Teahouse
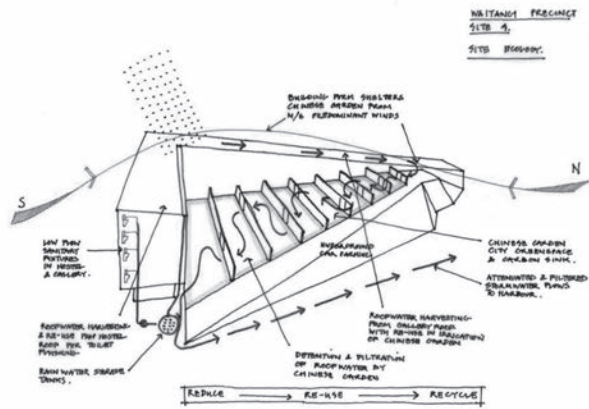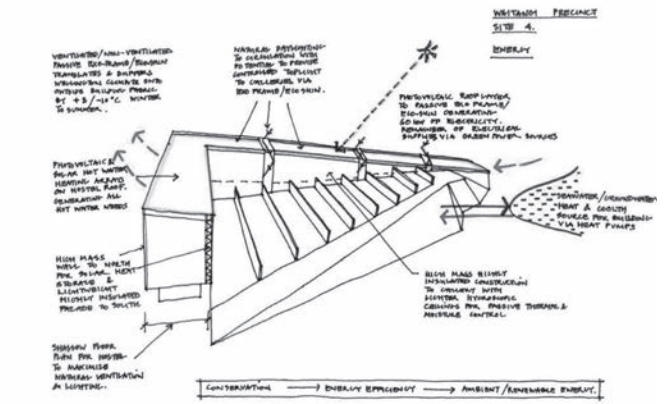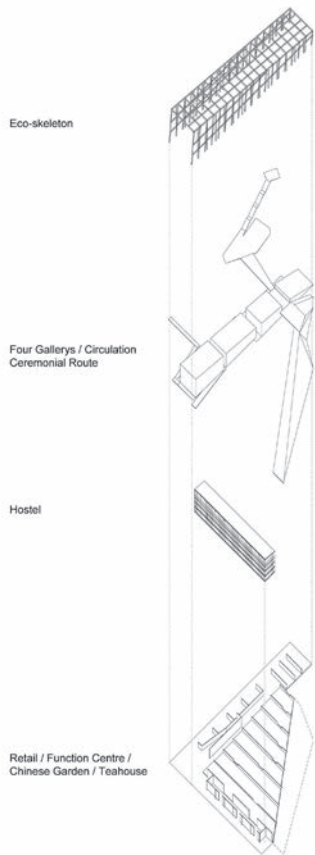
Above: Exploded axonometric of the key elements of the city edge.
Below: The section through the city edge part of the proposal shows increasing height towards the city centre.

Sectional diagram showing the environmental strategies incorporated into the gallery building to achieve energy efficiency, including the use of renewable energy and the philosophy of reduce-reuse-recycle.

high city block
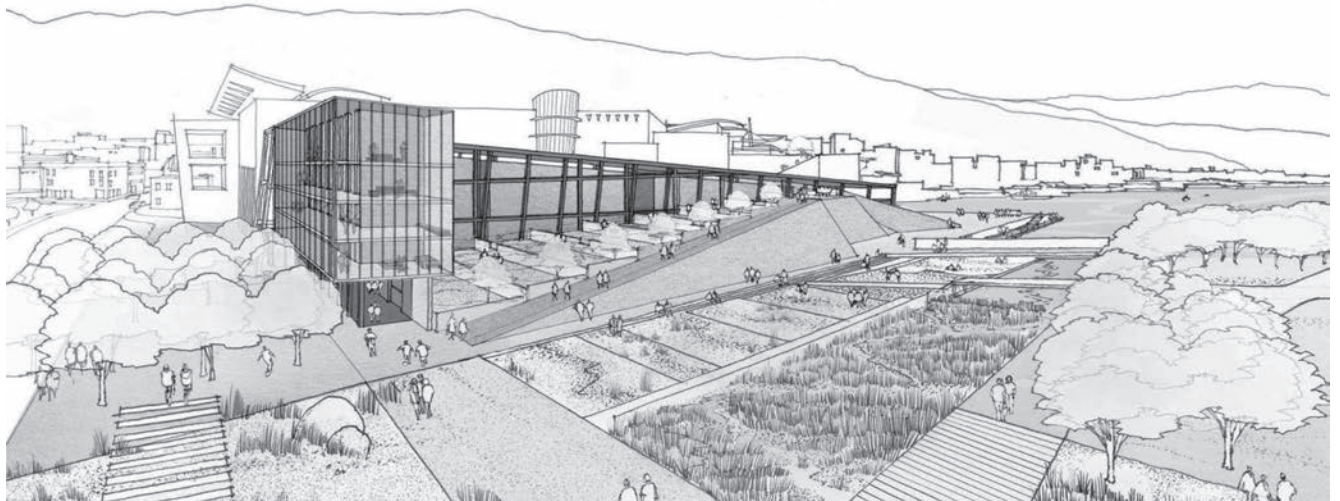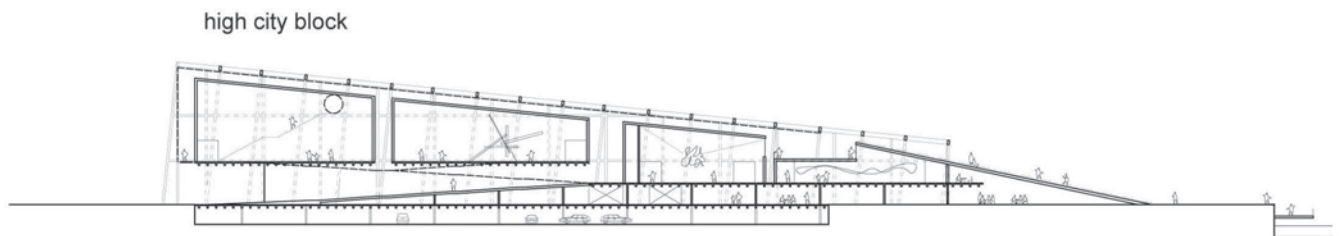
The city edge / gallery building, neighbouring Te Papa.

