Trans-Bodies / Queering Spaces

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Introduction

New Figurations in Architecture Theory: From Queer Performance to Becoming Trans

Robert Alexander Gorny and Dirk van den Heuvel, editors

This issue of *Footprint* aims to introduce the latest developments in the field of queer theory into the realm of architecture and urban design – and *vice versa*, to make architectural and urban design concerns an element of queer studies. Even though there may be a renewed interest, we find fairly little literature available specific to architecture. Most research into queer theory happens in the fields of cultural studies, literature and the arts and social geography, whereas a cross-disciplinary connection between architecture, urban design and queer theory seems only logical from the point of view that architecture and urban design are instrumental in the formation of social and political identities. Additionally, queer theory offers the possibility of opening up the disciplinary straightjacket of architecture. It engenders a radical reconceptualisation of the architectural discipline and its institutions. Queer theory unsettles any conception of architecture as an embodiment of essentialist categories, be it identities, forms and types, just as it disturbs the mythologies of authorship and autonomy. Instead, an understanding of architecture emerges as a field engaged in consistent transformation. Such a reconceptualisation of architecture foregrounds liminal situations, metamorphosis and transgression; it views difference not in terms of otherness, but rather in terms of relational processes and becoming. At this point, a queer perspective on architecture runs parallel with other attempts at redefining the discipline to see architecture as situational, dependent and embedded.[1] Admittedly, this conceptual shift toward situatedness has its own history dating back to the post-war decades and the debates of CIAM and Team 10, in which architecture and planning were already reconfigured in terms of 'habitat' as relational and ecological practices, yet these debates still remained within a modernist discourse and the redistributive politics of a paternalistic welfare state and concomitant family planning.

Tensions between an essentialist understanding of architecture and architecture as a process of becoming can also be observed in earlier attempts at connecting queer theory and architecture. In *Queer Space* (1997) Aaron Betsky proposed familiar gay tropes such as the closet and the interior, and hedonistic urban lifestyles as the ultimate spaces of queer identities.[2] Betsky's propositions coincided with the parallel feminist discourse of the 1990s, which focused on the sexual, libidinal dimensions of architectural production.[3] At the same time it also retained a quite problematic notion of 'otherness' – as criticised by Mary McLeod – in the way it portrayed the heterotopias of male queer space as yet another essentialist kind of space.[4] The anthology *Stud* (1996) edited by Joel Sanders had already suggested a more complicated relationship between space and gay male identities by clarifying that there is no 'queer space', only space 'put to queer use'.[5] The suggestion of 'putting to queer use' is still susceptible to essentialist notions of an autonomous architecture, by relying on a container

conception of space, rather than an interrelational reciprocity between embedded configurations of bodies and matter, or space as a dependency relation. Yet, 'putting to queer use' already anticipated the currently, widely used notion of 'queering', a capacity or agency of performance and acting out with the aim to pervert and undermine power constructs to unleash suppressed and marginalised desires.

Looking at the brief history of queer theory in architecture one can observe more of such conceptual shifts. Arguably, the critic Charles Jencks was the first to acknowledge a 'gay' presence in architecture when trying to define the parameters of postmodernism in the 1970s.[6] Speaking of among others the 'Gay Eclectic' he identified the uses of irony, parody and travesty. Semantic double coding was part and parcel of his project of abandoning the reductive and universalist claims of modern architecture and the International Style, while a number of gay architects figured prominently in Jencks's rewriting of architectural history, most notably Philip Johnson, Charles Moore and Robert Stern – clearly another example of male privilege, it must be pointed out. Yet unfortunately, Jencks did not elaborate this early proposition of a queer approach in architecture, from the Gay Eclecticists he quickly jumped to Straight Revivalism.[7] In hindsight, one might assess Jencks's aestheticist approach in various ways. One could see it as an act of cultural appropriation of the idea of difference exactly at the moment of the neoliberal shift toward the economisation of the production of difference. But at the same time, an essentialist connection between being a gay architect and a possibly gay architecture is (thankfully) uncoupled, because Jencks also shows one need not be a gay architect to promote a queering approach of irony and double coding to architecture. Robert Venturi and his ground-breaking book *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1966) can serve as the case in point here.

With such earlier conceptual shifts in the development of the project for queering architecture in mind it is not surprising to find that also today various contesting propositions regarding the definition of queer and queering are competing with each other within the very field of queer studies. Especially so, since gay, lesbian and transgender identities have entered mainstream culture in western societies while at the same time the male 'gay' identity has expanded into a range of different identities, often intersecting with one another, as exemplified by the acronym of first LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender), which in the debate on maximum inclusiveness is often expanded even further to LGBTQ, LGBTQI, and other variations, with the Q standing for Queer and the I for Intersexual. Generally speaking, these propositions range from the mapping of queer identities – sometimes paradoxically as a taxonomy of 'different' essentialisms – to the idea of queering as performative acts of activist subversion and subjectivation. Regarding performativity and the construction of gender identity, Judith Butler's ground-breaking works *Gender Trouble* (1990) and *Bodies That Matter* (1993) define the whole field of queer studies. Recent debates focus on issues of intersectionality, how various power systems and emancipation struggles for equality collide with one another within the queer discourse. Hence, questions that emerge now concern among others to what extent a white, western oriented privilege has dominated the queer discourse, how a gay male perspective obscures other experiences, how class is always an important factor at play yet often overlooked, and so on. The most radical propositions of queering seek to undermine any binary, mutually exclusive opposition as in the case of heterosexist normativity and any other hegemonic discourse based on such classic structuralist 'twin phenomena' as male-female, inside-outside, centre-periphery et cetera. In this negative function as an anti-label, a 'putting to queer use' consists not only in the political exercise to uncover hitherto hidden or repressed histories and

practices as part of an agenda of inclusiveness. It also entails a specific ethical agenda, in which acts of queering resist the establishment of stable identities, while they promote transitory assemblages that are embedded within an unfolding process of so-called 'differencing', an openness that allows the emergence of difference. Other terms that are used are processes of embodying, becoming real, actualisation and individuation of virtual potentialities.

The problematic relationship between language, naming and classifying is part and parcel of the queer experience. Language as such is considered part of the systemic oppression and marginalisation of queer identities by a dominant heteronormative culture, hence the ongoing search for new terms and a new language. Naming and renaming the range of possible identities help to arrive at the proper political representation of diversity, yet each distinct identification is also a setting apart. Historically, one finds this antagonistic relationship with language with such famous precursors as Oscar Wilde and Radclyffe Hall who are by now canonised in the historiography of queer art. With queer culture entering the mainstream as part of the process of decriminilisation and even normalisation, its historiography is now in the process of being established, especially so the last couple of years in those countries where LGBTQ citizens have obtained almost fully equal rights. The United Kingdom for instance started the online heritage project 'Pride of Place' mapping the sites of queer history and identity, which is crowd sourced and curated by the public body of Historic England. Tate Britain organised the landmark exhibition 'Queer British Art 1861–1967' this year to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Sexual Offences Act of 1967 that brought a first step in the decriminilisation of gay sexuality and love.[8]

However, despite almost fully achieved judicial emancipation in Western countries today, Wilde's reference at his trial to 'the love that dare not speak its name' still holds up as a model for many queer theorists and writers who seek the salvation of the socio-historical specificity of the queer experience. In his novels Alan Hollinghurst has developed a writing style that both highlights and avoids his queer subject matter. Scholars such as Katarina Bonnevier and Jasmine Rault have focused on the work of the designer and architect Eileen Gray to demonstrate the ways she developed an architecture of postponement and privacy, in which Gray and her peers could shape their own lifestyle. Describing the Parisian circles of Gray Rault even speaks of a specific Sapphic kind of modernity.[9] Building on Eve Sedgwick's foundational analysis of the closet, the architect and curator Henry Urbach produced another elegant proposition, of the antecloset – the space in front of the actual closet as a liminal space where one decides what to wear and how to appear in public.[10]

Next to these approaches that use the queer experience itself as a method to carefully reconsider the becoming of the historical individual subjectivities at stake, there is a strong movement within queer studies that aims to universalise the queer experience as part of the ongoing political-cultural struggle to overthrow hegemonic models of heteronormativity, especially the aforementioned aspect of essentialist, binary thinking. The queer experience is used to arrive at the identification of a general condition that goes beyond the sheer production or emergence of differences. Here, a first concern is to deconstruct the 'logics' in which these differences are produced and conceptualised, the concomitant disciplinary power structures and the epistemological frameworks that sustain these logics. For these writers, Gilles Deleuze's work is of particular importance in that it offers concepts that escape the postmodernist semantic game of differences, while the notions of transformation, becoming and interrelation support new ways of 'doing' architecture, to practise it and to think it.

The work of feminist and queer philosopher Rosi Braidotti, who builds her argument on Deleuze's writings, is often used as a key reference here. Her concept of figurations unpacks the various practices and discourses to demonstrate that they are by definition situated, and take form in specific constructs. Such figurations are materially 'embodied and embedded, relational and affective' as Braidotti puts it.[11] To make difference 'operative at last', she challenges so-called male-stream thinking and its 'legacy of dualistic thinking and oppositional otherness'.[12] Any conception of difference as 'oppositional otherness' systemically reduces difference to 'being different from', which is too often equal to 'being less than'.[13] In this sense, her work champions situatedness as the potent antidote to the postmodern relativist notion of difference, through which the production of differences has moreover become the main mode of production of advanced capitalism.[14]

At this point of embodiedness, it is important to note the way in which the whole debate has only recently moved on from queering to what is called transing, the process that brings together the social construction of gender identity and body transformation. Here, authors like Paul Preciado and Lucas Crawford can be called true trailblazers in architecture theory as they started investigating the potential of transing the conceptions of architecture, thus further pushing the de-essentialisation of the architectural discipline as initiated by queer studies.[15] While queering problematised essentialist conceptions of relationships, in particular heteronormative ones, transing radically problematises any essentialist conception of bodies, that is the so-called cis-gender and cis-normative understanding of bodies as opposed to the occurrence of trans-gender bodies. Thereby, transing questions all sorts of assumptions when it comes to identity construction of which architecture and planning are two important fields.

Starting from the apparent contrast between architecture and transgender Crawford's book *Transgender Architectonics* critiques the illusion of stability that the conception of architecture relies on: 'Architecture stands firm; transgender is at heart an ethos of change… Architecture excludes and divides; transgender encompasses, includes and bends boundaries and binaries.'[16] Subsequently, Crawford suggests to rethink architectural formations as the 'shape of change'. Transing emphasises not simply 'a move from one gender or materiality to another [… but] the very ubiquity of constant transformation.'[17] In this ethos, architecture and bodies, and architecture as a body should not be conceptualised as mere neutral, accommodating containers. Instead Crawford critically takes aim at the former focus of queer and transgender theory on 'space', that neglects the physical and material dimension of architectural and human bodies.[18] By contrast, Crawford posits that 'we must ask: how do these important theories of queer space make their way into our experiences of our bodies *as* spatial matter — or do they? What kinds of architecture are our trans bodies?'[19]

While sociologists have realised that space is always produced (historically or socially), they neglected to connect this insight to the fact that bodies are so, too. In contrast to the focus on spatial practices at the basis of queer theory, trans theory proposes a radically embodied conception of architecture and the difference it can make. It is at this point that transing theory converges with the work of Braidotti and other queer feminist theorists.

Admittedly, the incorporation of transing as a conceptual tool or means to rethink architecture as a body encounters a few political-theoretical problems of quite a principal character. A first question concerns whether an architectural theory can actually do justice to the specific trans experience at this moment of the emancipatory struggle of transgender people. Unlike the queer experience,

the trans experience is not generally recognised, there is no trans historiography being written, nor are there big thematic cultural exhibitions in national museums that depict the struggle, the violence and the trauma. The political battle for equal rights is far from resolved, even with the recent coming-into-mainstream of transgender issues with such spectacular media moments as when the former Olympic champion Bruce Jenner appeared on the cover of *Vanity Fair* coming out as Caitlyn Jenner in 2015.[20] There are very awkward moments when feminist icons clash with transgender activists on the notions of womanhood and (alleged) transphobia.[21] Appropriation or domestication through metaphorisation in architecture might be the least concern in this debate.

Yet, the fierce act of self-displacement by transgender people calls our attention to the notion of trans bodies as embodied becomings. These do not simply present another spatial concept nor metaphor, but we believe it offers a new 'conceptual persona' (Deleuze), 'figuration', or 'navigational tool' (Braidotti). We consider the figuration of trans bodies as a much-needed and very welcome update to the discussions on queering spaces and the ongoing de-essentialisation of architecture, also in response to the recent rise of new materialist, matter-realist and materially embedded approaches in architecture and cultural theory. Perhaps architecture itself could be reconsidered as 'trans' in that it is a discipline of physical transformation *par excellence*. Because of its corporeal and physical dimensions architecture can be understood as one of the material interfaces and situatedness of becoming.

When we launched the call for this issue of *Footprint* in July 2016, this was initially in response to what we considered an oversimplistic, heteronormative approach to the ongoing gender debate in architecture. Especially striking were the rekindled debates around the unresolved controversy around the Pritzker prize for Robert Venturi in 1991, which failed to include his partner Denise Scott-Brown. The affair led to renewed debates criticising the continuing sexist biases in the architectural discipline. But most inept, this was done on the basis of profoundly, binary heterosexual terms pitting perceived feminine values versus their masculine counterparts.[22] Notions of queerness or transsexuality were completely absent in these discussions. Although today one might observe that the debate is becoming slightly more inclusive, it is at an annoyingly slow pace. A handful of conferences and seminars have been devoted to the subject of queering and transing architecture in the meantime, from Rotterdam to Melbourne to Princeton.[23] But this cannot conciliate the unhappy feelings regarding the overall stalemate state of architecture as an inclusive field of knowledge and practice. There is not much progress to be observed within architecture since the mid-1990s, when queer theory had its first proper moment with Sanders and Betsky's publications, and the Queer Space exhibition at the Storefront for Art and Architecture gallery in New York.[24] Once again, mainstream culture seems miles ahead of the architectural discourse, which ironically tends to think of itself as embracing progressive values.

Surprisingly enough, in the autumn of 2017, architectural discourse had its own queer moment with a couple of journals devoting their pages to queer issues.[25] *The Funambulist*, for example, has devoted a recent issue to queer and trans topics in architecture and urban planning, intersecting with non-western, feminist and migrant perspectives. *Log* magazine featured a (largely USA-focused) special section on *Working Queer*, guest-edited by Jaffer Kolb, who highlighted a shift in architecture away from the 1990s attempts at 'making queer things' (i.e. 'what?') to 'making things queerly' (i.e. 'how?').[26] Regarding this methodological shift, Betsky begins to question whether there is still a need for queer space.[27] We would like to queer this problem itself, by starting from the fact that queer

agency is luckily no longer constrained to heterotopic spaces of potential transformation. Concerned with radical inclusiveness, 'queering' and 'transing' have thus become lenses to more generally critique 'exclusive' conceptions of architecture, as well as mutually exclusive container concepts of spaces and bodies. What could architecture do, if we were to start from the de-essentialising and transformative potential of architecture?

Our own aspirations for this issue of *Footprint* were then guided by the intention to advance the queer and trans as a specific theoretical lens in order to not only address the narrowing perspective of a heteronormative gender agenda, but also to use it as the starting point for a radical reconceptualisation of the changing body of architecture and architecture theory. We believe that the various articles we received and collected during the production of this issue explore the potential of this reconceptualisation in most challenging ways. We propose to locate this potential at the intersection of the discursive and the body, between language and matter. Judith Butler famously understands the formation of gendered identities, their enactments and possible undoing as performative.[28] Performance is here located within the becoming of bodies, to understand bodies in their interrelatedness, and their interrelated being as becoming. Such interrelatedness ties in with the more ecosystemic approaches that are popular in contemporary architecture: no longer seen as given formations 'in' space or 'in' an environment, bodies are increasingly understood as historical constructs, transient figurations 'of' a material milieu, which itself is in permanent reconfiguration. Such trans-bodies are not just in a state of transition themselves; they also transform these milieus as they make a difference – a queering of spaces indeed.

To further interrogate this interrelated becoming of such trans-bodies our authors point to many other thinkers, such as Karen Barad and Jane Bennett to grasp the full implications of the embodiedness of identities and how they are performed.[29] Interestingly, many of these issues tie in with some recent reinterpretations of architectural form based on Baruch Spinoza's challenge to understand bodies in term of what they (can) do – instead of what they are.[30] In this regard, the notion of assemblage as introduced by Deleuze and Guattari, is crucial for understanding how the interrelatedness of bodies and architecture intersects with technologies, desire formations and power distributions; not in the operative sense of the term or through capitalist co-optation by reification, but on the contrary as a reverting, inverting or perverting of this very operativity to bring out other economic and spatial-material differentiations.

To prime the relational conception of trans-bodies and trans-architecture, Xenia Kokoula's article 'Opening up the Bodyspace' challenges the discipline to finally abandon outdated container conceptions of bodies by using the notion of 'body-space', or *Körperraum* as proposed by the German sociologist Martina Löw. Kokoula advances four interrelated theses of recent posthuman and feminist theory ('container', 'grotesque', 'stickiness', and 'alliances') that taken together offer a starting point for reconceptualising the dynamics of embodied becomings. A materialist ontology for architectural production is further explored in Athina Angelopoulou's article, which reconsiders the operativity of transversal cuts in architectural production. Angelopoulou develops a provocative material-discursive approach to architectural production, starting from the resistance and self-organizing capacities of matter. This approach is based on the notion of the 'cut' from quantum physicist turned queer theorist, Karan Barad, whose agential realist theory reconsiders the notion of performativity on an entirely material level. In foregrounding the material agency of Foucault's apparatus as material setups, the function of *dispositifs* is rethought as a 'cutting together apart': an onto-epistemological practice

of inquiring into the workings of material reality by acting upon it.

This resonates closely with Tim Gough's reflection on the possibility of a 'trans-architecture', and the way it could further de-essentialise the very ontology of architecture (what architecture is), to what it can do. His assemblage-theoretical approach highlights how trans-bodies radically differ from 'hybrid' conceptions, through which architecture remains stuck in a binary machine. By focusing on London gay club experiences Gough probes the constitutive intermixture of bodies and situations in temporary, immersive environments.

Such a 'shared deterritorialisation' is also described in Daniel Snyder's analysis of Louis Sullivan's love for male beauty in architecture as a 'becoming-object' in his encounter with the writings of Walt Whitman. Through a close reading of Sullivan's library and writings, Snyder demonstrates how binary oppositions of self and other, male and female, heterosexual and homosexual dissolve into more fluid, fused and eroticised identities, even pointing to consubstantiation as the ultimate form of becoming.

Various authors approached these arguments and stories as personal stories, quite like the depicted self-identification of Sullivan with his architecture, and more so than one conventionally finds in architecture theory. It concerns a specific setting oneself apart, as to reconnect; the production of a specific queer or transversal genealogy. The psychological effects of this process are captured in Andreas Angelidakis' description of the fragile construction of an architectural identity. New narrative and design methods are integral to his project. In 'Me as a Building', we find the queer proposition of an anti-oedipal architecture combined with the oneiric quality of *Hypnerotomacchia*-realness. Another way to deal with the conflicted nature of queer architecture manifests itself in Colin Ripley's contribution 'Strategies for Living in Houses'. For Betsky queer space was inherently domestic space. Given the degree to which domestic space is built in the image of highly gendered and heterosexist spaces, Ripley by contrast problematises the very possibility for queer inhabitants to appropriate, and thus queer these spatial units in their very arrangement. Territorial contestation re-emerges in Joel Sanders's contribution 'Stalled! Transforming Public Restrooms' in which he challenges the exclusionary nature of the gender-segregated restroom. It is no coincidence that this space has repeatedly come to the fore as the main site in which (and around which) transgender debates have arisen. Continuing his methodological observations,[31] Sanders shows how a trans-inclusive approach allows rethinking and redesigning the architecture of restrooms.

Our issue concludes with an interview with our colleagues from the KTH Stockholm: Katja Grillner, Hélène Frichot, Katarina Bonnevier and Brady Burroughs. At the KTH Stockholm they set up a innovative approach to teaching and researching from a queer-feminist perspective, which includes new educational practices and formats, among others in terms of performance, re-enactments and creative writing. They end this issue of *Footprint* not with a concluding summary, but instead with a set of open questions that centre on a simple, yet highly complex pedagogical problem: how can feminist, queer and trans perspectives help transition the male-dominated, hetero-normative, and cis-gendered body of architectural knowledge from an exclusive logic of 'oppositional otherness' to a radically, and generously inclusive activity?

Notes

1. See for instance, Nishat Awan, Tatjana Schneider and Jeremy Till, *Spatial Agency: Other Ways of Doing Architecture* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011); see also Isabelle Doucet and Kenny Cupers eds, *Footprint* 4 'Agency in Architecture: Reframing Criticality in Theory

and Practice' (TU Delft, 2009).

2. Aaron Betsky, *Queer Space: Architecture and Same-Sex Desire* (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1997).
3. Betsky himself made a contribution to this discourse with his book *Building Sex: Men, Women, Architecture and the Construction of Sexuality* (New York: William Morrow, 1995).
4. Mary McLeod, 'Everyday and "Other" Spaces', in *Architecture and Feminism*, ed. Debra Coleman, Elizabeth Danze, and Carol Henderson (Princeton: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996), 1–37.
5. George Chauncey, 'Privacy Could Only Be Had in Public: Gay Uses of the Streets', in *Stud: Architecture of Masculinity,* ed. Joel Sanders (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996), 224.
6. Charles Jencks, *The Language of Post-modern Architecture*, (London: Academy Editions, 1978 [1977]).
7. Ibid, 93.
8. For Pride of Place visit: historicengland.org.uk; the catalogue of the exhibition Queer British Art 1861–1967 is edited by Clare Barlow, (London: Tate, 2017).
9. Jasmine Rault, *Eileen Gray and the Design of Sapphic Modernity: Staying In* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2011); Katarina Bonnevier, *Behind Straight Curtains: Towards a Queer Feminist Theory of Architecture* (Stockholm: Axl Books, 2007).
10. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (Oakland: University of California Press, 1990); Henry Urbach, 'Closets, Clothes, disClosure', in *Assemblage* no. 30 (August 1996): 62–73.
11. Figurations, Braidotti says, are not 'figurative' ways of thinking but existential conditions that translate into a style of thinking. They are 'navigational tools'. See Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994), 1; see also Braidotti, *Transpositions: On Nomadic Ethics* (Cambridge: Polity, 2006), and Braidotti, *The Posthuman* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013).
12. Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, 118; 146–67, here 160; see also Rosi Braidotti, *Metamorphoses: Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming* (New York: Wiley, 2013), 12.
13. Rosi Braidotti, Opening lecture of the Dutch Philosophy Olympiad 2017. Available online at https://youtu.be
14. Rosi Braidotti., 'Posthuman, All Too Human I: Memoirs of a Posthumanist', 2017 Tanner Lectures on Human Values this spring at Yale's Whitney Humanities Center. Available online at https://youtu.be, 00:46:15.
15. Paul B. Preciado, 'Pharmaco Pornographic Politics: Towards a New Gender Ecology', *Parallax* 14, no. 1 (2008): 105–17; Preciado, 'Architecture as a Practice of Biopolitical Disobedience', Log 25 (2012): 121–34; Preciado, Testo junkie: Sex, Drugs, and Biopolitics in the Pharmacopornographic Era (New York: The Feminist Press at CUNY, 2013). Lucas C. Crawford, 'Breaking ground on a theory of transgender architecture', Seattle Journal for Social Justice 8, no.2 (2010): 515–39; Crawford, Transgender Architectonics: The Shape of Change in Modernist Space (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015).
16. Crawford, *Transgender Architectonics*, 2.
17. Ibid., 14.
18. Ibid., 19–20.
19. Ibid., 25 (emphasis in original).
20. See Buzz Bissinger, 'Caitlyn Jenner: The Full Story', with a photoshoot by Annie Leibovitz. Available online at: https://www.vanityfair.com.
21. Notorious is the case of Germaine Greer who criticised transgender women by resorting to an essentialist understanding of 'real' women; see among others the interview in *The Guardian*, 11 April 2016: https://www.theguardian.com.
22. For instance, the special issue of *Architectural Theory Review* 17, nrs. 2–3 (2012).
23. Het Nieuwe Instituut, 'Queering Architecture, Through Queer Eyes', 15 September 2016; Princeton School of Architecture, 'Stand by Your Monster and Some Queer Methods', 4 March 2017; and Melbourne Design Week, organised by MADA, Monash etc., 26 March 2017.
24. Joel Sanders (ed.), *Stud: Architectures of Masculinity* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996); for the 1994 exhibition Queer Space, see the website

of Storefront for Art and Architecture: http://storefrontnews.org

25. Léopold Lambert (ed.), *The Funambulist* no.13 (September–October 2017) is a thematic issue on 'Queers, Feminists and Interiors', and *Log* 41 (2017) included a special section, 'Working Queer', edited by Jaffer Kolb.
26. Jaffer Kolb, 'Working Queer', in *Log* 41 (2017): 63–66, here 63.
27. Aaron Betsky, in interview with Jaffer Kolb, 'The End of Queer Space?', in *Log* 41 (2017): 85–88.
28. Besides her *Gender Trouble*, in which the theory of perfomativity was originally explored, see especially Butler, *Undoing Gender* (New York/Abingdon: Routledge, 2004): 198–231.
29. Jane Bennett, *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Things* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009); Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).
30. Andrew Ballentyne, 'Deleuze, Architecture and Social Fabrication', in *Deleuze and Architecture*, ed. Hélène Frichot and Stephen Loo (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013): 182–196, and Cameron Duff, 'The Ethological City', in ibid.: 215–229; Hélène Frichot, Catharina Gabrielsson, and Jonathan Metzger, 'What a City Can Do', introduction to Frichot, Gabrielsson and Metzger (eds.), *Deleuze and the City* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2016); Andrej Radman and Heidi Sohn (eds.), *Critical and Clinical Cartographies: Architecture, Robotics, Medicine, Philosophy* (Edinburgh: Edinburg University Press, 2017); Hélène Frichot, Catharina Gabrielsson, and Helen Runting, *Architecture and Feminisms: Ecologies, Economies, Technologies* (Abingdon/New York, Routledge, 2017); Zuzana Kovar, *Architecture in Abjection: Bodies, Spaces and their Relations* (London/New York: Tauris, 2018).
31. Joel Sanders, 'From Stud to Stalled!: Architecture in Transition', *Log* 41, 145–54.

