

PANEL #1 – URBAN TRANSACTIONS

Polyrhythmic Landscapes: Body/Dress/City

Lauren Skogstad

“The scan of the city indicates a straight horizontal line. Nothing’s happening. / Suddenly the line shows a peak, a rising point. / An event has just been detected. / An event in architecture is like a beat in the heart. / If it doesn’t happen, we’re in bad shape. / But they warn us: A. Artaud, S. Einstein, B. Tschumi”.

In their introduction to Performance Design, Dorita Hannah and Olav Harslof state, “design artifacts ... are inextricably bound to performance through notions of embodiment, action and event”. Considering artifacts as “performative (active) rather than constative (description)” allows them to be perceived as fluid and dynamic rather than static. Through a performance lens one can interrogate how bodies, spaces and urban artifacts operate in order to question established movement conventions and social-cultural codes. Space is thereby experienced as a dynamic entity evolving over time – accommodating the performative beat of events.

As an inquiry into event-space, this paper questions the inhabitation of quotidian site by actively rendering the everyday unfamiliar through a series of embodied spatiotemporal investigations that perform in response to the complex rhythms of city, objects and bodies. This draws upon Henri Lefebvre’s notion of “rhythm analysis” as a means of addressing the “concrete reality of rhythms” found in the continual life force of pulsing bodies. An awareness of spatial rhythms, facilitates an exploration of the unexpected in Wellington city to inform new spatial practices for both architecture and dance. These stages events aim to challenge customary practices and expectations of urban dwelling as well as how objects and spaces around us are experienced. The presentation will represent the process and design through a combination of text and moving image.

*The monstrous red dress: Lefebvre’s rhythm analysis – body rhythm, from “The Production of Space”
City made up of an assemblage of “beats”
“Event-space” performance/architectural interruption
Red dress on wall is both monumental and temporal. Connections to Cristo and Jeanne-Claude, but with concept of body position/relationship.*



*Becomes: Monumental feminine. Female city as enclosure vs male as thrusting.
Temporal space: Pettycoat, "liquid surface", extension of body.*

Dancing facades

Claudia Perren

Dancing Facades deals essentially with the artist Dan Graham and his pavilions in Berlin. These pavilions represent the interface between architecture, art, film and dance in a sensual but enlightening manner. With focus on the subject-object relationship they will be compared to Archigram's Walking City, Mark Goulthorpe's Aegis Hypo-surface, Diller and Scofidio's Blur Building and Peter Eisenman's Rebstockpark.

Dan Graham's pavilions have often been described as hybrids between art and architecture. But they are more. He questions the traditionally fixed relationship between form and matter and suggests an integration of time, variation and development of form into architecture. Dan Graham does not change the material of the object in his pavilions, e.g. the physical form, but nevertheless an event of change is laid out in his objects. The visitor experiences a visual movement as a sudden change in condition and form. Mirror images, triggered by the highly sensitive Two Way Mirror Glass he uses, are set into motion and assembled into ever changing new panoramas, resembling series of sequences in film. It is ultimately not just the facades that are starting to dance, but also the entire space itself. Interior and exterior, pavilion and environment penetrate each other, melt into each other and become inseparable.

With roots in the concept art of the 1960s, Dan Graham is interested in an art that "wanted to reject materiality". His art is context-dependent, it links itself and draws its meaning from other things that were material, although a materiality that is often an "of the moment". In his pavilions the viewers act as a dancer, opening up a space for themselves. The pavilion is not just scenery but a space to be actively formed. If for Dan Graham it is about a choreographic convergence of subject and object, in Diller and Scofidio's Blur building the cloud's dance is a dance without dancer.

More mobile, interaction with environment.

Peter Eisenman's theoretical text is applicable.

Perren: "Event should occur in object, not computer or plan." i.e. not just the design phase.