The Judgement of Architecture

Daniel Payot
Translation by Tim Adams

One of the difficulties facing criticism is that it must always *connect*, and it has to do this precisely where the dimension of liaison is no longer in evidence. Perhaps, this is why the problems facing criticism can reveal not only the difficulties, but also the opportunities inherent in modernity as a whole and not just theoretical modernity.

We know that to criticize is to examine: *krinein*, to judge, to match a predicate to a subject, a quality to a substance, etc. However, criticism is also a gestural activity; it takes hold of an object, looks for values and meanings, and establishes close and distant connections between the two. A critique of criticism should always recognize the fact that criticism is never simply concerned with the presence of a thing or a work; nor is it ever simply a critic judging, or a penetrating subjectivity, but it is, above all, a gesture that the critic makes with regard to the thing or the work, or what the thing or work invites them to make. Therefore, the problem is: where does the possibility for the liaisons that the critic must make come from? Where can the possibility for legitimizing the critic's gesture be found?

And here a kind of withdrawal takes place: we need to attach the activity of judgement to "something" that can, itself, attach a quality to an object; but to what is this gesture connected, or what connects to it? The critic acts in the name of a transcendental authorization that they can never make fully explicit, about which they can even be totally unaware, but which, nevertheless, is the basis for the gesture – rendering it possible, inaugurating it and giving it meaning. The multiplicity of liaisons produced by the act of judgement is preceded by: "it is possible to connect" (most often unspoken); or, indeed, by a, "you have the right to connect", and perhaps even more fundamentally, by a usually implicit, "you must connect". These are the in-junctions that open and render the critical junctions effective, but which *generally remain exterior* (except when critical discourse questions the precise reasoning behind criticism, its foundations and its authority; in other words when it exceeds its immediate exercise and concerns itself with its own limits).

Therefore, for example, when criticism talks about things, works of art, or architecture, it is also speaking about itself, in the sense that it responds to the problem of its own legitimacy. Since it speaks and criticizes at the same time, it must have solved the problem of what gives it the authority to judge: criticism, in so far as it criticizes, must always make its judgements as if the validity (the predication) needed to do so was already established elsewhere.

Perhaps, this is why there is really no criticism that is absolutely negative: even when something is linked to a negative attribute, even when the predication is pejorative, criticism, as such, is inexorably positive, at least in regard to it-

self; it must have already assured itself of its own right to judge. Therefore, it seems possible to support the thesis of an essential and *constitutive* positivity of all criticism.

This hypothesis seems completely at odds with what we so often hear today: that judgement has become so difficult that we may have even lost this faculty altogether; that art criticism, and architectural criticism in particular, have become decadent, mute and little more than pointless gossip: our critics no longer *teach* us anything. Obviously, these assessments seem to contradict the tentative suggestion made above: if criticism was so *positive*, it should always be able to make judgements without too much difficulty.