Biographies

Dirk van den Heuvel is associate professor with the Faculty of Architecture and the Built Environment, TU Delft, and he heads the Jaap Bakema Study Centre at Het Nieuwe Instituut in Rotterdam. Books he co-authored include *Team 10: In Search of a Utopia of the Present 1953–1981* (2005) and *Architecture and the Welfare State* (2014). He is also an editor of the publication series *DASH, Delft Architectural Studies on Housing* and was an editor of the journal *Oase* (1993–1999). Van den Heuvel was curator of the Dutch national pavilion for the Venice architecture biennale in 2014. In 2017 he received a Richard Rogers Fellowship from the Harvard University Graduate School of Design.

Robert Alexander Gorny is currently a guest teacher and PhD candidate at the Chair of Methods and Analysis, Department of Architecture, TU Delft. He is founder of relationalthought, a nomadic architectural practice that operates at the intersection of theory and practice. It aims at contributing to a new materialist understanding of historical formations and machinic approaches to the ecologies of architecture, which he puts forward in his doctoral studies on 'a genealogy of apartments'. He joined the editorial board of *Footprint* in 2016.

Opening up Bodyspace: Perspectives from Posthuman and Feminist Theory

Xenia Kokoula

Introduction

The field of architecture has long been dominated by the human body as the measure of things.[1] Situated in the single room, the home, the neighborhood, the city and moving on to larger and larger scales, the human body takes centre stage in the design process. As several scholars have critically noted, this is the normalised and normative white male body, as exemplified in Le Corbusier's Modulor or in Ernst Neufert's still routinely used handbook.[2] It is a whole and closed body surrounded by and enclosed in spatial spheres that are firmly placed in a pre-existing Cartesian universe.

Recent theoretical discussions have questioned this implicit understanding of the body as a closed and impenetrable unity, along with the wider rejection of anthropocentricism, and the role and limits of design.[3] Beyond these academic debates, artistic and architectural practices have offered potent images of bodies in space. The latter tentative explorations through design open up a broad field of possible interpretations; too broad perhaps, as they usually lack a coherent theoretical underpinning. Meanwhile the notion of the body as an almost sacred and intact locus of agency and the self persists.[4] What would it mean for bodily space and corporeality, if we were to replace the whole and closed, Cartesian body with a more fluid and dynamic one? Which terms have been introduced to describe alternative body spaces, and can they be inserted in other disciplinary discourses? What are the consequences for design and what new bodily formations, entanglements and alliances are we confronted with? As our powers of shaping and transforming all spatial scales – from the scale of the body to that of the planet – become clear in what has been called the Anthropocene, these questions become all the more urgent even if they far exceed the scope of this essay.[5]

Confronted with emerging spatio-corporeal paradigms, architects can no longer solely rely on a theoretical canon that has historically 'been deficient in the very tools of self-criticism'.[6] They must therefore seek inspiration in related discourses in the humanities and social sciences. The main purpose of this essay is, thus, to suggest possible starting points, and speculatively explore a range of conceptual paradigms and their implications for design. Drawing on an eclectic mix of feminist, posthuman and nonhuman debates I will advance four theses for this bodyspace, as an intricate and entangled construct in constant flux. Starting from the thesis that the bodyspace is not a container (as proposed by Martina Löw), I will then explore the notion of the grotesque (traced back to Timothy Morton and Mikhail Bakhtin), reflect on the concept of stickiness (as defined by Sara Ahmed) and speculate on the transformative possibilities of alliances (as developed by Judith Butler). My aim is to show that reading these theses against each other could urge architectural discourse to move forward, while enriching it with potent images, philosophically informed arguments and the potential of transformative action.

Bodyspace is not a container

Martina Löw's widely read and commented upon *Sociology of Space* introduced the German term *Körperraum* (literally 'bodyspace') to deliberately include the body in her wider call for a relational understanding of space.[7] It is important to understand this composite word (which I adopt here, despite its own limitations) within the scope of this perspective. First, she addresses space as a core concept of sociology, contrary to longstanding disciplinary tradition, in which the German-speaking world especially tended to ignore or marginalise space. Seeking to offer a counter-model to the absolute or static conception of Cartesian space, she develops an approach that expands and consolidates notions of a relational space. In this ambitious undertaking she combines theoretical insights with empirical research and takes into account the micro- and macro-sociological scales by identifying the body as the smallest sociologically relevant spatial dimension.[8] It is on this scale that her relational theory of space must be put to test to confirm its applicability across different scales.

In looking for a relational notion of space Martina Löw is not alone among social scientists. Her contribution can be summed up in the often repeated and elegantly stated thesis that space is as a relational ordering of living beings and social goods.[9] Actions such as the placement of things or the positioning of bodies bring about new spatial formations; stable ones that are iteratively reinforced, but also fluid ones that are prone to constant change. Consequently, she argues, space is not a category that precedes the social, no pre-existing setting in which action takes place, but is actively and constantly being reshaped.

Yet how does this understanding of space (which builds upon action-theoretical sociologists such as Anthony Giddens and echoes Henri Lefebvre's work) reflect on the body?[10] In order to approach this question Martina Löw draws on a variety of sources to weave a narrative of increasingly dissolving bodily barriers, a movement away from a closed, passive, container body to one increasingly open and unrestrained from its skin barrier. In this narrative the body is understood as a specific dimension of space. As such the thesis of a relational ordering of different parts that constitute an unstable and negotiable spatial formation should also apply to it.

Thus, after mentioning some historical examples of bodies in constant exchange with their natural environment, she identifies surgery as one of the developments that resulted in a narrow definition of the bodily boundaries that separate its interior from its exterior.[11] To bring internal organs and bodily functions to light through this surgical opening paradoxically reinforces the very boundary of the skin and with it the notion of a closed bodyspace.[12] While this is true for both male and female bodies the latter become (through the fetishisation of the womb) the container par excellence. The process of dissolving this boundary thus requires an exposure and questioning of the cultural practices and power mechanisms through which the closed body has become naturalised. Powerful counter-images with explicit spatial dimensions include the fragmentation and rearrangement of bodily organs, medical practices that prioritise the understanding of the body as an immune system, and discussions on prosthetics and cyborg paradigms.[13] These corporealities present alternatives to the dominant, closed, container-body.

A parallel reading of Löw's narrative against Georges Teyssot's essay 'The Mutant Body of Architecture' reveals some striking parallels as well as some crucial differences.[14] In Teyssot's explicitly spatial-architectural text, many of the above paradigms such as prosthetics, fragmentation, digitalisation, or cyborg bodies, appear as argumentative steps to create a narrative of the

dissolution of the body. This dissolution is at once a result of incorporation (of instruments, implants, grafts, organs, parasites and imprints) into the body as well as of disembodiment, the transposing of the body into expanding spatial spheres such as cyberspace. While Löw questions the intactness of the human body from the perspective of social theory, Teyssot is more concerned with the fragmentation of the body as an aesthetic and organising principle in architectural discourse and practice. Both authors deal with paradigms that share common genealogies and coexist without fully erasing earlier ones.

Some important underlying assumptions should be highlighted in this argument. To begin with, the composite word *Körperraum* (bodyspace) is a linguistic device and a neologism; in the German text this fact remains unacknowledged.[15] Löw does not further contemplate whether the body is a certain kind of space per definition or if it merely possesses and occupies space. From this point the author moves on to seek further modifiers for this space (container, closed, open etc.). The coinage of the term in the German language is significant, not just because it allows for such composite words to easily form. As Peter Gould has pointed out, the Latin and francophone space carries far more connotations of openness and infinity than the more constrained and delimited Germanic *raum* or the old English and old Norse *rum*.[16] Yet Löw's *Raum* is invariably translated as 'space' while the German text retains both meanings; a nuanced distinction that is easy to overlook. Furthermore, the compound word *Körperraum* connotes a spatial but finite entity. While the act of 'opening up' becomes more poignant and tangible, the deliberate merging of body and space – of two ontologically distinct categories in one – and its far-reaching theoretical consequences are obscured.

Additionally, there are two interrelated hypotheses that remain unexplored. The first hypothesis is based on the theoretical device that Löw calls relational ordering. She reads bodies as a relational ordering of parts,

> a concrete, material, animate organization of flesh, organs, nerves, muscles, and skeletal structure which are given a unity, cohesiveness, and organization only through their psychical and social inscription as the surface and raw materials of an integrated and cohesive totality.[17]

At the same time she theorises space as a relational ordering of living beings and social goods, which is given a unity through individual and collective explication and integration processes. The choice of words is significant; by drawing a parallel between bodies and spaces as relational orderings, she reinforces the argument that the bodyspace is fundamentally similar to spaces of larger scales. Bodies just like spaces in general are to be understood as 'processual, relationally ordered systems'.[18]

The second, more ambitious hypothesis is based on and expands upon the first. The shifts in the understanding of the body not only mirror, but are indeed closely related to the shifts in the understanding of space.[19] Elizabeth Grosz similarly speculates that historically specific theorisations of corporeality and spatiality (together with subjectivity and temporality) are linked. Concepts of spatiality are experienced through the body, while at the same time the body itself is conceptualised based on a spatial framework.[20] Shifts, it follows, are not coincidental; notions of corporeality and spatiality mutually inform each other. While this hypothesis is enticing Löw is careful to point out that different conceptualisations of the body have historically coexisted and overlap.[21] An unwaveringly linear development would present an oversimplification since especially the concept of open bodies interconnected with their environment, is not new in itself.

Broadly speaking the 'dissolution of the bodily barriers' presents a historical development that can be problematic for body politics, while also opening up new possibilities. This broadly defined openness calls into question hitherto fixed identities, and the gendered hierarchies and power structures that generate them.[22] Martina Löw's vocabulary and its twofold emphasis on closedness and openness, container and fluidity, the inside and the outside is specifically chosen so as to weave together perspectives and arguments across a range of disciplines and time scales, while still acknowledging their differences and nuances. At the same time they invoke potent spatial images that feed into the author's main argument for a shift in the understanding of space: from an absolute, static, container space to a dynamic, fluid, relational one.

Bodyspace is grotesque

In the middle of the seventeenth century 'the exposed buttocks of an old woman could invoke a storm, a "bleeding vulva" could influence the weather'.[23] Here agency – or rather instrumentality – emanates from a body and bodily flows intermingled with environmental ones. Rather than a clear separation there is a smooth, unmediated interaction between the body and its surrounding space. Transgressions of social order such as nudity or menstruation threaten to unwittingly summon natural forces, which in turn may destroy physical, built, spatial order. Hence flows between bodies and spaces were seen as constant and unpredictable.

In the beginning of the twenty-first century (well into the era that has been called the Anthropocene) we are confronted with phenomena that are 'massively distributed across time and space'.[24] These phenomena vastly exceed the spatial and temporal scales that are most readily associated with the human body but still surround, permeate and become inextricable from it. Timothy Morton has coined the term 'hyperobjects' to describe phenomena such as climate change or plutonium that are hard to grasp, yet so immediately, urgently and terrifyingly present that they must be granted the ontological status of an object. In his writings a new constant and uncontrollable nexus of interdependences between the body and its surrounding space emerges. As a result I will argue that the bodyspace becomes increasingly grotesque.

Morton offers a compelling, yet nebulous vision of interconnectedness between distinct ontological entities. Ontological boundaries, he argues, are human-made; they are sustained through everyday practice that perpetuates mechanisms of separation. Knowledge is thus critical in questioning them:

> For some time we may have thought that the U-bend in the toilet was a convenient curvature of ontological space that took whatever we flush down it into a totally different dimension called Away, leaving things clean over here. Now we know better: instead of the mythical land Away, we know the waste goes to the Pacific Ocean or the wastewater treatment facility.[25]

Tracing the flow of bodily waste (or rather a blend of bodily waste and other objects forming one mass) through a series of spaces starting with the bodyspace and ending in the Pacific Ocean, Morton argues for a proximity that defies measurable distance in a Cartesian sense. As it cannot be directly experienced this proximity is mediated through socially constructed systems of knowledge. Hence an understanding of these systems is necessary to counteract the still dominant cognitive narrative of closed, intact bodies in well-ordered Cartesian spatial spheres. In this argument Morton performs a series of displacements, which in turn destabilise ostensibly distinct ontological entities. To point out this inextricable interconnectedness between bodies and spaces he repeatedly swaps ontological categories: space becomes an object,[26] hyperobjects become surrounding mediums,[27]

human bodies become indistinguishable from nonhuman ones[28] and Nature disappears.[29]

These ideas resonate strongly with related posthuman and nonhuman discourses.[30] Morton focuses, however, not on the theoretical and political imperative of the interdependence and intimacy between bodies and their environment alone.[31] He moves on to explore its aesthetic dimension. He thereby argues for a new aesthetics, one where the distance between the viewer and the viewed disappears and where 'there can be no background; therefore there can be no foreground'.[32] A world consisting of hyperobjects that defy common understanding of spatial and temporal scales cannot be partitioned and framed for aesthetic consumption; at the same time the body cannot be separated from this world and reduced to the consuming gaze. This 'aesthetics of zero distance' reinserts the body with its own materiality in space. This would require a radically different process of design. Morton's contribution in spelling out this argument is crucial. Unfortunately, he offers only a few vague observations on what spatial design in the time of hyperobjects could do.[33]

Romanticism and the sublime are used as counterexamples for the aesthetics of interdependence and intimacy that Morton advocates, and which closely echoes the aesthetics of the grotesque as described by Mikhail Bakhtin: an aesthetics of exaggeration and excessiveness eventually culminating in the transgression of the boundary that encloses and delimits the human body.[34] By focusing on bodily functions such as 'copulation, birth, growth, eating, drinking, defecation' and bodily protrusions,[35] cavities and orifices such as 'the open mouth, the genital organs, the breasts, the phallus, the potbelly, the nose' Bakthin argues that the grotesque is more than an artistic canon or device for satire and parody.[36] Indeed, it is widespread and common in folk culture and it is especially pronounced in the case of people's assemblies that take place in the margins, or even in defiance of the regulated social order such as ritual spectacles, fairs, carnivals and the like.

Following Bakhtin there are three main attributes of what we may call the grotesque bodyspace: its penetrability and openness,[37] its inextricability from the material world, the surrounding space, the earth and finally its processuality.[38] The grotesque body 'is a body in the act of becoming. It is never finished, never completed; it is continually built, created, and builds and creates another body. Moreover, the body swallows the world and is itself swallowed by the world.'[39]

If hyperobjects contain and penetrate human bodies, in the grotesque imagination the world swallows and digests them; in both cases the aesthetic distance between a human subject and its surrounding spatial environment is negated. Here again a series of ontological displacements can be observed at the moment when comic exaggeration turns to transgression, leading to a complete 'swallowing up'. Not only male, senile bodies become pregnant, but bodily protrusions and orifices turn to animals or inanimate things; objects in turn not only symbolise bodily organs but are granted their agency.[40]

Reading Morton (who as a literary scholar has written extensively on grotesque themes in English literature) through Bakhtin, and vice versa, needs some clarification beyond these striking parallels. While for Morton knowledge plays a crucial role in the process of opening up the bodyspace, for Bakhtin this process takes place within the realm of the lived experience in the moments that make an alternative social order possible, such as the carnival. During those distinct situations, the grotesque emerges as an aesthetic principle with subversive potential. If we accept that hyperobjects

are both parts of the lived experience as well as facts that cannot be un-known, rethinking bodyspace in the time of hyperobjects is first and foremost a theoretical and political inevitability. Hyperobjects 'never leave us alone'.[41] They stick to bodies in the process of becoming one, inextricable mass, which in turn means that bodyspace is always and necessarily grotesque.

Bodyspace is sticky

The renewed interest in interconnectedness in feminist and posthuman theory can be seen as part of an endeavour to re-conceptualise and dismantle bodily boundaries. To open up the Cartesian body while at the same time destabilising binary oppositions associated with it. Inevitably, our attention is called to the fleeting yet persistent surface of the skin as the product of interrelations. These efforts may be summed up as a process of thickening. Even as it loses its ontological clarity as an infinitesimal but absolute barrier separating the human subject from its surrounding space the skin does not disappear. It rather becomes multi-layered, saturated and heterogeneous. As it expands to include other things or becomes penetrated by them it acquires depth and materiality.

The figure of 'stickiness' has been employed by Sara Ahmed in an attempt to theorise this newly acquired three-dimensionality of the hitherto two-dimensionally conceptualised surface of the skin. Stickiness describes a consistency that 'neither has the firmness of something solid, nor the flow of something liquid'.[42] Accordingly it provides a convenient starting point for theorising bodyspace as it lies between fixity and rigidity on the one hand and the openness of an unrestrained fluidity on the other. Ahmed does not see stickiness, however, as an inherent property of a surface but rather a condition of binding, of attaching meaning, of sustaining and accumulating connections. As such stickiness can be attributed to material (bodies, objects, surfaces) but also immaterial (affects, signs) entities, which complicates any distinction between a metaphorical and literal use bridging the material with the discursive.[43]

If stickiness is not an inherent property but rather a condition dependent on an act of bringing together, then the obvious question is how it comes to be. Ahmed proposes to 'think of stickiness as an effect of surfacing, as an effect of the histories of contact between bodies, objects, and signs.'[44] The two main propositions that are offered as an answer to the question above are transference – the proximity or contact with something sticky – and repetition; a process of signification and at the same time of attaching of signs to bodies or objects. It follows that stickiness is not a necessary condition of all and any bodies. Some bodies are stickier than others. Calling a queer, non-white or otherwise deviant body a derisive name can be understood as an act of transferring the stickiness of a sticky sign (the name) to a body which in turn becomes sticky. The name itself has become sticky through association with other derisive terms as well as through knowledge and power structures that precede it. The act of transferring stickiness, of associating bodies with derisive names evokes and reinforces this underlying history. This broadly defined historicity or processuality is an integral part of understanding stickiness as an effect that marks bodies unevenly and thickens bodily surfaces in different ways.

This concept offers a compelling explanation that brings together individual emotions with collective materialities, discursive and bodily acts so as to include whole populations in what Ahmed calls economies of affect.[45] Jasbir Puar, however, correctly points out the problematic underlying hypothesis that 'a form of narrativised discursive knowing … functions as a prediscursive necessity for "stickiness" to have any force at all.'[46] Not sitting firmly within the material or the discursive realm but oscillating between both, stickiness is still a useful notion if applied to the spatiality of the bodily

surface. Here, it describes the process of merging together ontologically different entities: bodies, things such as appendages or attachments as well as discourses, words or signs and the power structures in which these are embedded.[47]

Although both Ahmed and Puar evoke spatial images and refer to concrete spatial settings, it is with Arun Saldanha's figure of viscosity through which the concept of stickiness becomes spatial.[48] For Ahmed, a series of ontologically different entities are linked through a chain of transferred stickiness in a history of becoming sticky. For Saldanha it is space itself that should be pictured as a viscous mass – rather than an empty container – where bodies aggregate, clinging to each other and to places:

> Neither perfectly fluid nor solid, the viscous invokes surface tension and resistance to perturbation and mixing. Viscosity means that the physical characteristics of a substance explain its unique movements. There are local and temporary thickenings of interacting bodies, which then collectively become sticky, capable of capturing more bodies like them: an emergent slime mold. Under certain circumstances, the collectivity dissolves, the constituent bodies flowing freely again. The world is an immense mass of viscosities, becoming thicker here, and thinner there.[49]

Becoming a gendered, queer, non-white or otherwise marked body involves a thickening of the skin that is not only imprinted with histories of discourses, but also incorporates such heterogeneous elements as 'strands of DNA, phenotypical variation, discursive practices (law, media, science), artefacts such as clothes and food, and the distribution of wealth.'[50] Additionally these bodies '[forge] connections … with things and places, … get into certain habits, into certain collectivities, like city, social stratum, or racial formation.'[51] As a result, the concrete configuration of the elements that merge to form a sticky body as listed above depends on the connection between each element with another, but also on the spatial patterns of moving, clinging and pulling away through a viscous space of uneven densities.

Bodyspace is saturated with the possibilities of alliance

Aggregates of bodies including linkages of bodies and material, environmental and infrastructural conditions are discussed in Judith Butler's *Notes on a Performative Theory of Assembly*, one of her more space-related works to date.[52] Butler introduces the term 'alliance' in order to discuss fragile yet vital links and interdependencies, as well as to discern their political potential. Rather than deliberate bonds or political ties based on articulated common interests or identities, the alliances that she examines are 'uneasy and unpredictable', difficult to acknowledge, and resistant to an identity politics.[53] Rather than relying solely on kinship, bodies 'sometimes find themselves unexpectedly allied with one another in a bid to persist and exercise forms of freedom that overcome narrow versions of individualism without being collapsed into compulsory forms of collectivism.'[54] Indeed, it is the social and economic condition of precarity coupled with a struggle for political agency and not a shared identity that supports the kind of alliances examined here.

An alliance cannot be reduced to a collection of bodies and the empty, neutral space between them.[55] First, while alliances do occur when bodies congregate, as in the example of mass demonstrations, they are not necessarily dependent on a concurrent presence of bodies within a designated space. Indeed, in some cases, entering a space (i.e. walking into the street) means possibly exposing oneself to violence or harassment. This individual bodily act only becomes possible because of an alliance that exceeds both the single body and the space in question.[56] At this point the body in alliance 'is less an entity than a living set of relations'.[57] Similarly, a single subject can indeed advance

an understanding of the self as an assembly, a complex formation allied with various 'cultural vicissitudes' within the space of a single body. Neither are alliances transposable, as Hannah Arendt suggests, a collection of bodies that can occupy any given space.[58] Alliances form within already existing spatial and material conditions that support them and which at the same time they promptly work to engender as such.