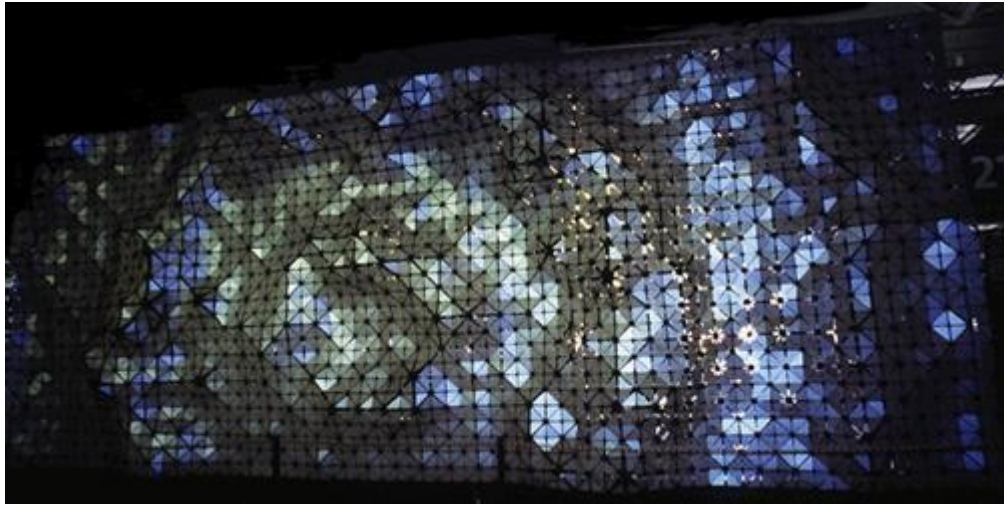
Shows "Muto", by graffiti artist:



More references to the Diller and Scofidio Blur Building (2002):



Mark Goulthorpe, Aegis Hyposurface (1999):



Impasse

William McClure

Impasse: 1. A road or passage having no exit; a cul-de-sac . 2. A situation that is so difficult that no progress can be made; a deadlock or stalemate.

Aporia: n.; pl. Alporias (#). [L., doubt, Gr. , fr. Without passage, at a loss; privation + passage.]

The question for this paper is how can architecture, film and dance operate to disturb, intervene and disrupt the site of an anterior aesthetico-political scene that I refer to as the Impasse. That is, how can these practices assist in bringing about a break from perceptions of necessity and an alteration in the force of long installed unconscious repetitions, drives and habits of body and mind that sustain symbolic authority? In approaching these questions I first discuss a body of thinking concerning the notion of the impasse as an anterior aestheico-political scene and its constitutive role for experience and perception. I seek to locate the topos of the meta-psychological anteriority and explore the relation of architecture, film and dance to this topos, and briefly outline how a certain interpenetration between these art-forms may be thought to intervene in the scene of anteriority from which experience and perceptions are managed.

The movement of the flâneur and the dériviste, new filming techniques and baroque architecture all engaged in a form of remembrance of the Impasse as the anterior aesthetico-political scene that both intensifies and constrains human existence. From the site of a tactile and habitual engagement of the city, the site of an optical unconscious, a redemptive and renewed investment in the moving-body is enabled.

The sensorimotor dimension of the flâneur and the dériviste function to accord the body capacities that convert the torsion of one's being in the world, the habit-driven associational logic governing perception, into a singular actualisation of an affective, haptic and proprioceptive space. Insofar as the sensorimotor dimension of the body introduces the body to the experience of itself as trace, as more than itself, the moving body becomes a singular force for the creation of a passage as the unpredictable, the experimental and the new.

(Proprioceptive: The unconscious perception of movement and spatial orientation arising from stimuli within the body itself.)

Filled with foam. Force way into it. Perceptions of necessity: "mirror vision".

Fossilized distress and excessive unrest.

breaking impasse -> love, possibility. Thought and mobility of thought.

(How about Play?) "means without ends" Giorgio Agamben writing on Debord.

Situationism, Walter Benjamin

Through Heidegger, neo-marxism, Agamben, but could be positive through ubermensch.

Panel Discussion

Lauren Skogstad, Claudia Perren, William McClure

Russel Dumas: Discussion of “dance” and “movement” and flâneur, etc. Bodies, these bodies are different. Dance -> running, not like derive/flâneur.

PANEL #2 – DYNAMIC REPRESENTATIONS

An Australian spatial practice: dancing as locating

Gretel Taylor

This paper aims to introduce my dance practice in relation to place or space, which I call 'locating', as well as to articulate some of the implications and potentials of 'locating' in the contemporary Australian context. It will then discuss the representation of an embodied place-based identity brought about by the intersection of or 'seam' between dance, video, geographical place and architectural space in my work Still Landing.