However, perhaps there is a way of answering this dilemma that will at first seem provocative, but may nonetheless lead to a solution. It would be to reply that the problem of criticism today – the biggest problem it faces, besides the too easy and too frequent diagnosis of "decadence" – finds its cause in the very positivity that constitutes criticism: it is because criticism cannot avoid being positive that it is so poorly considered today. If the critic is indeed more hesitant, timid, powerless and mute, it is not because they have run out of things to say about works of art and architecture. On the contrary, in general, we know much more about them now than during those earlier periods of history when criticism seemed to flourish and have an immediate impact; nor is it due to the application, to particular cases that interest it, of the models, rules, canons and laws upon which criticism was founded. Rather, it is because criticism itself no longer knows what meanings to give the positivity that constitutes it, and which can only be avoided by denying any role for the critic, which thereafter can never be filled. The problem, then, would be the inalienable remainder and burden of positivity, whose persistence becomes more obvious the less confident criticism becomes of finding external criteria able to guarantee its legitimacy in a "transcendent" normativity.

In a certain sense, this difficulty is a consequence of "reflective" judgement. Kant defined it in these terms:

> Judgement in general is the faculty of thinking the particular as contained under the universal. If the universal (the rule, principle, or law) is given, then the judgement which subsumes the particular under it *is determinant*…. If, however, only the particular is given and the universal has to be found for it, then the judgement is simply *reflective* (Kant, 1952: 18).

Because it must formulate itself prior to any concept of the beautiful being given, aesthetic judgement can only be reflective; it isnot preceded by the presentation of a principle by which it would then only need to select particular things to order to declare them beautiful. The exercise of reflective judgement is immediately confronted by an absence, by a primary non-given. It has to evaluate while lacking the measure for evaluation; it is unable to refer to a previous principle that, alone, would guarantee and give assurance to judgement.

Nevertheless, this could be considered to be not the most difficult problem, since despite the irreducible distance opened up between the need to formulate a judgement and the failure to present the principle behind its formulation,

judgement can still get by with analogies and substitutions, and the use of the "as if", with reflection to be precise. According to Kant, judgement does not collapse when it fails to present its principle of evaluation: instead, it discovers the means for its survival; it presents things as particular cases of a general law, by means of which it becomes possible to make a judgement legitimate and universal (although not objective). Certainly, determinant judgement, since it refers to previously applied rules, always appears more certain – and is in deed "objective": that is to say, it does know something about its object, which is not the case for aesthetic judgement, which, being "subjective", translates the state of the subjectivity that judges – and this is not a property of its object. However, this apparent handicap creates the possibility that judgement evaluates itself, a possibility not offered by the determinant judgement, since its exercise of judgement is ordered according to the application of laws or norms. Reflective judgement is subjected to the test of having to present itself to itself (hence the term "reflective"), a test that places it in a moment of peril (the critical moment where the evaluation evaluates itself and the examiner is summoned to the examination of their right to examine), though, according to Kant, it emerges from this test the victor. In the end, its legitimacy is even more strongly established, since it was not given in advance and since it had to win this for itself. How does this work?

In Kantian terms, the answer to this question is: by means of "common sense" as the following two extracts will define:

> Were judgements of taste (like cognitive judgements) in possession of a definite objective principle, then one who in his judgement followed such a principle would claim unconditioned necessity for it. Again, were they devoid of any principle, as are those of the mere taste of sense, then no thought of any necessity on their part would enter one's head. Therefore they must have a subjective principle, and one which determines what pleases or displeases, by means of feeling only and not through concepts, but yet with universal validity (Kant, 1952: 82, § 20).

> Now, for this purpose, experience cannot be made the ground of this common sense, for the latter is invoked to justify judgements containing an 'ought' (*ein Sollen*). The assertion is not that every one *will* fall in with our judgement, but rather that every one *ought* to agree with it. Here I put forward my judgement of taste as an example of the judgement of common sense, and attribute to it on that account *exemplary* validity. Hence common sense is a mere ideal norm. With this as presupposition, a judgement that accords with it, as well as the delight in an Object expressed in that judgement, is rightly converted into a rule for every one. For the principle, while it is only subjective, being yet assumed as subjective universal (a necessary idea for every one), could, in what concerns the consensus of different judging Subjects, demand universal assent like an objective principle, provided we were assured of our subsumption under it being correct (Kant, 1952: 84-85, § 22).[2]

The expression, "a subjective principle", perhaps summarizes most of the problems usually formulated about criticism. Unless one proposes, like Baudelaire, that "to be in focus, in other words to justify itself, criticism must be partial, passionate, political, that is to say it must adopt an exclusive point of view" (Baudelaire, 1992: 50),[3] it seems, in fact, inevitable to agree with Kant that subjectivity is, in the act of judgement, preceded by a principle of determination. If that was not the case, the enunciated critique could not claim any "necessity", it would only be the expression of an immediate sensible state and, therefore, entirely individualistic. Criticism, then, would consist entirely of a discursively enunciated set of personal feelings, emotions and affects without any pretension to universality. Kant suggests this would not be criticism: the statement would not be predicated and the proposition would not be, strictly speaking, a judgement. However, since the enunciating subjectivity is not completely confined to the immediacy of its affects and confronts other dimensions, it finds the resources for a gesture of attribution and determination. It is because the subjectivity that judges refers to such a principle that the judgement can take the form of a duty or a requirement. Because it is no longer simply the expression of a particular subject, it can claim the universality of the impersonal, the neutrality or generality of a principle.