Starting from the body's performativity and productivity Butler reaches conclusions that sound strikingly familiar to the Lefebvre reader. Henri Lefebvre understands space as a product and a producer of social relations.[59] Social relations take place in space, are inscribed upon it and – in the process – produce it; at the same time space is always already inscribed upon, invested with the power to guide, restrict and enable social practice. Within this iterative process of production lies the potential to seize and appropriate space; to induce differentiation; to make contradictions visible.[60] This process can only take place within an existing material reality, which, at the same time, it actively (re)produces. Derek Gregory also notes the parallels between Butler's argument and Lefebvre's theory of production of space.[61] While the notion of performativity has yet to be fully integrated in space-related disciplines, Gregory calls attention to the performance of space itself.[62] In this view, 'action (and its precarious performativity, the effects it brings into being) cannot be severed from the space through which it is achieved.'[63] Due to its explicit spatial references the concept of alliance can thus offer a basis to better understand the implication of bodies in processes of production of space.

The notion of the 'space of appearance' is a further crucial element in Judith Butler's understanding of alliances. This notion is based on Hannah Arendt's thought and is critically re-interpreted and further developed in Butler's argument.[64] For an alliance to occur, it is necessary that bodies appear; that they are perceived, seen and heard, penetrate and move through a space of appearance, which is often opaque and inaccessible. According to Arendt, spaces of appearance are already established and thus set certain conditions of appearance. The space of appearance becomes a prerequisite of political action and at the same time a field that can be transformed 'through avowing and showing certain forms of interdependency'.[65] These interdependencies that constitute an alliance are not solely between bodies but they extend to and include nonhuman beings, material and environmental conditions, media, infrastructures and things that are indispensable to human life, yet cannot be conflated with it.

Much attention has been paid to the proliferation of digital media as enablers of the kind of alliances that stretch over larger territories and far exceed the concrete spatiality and temporality of a certain act of appearing (or construing a space of appearance). While their importance should not be overstated (as both Butler[66] and Gregory[67] insist) digital media are indeed not only means of communication, coordination and organising between the allied bodies, but also an additional infrastructure that helps sustain the bodies in question. Digital media are thus part of the mix of local and supra-local, material and discursive, human and nonhuman elements that become part of the alliance and which include the pavement and the street, food and water, the hand holding the camera and social media, power structures and so on.

With Karen Barad we may think of this heterogeneous mix of entangled matter as a matrix of techno-scientific, material-discursive apparatuses where bodies in alliance materialise.[68] Drawing and expanding on Butler, Barad makes the case of a space saturated with apparatuses. These 'are not external forces that operate on bodies from the outside; rather, apparatuses are material-discursive practices that are inextricable from the bodies that

Fig. 1: Body.guards by Jürgen Meyer H. In Wilko Hoffmann (ed.), *Could Should Would* (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2015).

are produced and through which power works its productive effects.'[69] The high level of abstraction in Barad's elaborate thesis makes her argument broad, almost universal. Here, we find again a sense of inevitability, of the omnipresence of apparatuses that permeate and exceed the individual body, which however is bound to them in as much as it must necessarily come to matter through them. Butler's vision of alliances emphasises a space saturated with possibility and intentionality rather than a philosophical inevitability bordering on the universal. It is precisely this possibility of forming and actively pursuing alliances that enables precarious bodies to enter and transform space. Alliances displace the focus from the single, closed and whole body (and on a larger scale from well-defined, distinct and homogeneous groups). They instead draw attention to unforeseen and surprising constellations of ontologically different beings while at the same time reaffirming the agency of bodies in the social and political arena.

Insights and implications

With the notion of Körperraum Martina Löw has provided not only a convincing thesis in rejecting the Cartesian, closed body, but also notably, a tool for navigating recent theoretical developments in posthuman and feminist discourses to look for specific propositions on the bodyspace. The common themes of interconnectedness, permeability, merging, entangling and inextricability – which I have summed up as a process of opening – have to be critically examined, in order to acknowledge vital differences between them and crucially, to address their implications. If the bodyspace is not a container, the figure of the grotesque helps us question its ontological status while exploring an alternative aesthetic principle at the same time. With stickiness, a queering of the bodyspace ensues as we become aware of processes that affect bodies differently. The notion of alliance adds a further dimension beyond the ontological, aesthetic and epistemological; namely, the political.

Informed by these debates, the rethinking and consequent decentering of the Cartesian body in the process of design, which I advocate, must take into account these multiple dimensions. While not matching perfectly any one of the aforementioned theses, architectural design has indeed provided compelling images that counteract the still persisting Cartesian body to a certain degree. These could even be construed as grotesque, sticky or entangled with material-discursive apparatuses.

Ben van Berkel and Caroline Bos have, for example, tried to instrumentalise artistic representations of bodies in order to reflect on the conditions of architectural production but also to derive principles of spatial organisation.[70] In their 1999 essay on hybridisation they call for an architecture that seamlessly merges ontologically different entities in a fluid and variable whole. This represents a radically new relational ordering of heterogeneous parts.

Some of the emerging alternatives to the Cartesian body build upon architectural research on spaces that directly enclose the human body such as capsules and cocoons[71] or on the topologies of skins and folds.[72] Here we could name the speculative project 'Body.guards' by Jürgen Mayer H. The architects imagine a space saturated with nano-devices called 'smart dust', which mediate between the human body and material conditions in its environment.[73] The graphics depict a barely visible, free flowing protective armature that sticks to the body as it expands, shrinks or even dissolves on demand creating an endless variations of densities or thickenings around bodies. [Fig. 1] This also raises the possibility of connecting more than one individual in this viscous mass of smart dust.

The work of Elisabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio takes an even more nuanced stance as it focuses less on the appearance of the bodyspace and more on its performance.[74] Design is here the tangible outcome of critically dissecting performances of

gendered bodies in domestic or public spaces. It reveals their inextricability on the one hand while also showing the problematic effect of persisting dichotomies on the bodyspace. Yet other works have questioned the very notion of an average or ideal human body inhabiting the various spatial scales as a foundation for architectural design, while at the same time addressing some of the ontological, aesthetical and political issues that are raised.[75]

On the whole, there is considerable evidence pointing to an impending shift, or at least a growing pluralism in understandings and representations of corporealities. At the same time, architectural design actively questions the politics of bodily performances in space. Broadly speaking the opening up of the Cartesian body in space-related discourse and the practice of design is already taking place. Our posthuman, ontologically diverse selves will have to actively take part in the emerging debate. This should at the same time be informed by feminist and posthuman theory as well as bold, imaginative and unpredictable.

Notes

1. To reflect on a changing, and in certain cultures increasingly fragmented field I employ an extended understanding of architecture that encompasses the design of buildings and open spaces, but also of processes that unfold in and transform space.
2. For a critique see Dörte Kuhlmann, *Gender Studies in Architecture: Space, Power and Difference* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013) and Susanne Frank, *Stadtplanung im Geschlechterkampf: Stadt und Geschlecht in der Großstadtentwicklung des 19. und 20. Jahrhunderts* (Wiesbaden: Springer, 2003).
3. For a discussion in broad strokes by leading architectural theorists see Beatriz Colomina and Mark Wigley, *Are we Human? Notes on an Archeology of Design* (Zurich: Lars Müller Publishers, 2016).
4. For a recent example see Catherine Dereix Carrillo, 'The Body as Dust', *Journal of Landscape Architecture* 11, no. 3 (2016): 32–45.
5. See Jürgen Renn and Bernd Scherer, 'Einführung', in Jürgen Renn and Bernd Scherer, *Das Anthropozän: Zum Stand der Dinge* (Berlin: Matthes & Seitz, 2015), 7–24.
6. Neil Leach, *Rethinking Architecture: A Reader in Cultural Theory* (London: Routledge, 1997), xiv.
7. Martina Löw, *The Sociology of Space: Materiality, Social Structures, and Action*, trans. Donald Goodwin (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017 [2001]). For this paper I have consulted the German text in its 7th edition of 2012. Unless indicated otherwise I will refer to the German 2012 edition.
8. Martina Löw, *Raumsoziologie* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2012), 115.
9. Ibid., 158–159; see also Martina Löw, 'The Constitution of Space: The Structuration of Spaces through the Simultaneity of Effect and Perception', *European Journal of Social Theory* 11, no. 1 (2008): 25–49. doi:10.1177/1368431007085286.
10. Martina Löw, *Raumsoziologie*, 36–43.
11. Ibid., 117.
12. For a more detailed account of the effect of surgery on the corporeal space see Katharina D. Martin, 'Ecologies of Corporeal Space', in *Critical and Clinical Cartographies: International Conference Proceedings,* ed. Andrej Radman and Stavros Kousoulas (Delft: Japsam Books and TU Delft, 2015). http://www.tudelft-architecture.nl.
13. Martina Löw, 'Der Körperraum Als Soziale Konstruktion', in *Geschlechter-Räume: Konstruktionen von 'gender' in Geschichte, Literatur und Alltag*, ed. Margarete Hubrath (Cologne: Böhlau, 2001) and Löw, *Raumsoziologie*, 122–129.
14. Georges Teyssot, 'The Mutant Body of Architecture', in *Flesh: Architectural Probes*, ed. Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Miller Scofidio (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1994), 8–35.
15. For a similar argument and use of the composite Körperraum see Markus Schroer, *Räume, Orte, Grenzen: auf dem Weg zu einer Soziologie des Raums* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2006), 284.

16. Peter Gould, 'Space and Rum: An English Note in Espacien and Rumian Meaning', *Geografiska Annaler* 63, no. 1 (1981): 1–3.
17. Elizabeth Grosz, 'Bodies-Cities', in *Sexuality & Space* (proceedings of a symposium held at Princeton University School of Architecture, 10–11 March 1990), ed. Beatriz Colomina and Jennifer Bloomer (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996), 243.
18. Martina Löw, 'The Social Construction of Space and Gender', *European Journal of Women's Studies* 13, no. 2 (2006): 119–33. doi:10.1177/1350506806062751.
19. Löw, *Raumsoziologie*, 119.
20. Elizabeth Grosz, *Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001), 32.
21. Löw, *Raumsoziologie*, 117.
22. Ibid.
23. Löw, *Sociology of Space*, 93.
24. Timothy Morton, 'Zero Landscapes in the Time of Hyperobjects', *GAM Graz Architecture Magazine* 07 (2011): 79–87.
25. Timothy Morton, *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013), 32 (my emphasis).
26. 'Space is just a general word for large objects that contain us', in Morton, 'Zero Landscapes', 84.
27. 'You are surrounded by a hyperobject. You exist in a hyperobject. You are inside an object!' in Morton, 'Zero Landscapes', 82.
28. Timothy Morton, 'Queer Ecology', *Publications of the Modern Language Association of America* 125, no. 2 (March 2010): 277.
29. 'The more you think about the body, the more the category of nature starts to dissolve' in Timothy Morton, *Ecology Without Nature: Rethinking Environmental Aesthetics* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 107.
30. Richard Grusin (ed.), *The Nonhuman Turn* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2015).
31. Morton, Queer Ecology, 274.
32. Morton, 'Zero Landscapes', 82.
33. Ibid., 87.
34. See Mikhail Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 303–306. As an example of exaggeration that culminates in transgression Bakhtin mentions (following Schneegans) caricatures of Napoleon III that enlarge the emperor's nose up to the point of becoming a pig's snout or a crow's beak, thus transcending species boundaries (ibid., 315–16).
35. Ibid., 88.
36. Ibid., 26.
37. 'Thus the artistic logic of the grotesque image ignores the closed, smooth, and impenetrable surface of the body and retains only its excrescences (sprouts, buds) and orifices, only that which leads beyond the body's limited space or into the body's depths.' Ibid., 317–318.
38. 'The object transgresses its own confines, ceases to be itself. The limits between the body and the world are erased, leading to the fusion of the one with the other and with surrounding objects.' Ibid., 310.
39. Ibid., 317.
40. For example a tower is not only a phallic symbol but can actually impregnate women, ibid., 312.
41. Morton, 'Zero Landscapes', 82.
42. Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 90.
43. Ibid., 91.
44. Ibid., 90.
45. See also Sara Ahmed, 'Affective Economies', *Social Text*, 79, vol. 22, no. 2 (2004): 117–39.
46. Jasbir Puar, *Terrorist Assemblages: Homonationalism in Queer Times* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007), 188.
47. Puar uses the notion to convincingly explain how the turban of the Sikh people becomes a sticky sign; ibid., 187.
48. Arun Saldanha, 'Reontologising Race: The Machinic Geography of Phenotype', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 24 (2006): 9–24.
49. Ibid., 18.
50. Ibid., 19.
51. Ibid., 19. For Saldanha the figure of viscous space resonates with relational understandings of space as

being dynamic and in flux, yet acknowledging its inevitable hard materialisations.

52. Tucker J. Landesman, 'Review: Judith Butler, Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly' in *Antipode: A Radical Journal of Geography* (2015), https://radicalantipode.files.wordpress.com.
53. Judith Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2015), 70.
54. Ibid., 42.
55. Ibid., 84.
56. Ibid., 51.
57. Ibid., 72.
58. Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), 198. Also cited in Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly.*
59. Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2011).
60. Undocumented immigrants taking to the streets to demand rights – seizing a public space from which they are excluded – is an example of a contradiction becoming visible (those who have no right to appear in public and take part in public discourse defy this condition by actively enacting this very right). See Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly,* 41.
61. Derek Gregory, 'Tahrir: Politics, Publics and Performances of Space', *Middle East Critique* 22, no. 3 (2013): 235–46. Both Gregory and Butler take the arab spring uprisings and especially Cairo's Tahrir square as an example. Gregory additionally points out that Lefebvre's arguments are informed by the uprisings and the politics of space of his time, i.e. the May 1968 movement.
62. See also Kirsten Simonsen, 'Bodies, Sensations, Space and Time: The Contribution from Henri Lefebvre', *Geografiska Annaler* 87, no. B (2005): 1–14.
63. Gregory, 'Tahrir: Politics, Publics and Performances of Space', 242.
64. Arendt, *The Human Condition*, 199.
65. Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, 43.
66. Ibid., 92.
67. Gregory, 'Tahrir: Politics, Publics and Performances of Space', 237.
68. Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).
69. Ibid., 230. On the example of fetal sonography the entangled bodies of the mother, the fetus and the obstetrician who are all materialised as bodies within the context of the technoscientific apparatus of sonography, both within the space of the obstetrician's lab, and in the much larger spatial scales where the bodies exist.
70. Ben van Berkel and Caroline Bos, *Move 2: Techniques, Network Spin* (1999): 80–84.
71. See Lieven De Cauter, 'The Capsule and the Network: Preliminary Notes for a General Theory', *OASE Journal for Architecture* 54 (2001): 122–34.
72. Georges Teyssot, 'Soft Architecture and the Spaces of Topology', in *Could Should Would*, ed. Wilko Hoffman (Ostfildern: Hatje Cantz, 2015).
73. Hoffman, *Could Should Would*, 244.
74. For a discussion of the work of Elisabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio which has been pivotal in its engagement with the body see Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh: Architectural Probes*. See also Elisabeth Diller, 'Bad Press', in *Gender Space Architecture: An Interdisciplinary Introduction,* ed. Iain Borden (London: Routledge, 2000) and Lorie A. Brown, *Feminist Practices: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Women in Architecture* (New York and London: Routledge, 2011).
75. For a discussion of the genealogy of non-Cartesian bodies in architecture see Ariane Lourie Harrison, 'Charting Posthuman Territory', in *Architectural Theories of the Environment: Posthuman Territory*, ed. Ariane Lourie Harrison (New York: Routledge, 2013), 3–33.

Biography

Xenia Kokoula is an architect (NTUA) and urban designer (ETH Zurich) with working experience in Greece, Switzerland and Germany. Since 2011 she has been teaching design studios and theory seminars at the Department of Landscape Architecture, TU Berlin. Her research focuses on the role of power, knowledge and affect in processes of production of space.

A Surgery Issue: Cutting through the Architectural Fabric

Athina Angelopoulou

Introduction

When you throw yourself into the haptic space of encounters, and try to find out what happens when a discipline of spaces meets a discipline of bodies, then a critical moment comes, when you ask yourself: would a trans-architectural theory need to be approached through a theory of the body, or through a theory of space? And if it need not be either, as one *or* the other, then what is the specific quality through which these two disciplines will encounter one another?

Different approaches have been developed around this question. Some lines of thought concentrate their interest on the relation between space and trans-bodies. They investigate more precisely, how, on the one hand, space is re-experienced through trans-bodies and how, on the other hand, trans-bodies are acting agents in the formation of space.[1] However important, these approaches remain within an analytical mindset. According to some other lines of thought, an encounter of queer/trans theory and architecture is to be sought in the concepts of performance and performativity. Yet in architectural discourse these terms mean something different than they do in gender studies. Architects understand performance mostly in terms of efficiency, or effectiveness[2] – even though it does not have a general definition.[3] Performativity, in the architect's view, is by contrast understood as 'the material, organizational and cultural change that occurs as a result of the perpetual feedback and two-way transfer of information' between the building and its context.[4] This specific design approach, which is called performative or performance-based design, is geared towards construction. Its main idea aims at 'evolving a building through performativity and simultaneously testing its effects' in different contextual settings.[5]

As queer theorists like Eve K. Sedgwick or Karen Barad have extensively argued, not every performativity is necessarily a queer one. Performative design does pull architecture away from its long-standing essentialism, bringing it closer to a performativity understood as iterative citationality[6] (i.e. because 'models developed by one research paradigm' have the ability to 'generate, describe and evaluate performances, [but] also cite and recite them').[7] But that does not necessarily bring it closer to queer performativity, which, as Sedgwick has argued, is established rather upon refusals and denials.[8] Hence, more than working through 'iterative citationality', for Barad queer performativity works through 'iterative intra-activity'.[9]

Where are we to find the queer therein? This essay will investigate the possibility of finding it within the architectural through the little-addressed aspect of 'trans-modification'. The recently more known notion of 'transitioning' describes 'a person's process of developing and assuming a gender expression to match their gender identity'.[10] Yet, as a process it varies widely conforming to the needs of

the particular individual. Nevertheless, according to the *Standards of Care for the Health of Transsexual, Transgender, and Gender Nonconforming People,* this process may (or may not) involve behavioural alterations (i.e. changes in gender expression and role, and psychotherapy), external alterations (i.e. surgery), and internal alterations (i.e. hormone therapy).[11] Among these alterations, within an architectural context it is important that we consider transitioning as a 'material' transformation process, to emphasise how *bodily and spatial dimensions here encounter another in their shared quality*. What is more, even though surgeries and hormone therapies may be part of the transitioning of some trans-gender bodies, they are also variously applied to any body. This claim does not express any tendency to reduce the particularity of a transitioning process. But it highlights that, as suggested by gender theorist Eva Hayward, 'we might begin to recognize transsexuality as [being] about more than gender/sex;' rather, it may be 'conceivably about the profusive potential of bodily change'.[12]

In this essay I attempt to contribute to reclaiming a much more material ontology as relevant for the production and transformation of bodies in general, and for architectural bodies in particular. Within this context, I want to focus on a surgical issue, since the processual and performative aspect of surgical procedures make them an interesting case study for a trans-architectural discourse. I will begin with a review of the medical visualisation techniques used by surgeons to help them perform acts of cutting. I will then investigate what the surgical act of cutting through the skin could suggest for the queering of architecture.

Queering Topology: Langer's body plan

In 1861, the anatomist Karl Langer published a body plan. Its lines illustrate the lines of natural skin tension; that is, the basic direction of the collagen fibres of the dermis (the human skin's structural layer). Langer's body plan was a literal plan that could be altered formally or metrically, while staying connective during its transformations. Langer's visualisation was therefore a topological one,[13] since it was based upon relations of continuity, not metric relations.[14] What is particularly interesting about this representation is that instead of being an immaterialised topological description, it was based upon a material fact; namely, the distribution of collagen fibres.

A few decades later, in 1897, the surgeon Emil Kocher proposed that surgeons use Langer's lines as a guide when performing surgical incisions. He argued that incisions orientated parallel to those lines result in thinner scars, while healing becomes the more extensive, the more the direction of the incision diverges from these lines. His proposal was generally accepted and Langer's topological body plan was put into use during surgical procedures. Since Langer's research had been based on cavaders, the lines representing the skin's natural tension lines were in fact not an accurate representation of living individuals. They did not account for dynamic forces.[15] Many attempts were made to re-examine Langer's lines. One critical attempt was made by Albert F. Borges, a surgeon who, in 1984, described a 'simple method to determine the Relaxed Skin Tension Lines (RSTL) by pinching skin and observing the formed furrows and ridges'.[16] Borges's plan of RSTLs – based on living individuals – is still in general use. Yet in most medical textbooks, RSTLs are still referred to as Langer's lines, as a way of acknowledging Langer's work.[17] In the rest of this essay, when we refer to RSTLs, we will be using the term 'Langer's lines' as well. [Fig. 1]

It is worth noting that Kocher's suggestion changed the ontology of Langer's topology in a radical way. Given that Langer was an anatomist and never expected that his lines were to be used for the performance of surgical incisions, Kocher makes, in my opinion, a critical step: by seeing in Langer's

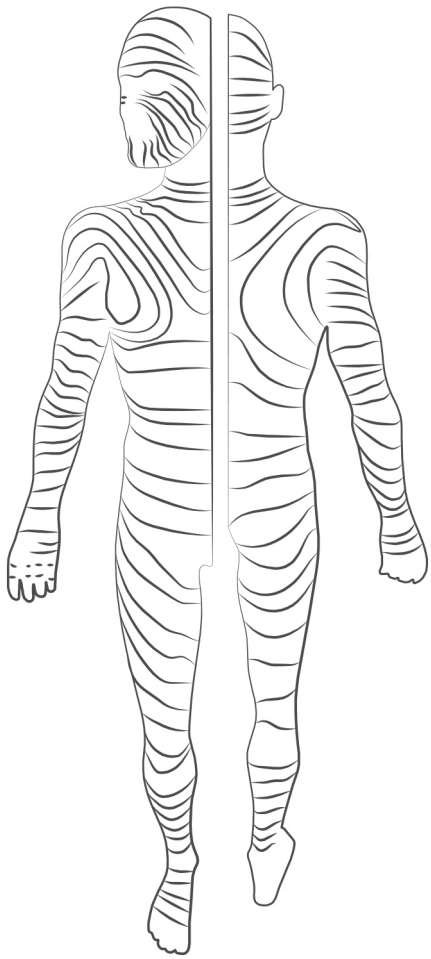

Fig. 1: Langer's lines (RSTLs). Illustration: Author.

representation of matter (i.e. collagen) the measure of our possible action upon bodies, he transforms Langer's representation from a mere topological body plan, to a body plan that, while representing a material continuity, suggests de-structuring acts upon it.[18] I refer to this kind of representation as *amphi-topological*.[19] Amphi-topological representations are incarnating a coexistence of preservation and decay. They thus urge us 1) to cancel the idea of material continuity and give up a part of the process of formal generation to the self-organisational capacity of matter; 2) to preserve topological continuity and thus transform objects by means of continuous deformations; 3) to do both at once. In contrast to the common notion of topological 'plans', amphi-topological representations do not submit a certain behaviour towards transformation; they do not have a predetermined nature. Rather, their nature is defined and redefined every time someone acts through them upon matter. In this sense, such representations are queer to the extent that, on the one hand, they are connected to contradictory states, and on the other hand, their performativity is based upon the possibility of an iterative refusal of established structures.[20] To clarify this position, it may be useful to compare amphi-topology to the concept of classical topology. Topology is concerned with continuous transformations (such as stretching or bending, but not cutting or gluing) and may be a material as well as an immaterial description of forms. Amphi-topology is concerned more with *dis/continuous* transformations, and is thus necessarily a kind of materially embodied and embedded topology. The term 'dis/continuous' is here of particular importance in its two-fold meaning. It designates that an amphi-topological representation may submit both continuous and discontinuous transformations, but not only that. Further, it highlights that in material topologies (amphi-topologies) there cannot be total discontinuity, i.e. anti-relation; only non-connections. Taking the example of skin cuttings, performed through surgery, we may understand that even though the skin is severed and the edges of the cut separated, they are not deprived of their inherent relation. On the contrary, it is this very non-connection that makes them reunite, by activating the skin's wound-healing process through scar formation.