The paper will be situated within some of the sites that it describes via projections of still images from live performance Blasted Away and video installation Still Landing.

"Walking as a spatial practice". Dance: mode of locating body; embodied exploration.

"Multi-sensorally attuned" through space; experience of forest. (Marten's question of "Why?")

Merleau-Ponty: Thickness of "the Look" and the body as separating us from world, but not as an obstacle, as our communication. "Flesh"

Conflict as white colonial; seeking connection, and deep guilt (My thoughts on connection to land, and magic practice with land as Anglo-Australians – there is a lack)

Work in Melbourne worked with the location of a now-destroyed waterfall.

Architecture as a movie script Sergei Eisenstein and the “promenade architecturale”

Ulf Meyer

“Film’s undoubted ancestor is – architecture.” Sergei Eisenstein

Sergei Eisenstein, the revolutionary Soviet film director and film theorist, a trained architect, interpreted architecture as film. Understanding architecture as a four-dimensional art form, three-dimensional spaces experienced along a “promenade architecturale”, is crucial because plans, sections and elevations, even three dimensional representations, are rather helpless tools architects use that do not fully describe architecture. Eisenstein explored the relationship between the two art forms by writing retrospect “scripts” of buildings.

His understanding of architecture as film has largely been overlooked, despite the fact that it is ground-breaking. Using the example of the Acropolis in Athens, Eisenstein designed a retrospective script for the spatial experience that visitors enjoy at this landmark. Since architecture is explored and enjoyed while moving through a space rather than a purely static impression, the reading of the spatial refinement with which the acropolis was designed and placed in its surrounding, as a movie-script-like sequence will help designers conceptualize their designs as objects explored while in motion. The fact that the Parthenon Temple in turn sits off-centre and is first seen at an angle rather than in full elevation increases the sense of drama along the promenade architecturale of the Acropolis.

From his film-analysis of the Acropolis, Eisenstein went on to write a script for a movie straight out of his understanding of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe’s design for an all-glass skyscraper on Friedrichstrasse in Berlin of 1921 (unexecuted), illustrating the potential of a load-bearing all glass building but also the possible tyranny of transparency in modern architecture.

Architecture as a four-dimensional art form. (Bert Bongers dislikes the use of time as 4th dimension, as he does not feel we have the same experience/access as spatial dimensions)

Architecture is film. Sergei invented the Montage: contrasting elements. Le Corbusier(?)

Interactive Bodily Experiences of Architectural History and its Perceptual Implications

Banu Pekol

Defining historical architecture through dance, a field not normally and necessarily perceived to be related to it allow us to engage in a dialogue with architecture which would otherwise have not been possible. Movement/dance is not a part of architectural history education, or vice versa yet both disciplines can borrow from each other, in their process of creation; ideas about experiencing space and the visualization of space are just two examples. On the whole, architectural researchers have few methodologies for assessing the impact of movement on the perception and cognition of architecture.

When re-interpreting an existing building, it is important to be as creative as when designing a new building. The idea that aesthetic perception and creation of architecture cannot be achieved without the inclusion and application of digital interacting technology forms the basis of this paper. The perception of spatial volume, which is the essence of architecture, is dependent on the viewer obtaining as many different perspectives through bodily movement as possible. Architecture, unlike sculpture or painting, incorporates the possibility of action which naturally is tied to a bodily reaction. Any architecture that aims to be evocative should go beyond being a series of retinal image.

This paper, and the project it refers to are about deconstructing space such that it is experienced differently. Through the use of the graphic programming environment Isadora, the structure provides a reassessment of itself. The architectural experience of a space can thus be extended from just being a dwelling to a more aggressive, seeking approach to architectural forms with the use of new psychophysical coordinates. This can then be linked to the design problematics in architecture, or to different analyses of theories of architectural history.

Bodily experiences of architectural history. Responding to human desires... Visual privilege to contemporary design. Example is controlling building model via video tracking; much larger, but was implemented on a more 1:1 relationship too.