Now the principle in this case cannot be *objective*: determination in aesthetic matters cannot be made by a *concept*. The principle dimension that precedes judgement, that informs it and gives it its predicative status is not the type of liaison that constitutes the unity of a given diversity prior to the encounter with the object of judgement: aesthetic judgement is not a knowledge judgement. Furthermore, the principle does not belong to an order that would be exterior to subjectivity: it is only ever located in it. How, then, can it still be a *principle*? Does not its subjective constitution remove all pretension to legislate from it? What, in fact, is its necessity if it cannot be the "unconditioned necessity" of determinant judgements? And in what sense can it be universal?

The main thrust of Kant's argument consists of sustaining the idea of a dimension which must be subjective (since it is a matter of relating to something which does not have any concept, and the method of this relation is no longer simply feeling), but which, nevertheless, allows for a determination, "with universal validity" being "assumed as subjective universal" (otherwise we cannot maintain the proposition that, properly speaking, they are judgements when we do not have any concept for them). It is, therefore, necessary that this universality be found in the only domain established here: in other words in feeling, sensation and subjectivity. The "common sense" is a communication of feelings that, instead of leaving each person in the particularity of their sensible experience, constitutes an "ideal norm" that each person can claim, and in the name of which they "could, in what concerns the consensus of different judging Subjects, demand universal assent like an objective principle."

Despite these explanations, it is still quite difficult to put aside the scepticism we no doubt have about the sense of uselessness we feel whenever "taste and preferences" are discussed. Today, the predominant subjectivism is largely a form of nihilism: the right to feel and to like whatever one wants is certainly recognized, but, often, this comes at the cost of rejecting any principle whatsoever, which is to say any judgement as well. That is why it is important not to stop with the Kantian

3. To do it justice, let us quote the end of the sentence, the further examination of which would lead to other considerations: "…it must adopt an exclusive point of view, provided always the one adopted opens up the widest horizons."

affirmations about the existence of such a principle, or such an ideal norm; it is necessary to rediscover Kant's explanation of the mechanism of common sense:

> For where any one is conscious that his delight in an object is with him independent of interest, it is inevitable that he should look on the object as one containing a ground of delight for all men. For, since the delight is not based on any inclination of the Subject (or any other deliberate interest), but the Subject feels himself completely *free* in respect of the liking which he accords to the object, he can find as reason for his delight no personal conditions to which his own subjective self might alone be party (*an die sich sein Subjekt allein hängte*). Hence he must regard it as resting on what he may also presuppose in every other person; and therefore he must believe that he has reason for demanding a similar delight from every one. Accordingly he will speak of the beautiful as if beauty were a quality (*Beschaffenheit*) of the object and the judgement logical (forming a cognition of the Object by concepts of it); although it is only aesthetic, and contains merely a reference of the representation of the object to the Subject; – because it still bears this resemblance to the logical judgement, that it may be presupposed to be valid for all men (Kant, 1952: 50-51, § 6).

It is obvious that, here, common sense does not mean consensus. It is not a matter of proposing that the whole world will, in the end, agree to share the same assessment because the whole world applies a common criterion to everything – that would make aesthetic judgement become a determinant judgement again, and would therefore contradict everything that went before. The argument here is a lot more subtle because it is exclusively *reflexive*. There is nothing other than the delight that *I* feel in the presence of the object, nothing other than a *subjective* pleasure. And nothing else will intervene in what follows it: everything takes place in the domain of subjectivity. However, this is not an immobilized totality, an arrested identity: on the contrary it is a power of reflection. The above quote describes the process of this reflection: the delight felt by the subject is independent of his particular interest or any individual inclination; if I feel pleasure in front of this object it is not because it responds to a craving that I had prior to encountering it, that its presence then fulfils. The presentation of the object is not preceded by a will, or a desire, that would have rendered its presentation desirable or necessary. The object does not occur *for* my satisfaction, quite simply it occurs and it satisfies me by coming from elsewhere, from a region not previously circumscribed by me, independent of any predetermined end. The thing happens *to* me, it does not happen *for* me. And this is why it does not only occur to me. The delight that I feel is not the satisfaction of a craving or a will that would be mine exclusively. I am not satisfied because the thing responded to my expectations: in fact I did not have any expectation regarding it. Rather, it is that I am in the position of responding: I respond by feeling pleasure that will then be translated into the form of a judgement (of the type: "this thing is beautiful"), to the free presentation of something independent of all ends. This presentation is primary. And since it gives me pleasure, despite it being independent of my desires and my expectations, I can suppose that it will give others the same pleasure, and even that it will satisfy all others, since this pleasure will always be independent of the particular desires and expectations of individuals.