Consequently, Langer's and Kocher's amphi-topological representation, while representing a material continuity (i.e. topology), suggests generational cutting acts upon it, that are dis/continuous acts. In this sense, the qualities of 'amphi-topological' and 'dis/continuous' are capable of queering categorical spatial and architectural binary conceptions of bodies' transformations as either topological *or* non-topological, either continuous *or* discontinuous. Instead, they provide a more inclusive concept for transformational processes.

The cut in queer theory

The act of cutting, introduced in the previous section, is very important for queer theory and transgender studies. It is worth noticing that the term 'queer' itself has its etymological roots in the German 'quer', which indicates a transversal movement; a 'cut' across. It seems though that there is something about this specific act that makes it indivisible from queer nature. That is perhaps why many queer and gender theorists have circled around the subject, while two important figures have addressed it explicitly.

Eva Hayward develops her thoughts upon the act of cutting in her article 'More Lessons from a Starfish: Prefixial Flesh and Transspeciated Selves'.[21] What is interesting about Hayward's work is that, while recognising that sex reassignment surgeries may be a wounding experience for some transgender subjects, it offers an affirmative way of thinking about the cut. By returning to her own experience as a transgender woman, and by speculating upon the mutuality of her becoming with the materialisation of the starfish (who regenerates after cutting), she considers the cut to be an opportunity,

a ‘generative enactment’.[22] Indeed, Hayward thinks of cutting and amputation as a form of becoming; a way to ‘feel the growth of new margins’, as well as an action (to the extent that it is the result of an individual choice).[23]

Queer feminist theorist Karen Barad has broadly written on the notion of the cut as an ethico-onto-epistemological tool developed in the context of her agential realist take on how bodies come to matter. According to Barad’s theory, the universe is comprised of phenomena that are the entanglement, ‘the ontological inseparability of intra-acting “agencies”’.[24] The term ‘intra-action’ is conceived by Barad to contrast the traditional term ‘interaction’, where individuals preexist the relations they enter. Antithetically, the concept of intra-action suggests that individuals exist only through the intra-action in which they come to matter. In Barad’s words, ‘Intra-actions enact “agential separability” – the condition of exteriority – within – phenomena’.[25] That is to say, since in the universe everything is entangled with everything else, any observation therefore depends on a ‘cut’; a provisional ‘local resolution within the phenomena’;[26] ‘a local causal structure’ determining what is going to be considered and what is going to be excluded,[27] so that a certain knowledge upon something may be obtained. Thus, an intra-action is a ‘boundary-drawing practice’[28] that enacts agential cuts.[29]

An agential cut, even though it enacts a local and provisional separability within the phenomena, does not deprive the separated entities from their inherent entanglement. That is why Barad sees agential cuts as a ‘cutting together-apart’.[30] In her view it produces an ‘entangling-differentiating as one move, not [as] sequential acts’.[31] An ethico-onto-epistemological tool, this agential cut may also be important for our previous analysis of amphi-topological representations and dis/continuity of skin cuts, as it suggest that cuts into self-organising fabrics, act as agents of dis/continuity.

The cut in architectural theory and practice

Passing from queer theory and topological dis/continuities to the practice of architecture, the act of cutting continues to hold an equally prominent position. One should only consider the traditional role that cross and planar sections (etymologically related to ‘cutting’) have played in the construction of architectural bodies since the sixteenth century. Raphael claims, in his 1519 letter to the Pope, that the cross section had to be considered as important a drawing as the ground plan and the elevation;[32] forming, from then on, the famous triad of architectural design.[33] Certain academics claim that there is a relation between architectural cross sections and human dissections, even originating in some cases (how queer an origin would be!).[34] The addition of the cross section in the architectural tool-kit established the dialectic relation of surface and depth, signalling a new era for the inner organisation of architectural artifacts. In this sense, architecture has long been producing buildings through intellectual acts of ‘cutting through buildings to come to matter’; that is ‘cutting through buildings’ as part of the process of their very materialisation.

The cutting of a building, however, did not remain a mere matter of intellect within architectural history. In the 1970s a building’s cut passed from the realm of the virtual to the actual world, when the American artist Gordon Matta Clark (who was originally educated as an architect) performed his famous building dissections (building cuttings). Matta Clark was antithetical to architecture as a creation of a building ex nihilo. Rather, he faced it as a piece of information to be put in a feedback process both from human and non-human (ecological) sources, highlighting in this way the performative aspects of place and architecture.[35] Indeed, Matta Clark considered his oeuvre to be a performance, both in terms of his personal working activity and of the changes/acts (simple cuts or series of cuts) made on the buildings.[36] His process involved the selection of the building to act upon, the preparation phase,

and the action phase. Matta Clark chose buildings with a recognisable and established structure (architectural, social, cultural, or other) for reasons of communication effectiveness.[37] Even though he sought typical structures, during the preparation phase he recognised the building's total (semiotic) system, 'not in any idealised form, but by using the actual ingredients of a place'.[38] Thus, he did not reduce buildings to idealised types. This approach led him to actions (cuttings) that emerged in the artist's mind through the buildings' very specificities.

In order to understand Matta Clark's mindset, when performing his cuttings, it is important to consider his previous works, and particularly his Agar pieces, since they are characteristic of his beliefs and attitude towards matter. In the Agar pieces Matta Clark explored 'how changes could be both brought to and brought about by matter'.[39] In these works, matter was literally a living element. It is noteworthy that Matta Clark provided a microscope so that the visitors could inspect in greater detail the life of the agar matter.[40] This take on matter – as a living element capable of bringing about its own changes – continued to accompany the artist throughout his short life, and exercised considerable influence on his building cuttings.

Just as in the case of his agar pieces, Matta Clark considered the buildings to be a form of living being and, as such, an active participant in their transformational process.[41] Artist and building were in an active dialogue during the preparation and the performance of the 'cuts'. The building structure (whether social, architectural, or semiotic) provided the vocabulary for its distortion.[42] The artist responded to the information taken by the building through the performance of his cuts/moves/gestures, and then waited to see what would happen; how the building would respond (receiving and giving feedback). As he said: 'throughout the process, there was a terrific suspense, not really knowing what would hold or shift … I don't feel totally in control of the situation'.[43] This approach was characteristic of Matta Clark's claims concerning architectural bodies. As he used to say, it takes cutting through a building in order to get to know it.[44]

Matta Clark's claims seem to be related to the Spinozist problem of 'what bodies can do'. Benedict de Spinoza said in his *Ethics* that 'the human mind does not know the human body itself, … except through ideas of affections by which the body is affected'.[45] What Spinoza argues here, is that we are conscious of our body only insofar as it is affected by other bodies through movements.[46] Hence the cut (as a transversal movement) is that which passes through the bodies that it happens to cut and is thus a 'passion'.[47] In this sense, cuts, as acting on bodies, are responsive investigations into their self-organising capacity, and it is through them that we may get closer to knowing what bodies can do. This may be exactly the reason why Matta Clark did not consider the cuts to be violent acts, but rather acts that result in 'a sense of heightened awareness' about what a building is.[48]

For Gordon Matta Clark architecture was also an environment, and buildings a structural fabric, so that 'when [one is] living in the city, the whole fabric is architectural'.[49] What Matta Clark did, then, was *cutting through the architectural fabric*, in order to get to know it; to reveal its capacity to re-organise itself and create unexpected and complex spatial results. However, this take on architecture, as a fabric through which one has to cut in order to reveal its ambiguous complexity and create new perspectives, was neither new, nor non-sustainable.

Cutting the fabric: towards a process of smoothing

The idea of material continuity as a fabric reflecting itself in the form of possible modes of discontinuity, and – by extension – possible acts of cutting, was elaborated explicitly by Henri Bergson in the beginning of the twentieth century.

Bergson describes how the totality of matter appears to us as an enormous fabric (*étoffe*) in which we may cut out whatever we want and sew it together however we want; this process can be continued ad in infinitum.[50] He also argues that it is this very ability to consider the material fabric as infinitely divisible that constitutes our idea of abstract space. The continuity of the material fabric of the world is reflected back to us as possible acts of division and recomposition of the fabric, that is, possible acts of cutting and sewing (because, of what surrounds us, we may see only the aspects that we may act upon). When all these virtual acts are projected behind the material world they form space; 'the plan of our possible action on things'.[51]

Furthermore, Bergson does not consider the cutting of the fabric to be only a way to get to know it, but he thinks of it as the only *means to fabrication*. Since fabricating means modifying the material world, and since modifying matter becomes possible when and only when it is perceived as discontinuous and divisible, fabrication becomes inseparable from material cutting.[52] For Bergson, then, one may pass from fabric to fabrication only through acts of cutting. This is how he transforms Spinoza's gnosiological tool of 'cutting the fabric' as *getting to know*, into 'cutting the fabric' as a *fabricating tool*.

Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari continued a preoccupation with the spatial aspect of fabrics and, in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia* gave new insights to what a transversal movement (cutting) through that fabric could produce. In elaborating the concept of smooth and striated space, they use woven fabric as a technological model of striated space and contrast it with the nomadic felt as a model for smooth space. On the one hand, the striated fabric is described as being composed by two groups of parallel elements (threads) that intersect perpendicularly. Each group has a specific function within the weaving process (one is fixed and the other mobile), while the whole configuration necessarily has a top and bottom side, since the knots are placed on one side of the fabric. On the other hand, the smooth felt is composed of matted fibres, 'it has neither top nor bottom nor centre' and distributes a continuous variation instead of assigning fixed and mobile elements.[53] Smooth felt is in principle infinite and open, in contrast to fabric that is closed on at least one side. Smooth is good; striated is bad. Smooth is an open space of possibilities and becoming; striated is a space of stability and enclosure.[54]

But as Deleuze and Guattari maintain, smooth and striated exist only in mixture, with either being constantly transformed into the other through processes of smoothing and striation. The sea for example, a smooth space par excellence, was striated through bearings and maps, the latter being exactly the application/projection of an undifferentiated grid upon it (a process of striation). The space of the sea becomes striated, but only provisionally. Its re-smoothing is to be performed by strategic submarines that, serving the purposes of a war machine, *move across all gridding* in order to control striated space (a process of smoothing).[55] Consequently, applying grids is a process of striation, while moving across the lines of the grid (*transversal movement*) is a process of smoothing.

Regarding this smoothing and striation, the French architect and theorist Leopold Lambert argues that a similar smoothing process of striated space, in service of the war machine, has been put in use in cases of urban warfare as well. Lambert provides two examples: the revolutions that emerged in the Parisian urban fabric in the nineteenth century, and the siege of Nablus Palestinian refugee camp in 2002. French revolutionaries and the Israeli army both smoothed the urban fabric by denying the physicality of architecture. They moved across the imposed boundaries by opening holes in the walls, ceilings and floors of the urban fabric.[56] This practice, very similar to Gordon Matta Clark's building cuts, was exactly *cutting through the urban*

fabric as a process of smoothing, creating deep metamorphic scars within the built environment.

The smooth space that emerges here, as well as in Matta Clark's pieces, isn't the same kind of smooth space that architects/architectural conceptions have been trying to realise through the application of topology. It is neither an edgeless space (a space of the surface), nor a space produced through continuous transformations. Rather, it is a space where the revealing of the edge celebrates the emergence of new possibilities, a space created through queer acts of 'cutting across'; cutting through the surface so as to create, from something existing and typical, new organisational logics and spatial relations. It is a space established on denial; the denial of the surface as a limit. Hence, in contrast to the recent emergence of topological takes in architecture, in response to the reception of Deleuze's conception of the smooth, this reading argues that smooth spaces may also be produced through a series of cuts through the material fabric of the world.

SCARchiCAD: queering the architectural tools

Architectural software (deriving from special effects for the film industry), was introduced in architecture in the early nineties at the paperless studios of Columbia University. That was a period when the architectural discourse was heavily dominated by readings of Michel Foucault and Deleuze and Guattari (notably the text on the Rhizome and the concepts of smooth and striated space).[57] Particularly, the ostensible 'goodness' of smooth spaces was a source of inspiration, and at the time, all kinds of architectural concepts and typologies hoping to realise such spaces were developed. What's more, as a result of this architectural movement, certain software packages gained ground over others among architects, by virtue of their relation to Riemannian geometry and topological models, which were connected to the concept of smooth space. Thus, smoothness (translated mostly as edgelessness, and as the process of creating different forms as equivalent expressions of a single organisation) was further embedded, as a quality, in the DNA of architectural production.[58]

The power that the idea of 'smooth' has exercised on the tools through which contemporary architecture is produced, is not to be underestimated. The tool through which a designer elaborates a project is critical for the ontology of the project to be produced. It seems then that one cannot examine what the 'queering of design' could mean without examining the possibility of queering the way it is produced; *queering the design tools* . Since digital environments represent the present, and probably the future, of design, it seems important to investigate how queer creativity, as creating by cutting through the already existing, could find its place within the digital realm. What possibilities could such a design attitude offer?

In order to confront these questions, I have developed SCARchiCAD; a computational tool that takes the skin's wound healing process as a model in order to offer a workflow that postulates the self-organising capacity of bodies as a presupposition of a 'new' structure. There is a dual reason for choosing wound healing (as a process of scar formation) as a model for SCARchiCAD. On the one hand, it is a process activated by queer acts of 'cutting through' the skin. On the other hand, it may well be contextualised in the aforementioned debate around architectural software and its quest for smoothness. This is because uninjured tissue and scar tissue are structured similarly to the fabric/felt model. Indeed, the collagen fibres structuring uninjured skin are organised in layers consisting of fibres arranged in parallel lines; while those structuring scar tissue are much more entangled (even matted in some instances) and deny strict stratification.[59] Cutting through the skin thus appears to be a process of smoothing the striated, like the processes previously described. Furthermore, the model of normal tissue/scar tissue, when compared

to the model of fabric/felt, is characterised by an augmented capacity of its matter (collagen) to be an active/dynamic agent in skin's materialisation. Consequently, the skin healing process seems to provide an anti-paradigm to processes that attempt to create smooth space ex nihilo, or to processes that postulate that 'smoothness' may only be created through topological acts.

Scientific Background

Understanding how SCARchiCAD operates, requires a basic knowledge of the structure of the skin, the different natural processes of scar formation, and the agents of healing. Human skin is composed of two main layers: epidermis and dermis.[60] The epidermis is composed of keratin, generally formed into dead cells flattened in the plane of the surface. The dermis, underneath the epidermis, is the structural layer of the skin, since it is mostly composed of bundles of collagen fibres, which give it its mechanical strength.[61] Since each skin area suffers different forces, the dermal thickness varies accordingly. The collagen bundles are arranged in layers parallel to the epidermis, and the superficial layers have a fibre orientation very close to that of Langer's lines.[62]

Underneath the skin (cutis) there is the so-called subcutaneous layer (superfiscial fascia or hypodermis), and even deeper there is the fascial layer (deep fascia). The subcutaneous layer is so closely related to the dermis that it is regularly presented in literature as the third layer of the skin. It serves mostly functions of mechanical support of the dermis and thermal insulation. Its collagen fibres are organised in such a way as to form easily discernible rims (septa), which may be perpendicular or have a criss-cross orientation to the planes parallel to the epidermis.[63] The fascia is an uninterrupted tissue surrounding and penetrating all structures of our body. Fascial structure varies according to the specific region where it is found; the fascia of the limbs for example consists of three sublayers each one of which has a specific orientation of collagen fibres (parallel), while the angle between the parallel fibre lines of adjacent layers is 78 degrees.[64]

When the skin's continuity is locally destroyed because of a cut, our organisms begin the wound healing mechanism in order to restore lost continuity. During this process, new collagen is produced, re-organised and re-orientated appropriately. There are four main types of scars, each of which stands for a different process of collagen organisation or for a different quantity in collagen production: (1) normal scar, (2) hypertrophic scar, (3) keloid scar, and (4) depressed scar. [Fig. 2]

First, normal scars are flat scars that may not be very apparent. At a microscopic level, the collagen fibres of normal scars re-orientate along Langer's lines if the incision is placed parallel to them. However, there is a declination from complete parallelism. This declination augments even more when the incision is placed perpendicular to Langer's lines. In such a case, one may observe 'many interconnections between the different layers and interdigitations between the fibres of the same layer'.[65] Second, hypertrophic scars are raised scars that do not grow over the boundaries of the original wound. At a microscopic level, their collagen fibres are organised in whorl-like arrangements that progress into distinct nodular forms. However, nodular and whorl-like fibre arrangements may be found to coexist.[66] Third, keloid scars are raised scars that augment their size through time and expand over the boundaries of the original wound following particular growth patterns, that is, following the direction of natural skin tension lines.[67] [Fig. 3] At a microscopic level, keloids consist of 'large bands of fairly uniformly orientated collagen fibres'. In the case of keloid scars produced from incisions perpendicular to Langer's lines, J.A.A. Hunter and J.B. Finlay observe that 'the bands are orientated in every direction except directly across the wound'.[68] Last, depressed or atrophic scars

are scar formations that present as topographical depressions. They are the result of an inadequate production of dermal collagen and connective tissue during the normal healing process.[69]

The activation of a specific process of the healing phenomenon depends generally on (1) the characteristics of the region where the cut is performed, (2) the characteristics of the cut, (3) the age of the patient and (4) genetic predisposition.[70] However, during the development of SCARchiCAD, only factors (1) and (2) were taken under account, by virtue of their geometric translatability.

The characteristics of the region that mainly influence the healing process are (1) the thickness of the dermis on that particular area of the body,[71] (2) the curvature of the area *(*convex areas tend to form depressed scars, while concave areas have a tendency towards raised scars),[72] (3) the existence of bones underneath,[73] and (4) the existence of organs that exercise repetitive cycles of forces, like for example with the movement of the chest wall in the case of abdominal incisions.[74] Yet, for the development of SCARchiCAD, repetitive cycles of forces were not considered, despite their existence in buildings, in order to limit the complexity of the problem (only static forces were considered).

As for the characteristics of the cut that are considered to influence healing, these are (1) its depth, and (2) its orientation in relation to Langer's lines. The deeper the cut, the more layers of the skin are involved in healing, while, generally, deep cuts do not activate normal scar healing.[75] The orientation in relation to Langer's lines influences the healing process, as incisions that are parallel to Langer's lines have a greater potential to develop normal scarring, while those that are perpendicular are much more susceptible to develop keloid or hypertrophic scarring.[76] This is why Emil Kocher suggested at the outset that it is preferable for surgical incisions to be performed parallel to Langer's lines.

SCARchiCAD's operation is based on these basic principles describing the skin's wound healing process and hopes to offer a workflow for the experimentation with queer forms of creativity; which for me is creation as a process of cutting through the existing, instead of creating ex nihilo. The tool was developed through Grasshopper (which may of course be considered an internal contradiction, and thus part of its queer nature).[77] The algorithm starts by asking the user to introduce a surface or a form. The user also has the option of introducing solids (bones) under the surface in order to customise the environment of the digital 'healing'. The algorithm proceeds with the transformation of the input surface/form into a skin-like structure and at a later stage it asks the user to provide the geometry of the cuts to be performed.[78]

More specifically, the input surface is transformed into a structure consisting of four layers (epidermal, structural, subcutaneous, fascial), in accordance to the skin structure described above. [Fig. 4] Initially, the epidermal layer is visualised as a triangulated mesh, because of its composition of flat cells; this form (mesh) is used by other skin simulations as well.[79] The structural layer is visualised as consisting of only five parallel layers; a simplification made necessary for the transformation of a biological structure to a more tectonic one. Each of the parallel layers is formed by isoparametric field curves intrinsic to the input surface. [Fig. 5] These curves stand in the algorithm for the collagen lines of the skin/Langer's lines; (since SCARchiCAD is not a medical simulation, such assumptions were considered permissible).[80] Further, the thickness of the structural layer varies according to local stress concentrations on the input surface, as defined through a structural analysis. Maximum thickness occurs in areas of maximum stress and minimum

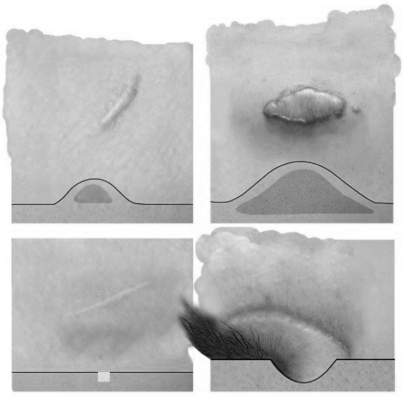

Fig. 2

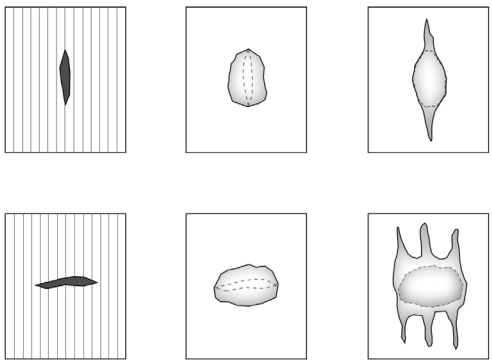

Fig. 3

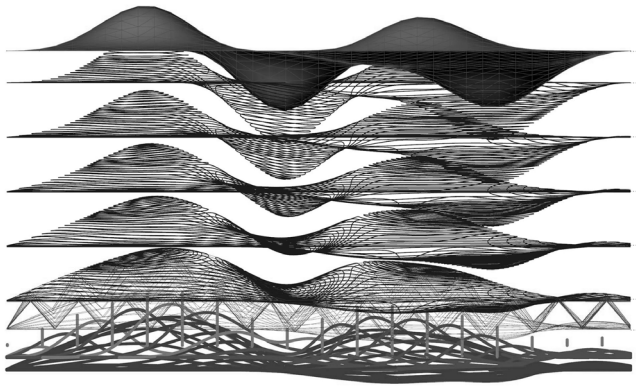

Fig. 4

Fig. 2: Digital collage-painting showing textures and profiles of hypertrophic, keloid, depressed, and normal scars (clockwise from upper left). Illustration: Author.

Fig. 3: Keloid growth. Keloids tend to grow, following natural skin tension lines, developing interesting patterns. Illustration: Author.

Fig. 4: The skin-like structure. Epidermal, structural, subcutaneous and fascial layers. Illustration: Author.

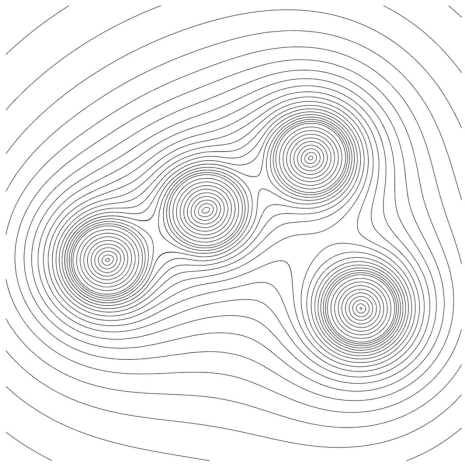

Fig. 5

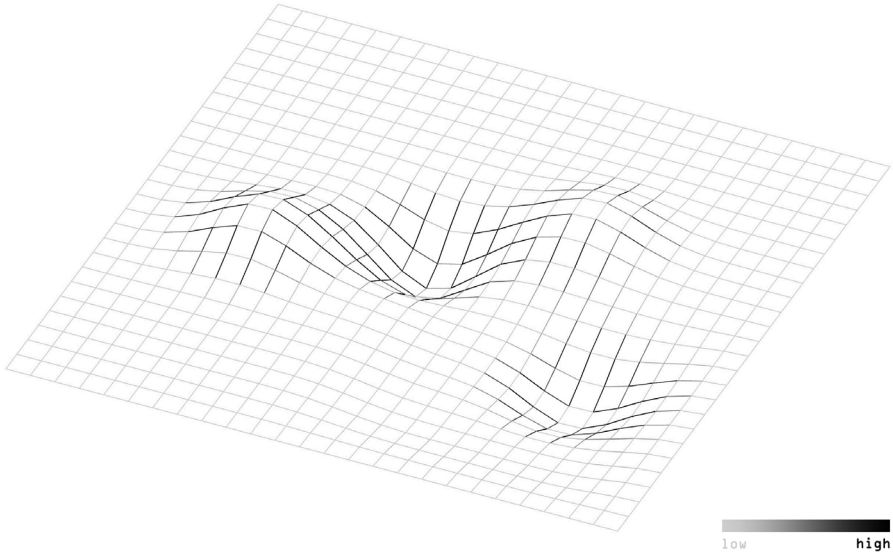

Fig. 6

Fig. 5: Isoparametric field curves, intrinsic to the input surface. These curves stand in the algorithm for the collagen lines of the skin (Langer's lines). Illustration: Author.