Banu is from Istanbul, Turkey. PhD on renovating old buildings for new uses.

INTERVIEW

Procedural Architecture – Arakawa & Gins

Andrew Benjamin (Jondi Keane)

SWORM: Through architecture tool, into Rhino. Can set AI to run through actions with a specific outcome. AI. Child-parent based.

Andrew Benjamin is interested in the non-relationship; the relationship of non-relationship. How is this encoded? E.g not wanting to relate to someone. "Necessity for radical interruption" -> generative.

Deleuze: Philosophy of modern capitalism. No borders. (This is like Marten's comments on the Body Without Organs)

(Relation is not equal to no borders, and not wanting to relate to someone is not the same as having no relation)

Ridiculous analogy of refugee with the two options of either i) become like me, or ii) work it differences.

Benjamin's Lyotard influence.

Judgement for tools:

Nietzsche: Loves face cannot be totalized. No finality.

"What relationship the work has to the history from which it's from"

Materialize: Meaning not prior to object, but from the materiality to the work.

Avoiding questions of practice.

"Difficult" to consider Benjamin's writing practice (possibly because it throws it into a lit. crit. discourse)

Pascal: immediately -> justice tyranny

"mediately" -> with a spacing

"Artwork becomes art when the critic looks at it"

"Consumption is not criticism"

viewer/audience is consumption.

KEYNOTE #2 – A DANCE OF ATTENTION: CHOREOGRAPHY AS MOBILE ARCHITECTURE

Erin Manning

Erin Manning is assistant professor in studio art and film studies at Concordia University (Montreal, Canada) as well as director of Te Sense Lab, an interdisciplinary environment that explores the active relation between the philosophical, artistic and political sensing body in movement. Her artwork is primarily devoted to painting and sculpture. She dances Argentine Tango professionally. Her publications include “Relationscapes” (2009), “Politics of Touch Sense, Movement, Sovereignty” (2006) and “Ephemeral Territories: Representing Nation, Home and Identity in Canada” (2003).

Her current project entitled folds to Infinity is an experimental fabric collection composed of cuts that connect in an infinity of ways, folding in to create clothing and out to create environmental architectures.

The next phase of this project will explore the resonance between electromagnetic fields and movement through the activation of existent magnets in Folds to Infinity. Her writing addresses the senses, philosophy and politics, articulating the relation between experience, thought and politics in a transdisciplinary framework moving between dance and new technology, the political and micropolitics of sensation, performance art, and the current convergence of cinema, animation and new media.

“What else?” of William Forsythe: Choreographic Object.

“Environments of action”. Queue alignment and priming -> cooking example of synchronisation with partner in the kitchen while cooking.

Putting queues fast together making a dense time signature.

“Landing sites” of Arakawa & Gins -> Attention as both conscious and unconscious (cognitive theory)

Folds to Infinity: Reconfigurable fabric sections. Dance. Arakawa & Gins: Only nomads take mobile architecture seriously.

The Erotic Return

Pia Ednie-Brown

Pia Ednie-Brown is a writer, designer and educator based in Melbourne, Australia. She works at RMIT University where she is a Senior Lecturer in the Architecture program and a research leader in the Spatial Information Architecture Laboratory (SIAL). Her diverse, transdisciplinary activities are encompassed under the practise name “onomatopoeia”.

Her research, which has been published and exhibited internationally, employs writing, designing and teaching to explore processes of change at work in the present moment (or the “contemporary”), and to both understand and generate connections between architectural endeavour and other diverse, apparently disconnected phenomena. Her approach generally involves a form of micro-analysis, in which the apparently insignificant acts and gestures of bodies and things can become relevant to creative composition. A recently published book, *Plastic Green; designing for environmental transformation*, offers an account of one of her cross-disciplinary, collaborative projects with other researchers and students at RMIT.

Aphrodite; endlessly losing her virginity. Defilement, like practice.

Bataille: Eroticism. Spiritual, Religious, and ...

Capitalist orgy: “Knowledge” and “creativity” no longer makes sense in such a fast-moving information world

Affective reactions concealed leads to untapped potential.

Shared laughter holds across a rupture (oxytocin, social connectivity)

“The Loop” – public toilet which provides orange juice from humanure.