Here, we need to pay special attention to the precision, and even at times to the apparent complication, of the expressions chosen by Kant. The subject, he writes, "must regard [his delight] as resting on what he may also presuppose in every other person; and therefore he must believe that he has reason for demanding a similar delight from every one" (Kant, 1952: 51). This "must" is not strictly speaking a constraint, but rather a kind of logical invitation; it is a concession, but one that sometimes, without taking anything away from its pleasure, introduces the subject to a *distribution* of its delight. The delight is *founded*, which is what the text says; it is preceded by a principle. This foundation is not in me; although this principle is subjective, it is not in me. It is in the relation that is established, without me willing it, between the presentation of the thing and the way that this presentation affects me. However, since I do not decide for myself the way in which it affects me, rather, it is the presentation itself that decides, I can "suppose" an affection, an identical reception in any other, and therefore "attribute" to all the others the delight that I felt from the presentation of this thing. These two verbs – to suppose and to attribute – complete the device of reflection: in the end something is *projected*, and it is only at that very moment, when I launch my pleasure beyond the strict limits of my individuality, that an operation takes place that is rigorously a judgement. I never judge alone: I judge when the I that judges expands to the dimensions of "every I"; when I am the one that will be able to be every I in the same situation. Therefore, the one who judges is common, and judgement proceeds from the community that is in me, that I shelter in some way and that I then liberate.

I liberate the community in me, since the delight that I feel from the presentation of something is not for my interest alone. Reflection is, in fact, a double movement: on the one hand, delight is strongly *related* to something (no pleasure without movement, without the relation of pleasure to something other than to itself, so it must in the end make an account, form a judgement). On the other hand, this first relation is *projected* (by attribution or supposition) onto other subjects. And, for the final projection to be possible, it is not enough – otherwise it would be the presupposed principal of complete explanation – that the delight be related to my interest alone, but be for the community that awakens in me. Since the pleasure is not related to me alone, it can be supposed to belong to all: as soon as there can be an effective *relation* of the delight, independent of an exclusively individual interest, this delight belongs, by right, to all. The negative (a pleasure exempt of interest) immediately converts into a positive (a shared pleasure), and judgement can take place (the formulation of the judgement: "this thing is beautiful" then has the *form* of an objective judgement. It seems to say something about the very thing itself, although it rests only on a subjective foundation. However, this foundation is really a principle, and the enunciated products that follow are really universals: as if the subjective universal of common sense spoke for itself, in a way that, in the objective form of the judgement, is both correct and illegitimate).

It is obvious that this way of understanding aesthetic judgement poses a formidable problem for *architectural* criticism. However, the way this difficulty is usually accounted for is, doubtless, insufficient. For example, when someone says, leaning heavily on the few passages in the *Critique of Judgement* that mention architecture, that the presentation of the architectural work, in contrast to the presentation of pictorial, musical or sculptural works, cannot be separated from interest and inclination, and is therefore unable to give rise to a disinterested delight in the

subject, so architecture cannot be the occasion for this projection of the delight by which, as we saw, common sense expresses itself. The specifically architectural affect would always be too interested to correspond to the processes of aesthetic reflection as described by Kant, who, in fact, had to resort to other forms of art in order to describe it. And therefore the conclusion is: either a "Kantian" critique of architecture is possible, but it will never consider an architectural work to be a disinterested aesthetic presentation like a painting or a symphony, as an unforeseen event independent of any previously formulated end, but it will consider that which is not specifically architectural (the façade, or more generally the building reduced to its exterior representation, uninhabited we could say, literally, outside of its use); or else that criticism will treat architecture as such, but then it will only be able to account for its use, function, purpose, and its responding to a need, and therefore it will cease being "Kantian".

Not all of this is absolutely false. However, the fact remains that the architectural thing is no more reducible to *my* interest, to *my* inclination than any other artistic work. The delight that the presentation of an architectural work provokes in me is never just my delight alone, and the pleasure that I feel is no more immediate than the one that I feel when presented with a pictorial, musical or sculptural object. In other words, the architectural pleasure in me is also *related* to something else. If I say that a building is beautiful, that it is well conceived, that it responds to a need in a satisfactory way, I am doing something quite different from simply acknowledging an immediate feeling of well-being. I relate the pleasure that I feel to "something" in me, to that which is not exclusively me – this is, we discovered, the "definition" Kant gave for "disinterestedness". Since, concerning architectural presentation, we noted the effectiveness of the first moment of reflection – the rapport with or relation to – why should we deny ourselves the second moment – the projection, the supposition, the granting to "all the others" – and therefore the possibility of a judgement resting on a subjective principle?