Fig. 6: Structural analysis of the input surface. Illustration: Author.

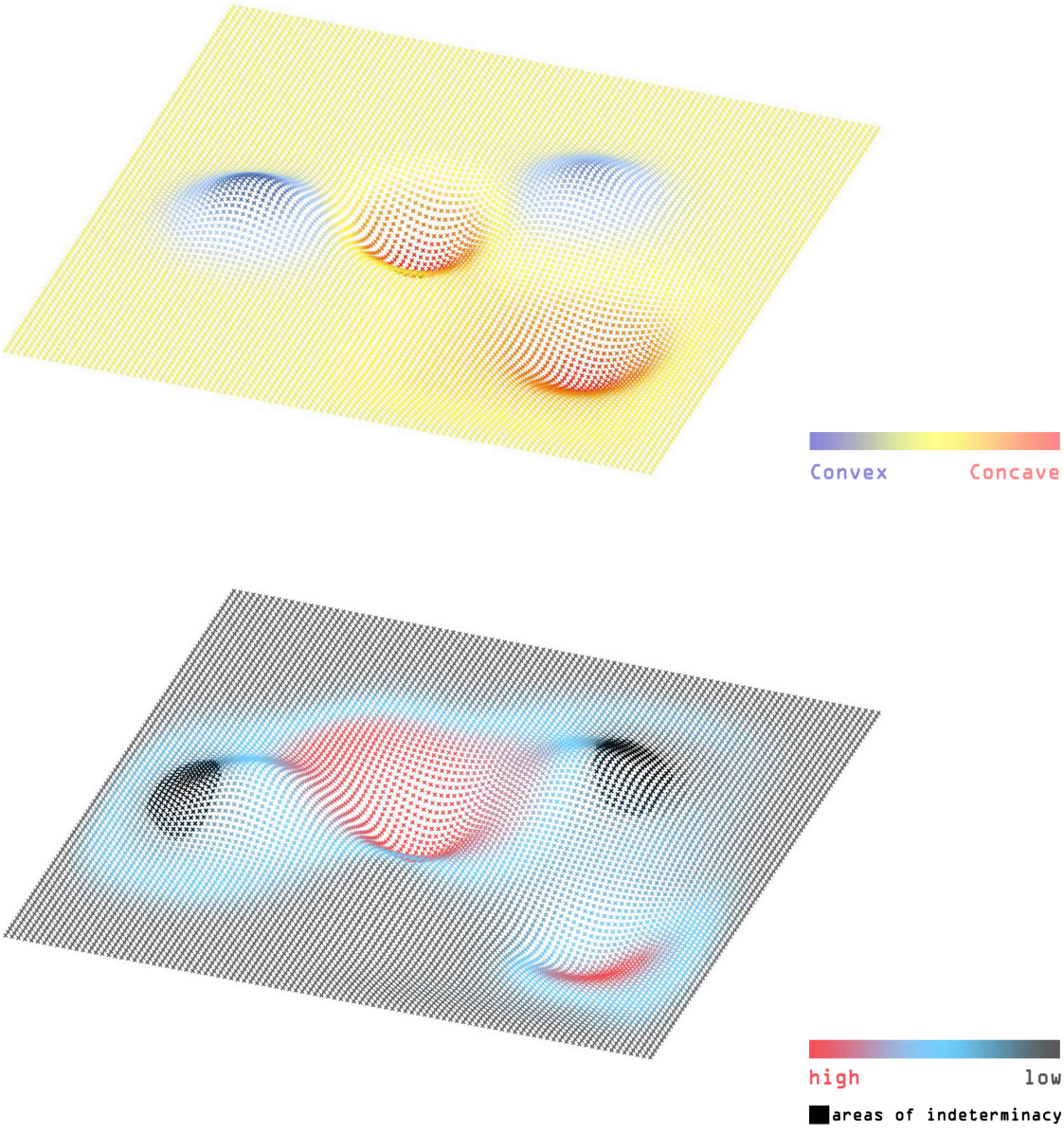

Fig. 7: Concavity/convexity analysis of the epidermal layer and thickness analysis of the structural layer. Contradictory results of these two analyses produce areas of indeterminacy. Illustration: Author.

thickness in areas of minimum stress. [Fig. 6] Since the structural layer is the only layer whose thickness influences the healing process in an important way, it is also the only one that is calculated and visualised with a variant thickness. Next, the subcutaneous layer is translated into a space frame structure (because of the similarity of this structure to the actual organisation of fibres of the hypodermis into rims/septa perpendicular and criss-cross to the plane of the epidermis). Lastly, the fascial layer consists of three parallel sub-layers, the lines of each being parallel, while the angle between the lines of adjacent layers is 78 degrees, following the structure of the deep fascia of the limbs.

The agency of the skin-like structure in the healing phenomenon is calculated by the algorithm through a concavity/convexity analysis of the epidermal layer and through a thickness analysis of the structural layer. [Fig. 7] On the one hand, through concavity/convexity analysis, convex, concave, and planar areas are related to a tendency towards depressed, raised, and normal healing processes respectively, following the tendencies that those areas have in nature. On the other hand, thickness analysis matches areas of high, moderate, and low thickness to high, moderate and low susceptibility to the keloid healing process, following scientific results suggesting such a relation.

From their very definitions, these two analyses are expected to present some areas of contradictory results; areas of indeterminacy. This is because convex surfaces that tend towards a depressed healing process generally have a high thickness due to high tension, as determined by the structural analysis, and thus tend to raised healing processes as well. This indeterminacy is the ‘queer’ bit of the algorithm, since it oscillates between contradictory states, and it is to be resolved based on local relations (tendencies of neighbouring areas).

If the user has introduced a solid (‘bone’ component) under the skin structure, the healing process will be influenced by its presence in the case of a deep cut. In this case, the algorithm is interested only in the existence or non-existence of the solid and thus the bone is represented by a boolean variable (true/false) in different positions of the surface.

When the surface/form, introduced by the user, has been transformed into a skin-like structure, the algorithm asks the user to digitally perform the cuts. [Fig. 8] Each digital cut is represented in the algorithm by two variables: (a) its index number, and (b) its depth. The index number is a remapping of the cut’s directionality in relation to the fibre lines (isoparametric field curves), where 0 represents parallelism and 1 perpendicularity. [Fig. 9] The reason for this, as explained earlier, is that the depth and the declination of the cut’s orientation from Langer’s lines are the two basic characteristics of its geometry, influencing the healing.

It is important to understand that the healing process to be activated is a result of the intra-activity of all three components of the healing phenomenon (surface, solids, and cuts). [Fig. 10] In Figure 11, I show a map of the general healing propensities emerging through the intra-activity of the different components, for a particular surface. The variables of the cut intra-act with those of the input surface and solids, so as to produce a map of the collective behavioural tendencies of the phenomenon ‘surface-solids-cut’ towards particular generative/healing processes. One may notice in the visualisation how the propensities of the surface change in relation to the depth of the cut. Furthermore, one may notice that the healing result of two cuts performed on the same region with exactly the same depth, may vary considerably, if the cuts have a different orientation, since the index number of a cut is also an agent of the phenomenon. That is why cuts of a particular depth performed on the

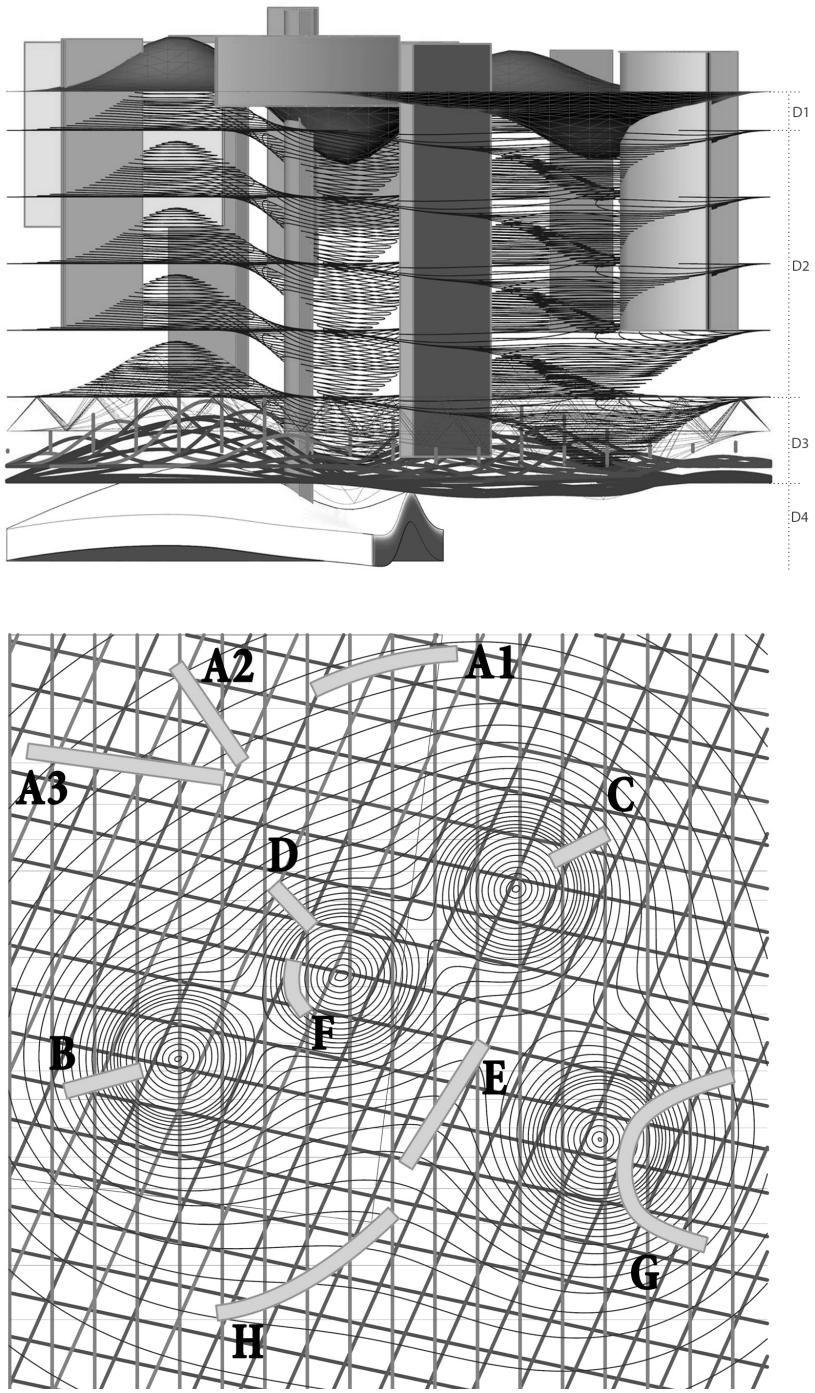

Fig. 8: The cuts (elevation and plan). Author

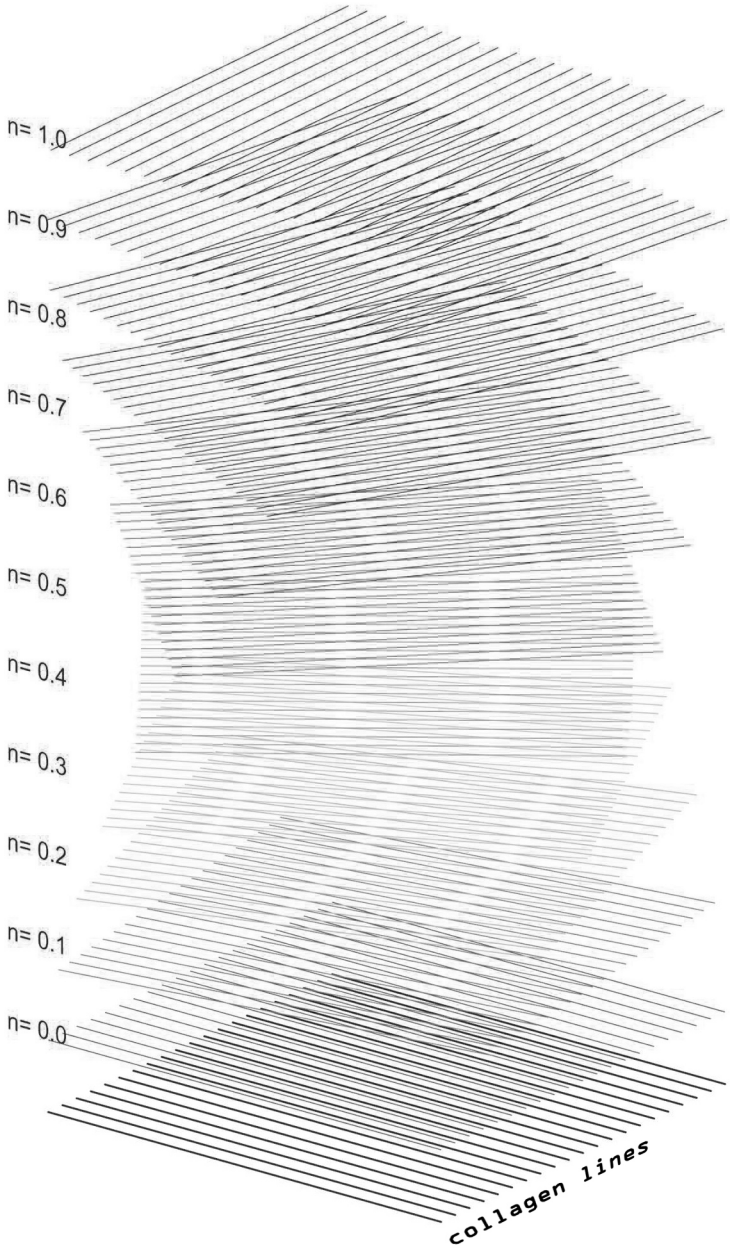

Fig. 9: Index numbers according to the cuts' directionality in relation to fibre lines. Illustration: Author.

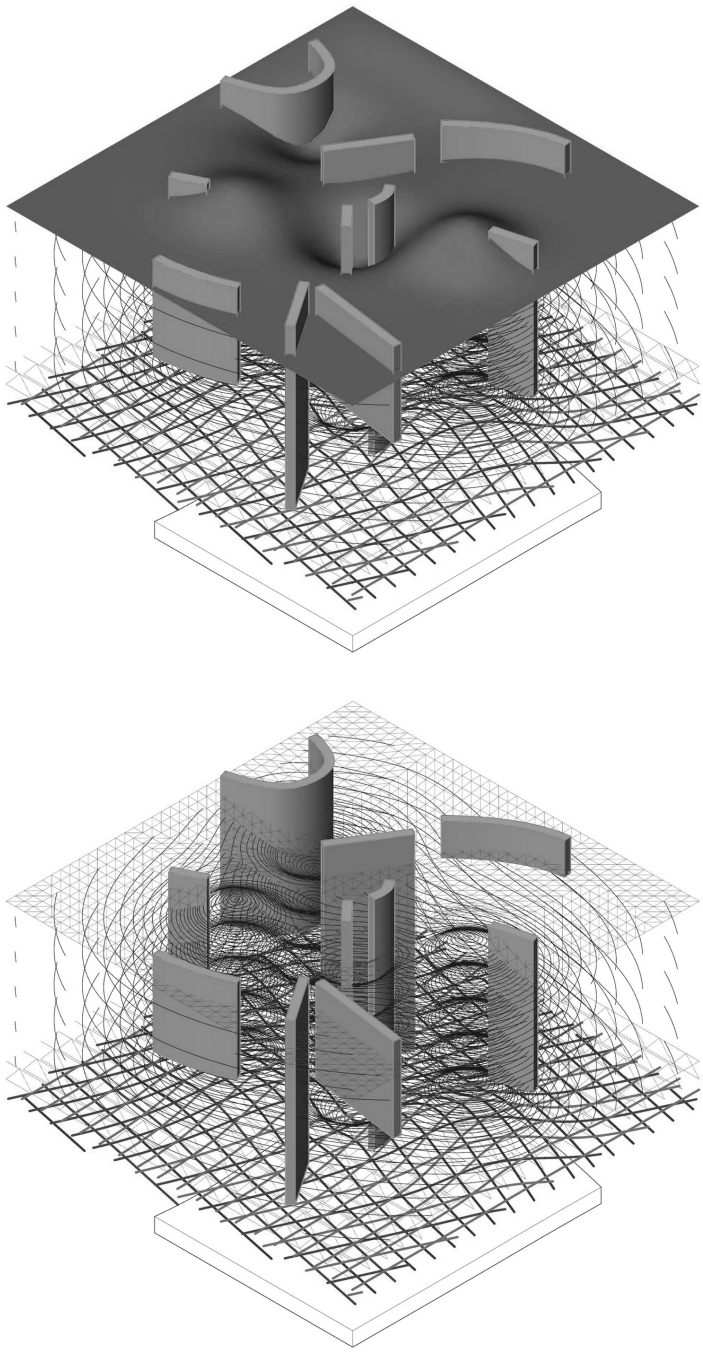

Fig. 10: The components of the healing phenomenon (skin-like structure, cuts, bone). Illustration: Author.

same surface region are shown to tend towards two healing processes, even contradictory to each other.

Finally, if the depth of the cut is larger than the thickness of the epidermal layer, a certain healing process is activated by the algorithm as a result of the intra-activity of the different components. The healing processes, to be activated, tend towards four procedural poles, in accordance with the healing processes of the natural phenomenon: (a) the normal scar process, (b) the keloid scar process, (c) the hypertrophic scar process, and (d) the depressed scar process. The normal scar process modifies the orientation of the fibres in the planes parallel and perpendicular to the input surface. The keloid process produces an augmented number of virtual fibres and modifies both their orientation and curvature, so as to simulate the raised appearance of keloid scars and their fibres' augmented density and entanglement (the curvature of the virtual fibre lines is modified so as to result in convex fibre configurations). The keloid process evolves through time following the growth logics visualised previously in Figure 3. The hypertrophic process modifies the orientation and curvature in a similar way, but also creates nodular and whorl-like fibre arrangements that, in accordance to the natural process, tend to repulse the fibres around them. Last, the depressed scar process modifies the orientation, but especially the curvature of the fibres so as to result in concave configurations simulating the formal result of topographical depressions. In all four processes, the randomness of the fibres gets higher when the index number of the cut increases. [Fig. 12]

Some thoughts

SCARchiCAD remains a work in progress. Apart from its internal contradictions, it has helped me to navigate through queer creativity and explore the possibilities that design, as cutting through existing structures, may offer. As far as the macroscopic characteristics of the resulting materiality are concerned, the cutting through the surface leads to the emergence of areas with altered material properties. More precisely, the augmented density of fibres, as in the case of materialisations generated through processes with a tendency to the keloid procedural pole, result in augmented regional stiffness. Other than that, materialisations that resulted from cuts with a high index number (perpendicular to Langer's lines) result in high degrees of randomness in the modification of curvature and orientation. As a consequence, regional isotropic areas emerge out of the destruction of anisotropic ones. An interesting direction for future research would be to investigate whether the opposite may also occur; that is whether anisotropic areas may emerge through the regional cutting of isotropic ones.

Other than that, it became apparent how, when the continuity of an amphi-topology is regionally destroyed, new organisational logics emerge and hierarchical relations among different layers are transgressed; [Figs. 13–14] that is, in contrast to topological transformations that rest at a formal level, without any alterations to the organisational logic of the new form. When cutting through a material form, the new connections between the different layers, as well as among the lines of the same layer, result in more complex and entangled regional relations.

Last but not least, SCARchiCAD created a thought that could bridge queer creativity and creation ex nihilo. Since digital architecture is notoriously bad at dividing buildings and constructions into parts that would allow assembly, it is possible that this approach of *cutting through a design or virtual building* might enable one to think and design the seams in a building differently, making queer creativity a part of every creative process that aims at fabrication through the assembly of parts.

Conclusions

This essay has suggested that creativity, and design

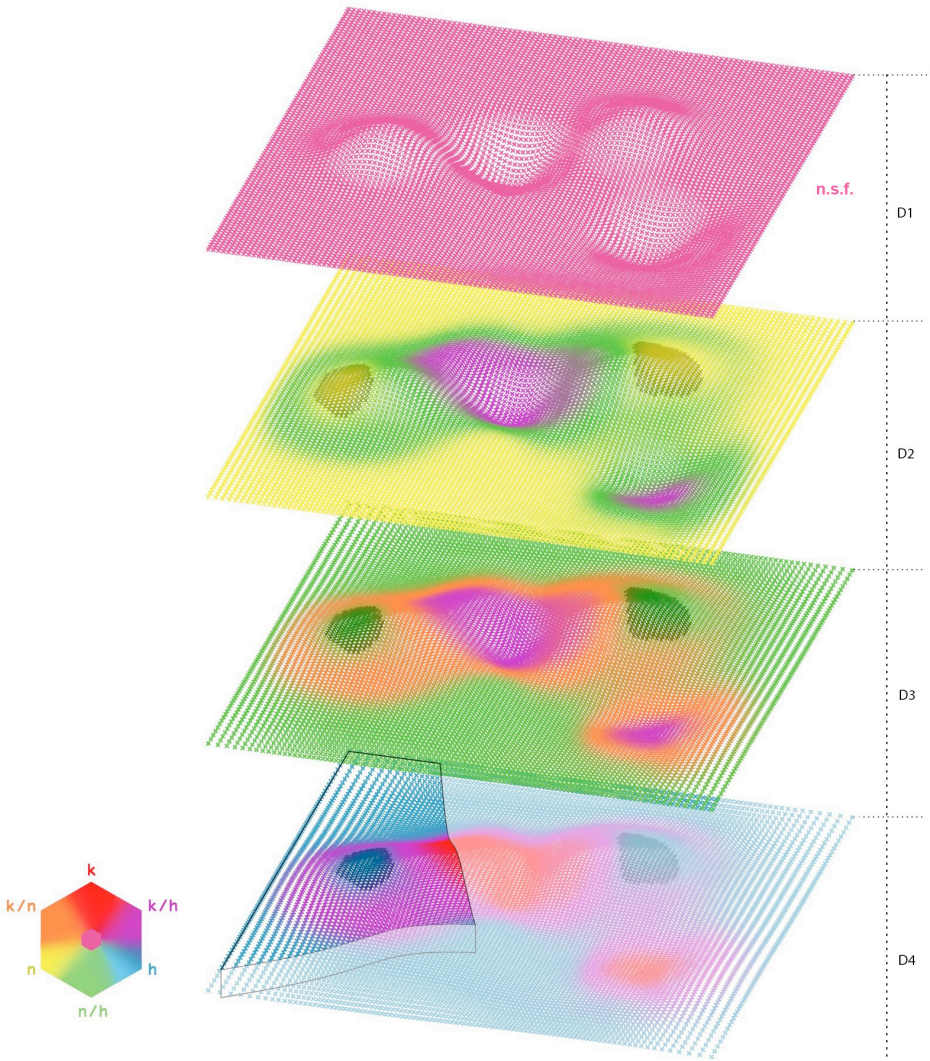

Fig. 11: Collective behavioural tendencies towards particular healing processes. The propensities of the surface change in relation to the depth of the cut. (D1: the depth of the cut is smaller than the thickness of the epidermal layer. D2: the depth of the cut reaches the structural layer. D3: the depth of the cut reaches the subcutaneous or the fascial layer. D4: the depth of the cut reaches the bone. k: keloid, h: hypertrophic, n: normal, n. s. f.: no scar formation when the cut does not surpass the epidermal layer). Darker colour variation represents areas of indeterminacy shown in Figure 7. Illustration: Author.

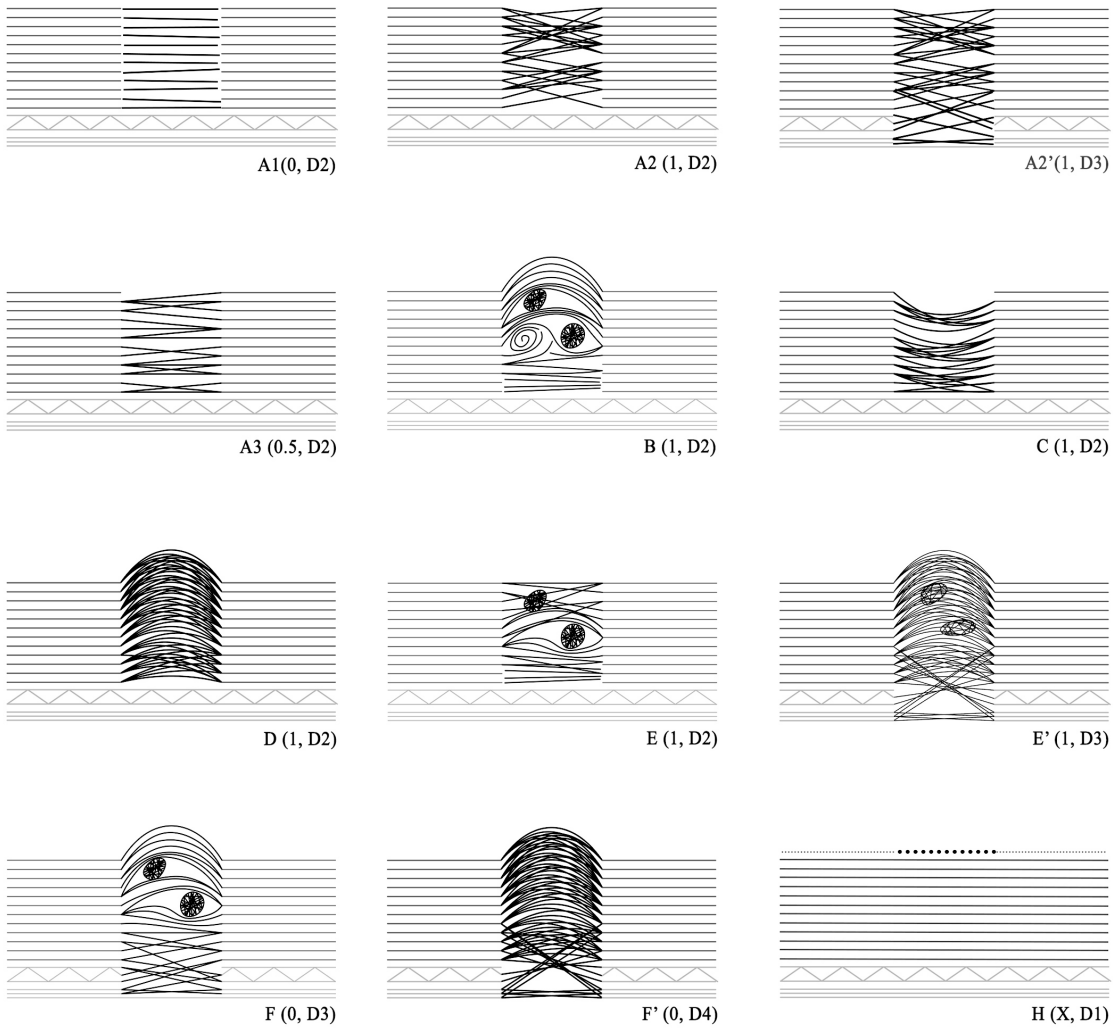

Fig. 12: Diagrammatic sections of the resulting scars. Cut (index number, depth). A1, A2, A2´, A3: organisations produced through variations of the normal scar process. B, F: organisations produced through variations of the hypertrophic process. D, F´: organisations produced through variations of the keloid process. C: organisation produced through the depressed scar process, H: no scar formation. E, E´: hybrid organisations. Illustration: Author.

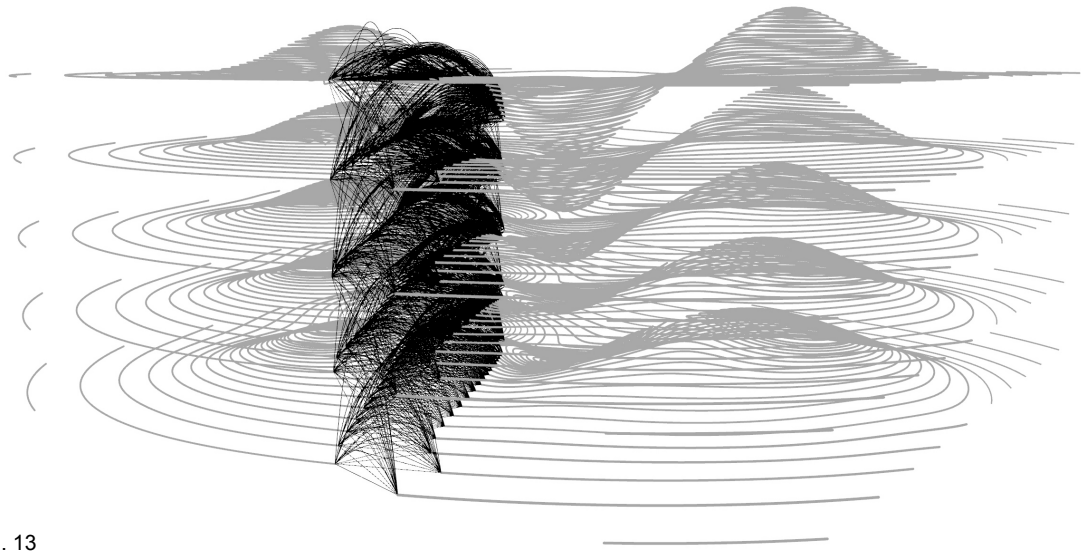

Fig. 13

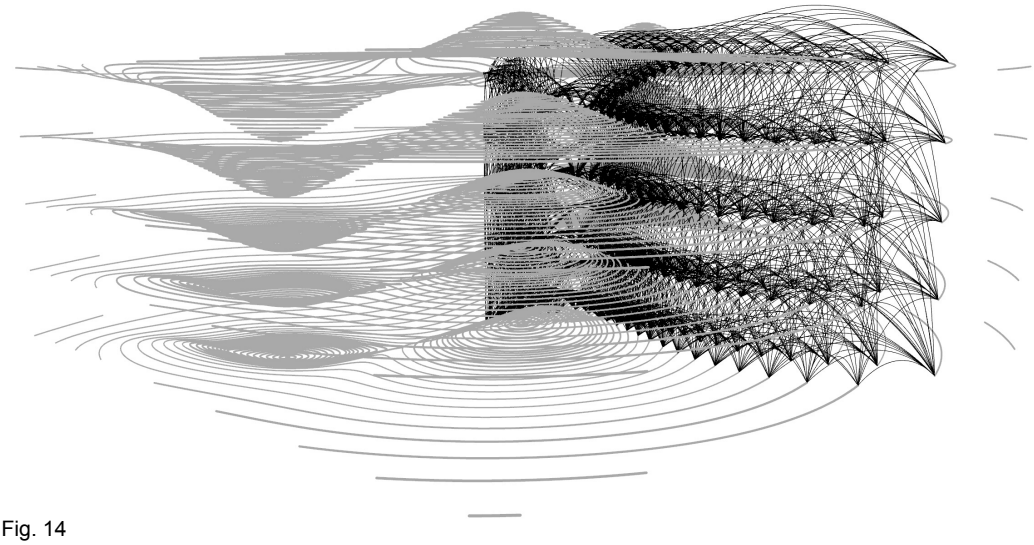

Fig. 14

Fig. 13 & 14: Perspective view of the healing result after the cut. New organisational logics. Illustration: Author.

creativity in particular, may be seen as a mechanism of thought and action, which does not make forms ex nihilo (with the designer as demiurge), but activates appropriately the material fabric of the world – affects it in order to provoke its capacity of form generation and autopoiesis (designer as an 'affecting body'). Certainly, there are many ways to affect matter. Yet, cutting through it (refusing the given relation and continuities) is the most destabilising and, in this sense, the queerest of all, as long as it is established upon a denial. I argue, thus, that *queering* in architecture and design should be interpreted as cutting through structures and processes; as an iterative return to the moment of denial of the existing structures. But this denial is not an ultimate one, like for example the demolition of the Pruitt-Igoe modernist housing project. Instead, it is a partial destruction, like the one realised through the building cuts of Gordon Matta Clark. The act of refusal, which is at stake here, does not deny the material reality per se, but tries first of all to understand it, showing responsibility towards the process that is materialised through the 'body' to be modified. This kind of responsibility is important, because it makes the very difference between a violent act of cutting and a generative one.

In this way, the tradition of discontinuity, as anti-relation, is changed towards more affirmative interpretations. Dis/continuity, I argue, is the quality that permits the emergence of a (smooth) space of future reworkings and possibilities. Dis/continuous acts, projected behind amphi-topological representations, become, then, important 'tools' for the materialisation of buildings through the queer performativity of architecture (iterative intra-activity). As a boundary-drawing practice, architecture produces buildings by enacting a series of virtual (intellectual) or actual 'agential cuts' through the material fabric of the world: cuts that open up bodies towards unknown reworkings of their own. Promising becomings to come.

Notes

I would like to deeply thank Eftihis Efthimiou who helped me to translate SCARchiCAD's algorithm into a Grasshopper definition. I would also like to thank George Parmenidis, since our conversations helped me to clarify many ideas presented here, and Stylianos Giamarelos for reviewing early drafts of this essay.

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6. Judith Butler, *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (London: Routledge, 1993). In Butler's approach to performativity, citationality is integral. She defines performativity initially through speech acts, and then adds gestural/bodily components to this. She gives the example of the performativity of the judge, whose decision gains its binding and conferring power from the citation of the law, whose authority is thereby established.
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8. Eve K. Sedgwick, 'Queer performativity: Henry James's the Art of the Novel', *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 1 (1993): 1–16.
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17. Waldorf, Perdikis, and Terkonda, 'Planning incisions', 206.
18. Ibid., 199.
19. The prefix 'amphi- 'has the meaning of 'both', or 'on both sides' (in contrast to the prefix anti- which suggest a dualism – either the one, or the other). Thus, 'amphi- 'suggests a certain kind of oscillation or incarnation of contradictory states.
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23. Ibid., 72.
24. Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2007), 333.
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26. Karen Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter', *Signs* 28, no.3 (2003): 815.
27. Ibid.
28. Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway,* 204, 206 and 208.
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30. Ibid.
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32. The plan had a material aspect, since it was the foot-print of a building on the ground before the construction and in this sense is different from the section.
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78. In the term 'skin-like structure', the 'skin' is used in a broad sense, meaning both the skin (epidermis and dermis) and its sublayers (hypodermis and deep fascia). Skin collaborates importantly with its sublayers, while the latter are highly implicated in the healing phenomenon, especially in the case of deep cuts.
79. Pieper, 'More than Skin Deep', 79.
80. The thought behind this correspondence was to use a set of lines intrinsic to the surface in a similar way that collagen lines (representing collagen concentrations) are intrinsic to our skin. In addition, the similarity of the organisation of the isoparametric field curves to the organisation of collagen lines made the translation of the relations between skin cutting features and formal generation feasible.

Biography

Athina Angelopoulou is a licensed architect and a post-graduate student of Theory of Knowledge in Architecture at National Technical University of Athens. Her research focuses on design methodologies, and on the design of lived bodies. Athina's most recent works on the design of monstrous bodies and on queering perspectives in architecture, have been presented in conferences at the University of Texas, Queen's University, and National Technical University of Athens. She is currently interested in design reasoning, cuts, catastrophes, accidents, and errors, and investigates how these may become part of an architectural thinking that embraces dis/continuity and destruction.

Trans-Architecture

Tim Gough

In the introduction to *Queer Space*, Aaron Betsky invokes his visits to New York's Studio 54 club:

> Passing through the barricades, you would enter into a long hallway, the music and lights already echoing through the space … Nearly nude males would wrap themselves up in shadows, adoring themselves in motion. Upstairs, on the balcony, voyeurs would watch, or would engage in their own, more intimate dances, discovering their bodies in others … This was the *Gesamtkunstwerk* that New York produced in the 1980s … It was a spectacle that brought to life a vision of a liberated, joyous, and sensual existence … a new world was born, but it would have no issue, it would make no difference, it would save nothing.[1]

This striking experience prompts Betsky to write *Queer Space*, but the rest of the book makes no reference back to that experience, nor does it attempt to place it theoretically in relation to the question of architecture in general or queer space in particular. John Paul Ricco, in the preface to *The Logic of the Lure*, writes in similar terms when he traverses the upper floor of Manhattan's Limelight club and finds:

> a small, rather quiet, dark, and nearly stifling hot room packed full of men and boys, pants around their ankles, hands groping crotches, t-shirts pulled behind necks, kissing, sucking, jacking, licking. I instantly realized that I had entered a space of erotic, ethical, and perhaps political potential unlike any other, in its refusal of so many codes, protocols, laws, and imperatives. That night I experienced, as if for the first time, the pure pleasure of the force of the existential in all of its singular multiplicity.[2]

Ricco has a different conceptual apparatus to that of Betsky, who retains a conventional representational mode of analysis, hinted at by his references to the 'spectacle' and the idea that *this* queer space can make no difference, that it has 'no issue'. Ricco's interest in pornography avoids subsuming it under specularity or representation or, importantly, under a logic of use or fertility (or lack thereof). Nonetheless, his evocation of the architecture of the Limelight club remains, as with Betsky, *sui generis*. He proposes no general architectural theory or philosophy that would at the same time respect the specificity of this experience of the gay club. It is significant that these scenes are included in the *introduction* or the *preface*. Somehow, they get the writing going, they act as a stimulus to action, but remain outside the scope of the main part of the text which they prompt.

In this essay, I want to ask whether, and how, we can make a connection between the intensity of Ricco's and Betsky's experience of these spaces and happenings, and the spaces that architects and others more generally work with, create, theorise, inhabit and experience. In other words, is there an exceptionalism of the gay club, of the freedom it allows, of the acts that it contains and encourages, or is it possible for this architecture to have an issue, to make a difference, to carry its logic through to, on the one hand, the undermining of everyday minor

fascisms – in particular, the spatial ones – and on the other hand to a general theory of architecture?

In this question, feminist-, queer- and trans-studies can guide us as to how architecture might be rethought.[3] But more than this: the continuing investment in cis-normative modes of thinking on the part of much architectural theory means that, looking from where we stand now, a transgender or queer way of thought and being has in fact been the only location where such rethinking has occurred. The aim here is not simply to take into account within architecture the theoretical, philosophical and political advances that these other 'disciplines' have made, nor to make connections between the two (instructive though this is), but rather to call into question and reframe the very ontology and, as we shall see, epistemology of architecture. The queering, or transing of gender will lead to a transing of architecture, of its very mode of being. This will then lead us back to Betsky's and Ricco's experiences in the gay club, not to make these exemplary of architecture, since there is no necessary equivalence between their (experience of) architecture and that of the indefinite series of others (feminists, lesbians, female to male trans, male to female trans, intersex, interrace…), but rather to call into question the exemplary as the founding trope of what architecture is.

This is seen already in the 1998 'Transgender' issue of the *Journal of Gender Studies*, edited by trans academic and trans activist Stephen Whittle, who highlights that this special issue

> is a first because it is queer/feminist writings, not one nor the other, it trans'es that border, by which I mean something specific. Trans'ing is not just 'crossing over', not just 'blurring boundaries', not just 'blending categories', but it fully queers the pitch by highlighting, clarifying, deconstructing and then blowing apart the border between queer and feminist theory, just as in 'real' life it highlights, clarifies, deconstructs and then blows apart all the things we know about sex, genders and sexualities.[4]

What transing does is to put into effective and political play Jacques Derrida's quasi-philosophical act of deconstruction, not as a change in how we think about things, but as an intervention in the real itself (which is why it *is* quasi-philosophical). Essentialist notions of sex and gender are deconstructed. As Whittle says, this is *not* just a question of the blurring of boundaries between categories; rather it involves the deconstruction of the hegemony of categorical thought itself. A similar point is made by Jasbir K. Puar, whose essay 'Queer Times, Queer Assemblages' draws a distinction between intersectionality and the Deleuzian question of the assemblage (which we will come to below) and suggests that we need to move on from the one to the other.[5] In the preface to the second edition of *Gender Trouble*, Judith Butler contends that gender – as a *performative* issue – is not simply an appeal to the notion of the event, of acts of (repeated, iterated) performance that engender gender. Rather, she highlights the deconstructive tone of the word by citing Jacques Derrida's text *Before the Law*. Derrida's deconstruction is always primarily a deconstruction of identity. Identity can be deconstructed, precisely because it has been constructed in the first place. But that construction is shown never to be straightforward for the reason that that which is constructed presents itself instead as foundational, or essential. This means, the constructed quality of identity is elided. The aim of deconstruction is thus to unmask that constructedness: 'Neither identity nor non-identity is natural, but rather the effect of a juridical performative.'[6] In his analysis of Franz Kafka's short story *Before the Law,* Derrida displays this text's deconstructive quality by showing how the law is an effect of an expectation and a co-performance between the one who seeks the law and the gatekeeper of 'it'. The result of deconstruction is that the 'it' has to be put into scare quotes, since there is no identity

of the law, there is no law, prior to something like the performance that these two characters iterate through the story. There is no law prior to the interplay between them, and access to the law itself is endlessly delayed, by virtue of 'an endless *différance*';[7] but nonetheless the law remains effective. Butler translates this deconstructive and *différancial* trope to the question of gender (something Derrida also does).[8] She wonders, 'whether we do not labor under a similar expectation concerning gender, that it operates as an interior essence that might be disclosed, an expectation that ends up producing the very phenomenon that it anticipates.'[9]

Architecture, too, is just such a (non)thing. Just as gender-, feminist-, queer-, and trans-studies have called into question essentialised notions of gender, the preceding discussion makes clear that this supposedly ontological question – the question about what architecture *is*, is also an epistemological question; one intricately intertwined with the discourse of and on architecture. It matters what is said, and what is written, to the extent that the possible discourses about architecture determine, in exactly the performative manner of which Butler and Derrida speak, what architecture 'is', or is assumed to be. This then has real effects, in the sense that architecture is constructed (and by this I mean both specific instances of what we like to call architecture, and further discourse within the discipline) in the light of these assumptions. We can point to the prevalent cis-normative architectural ontologies equivalent to the categories of gender that transing deconstructs, and outline the categories, or strata (to use Gilles Deleuze's terminology) into which architecture gets forced.

These include the concept of architecture as *exemplary* in relation to the aesthetic. What distinguishes architecture, properly speaking, is said to be that which stands out from the everyday as an object of aesthetic discourse. More generally, architecture is therefore framed within the binary distinction between building and architecture, and the associated binary distinction between the everyday and the exemplary and also between subject (us) and object (building). As exemplary, architecture is conceptualised as a *formal* discipline of design, taking a lead from Kant: 'In … architecture …, design is what is essential; in design the basis for any involvement of taste is not what gratifies us in sensation, but merely what we like *because of its form*.'[10] But at the same time, architecture is often given meaning, be that a phenomenological or an iconographic one, and is therefore framed within the binary distinction between *form* and *meaning*.

Architecture is caught within these normative categories; it is made to fit within what Deleuze calls the 'binary machine' of categorisation or the strata of thought. This binary machine operates by splitting every question and every ontology into a radical (i.e. root-like) question, a question of roots and branches, a tree-like structure composed of a series or sieve of binary distinctions into which the matter at hand – here, architecture, there gender – is forced.[11]

The transing task, then, is to queer this binary machine, to make of architecture not something sieved through the categories, but mixed across them. Thereby it transes these categories themselves in such a manner that they become an after-effect of the mixture, and not a representation of ontologically pre-existing things. (Pre-existing *things*, because pre-existing *categories*: ontology and epistemology intertwined.) Therein, trans-bodies radically differ from 'hybrid' others that leave these categories fully intact, perhaps even reinforcing them. And it is indeed in queer studies of architecture that we can find how this *différance* of architecture can be thought more precisely. In a 2010 paper entitled 'Faceless sex: glory holes and sexual assemblages', David Holmes, Patrick O'Byrne and Stuart J. Murray give a very precise definition of Deleuze and Félix Guattari's concept of

an assemblage in relation to the use of glory holes in queer meeting places. For them, and in this they are consistent with Deleuze and Guattari's use of the term in *A Thousand Plateaus* and elsewhere, an assemblage is made up neither only of the bath-houses within which the use of glory-holes occurs (as a heterotopic space); nor the two persons using the glory-hole (by having anonymous oral and anal sex through a small hole).[12] The assemblage is rather *the intermixture of these things*:

> At the bathhouse, bodies … form connections with each other. These preliminary connections, which may operate initially through the gaze, create intensities that lie at the core of desire – a result of it as well as its cause. Further connections between bodies, through touch, oral sex, etc. – or even between parts of bodies or inanimate things – create connections that can be multiple and intense. Suffice to say here that assemblages between persons–persons, persons–things, and things–things are legion and constitute important aspects of our daily existence (hand–spoon at breakfast, toothbrush–teeth, etc.).[13]

The assemblage, for Holmes *et al.* as for Deleuze and Guattari, is a transing. It occurs in the transverse movements and connections that occur in the interplay of things that are usually regarded as entirely diverse. Not least amongst these diverse things are the categories of subject and object, which get entirely undone and deconstructed here. It is not a question of a pre-formed subject and pre-formed object coming into conjunction in the assemblage. Rather, as they make clear, the assemblage is primary, since 'for Deleuze and Guattari the fixed identity of the Modern subject is nothing more than the particular way in which bodies have been mapped or stratified (cartographié)'.[14] In other words the subject is nothing more than the result of the workings of the binary machine we looked at above.

If cis-normative architectural theory has co-opted the philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari from the early 1990s onwards, we would be hard-pressed to find any such transing use of the concept of assemblage within that entire co-option. But in this queer, transing concept of the assemblage – i.e. as an essentially social/material/spatial mixture or individuality, or individuation (as Deleuze and Guattari name it) – we find nothing other than architecture 'itself', or architecture thought and experienced (as literature was for Derrida) beyond the binary machine. Architecture does not have the quality of an object (that, we can call building).[15] It is not something to do with a subjective aesthetic response, nor with form deployed in design; nor is it inherently meaningful. And it is no co-incidence that this concept of assemblage is perhaps first most aptly applied to mixtures that include spatial configurations (and which are therefore inherently architectural) within queer studies.

The notion of assemblage within Deleuze and Guattari is itself decidedly queer, in that it produces a shared deterritorialisation. One of the key examples of an assemblage given by Deleuze and Guattari – one that they come back to on many occasions – is that of the wasp and the orchid. There is a symbiotic relation between these two creatures. One might see the relation between them as essentially imitative or representational: the orchid *imitates* the wasp in order to attract it. But, Deleuze and Guattari say, this is to conceptualise the relation between the two within the grid or sieve of pre-existing categories ('on the level of strata').[16] Imitation is *not* what happens: rather, it is the 'aparallel evolution of two beings that have absolutely nothing to do with each other' occurring here.[17] In this 'symbiogenesis', both mutually become different with another.[18] The wasp and the orchid, in other words, form an assemblage in the same way that cock-mouth-glory hole occurs in the bathhouse. This linking of the wasp and the orchid to the gay bathhouse is authorised by one of the sources of Deleuze and Guattari's example – the scene of the

seductive encounter of the tailor Jupien with Baron de Charlus in the opening pages of Marcel Proust's *Sodome et Gomorrhe I*. This encounter starts with, and is portrayed by the narrator as the mutual lure between bee and orchid. The narrator watches the mutual seduction of the tailor and the aristocrat from a hidden vantage point, where he had originally been looking at 'the precious plant, exposed in the courtyard with that assertiveness with which mothers "bring out" their marriageable offspring … asking myself whether the unlikely insect would come, by a providential hazard, to visit the offered and neglected pistil.'[19] The insect and the plant remain un-named at this point, and for their unfulfilled interplay is substituted that of the two men, the elderly Charlus and the younger Jupien, who approach each other across the courtyard of the *hôtel* where the narrator lives and where Jupien has his tailor's shop. The exact species of plant and insect are only revealed as the seduction occurs, as if it is the relation of bee and the orchid which are to be compared to the former rather than *vice versa*:

> Meanwhile, Jupien, shedding at once the humble, kindly expression which I had always associated with him, had – in perfect symmetry with the Baron – thrown back his head, given a becoming tilt to his body, placed his hand with grotesque effrontery on his hip, stuck out his behind, struck poses with the coquetry that the orchid might have adopted on the providential arrival of the bee.[20]

What Proust is describing here is precisely an architectural assemblage – that is, a mixture of the event of seduction, the courtyard space which enables it, the voice and position of the narrator, the actions of the two men who carry out the dance of an aparallel evolution in front of the hidden narrator's eyes. If Deleuze and Guattari's notion of an assemblage is to be the means of transing architecture, of de-essentialising it, of doing to it what queer studies have done for gender, then it is notable that one source of this concept is the queer situation of the baron and the tailor in Proust's courtyard. It is indeed this situation that gives us a clue to deconstructing architectural theory.