This line of argument will, nonetheless, seem excessively sophistic: doesn't it try to rediscover a disinterestedness in architecture that is manifestly not found there? But we need to be more precise: it is not a matter of architecture in relation to itself, but the nature of the delight than it provokes (or doesn't) in us. We are not speaking here about a relation other than one which a subject maintains with the architectural thing, not of the thing itself. And, in fact, in this relation, we notice a movement that diverts the subject from the sole consideration of itself, or the sole experience without thinking about its affects. Why, then, do we continue to presuppose that this deviation, which is undisputable, is not entirely of same nature as the one at work when considering a musical or pictorial work? Because it is never disputed that the delight provoked by the architectural thing has even the smallest moment of "disinterestedness" (a moment when the subject does not keep this delight to himself, but relates it to something else), we cannot avoid presupposing that it is a matter of another type of disinterest from the one at work in music or painting. How then to think the difference between these types of disinterest?

At this point, we can risk the following hypothesis: the delight provoked by the architectural object would also be a relation to, but it would, nevertheless, not be possible to project it onto, "all others". Why? Not because this delight is too individual or too private, but on the contrary because, for architecture, the common

is always too immediately present to be the object of a projection. For architecture, the community cannot be considered as the horizon of a supposition or an attributing to, because it is already present in the very presentation of the thing. The community here is not the object of a duty ("he *must* regard it as resting on what he may also presuppose in every other person"), for it is not ahead of, in the future of the subject, but already there in the very presentation. The common is not presumed, postulated, or supposed, it is in the presentation of the thing, in its very presupposition. And this is why the mechanism of reflection, to the extent that it experienced rapport and projection, cannot be effective: in architecture, from the outset, there is already what, in reflective judgement, had to be exhumed by the double movement of a suspension, and of an attributing to: the fact of the common in the presentation.

The difficulty would then be that, if the obviousness of the common prevents the judgement of architecture occurring with any precision, reflective judgement could no longer consist of the exposition of laws, rules or norms that would make architectural judgement a determinant judgement. The community is neither a need nor a concept: it is a fact. Architecture is the presentation of this fact. As such, architecture is not, or it is not exclusively, an aesthetic phenomenon, nor is it an object of science. Its evaluation is not exclusively related to either subjective-universal principles upon which aesthetic delights are based, or objective-universal principles upon which knowledge is constructed.

Thus, how can architectural criticism comprehend its own positivity, which, as hypothesised, is unavoidable, if this positivity cannot depend on any of these principles? Where will this criticism find its own legitimacy, if it cannot rest its judgements on one side or the other, and only ever misses its target when it tries to be artistic, just as much as when it tries to be scientific?

Obviously, these questions are not trying to invalidate architectural criticism. On the contrary, they show its inestimable interest, as an example of a discourse that is truly, constantly and constitutively confronted, in the very presentation of its object, by a necessary, and therefore unconstructible, presupposition of the fact of the community. Can we then suppose what its proper object will be if it is neither exclusively artistic nor exclusively scientific? From this point of view, what follows is only a tentative, hazardous and cautious attempt at a beginning. Let's suppose that architectural criticism relates to what, in architecture, proposes an experience of the fact that there is something in common. It would no longer be interested in architecture as a simple object, nor simply as an occasion for applying predetermined rules; rather, it would feel what, in architecture (in its visual aspects, certainly, but also in its use and in its potential for ethical and political invention in general), gives rise to, authorizes or emerges to open experience up to the presupposition of the common, and to evaluate – quite probably without any objective criteria – the particular quality of this invitation.[4]

Perhaps, something of this kind did try to emerge, at the end of Benjamin's famous text on the work of art, in the notion of a "tactile" reception distinguished from visual apprehension:

> Buildings are appropriated in a twofold manner: by use and by perception – or rather, by touch and sight. Such appropriation cannot

4. Let us specify that this proposition is not only limited to collective architecture: there are individual constructions that inform the common from which they originate, just as there are, obviously and unfortunately, collective constructions that can destroy it, cover it over or to stifle it under pomposity or poverty.

be understood in terms of the attentive concentration of a tourist before a famous building. On the tactile side there is no counterpart to contemplation on the optical side. Tactile appropriation is accomplished not so much by attention as by habit. As regards architecture, habit determines to a large extent even optical reception. The latter, too, occurs much less through rapt attention than by noticing the object in incidental fashion (Benjamin, 1969: 240).