Later, there is an even more intense queer architectural assemblage between these two characters, in Proust's *Le temps retrouvé*. Jupien has procured a gay brothel where Charlus's extreme masochism can be indulged; the narrator witnesses him, chained to a bed, being whipped to shreds by young male prostitutes. There is here a precise description of masochism as an experience of *intensity*, an intensity linked to its architectural 'setting' and to other things supposedly remote from the usual definitions of masochism, such as humour. The scene where Charlus, having been beaten, chats with his torturers, in the hope that they are real murderers (he wishes to be truly threatened by them), and is disappointed when they let slip that they've never committed a crime in their lives, is surely one of the funniest in twentieth century literature. Here again, we find a link to Deleuze. His 1967 book on masochism points to the *humour* of the masochist situation (as opposed to the platonic, we may say cis-normative *irony* of the sadist).[21] It stresses the role of the masochist as educator, the one who has to educate their partner(s) into the aparallel evolution between masochist and their tormentor – just as the prostitutes have to be taught to pretend to be real murderers. As Susan Stryker implies in *Dungeon Intimacies*, we can see Deleuze, as so often, taking a particular queer situation and generalising it into a broad positive possibility. As Stryker says, he 'deromaticizes love and eroticizes the world'.[22] Or in Deleuze's words, Masoch 'has a way of "desexualising" love and at the same time sexualising the entire history of humanity'.[23] In this light, with everything else ('the entire history of humanity'), architecture too becomes something *sexual*, since an assemblage is nothing other than the sexualising of ontology: an ontology of generative relations. Think of how Deleuze entertained countless such relations with other philosophers. It is therefore not

surprising that the bathhouse and the glory-hole is the place where the full architectural import of the assemblage is best revealed. Nor surprising that cis-normative discourses seem unable to fathom the assemblage's architectural ontological import; either that, or they actively intend to suppress it. But the exemplary quality of the glory-hole then needs to be generalised and understood as being a specific instance of the play of the entire world (or cosmos, as Deleuze would say) and the play of architecture.

This ontology of architecture is concerned primarily with difference and relations, and not with the *terms* of relations. It is an ontology that operates outside or before categories, and in that sense, it does not ask what architecture is, but rather asks *how* it is or *what it does*. This is an ontology that respects the *différance* of architecture, its 'essentially' differential character, or its hyper-relationality. Yet, cis-normative notions of essentialism, formalism, typology, and the various architectures of identity all concern themselves with the *terms* of relations, i.e. with what is held to be substantial, material, capable of being formed. It is by this means that the sieve of categories is utilised to define what architecture is. But a transing ontology of architecture as assemblage sees architecture as inherently a question of differences, of differences between a multiplicity of 'things' that generates, as an after-effect, what subsequently becomes solidified into terms of the relationships that those differences create. For us, architecture therefore becomes (is seen and understood as) the event of those differences, the constant movement of the multiplicity, and the task of the transing architect is to respect this anti-essentialism/anti-formalism/anti-typology and return therefore to a location where differences play a more productive role, where they make a difference. Deleuze and Guattari name this location the *plane of consistency*.

Deleuze's book on masochism was published just before his two books on Spinoza, and one can already see in the earlier book the influence (if unacknowledged) of the seventeenth century anti-Cartesian philosopher. Other well-known Deleuzian themes, picked up in his later work with Guattari, include the phenomena (if not the name itself) of the machine;[24] the depreciation of representation and the valorisation of symbiosis (do not describe the world, but find a counterpart, just as the masochist has to find their counterpart);[25] the interest in the *umwelt* (Jakob von Uexküll's affective environment, again at that time unacknowledged);[26] and the fascination (that he gets from Masoch) with the (architectural/spatial) interplay between the nomadic and the steppe.[27] In this Deleuze, as always, is an empiricist in that he starts from the particular instance and then explains the *common notions* (to use Spinoza's terminology) that he finds therein, rather than starting out from the concept. Here again, the *queer*, the *transgender* (Charlus is often presented by Proust as a woman) and the trans in general, are particular instances in which Deleuze finds his resources. If Deleuze makes only a passing reference to Spinoza in his Masoch book, he utilises the clearly Spinozian notions of the 'essence' of perversion, contrasting this essence with the 'subject' or 'person' that by virtue of the perversion can be eluded.[28] Thereby Deleuze implicitly addresses the whole Spinozist question of *what a body can do*.

For Susan Stryker, the intimacy of the transsexual masochistic dungeon is exemplary in its queer and transing display of what a body can do, and again one moves from the particular of the trans-situation to the generality of what this transing tells us about the world. 'Transsexual sadomasochism in dungeon spaces enacts a *poesis* (an act of artistic creation) that collapses the boundary between the embodied self, its world and others, allowing one to interpenetrate the others and thereby constitute a specific *place*.'[29] The use of the word 'place' indicates here that Stryker regards this poesis as the production of *architecture*, using the term 'architecture' in the

way in which I have defined it above, that is, as assemblage. What is also on display here is the Spinozist destruction (or deconstruction) of the Cartesian dichotomy between subject and object, in the collapsing of the boundary between the self and its world. For Spinoza is the one, in the entire history of philosophy, who most clearly undermines this onto-theological and cis-normative split. He famously states that no one knows what the body can do, what it is capable of;[30] but this is only the corollary to the essential point that 'mind and body are one and the same thing',[31] are of one and the same substance. To return to this substance is, in Stryker's terms, to give the possibility of *poesis*, of creation; in Deleuze and Guattari's terms, it is to return to the plane of consistency, the location where all dichotomies are dispensed with, where *everything* – mind, body, history, thought, memory, the whole intertwined cosmos – exists on the same level without hierarchy and can therefore interplay, or *become*, or trans.

Lucas Crawford's seminal *Transgender Architectonics* sets out a blueprint for what this means, in what we might call five points for a new architecture: first, it 'does not entail a move from one gender or materiality to another' (which would leave us still caught in the cis-normative strata or categories) but instead means 'the very ubiquity of constant transformation for all'.[32] In Deleuzian terms, this is 'becoming'. Second, transing and trans-architecture does not happen to the 'sovereign subject' (which would maintain the illusions of Cartesianism), but instead means 'the acts and collaborations that happen across bodies, buildings and milieus'.[33] In my terms, these acts *are* architecture; *that* is its ontology. Third, it therefore 'traverses and undoes the demarcation of a body's inside and its outside', being an act of folding and refolding; this makes reference to Deleuze's book *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque* where, far from the fold being interpreted in formal architectural terms (the cis-normative interpretation), the fold folds to infinity, and those infinite folds *are* the real.[34] Fourth, Crawford emphasises that this is nothing to do with identities: these are 'happenings or movements rather than objects or presences';[35] here, the deconstruction of the metaphysics of presence is affirmed. Fifth, this is a question of the 'surface', and again the Deleuzian import of Crawford's blueprint is clear, since from *The Logic of Sense* onwards, Deleuze was forever railing against depth in the name of what occurs across the surface.[36] As Crawford says, 'transing shows the inherent instability and décor of even the most "foundational" or "inner" architectures (of the self)'.[37]

As in Deleuze's use of the exemplary queer situation of the trans-masochist to come to a more general ontology, Crawford's five points are brought to us via the exemplary architecture of the Blur Building, by diller scofidio + renfro (DS+R) at the Swiss expo 2002.[38] The book also analyses DS+R's transgender washroom at the Brasserie restaurant in Mies van der Rohe's Seagram building, showing how the architectural assemblage set up there gives an instance of 'the explicit relationality of "trans-"';[39] and shows how the same architects' New York High Line Park was formerly 'trans' – in the sense of being the peripheral location for 'slaughter houses and transsexuals' – and is now 'transitioned'.[40] What is interesting about these analyses is that they move from the explicit, (the case of the washroom, where it seems clear that the architects indeed intended to question binary gender specifics in the context of Mies's cis-normative architecture) via the slightly more diffuse (the Blur Building, where the transing, or the happening, or the intrinsically eventful quality of the architecture becomes an experience not specifically to do with gender) to further speculations (the High Line, where the connections Crawford draws regarding the trans quality of the architecture seem, at first sight, to be so liminal as to be forced). In the latter case Crawford states that 'in addition to "preserving slow meandering experience through varied conditions", DS+R also include

a slow-going staircase, the spread-out steps and landings of which are meant to extend one's transition time between city street and park.'[41] This reader at least asked, initially, what is the real trans-architecture point being made here? Surely there are many other examples of slow staircases by ostensibly non-transing architects, and other architectural conditions where transition times are extended? My thoughts went, for instance, to the gentle, and gently varying, staircase up to the Memorial Grove by Erik Gunnar Aslpund in the almost painfully affective landscape of the Woodland Cemetery in Stockholm. [Fig. 1] That staircase, with its varying risers and goings, was intended by the architect to encourage the mourners on their route up to a place of comfort where they could view the funeral catafalque from a distance. This seems, at first glance, very distant from Crawford's concerns.

But that is to mistake the broad implications of the points being made in *Transgender Architectonics,* and in the ontological transformation I am attempting to effect here. The issue is not that trans-architecture is evinced solely by architectures such as that of DS+R, who explicitly address the question of transgender and the debates around transgender washrooms. That explicit address is vital work, but serves a more general purpose to force us to transform our overall ontology of architecture such that Asplund's slow staircase becomes for us precisely that, a *becoming*, an *event,* which transes the distinction between subject and object, destroys the hegemony of the subject and presence, and shows us what bodies (and, therefore, minds) can do.

Asplund's sublime staircase nonetheless remains exemplary, perhaps one of the most beautiful staircases ever made. What of *any* staircase *you* have *been*? To return to a point made at the outset, architecture is so often defined and therefore caught in and sieved through the binary distinction between the everyday and the exemplary, made to sit squarely on the exemplary side of the distinction. If we instead propose an ontology of trans-architecture, if architecture is the becoming or the assemblage that occurs across the distinctions between subject and object (us and building, cock and glory hole, orchid and wasp…), then it will need to be shown what this does to architecture, and what this shows us, in the general milieu of the everyday as well as in the exemplary moments of normative architecture. If DS+R are successful in transing the cis-normative architecture of Mies's Seagram Building, then to what extent is all architecture, the entire city, queered? Also, to what extent is the whole of even Mies's oeuvre transed, since we begin to interpret it through another ontology, through another lens? (As noted above, when our epistemology of architecture changes, so does our ontology: architecture, even the most normative, can begin to trans itself since architecture, in Deleuzian manner, is always us-in-becoming.)

The districts of Vauxhall and Kennington, in South London, have for centuries – in common with the whole of the south bank of the river Thames – been associated with pleasure. This befits their peripheral position at the edge of the medieval and eighteenth century city of Westminster and the City of London proper; in Victorian times, as the city expanded, and into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries the area remained peripheral to the centre, a space of cheaper rents and cheaper land, more vulnerable to flooding from the Thames than the wealthier parts north of the river, notwithstanding the recent influx of bankers and other relatively high net worth individuals (pushed out of the centre by an associated influx of foreign money since the early 2000s). We could say, in Deleuzian terms, that Vauxhall and Kennington present a territory where the plane of consistency has more chance of holding sway. Deleuze, in fact, draws a distinction between *two* planes, two 'elements' in which things can happen.

The first – which is also the primary plane – is the plane of consistency, the place where transing

Fig. 1: Erik Gunnar Asplund, staircase to the Memorial Grove, Woodland Cemetery, Stockholm, Sweden (c. 1935). Photo: author.

occurs. It is an explicitly Spinozist space, having been originally defined by Deleuze in his second book on Spinoza (well before *A Thousand Plateaus*). For Spinoza, what is involved is 'the laying out of a *common plane of immanence* on which all bodies, all minds, and all individuals are situated. This [is the] plane of immanence or consistency'.[42] What a *body* can do, which in this anti-Cartesianism is the same as what a *mind* can do, is given its broadest possibility here on this plane. The 'individuals' that inhabit it are for Deleuze (and Spinoza) *not* subjects (or objects) but rather assemblages, things that can be assembled together according to relations of proximity and interplay, passion and affect, symbiosis and aparallel evolution. Examples of such individuals or assemblages include: orchid and wasp, seducer and seducee, seduction scene and courtyard, cock and hole, and therefore also trans-architecture as such. These are all answers to Deleuze's question: 'How do individuals enter into composition with one another in order to form a higher individual, *ad infinitum*?'[43]

The second, and secondary plane, is the *plane of organisation*, a contrary conception of the 'plan' (as Deleuze says) linked to structure, development, genetics, the development of forms (architecture as commonly defined) and the formation of subjects (us a sieved through the binary machines of the strata).[44] If the south bank of the Thames has a bias towards the plane of consistency, then we could say this is in contrast to the north bank, the place of wealth, of governance, of control (of floods, for instance), which has a definite bias towards the plane of organisation.

In the mid to late seventeenth century, the pleasure gardens of Vauxhall were established, and thrived through to the mid-nineteenth century.[45] Their location is difficult to ascertain within the grain of the current city, but there remains a rather ill-defined park in part of what was the pleasure gardens. Kennington, too, had its pleasure-gardens: indeed, my house in Kennington is located on the site of a nineteenth century botanical and pleasure garden, remnants of whose trees can still be found in the urban gardens a kilometre or so south east of Vauxhall. These were trans-architectural spaces precisely by virtue of being places for pleasure and creativity. The pleasure gardens of Vauxhall played host to on the one hand the exquisite music of Handel and Mozart, but on the other, from the outset in the seventeenth century as the diarist John Evelyn records, was a place for assignation, romance, and prostitution. The gardens were the equivalent of our clubs of today. They opened at 5 or 6pm, and stayed open well into the early hours, until the crowds, sated from the music, the food (served largely *al fresco*), the landscape and the fireworks and festivities, finally left – initially by boat to the north bank; then, with the coming of Vauxhall bridge, by foot or carriage; finally by train when Vauxhall station opened in the mid-nineteenth century, having been located there specifically to serve the gardens.

A place for the trans-architecture of the plane of consistency, certainly; a place for creativity, for the creation of higher-level individuals in the couplings and transactions which occurred; but also, a place where the plane of organisation held some sway, as always with architecture or indeed any phenomena. For the development of forms, the formation of subjects, the organisation of happenings, the planning of events – all aspects, as Deleuze notes, of the plane of organisation – is an intrinsic and necessary part of this event of architecture: 'There are two very different conceptions of the word "plan" … even if these two conceptions blend into one another and we go from one to the other imperceptibly.'[46] We pass constantly from the plane of consistency to the plane of organisation, but it is the plane of consistency which is primary, and on which the plane of organisation does its work. The question is not that

of an absolute lack of organisation, but rather the extent to which in a given situation, in a given architecture, the plane of consistency can be respected and a trans-architecture allowed for or be created.

Today, we see the same tension in the architecture of Vauxhall and Kennington. Both are places known, in the late twentieth century and into this century, for their queer-friendly atmosphere.[47] Queers have long had a strong presence, again perhaps picking up on the peripheral status of the south bank and the relative cheapness of the housing. Vauxhall, perhaps following on from its pleasure-garden status, is famous for its gay and trans-scene; in particular the Royal Vauxhall Tavern, which sits cheek-by-jowl with the train station on the main road, has long been a venue for transgender and drag, 'the beating heart of Vauxhall, the best in alternative entertainment – serving confirmed bachelors and friends since long before Kylie was born', as its website joyfully proclaims. Clustered around the tavern are almost equally well-known examples of trans-architecture, established in the interplay between the planes of consistency and organisation, with the latter always being attacked and charged by the former. Just as the Tavern, in its outer aspect as a work of conventional architecture, appears to be nothing other than a standard late Victorian London pub, so the other venues almost all use the quotidian rhythmic spaces of the under-arches of the railway viaduct that ploughs across the site of the former pleasure gardens.

These under-arch spaces (no doubt similar to those of the High Line analysed by Crawford) have the virtue again of cheapness and a certain open quality to the architectural space: they can take anything, provide space for anything in their solidity as a left-over from nineteenth century engineering technology – that is, a left-over from the commercial plane of organisation of the private railway companies which dominated that part of the industrial revolution in the UK. There is the well-established Chariots sauna, taking up two of the arches. Next door on both sides are the smaller trans- or queer- venues of Brut and Union. [Fig. 2] These sit, incongruously one might think, next door to a motorcycle dealership, a bathroom shop and a kitchen shop; but this incongruity is nothing other than the juxtaposition of the city, the disjunctive synthesis typical of such places where the plane of consistency can give opportunity to all sorts of ongoings. But the plane of organisation, in the form of some very well-formed architecture and institutions, is never far away: the headquarters of the British Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) lies directly across the road from these venues, a building designed in capitalist post-modern fashion by Terry Farrell – that most establishment of architects; and the residential towers of Nine Elms, built primarily for investment purposes and bereft of real residents, appear on the horizon.

Just down the road are the blank facades of the *Eagle*, another gay pub which, unlike the Royal Vauxhall, keeps itself very much to itself. And to the east was the *Hoist*, another under-arch venue which has now closed after 21 years, much to the sadness of the leather/masochist community which made much use of its eponymous hoisting equipment. I was particularly interested in the Hoist, or in its remnants. [Fig. 3] The closure of the venue was reported thus:

> Hoist owner Guy Irwin has since confirmed the closure but assured fans of the club that it has not been a victim of gentrification, like other iconic queer clubs such as The Black Cap, Joiner's Arms, and Madame Jojo's… 'In all honesty, we opened the Hoist 21 years ago: it was going to originally be for just two years. That turned into seven years, and then 10, 12 and 15. Now, after 21 years, me and Kurt [his former partner] have simply had enough… I'm 56 next week and I live a quiet life in rural Norfolk with my husband and two

> dogs,' Guy said. 'We negotiated with Network Rail to get out of our lease. They've been a decent landlord.'[48]

Here, in microcosm, we have the story of the interplay between the plane of consistency and the plane of organisation in relation to the trans-architecture and the queer scene in London. It is not simply a question of opposition between the two planes, nor a pure valorisation of the plane of consistency. Rather, there is a tension for us between the desire for one and the desire for the other. It is now 50 years since gay sex (between men, in limited circumstances) was made legal in the UK, an anniversary marked this year both by celebrations and a certain degree of wistfulness that perhaps the plane of consistency is being abandoned. Typical in the latter regard was an article by Philip Hensher, where he spoke nostalgically of the time when Gay Pride had not been commoditised, when you did not have to be 'registered' to a group in order to take part. Yes, the legalisation was welcome, the possibilities for marriage too, as was the gay commissioner of the Metropolitan Police, the sight of the military hierarchy defending the rights of trans-folk against a bigoted US president, or the news that Annie Leibovitz's portrait of Chelsea Manning is to feature in the September issue of *Vogue*. But Hensher missed the drunkenness, the lewd behaviour, the chants about the size of the Gay Police Association's truncheons. These are all symptoms of the plane of organisation drowning out the plane of consistency. Despite the advances within the state organisation (legality, marriage, etc.), the task remains to open up a space, to return to the plane of consistency, to not allow the forces of organisation to take over entirely. As Hensher states, 'The current situation feels as if an exasperated majority is telling us that we have been given a generous legal framework. We used to insist on your silence; these days, we've kindly ensured that there is no reason for you to speak up. That's an improvement, isn't it? Now go away.'[49] The movement, he implies, has to stay suspicious of the plane of organisation – despite desiring the advantages it offers – and needs to remain wedded, in some way, to the plane of consistency. Otherwise, it loses its soul.

There is likewise such a tension within architecture, specifically the quotidian architecture of the Hoist, but a tension that in this case successfully persisted at least for a while. The owner claims that its closure was not the result of gentrification, as has been the case with trans-architecture of various sorts (artistic as well as queer) across London and in other metropolises (New York, Berlin…). The forces of organisation (Network Rail, a state body) had been exemplary landlords, it seems. What was the Hoist, after all? It was a conjunction of things, it was a higher-order 'individual' made up of a whole series of other individuals, an assemblage of assemblages, and in that sense was a piece of trans-architecture made up of a complex of organisation and creativity (plane of consistency). The assemblages making it up included the following: the place 'itself', under the arches (relatively open to multiple uses, as we have already seen). The nondescript, industrial exterior which, with a few additions (vent outlets, security bars of just sufficient quirkiness to indicate something unusual was occurring within), signalling – but barely signalling – the presence on the street. The owners, setting up an interrelation with the landlord 22 years ago, ostensibly for a short period. But then the assemblage starts to function too well, and it continues, like a machine that the owners do not quite have control of, for much longer than they had anticipated. It seduces those who came to engage in the assemblage, who become in turn part of this instance of trans-architecture. Or rather they created, in their participation, this trans-architecture, this assemblage, meeting at a place of relative openness to the plane of consistency, openness to queer scenes and events similar to those essayed by Proust: the young man with a taste for the old man; the transvestite; the masochist whose positive desire is to be suspended in the hoist and beaten by strangers. What intensity! This, surely, in

Fig. 2

Fig. 3

Fig. 2: Brut and Chariots gay club/sauna. Vauxhall, London. Photo: author.

Fig. 3: Former premises of Hoist S&M club, Vauxhall, London. Photo: author.

its interplay between the planes and its nurturing, for just a while, of the plane of consistency, is the real, is trans-architecture. That is, it is architecture *tout court*.

We return, therefore, to where we started, but seen in a different light. The scenes that Betsky and Riccio described, those intensities that set their discourses going, were nothing other than an instance of architecture, of the real of architecture. Far from having no issue, they serve to show that the 'force of the existential in all of its singular multiplicity' is the reality of trans-architecture.[50]

Notes

1. Aaron Betsky, *Queer Space: Architecture and Same-Sex Desire*, (New York: William Morrow & Co., 1997), 3–4.
2. John Paul Ricco, *The Logic of the Lure* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), xxii.
3. Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity,* second edition with additional preface (London: Routledge, 1999).
4. Quoted in Stephen Whittle, 'Where did we go Wrong?', in *The Transgender Studies Reader*, ed. Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle (London: Routledge, 2006), 202.
5. Jasbir K. Puar, 'Queer Times, Queer Assemblages', in *Social Text* 84–85, Vol. 23, Nos. 3–4, Fall–Winter 2005, 127–128.
6. Jacques Derrida, 'Before the Law', trans. Avital Ronell and Christine Roulston, in *Acts of Literature,* ed. Derek Attridge (London: Routledge, 1992), 211–212.
7. Derrida, 'Before the Law', 211.
8. See, most obviously and amongst other places, Jacques Derrida, 'Geschlecht: Sexual Difference, Ontological Difference', trans. Ruben Bevezdivin, in *A Derrida Reader: Between the Blinds,* ed. Peggy Kamuf (New York: Columbia Unversity Press, 1991), 378–401.
9. Butler, *Gender Trouble*, xiv.
10. Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgment*, trans. Werner S. Pluhar (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1987), 71.
11. See for instance Gilles Deleuze and Claire Parnet, *Dialogues II*, trans. Hugh Tomlinson and Barbara Habberjam (London: Continuum, 2006), 15–17.
12. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).
13. David Holmes, Patrick O'Byrne and Stuart J. Murray, 'Faceless Sex: Glory holes and sexual assemblages', *Nursing Philosophy* (2010), 11, 254.
14. Holmes *et al*, 'Faceless sex', 255.
15. Deleuze and Guattari, *Thousand Plateaus*, 253 (in the Plateau/Chapter '1730: Becoming-Intense, Becoming-Animal').
16. Ibid., 10.
17. Ibid. They are here quoting Remy Chauvin from his *Entretiens sur la sexualité*, eds. Max Aron, Robert Courrier, & Etienne Wolff (Paris: Pion, 1969), 205.
18. For a recent development of Lynn Margulis's notion of 'symbiogenesis', see Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).
19. Marcel Proust, *Cities of the Plain*, vol. 2 of *Remembrance of Things Past*, trans. C. K. Scott Moncrieff and Terence Kilmartin (London: Chatto and Windus, 1982), 623.
20. Ibid., 626.
21. Gilles Deleuze, *Masochism: An Interpretation of Coldness and Cruelty*, trans. Jean McNeil (New York: George Braziller, 1971).
22. Susan Stryker, 'Dungeon Intimacies: The Poetics of Transgender Sadomasochism,' *Parallax* (2008), no. 1: 43. I am grateful to Lucas Crawford for the reference to this paper.
23. Deleuze, *Masochism: An Interpretation of Coldness and Cruelty*, 12.
24. Ibid., 37.
25. Ibid., 33.
26. Ibid., 37.
27. Ibid., 48.
28. Ibid., 37 and 45. For Deleuze's take on the Spinoza's essence, see the entry of that name in Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy,* trans. Robert Hurley

(San Francisco: City Light Books, 1988), 64–67; and chapter 11 on essence in Deleuze, *Expressionism in Philosophy: Spinoza*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Zone Books, 1990), 191–199.