What is interesting about this distinction, which, by itself, can seem too simplistic and even naïve, becomes more apparent when we relate it to a remark made a little earlier in the text: that "architecture has always represented the prototype of a work of art, the reception of which is consummated by a collectivity in a state of distraction" (Benjamin, 1969: 240). Here, there is the indication of a solidarity between this kind of habitual, tactile, distracted reception and the experience of the community. This is not something that can be felt with the effort of attention, with the concentration and contemplation that corresponds more to an individual experience. The common is not what we place in front of ourselves, like an isolated object to be examined at our leisure, but it is what we are in, to which we belong before we have even made the decision to examine it. And, perhaps, this is the reason why architecture is such an experience of the common. In contrast to what happens, for example, with a picture, the reception that we give to a building does not consist of placing it in front of us as something separate. Here, the experience takes place precisely without placing the object at a certain distance in order to make it have an effect, without any defining or delimiting it. We are in the building, we touch it and are touched by it in a dimension of participation or, better, of com-motion: we move together without

ever being able to grasp, by ourselves, what the building is in its entirety. Even the powers of representation, by which I could assure myself of my mastery over the building, are insufficient here: architecture, as such, having spaces that can be traversed and divided, is always beyond its image. We cannot isolate it as we do when framing a picture to be mounted on a wall and later appreciated. We are in architecture even before we notice it; before we decide to observe it, it has already proposed itself to us and we are already affected according to our least re-flective and least analytical sensibilities. We move ourselves in it, and it delivers it-self to us according to such displacements, as an inseparably spatial and temporal suggestion: a com-motion that would therefore need to take into consideration the fact that this suggestion immediately addresses itself to a plurality, not just to a singularity. The only architecture is one that is distributed, since it can only authorize a multiplicity of journeys. Each one of these journeys is a collective adventure: an experience of the community in so far as it is not constructed like a work, in so far as it is not reducible to a body of laws that could be enunciated *a priori*. It is already there, experienced in the variety of journeys and the necessarily divided character of each one. It is never presented truthfully by itself, never figured in a illustrative or exemplary manner (except in architectural publicity, but even then things are not as simple as they seem); it is what can be experienced in its presentation – even if the presentation itself contradicts this experience, instead of supporting it.

Benjamin then adds an obviously essential remark about this absent-minded tactile reception:

> This mode of appropriation, developed with reference to archi-tecture, in certain circumstances acquires canonical value. For tasks which face the human apparatus of perception at the turning points of history cannot be solved by optical means, that is by contemplation alone. They are mastered gradually by habit, under the guidance of tactile appropriation (Benjamin, 1969: 240).

This was to suggest some important issues about architecture and that we should take responsibility for them. The text was written in 1936. The question of knowing what could be made from a presupposition of community in architectural presentation was then a burning issue. Are things qualitatively any different today? Is the idea that architectural criticism should again confront such questions only a ridiculous anachronism or, on the contrary, is it necessary to assert that it has to if it is to participate in a very necessary resistance?

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Dr Leonhard Emmerling is Director of the AUT St. Paul Street Gallery. He studied European and Byzantine Art History, Musicology and German Literature and worked as an assistant at the Collection Prinzhorn, Heidelberg, and as a tutor at the department of Art History at the University of Heidelberg. His career has included positions as curator at Museum Pfalzgalerie Kaiserslautern and the Krefelder Kunstmuseen, as well as director of the Kunstverein Ludwigsburg in 2004/2005. He has also lectured in contemporary art and theory at Kunsthochschule Berlin-Weissensee. Publications include books on Gothic and Renaissance Art in the Palatinate, Jean Dubuffet, Jackson Pollock and Jean-Michel Basquiat, and articles on the art of the mentally ill, as well as on contemporary art. Recent curatorial projects include *Friendly Fire* (Gus Fisher Gallery, 2004), *The Inconceivable* (Berlin/Auckland, 2005/2006) and *PX – A Purposeless Production/A Necessary Praxis* (St Paul St, 2007).

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Dr Hong-Chi Shiau is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication Management at Shih-Hsin University, Taipei, Taiwan. He has a degree in Mass Media and a Ph.D. from Temple University, Philadelphia. He taught in the US for four years before returning to Taiwan to take up a position at Shih-Hsin University. His research interests include globalization, identity-politics and the different forms of social conflict that are encountered and expressed in social/cultural discourses and texts in the public domain.

Tom Daniell is a New Zealand-born architect based in Kyoto, Japan. He holds a B.Arch. from Victoria University of Wellington, an M.Eng. from Kyoto University, and is currently an invited PhD candidate at RMIT, Melbourne. He runs his own architecture practice, and is on the design faculty of Seika University, a part-time lecturer at Kyoto University, and a Visiting Fellow at SIAL. His book, *After the Crash: Scenes from Post-Bubble Japan*, is forthcoming from Princeton Architectural Press.

Bill McKay is a practitioner, academic and well-known critic of New Zealand architecture. A former Head of Interior Design at Unitec, he took up a full-time position in the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of Auckland in 2007. His research interests include contemporary architecture, New Zealand architecture, Māori architecture and differing understandings of the space-time relationship within architecture. He is completing a PhD on the latter at the present time.

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Dr Peggy Deamer is Principal of her own firm, Deamer Studio. Prior to this, from 1986 to 2002, she was a partner in the architectural firm of Deamer + Phillips. She is a Professor of Architecture at Yale University, where she was the Associate /Assistant Academic Dean at the School of Architecture from 2002-2006. On leave from Yale in 2007, she was Head of the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of Auckland and also taught at Unitec. The work of Deamer + Phillips has been published in *Progressive Architecture, House and Garden*, and the *New York Times Magazine*, among others. Her writing has been published in numerous journals and anthologies and she is the author of *The Millennium House* and co-editor of *Re-Reading Perspecta.*

Dr Julia Gatley is a Lecturer in the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of Auckland. Her research interests include modern and postmodern architecture and the advent of modern town planning. With Dr Helene Furján, she is co-editing *Interstices* 09, the theme of which is "Expat: Places, Spaces, Baggage". As the DOCOMOMO New Zealand Registers Coordinator, Julia is also leading a book and exhibition project that will identify and document 180 of New Zealand's best and most important modern buildings, sites and neighbourhoods.

Kerstin Thompson is Principal of Kerstin Thompson Architects and an Adjunct Professor of Architecture at RMIT. Located in Melbourne, KTA was started in 1994 and has established itself as a significant and innovative reference point in Australian architecture and urban design. Kerstin is a Contributing Editor of *Architecture Australia*, a writer and lecturer with close links with schools of architecture and professional institutes in Australia and overseas. She is a National Counsellor for the RAIA and one of the Creative Directors for Australia's 2008 participation in the Venice Architecture Biennale. Recently completed projects include the Visitors' Centre for the Royal Botanic Gardens in Cranbourne.

Architecture Workshop is a Wellington-based practice, established by Christopher Kelly on his return to New Zealand from Europe in 1991. James Fenton joined as a director in 1998. AW has been influenced by Kelly's ongoing working relationship with the internationally renowned Italian architect, Renzo Piano.

Indeed, Kelly established his practice as a "workshop" to reflect his admiration of Piano's focus on process and construction, and from 1998 to 2000 collaborated with Piano and others on Sydney's Aurora Place Office Tower and Macquarie Apartments. In New Zealand, AW has received both national and regional architecture awards.

Dr Daniel Payot is a Professor of the philosophy of art, and the chancellor of the Marc Bloch University, Strasbourg, where he teaches contemporary philosophy and the philosophy of art. The essay, "The Judgement of Architecture", first published in French in 1999, continues and updates his interest in the connections between architecture and philosophy that began with his PhD thesis, "Le Philosophe et l'architecte" ("The Philosopher and the Architect") (1980), published as a book under the same title two years later.

Tim Adams is a tutor in the School of Architecture and Planning at the University of Auckland, where he has taught the core subject, Architectural Theory, for the past four years. In 2007 he completed his M.Arch. thesis, "Heretical Rhapsodies: A Survey with Translations of Architectural Theories in France from 1982 to 2004", which includes an earlier draft of the translation of Daniel Payot's essay, "The Judgement of Architecture," found in this issue.

Acknowledgements

Notes for contributors

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Use endnotes, not footnotes, in all manuscripts.

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Abbreviations (and punctuation):

cf.	compare	e.g.	for example
etc.	and so forth	i.e.	that is
viz.	namely	vs.	versus

Quotations:

Double quote marks around a quoted word, phrase, or sentence, as follows:

Heidegger would make this point very clear in two later essays, in which he introduces the "primal oneness" of the fourfold where "to be 'on earth' already means 'under the sky'" as a counter to a world in a process of planetary dissolution, in which "everything is washed together into the uniform distance-less-ness" (1954: 149), and "airplanes and radio sets are … among the things closest to us" (1975: 21).

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> The axonometric drawings of Sartoris can be considered ... the locus of a cognitive transcendence: in the finished perfection of the design, where geometry discloses its suprahistorical authority, the architect-theologian catches the 'philosophical and poetic matrix' of the new architecture in the mirror of the 'dreamt image', and anticipating the ends by the mastery of the means, prefigures a reality to come … (Reichlin, 1978: 91).

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Jackson, M. (2001). *Radical Gestures*. Auckland: Auckland University of Technology. Unpublished Paper.

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Thesis:

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On-line References:

Humanities Society of New Zealand/Te Whainga Aronui (HUMANZ) (2000b). Knowledge, Innovation, and Creativity: Designing a knowledge society for a small, democratic country. Wellington: Ministry of Research Science and Technology. Retrieved November 23, 2001, from http://www.morst.govt.nz/publications/humanz/Humanz.htm.

Frascari, M. (2000). A Light, Six-Sided, Paradoxical Fight. Nexus Network Journal, 4(2 Spring). Retrieved February 22, 2001, from http://www.nexusjournal.com/Frascari_v4n2.html.

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