29. Stryker, 'Dungeon Intimacies', 39 (emphasis added).
30. Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics*, trans. Samuel Shirley (Indianapolis, Hackett: 1992), 105 (Part 3, Proposition 2, Scholium).
31. Ibid., 104.
32. Lucas Crawford, *Transgender Architectonics* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2015), 14.
33. Ibid.
34. Gilles Deleuze, *The Fold: Leibniz and the Baroque*, trans. Tom Conley (London: The Athlone Press, 1993), 6.
35. Crawford, *Transgender Architectonics*, 14.
36. Gilles Deleuze, *The Logic of Sense*, trans. Mark Lester and Charles Stivale (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 82–93.
37. Crawford, *Transgender Architectonics*, 14.
38. Ibid., 19–38.
39. Ibid., 39–66.
40. Ibid., 149–166.
41. Ibid., 162.
42. Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, 122.
43. Ibid., 126.
44. Ibid., 128.
45. Penelope J. Corfield, *Vauxhall and the Invention of the Urban Pleasure Gardens* (Mitcham: History & Social Action Publications, 2008).
46. Deleuze, *Spinoza: Practical Philosophy*, 128.
47. For a detailed analysis of this, see Johan Andersson, 'Vauxhall's Post-industrial Pleasure Gardens: 'Death Wish' and Hedonism in 21st-century London', *Urban Studies* 1 (2011), Vol.48(1), 85–100.
48. Josh Lee, 'One of London's longest-running fetish clubs is set to close', *Attitude*, 28 November 2016; http://attitude.co.uk [accessed, 05 August 2017].
49. Philip Hensher, 'How the straight majority still silences gay people,' *The Guardian*, 21 July 2017. www.theguardian.com [accessed, 05 August 2017].
50. Ricco, *The Logic of the Lure*, xxii.

Biography

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Louis H. Sullivan: That Object He Became

Daniel Snyder

Louis H. Sullivan (1856–1924) recounted a story when as a five-year-old he built a dam across a local creek. He characterised it in terms of power: 'child power and water power'.[1] Instantiating a common theme throughout his writing, he believed that humans have some 'innate', 'congenital', and 'natural' power necessary to generate an organic or living architecture. He claimed that without a 'clear vision' of it, 'there can be no genuine understanding of the nature of creative art of any kind', especially architecture.[2] But for Sullivan, it was not the power we might expect. In his story, by the time the dam had retained a miniature lake, at that precise moment of stasis when those engineered powers stabilised in seeming equipoise, yet brimmed pregnant with imminent rupture, at the very moment of 'grand climax – the meaning of all this toil', Sullivan 'tore out the upper center of the wall, stepped back quickly and screamed with delight, as the torrent started, and, with one great roar, tore through in huge flood, leaving his dam a wreck'. Surrendering to this wild exhibition of power, 'he laughed and screamed'.[3]

Because in the late nineteenth century, power was contaminated with constructions of gender – the questions of who had it, or how, when, and where it could be deployed were all culturally determined by sex – I interrogate his understanding in terms of two categories of identity: gender and sexuality. In very general terms I make a simplified deduction: if Sullivan construed architecture in terms of power, and if he construed power in terms of gender and sexuality, then in some way he construed architecture in terms of gender and sexuality. I begin with a close reading of his writings along with selected sources from his library. Therein, I pay particular attention to his often-encrypted references to a specific yet transgressive nineteenth-century voice of the topic, Walt Whitman (1819–1892). I rely upon a selection of scholarship that has been slowly evolving since the end of the twentieth century. In 1985, in his penetrating biography, Robert Twombly was the first to suggest in print that Sullivan may have been homosexual.[4] His research and analysis made a significant contribution to the mapping of the architect's sexuality. Given the era, it is not surprising that he relied upon essentialist constructs in the determination of stable identities. Just seven years later, in her dense meandering and humourous essay 'D'Or', Jennifer Bloomer unmasks those constructs as instruments of power. Using Twombly's analysis of Sullivan's sexuality as her point of departure, she undermines their supposed stability while exposing an inherent misogyny and homophobia. While she does not provide it, she calls for a 're-writing' of 'the text of Sullivan'.[5] And in 2009, in her *Louis H. Sullivan and a 19th-Century Poetics of Naturalized Architecture*, Lauren Weingarden firmly established Whitman's influence upon the architect. Through what she calls a semiotic analysis, she links the bard's poetry and prose with Sullivan's broader architectural world view.[6] I rely on that analysis, but focus more specifically on how that influence may inform our understanding of Sullivan's constructions of identity.

Like Twombly, I add to the map of his sexuality. But that is not my primary aim. More like Bloomer, I remain suspicious of any essentialist constructs and how they may collude in architecture's mechanisms of power. With the recent advances in queer theory and the consequent dismantling of those very same essences, I approach Sullivan's construal of architecture, power, gender and sexuality from a queer perspective.

Sullivan was born in 1856. He practiced architecture until his death in 1924. Social historians describe this period in the United States as one of significant cultural transition for what it meant to be a 'man'.[7] They characterise it as a power shift from a nineteenth-century conception of 'civilised,' self-restrained, 'manliness', to a twentieth-century conception of 'savage masculinity'. As a reaction to broad cultural movements such as: the transition from agriculture to urban industrialisation; the need for the specialised businessman and the devaluation of physical labour; the rise of the woman's movement and women's suffrage; the huge influx into America of immigrants seen as racially inferior and primitive; the alienation experienced in the burgeoning cities; and the recent categorisation of 'homosexuality' as a disorder of sexuality and gender; each was seen as a consequence of 'over-civilisation', construed as feminising, and perceived as a threat to the power of American manhood. As a defense, men rejected 'manliness' in favour of the primitive, unrestrained, and savage performance of 'masculinity'. Though it is apparent that Sullivan understood the cultural forces that precipitated the transition, and recognised (and at times even decried) their alienating effects, he nonetheless eschewed the singular, gendered, raw, and primitive power of 'masculinity'. While he posited a world view in terms of power, it wasn't normative.

In his last writing on architecture, *A System of Architectural Ornament* (1924), Sullivan outlined a hierarchy of five powers. As if ascending a ladder, he organised them in increasing force and moral value. Climbing, he described the various 'men' that occupied each rung: the worker of the physical powers; the scientist of the intellectual group; the emotional man of the emotional group; the philosopher of the moral group; and the 'dreamer man… the seer, the mystic, the poet, the prophet, the pioneer, the affirmer, the proud adventurer' of the spiritual group. Gaining creative strength in the ascent when he finally reached the top we find 'to our utter dismay, or utter joy', a man who 'is not what our kind for so long had believed him to be and still believes him to be'; for at that highest rung, as 'the last veil lifts, the reality-man is found sound to the core, the quintessence of power, the dreamer of dreams, the creator of realities, the greatest of artificers, the *master craftsman.*'[8] His emphasised last two words tumble from the ladder like a dead weight crashing through his veil-lifting flight of rhetoric. The apron-clad 'master craftsman' is a lesser god, a humble god, no 'ideal man', no 'cosmic super-man', just the maker of ornament.[9]

In the *System*, Sullivan focused considerable attention on one other important 'power'. While he endowed 'man' with the powers of his hierarchy, he offered the emotion of 'sympathy' as an all-encompassing meta-power that integrated the five groups with each other and with the world. 'Man's power to create, is intimately based on his power to *sympathize*'.[10] In his *Kindergarten Chats* (1918) he characterised it as that which 'contains, encloses and sets in motion and guides to a definite goal, all that is of human value – all of man's powers and the output of those powers.'[11] With slight variations, this was a consistent theme over the previous thirty-five years.[12]

Today, sympathy is defined as 'the quality or state of being affected by the condition of another, with a feeling similar or corresponding to that of the other'.[13] Describing a kind of shared feeling, it situates at least two agents capable of feelings

Fig. 1: Carson Pirie Scott and Company Store, Chicago, IL, 1899, 1903. Louis H. Sullivan, architect. Historic Architecture and Landscape Image Collection, Ryerson & Burnham Archives, The Art Institute of Chicago.

in a relationship of *shared* affection. As such, the definition is constitutive of one and *an other* able to be 'affected' by a 'condition', or capable of 'feeling'. Sullivan's usage intensifies this notion. For him sympathy becomes a kind of shared *being*. He credited Whitman, who 'beautifully expresses this idea' in the poem 'There Was a Child Went Forth':[14]

> THERE was a child went forth every day,
> And the first object he looked upon and received with wonder, pity, love,
> or dread, that object he became,
> And that object became part of him for the day, or a certain part of the day,
> or for many years, or stretching cycles of years.[15]

Sullivan was quite taken by this poem. He often quoted from it in his autobiography.[16] In his essay 'The Artistic Use of the Imagination', he referenced it in conjunction with this statement about the artist: 'into all that he sees he enters with sympathy; and in return, all that he sees enters into his being, and becomes and remains a part of him.'[17] We might wonder how literally he intended this. Weingarden suggests that Sullivan meant it metaphorically. Yet she reminds us that his essay left the interpretation intentionally open-ended. He wrote that it was up to us 'to supply what has been left unsaid, to carry on such impulse as there may be as far as [we] may'.[18]

In the *System* Sullivan described sympathy as

> the power to receive as well as to give; a power to enter into communion with living and with lifeless things; to enter into a unison with nature's powers and processes; to observe – *in a fusion of identities* – Life everywhere at work – ceaselessly, silently – abysmal in meaning, mystical in its creative urge in myriad pullulations of identities and their outward forms.[19]

In each case, sympathy grants a kind of subjectivity to the other. But for Sullivan, that meant even 'Life'. To be in a world of things was to inhabit not a world of objects, but subjectively, emotively, 'in communion' with the living rocks themselves, reciprocally. Overturning the binary oppositions of self and other, life and lifeless, subject and object, he posited a particularly fluid ontology where categorical being dissolves in vital consubstantiation. Indeed, identities fuse.

Returning to his story of the dam, it might be worth considering if and how Sullivan's understanding of 'sympathy' is evidenced within the text. He wrote that after he released the waters, 'he lay stretched on his back, in the short grass'. Quite satisfied in his engineering accomplishment, he fell into a deep reverie. 'Then he *loafed* and *invited his soul* as was written by a big man about the time this proud hydraulic engineer was born. But he did not observe 'a spear of summer grass'; he dreamed'.[20]

For his introduction to the dream, Sullivan encrypted another reference to Whitman, whom he called 'a big man about the time this proud hydraulic engineer was born.' He inserted a modified quote from the poem eponymously titled, 'Walt Whitman'.[21] Like Sullivan, Whitman, began with loafing and inviting of the soul:

> I loafe and invite my Soul,
> I lean and loafe at my ease, observing a spear of summer grass.[22]

The reference invites many questions. Why did Sullivan insert it here? What did Whitman add to this tale that Sullivan could not or would not, for whatever reason, say? The reference does not add 'poetry' given that Sullivan only added shared terms and truncated phrases diminished into prose. Besides a kind of name dropping, which could have been his intention, the inclusion suggests that he intended to refer to something from the content of Whitman's poem.[23]

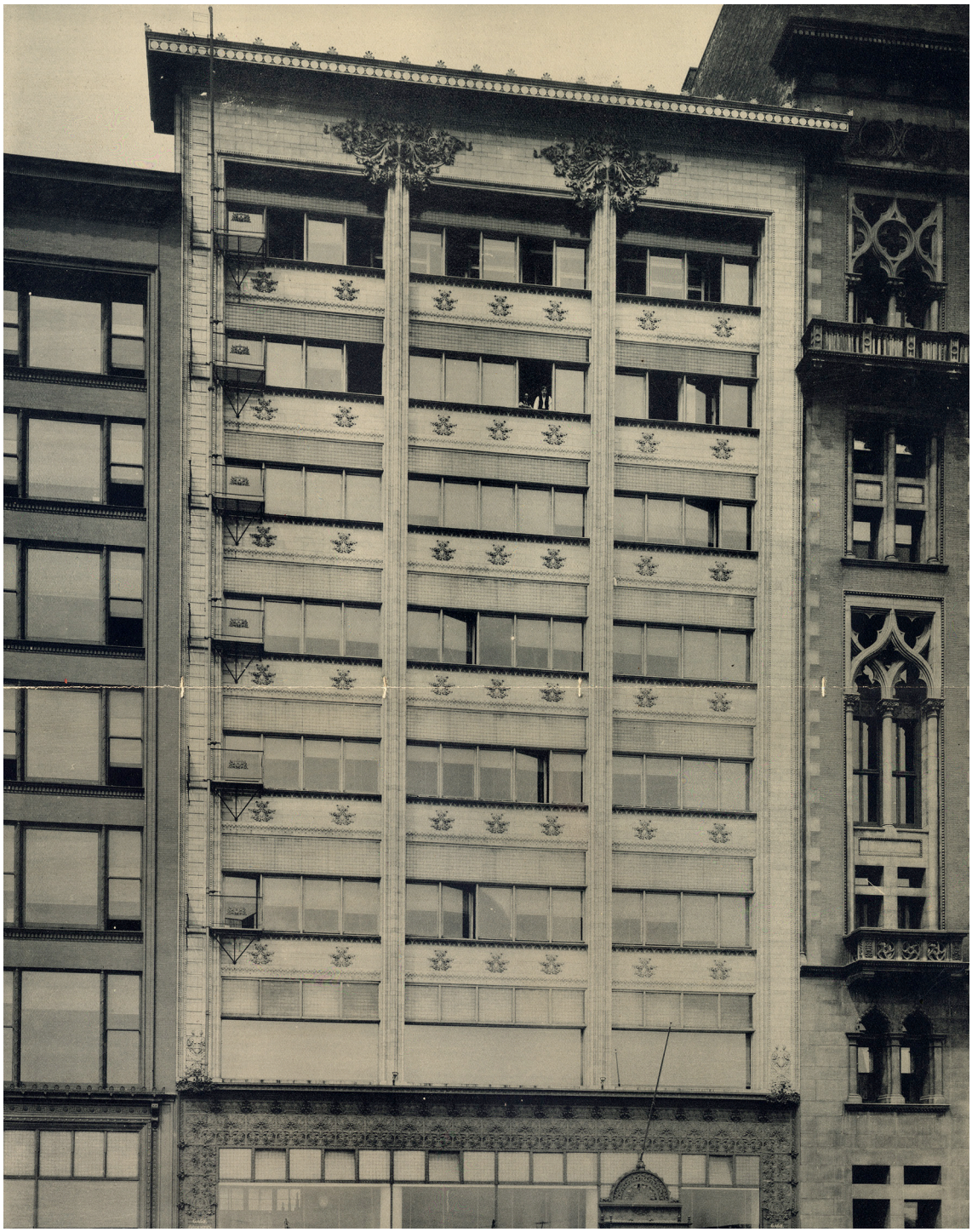


Fig. 2: Gage Building, Chicago, IL, 1898–1899. Louis H. Sullivan, architect. *Inland Architect*, Vol. 36, No. 1, Ryerson & Burnham Archives, The Art Institute of Chicago.

On the most basic level, both works are autobiographical. Both authors described scenes where they 'loaf' and 'invite my Soul'. Both made reference to a rather phallic 'spear' of grass, and both fell into a deep dreamlike reverie.[24] What follows are dreams of considerably different length (Sullivan's is all of seven lines, Whitman's is eighty-two pages), that nonetheless share striking similarities and a few noteworthy differences.

Sullivan briefly described his daydream:

> Vague day dreams they were, – an arising sense, an emotion, a conviction; that united him in spirit with his idols, – with his big strong men who did wonderful things such as digging ditches, building walls, cutting down great trees, cutting with axes, and splitting with maul and wedge for cord wood, driving a span of great work-horses. He adored these men. He felt deeply drawn to them, and close to them. He had seen all these things done. When would he be big and strong too? Could he wait? Must he wait? And thus he dreamed for hours.[25]

Any reader of Sullivan's autobiography will recognise this dream as yet another variation of that often-repeated leitmotif of his song of childhood. Watching his father riding the rough sea in a rowboat; the men cutting ice; the moulder; the shoemaker; the farmer; and the shipbuilder: each is another iteration of the beloved, big, strong, working men whom he 'adored'.[26] But here, Sullivan condensed the whole host into one dynamic sentence of 'digging', 'cutting', 'splitting', and 'driving'. In the rapid-fire repetition and tacit sentiment of love, it replicates Whitman's catalogues of those whom he loved: the carpenter, deacons, machinist and, 'the young fellow [who] drives the express-wagon, I love him, though I do not know him'.[27] But Whitman was more catholic in his embrace. His entries include the lunatic, prostitute, president, quadroon girl, squaw, and 'clean-hair'd Yankee girl'; those who labour, sit, 'jeer and wink,' men and women and child; each honoured with little more than a rapid line.[28] Sullivan saw the men like the powerful forces of the pent up waters of his dammed creek: 'these crowds of men working, doing many things, all moving at the same time – all urging toward a great end.'[29] It suggests Whitman's 'Urge, and urge, and urge, / Always the procreant urge of the world.'[30] For Sullivan, they 'were his beloved strong men, the workers – his idols.'[31]

But to this scene, Whitman lustily included what the respectable architect, decorously elided: overt sexual content.[32] When Whitman lay on the grass he wrote,

> Loafe with me on the grass – loose the stop from your throat,
> Not words, not music or rhyme I want – not custom or lecture, not even the best,
> Only the lull I like, the hum of your valved voice.
> I mind how once we lay, such a transparent summer morning,
> How you settled your head athwart my hips, and gently turn'd over upon me,
> And parted the shirt from my bosom-bone, and plunged your tongue to my bare-stript heart,
> And reach'd till you felt my beard, and reach'd till you held my feet.
> Swiftly arose and spread around me the peace and joy and knowledge that pass all the art and argument of the earth…[33]

Whitman continued with seven more quick, mystical, earthy sentences, each beginning with a breathless 'and' like the rhythmic gasps of climax.[34] Described by Michael Orth as 'the crucial moment of the entire poem, the creation of the poetic fetus', he considers the 'unconventional use of fellatio rather than copulation as the process of conception… daring, but supremely effective.'[35] In the invitation of the soul, Sullivan's power of creation and its poetic progeny are conceived, not as pure acts of imagination, but erotically, in fellatio. The insertion of Whitman

sexually colours the daydream. The hydraulic engineer had the 'big man' speak for him.[36]

Sullivan may have referenced Whitman's poem to suggest the scene that follows shortly thereafter. In what has been called the 'magnificent parable of the twenty-ninth bather',[37] Whitman described a scene, of twenty-eight men bathing in the waters by the shore:

> The beards of the young men glistened with wet, it ran from their long hair,
> Little streams passed all over their bodies.
> An unseen hand also pass'd over their bodies,
> It descended tremblingly from their temples and ribs.
> The young men float on their backs, their white bellies bulge to the sun, they do not ask who seizes fast to them,
> They do not know who puffs and declines with pendant and bending arch,
> They do not think whom they souse with spray.[38]

One is reminded of the scene from Sullivan's autobiography, also at the shore.[39] Sullivan's father stripped, ordered the six-year-old to strip, and threw the boy into the water. After a brief swimming lesson, the father offered a ride to the landing on his shoulders. Sullivan 'gloried as he felt beneath him the powerful heave and sink and heave of a fine swimmer, as he grasped his father's hair, and saw the bank approach.'[40] On land, after admiring 'his father's hairy chest, his satiny white skin and quick flexible muscles over which the sunshine danced with each movement', Sullivan fell again into a reverie that generated 'a new ideal now… a vision of a company of naked mighty men, with power to do splendid things with their bodies.'[41] In many ways this is a touching, ingenuous story; yet it is almost too incestuously intimate in the wet, sensuous grasp, and 'heave and sink and heave' of the father's shoulders, that is then followed by the admitted 'vision of a company of naked men'. With the echoes of shore, water, bathers, wet hair, white skin, the sunshine illuminating the contours of naked male bodies, the two stories encircle each other in overt sensuality. Sullivan could not have overlooked the comparison.

When Sullivan inserted Whitman's poem as a bridge linking his story of the dam with his daydream, he placed Whitman's sexualised men between his hydraulic engineering story and the recurring dreams of the men that he adores. There is the overlay and interpenetration of Sullivan the dam builder, Whitman the poet, Sullivan's working men, and Whitman's sexualised men. For Sullivan, this was not only about the asexualised power of work, the power to create. By including Whitman, he was suggesting that this power is an erotic power as well.

But it is a particular relational positioning of power. Notice that when Whitman loafed, he *received* the advances of an unidentified lover. He was held from his beard to his feet. He was penetrated by the tongue of the other to his 'bare-stript heart'. *He was on his back.* Of the men swimming, someone 'seized' them. As erotically charged as all of the tales are, for the men, Whitman and the whole company of 28 bathers, it is a passive eroticism.[42] In the terms of the nineteenth century, Whitman and the swimming men are in the 'feminine' role.[43] Sullivan inserted the Whitman reference to convey this relational understanding consistent with his understanding of 'sympathy' as 'the power to receive as well as give'. Moreover, in his story of self-assertion *and surrender*, that resolves in 'the peace and joy and knowledge that pass all the art and argument of the earth', unbounded from the strictures of convention, it was eroticised.[44]

To suggest that Sullivan's understanding of architecture was contingent upon a sympathetic construction of power, where the normative relations of feminine and masculine are both overturned and eroticised, may seem rash. But a review of his

Fig. 3: Carson Pirie Scott and Company Store, Chicago, IL, 1899, 1903. Louis H. Sullivan, architect. *Inland Architect*, Vol. 41, No. 5, Ryerson & Burnham Archives, The Art Institute of Chicago.

Fig. 4: Gage Building, Chicago, IL, 1898–1899. Louis H. Sullivan, architect. *Inland Architect*, Vol. 36, No. 1, Ryerson & Burnham Archives, The Art Institute of Chicago.

library – the sources that he read – suggests that Sullivan knew what he was doing and intended it.[45] To be sure, he owned some of the expected 'masculine' 'cowboy novels' of his generation. But he also owned books about sex and gender that in the language of his era, argued that in every man there is more than a bit of a woman. There were three specifically about sex: Otto Weininger's *Sex and Character* (1906), Patrick Geddes and J. Arthur Thompson's *The Evolution of Sex* (1902), and Charles Godfrey Leland's *The Alternate Sex* (1904). All three, written in the context of the burgeoning woman's movement, sought to determine a scientific, biological basis for the differences of gender. All three argued for an irrefutable correspondence between anatomy and psyche such that the physical characteristics of a given gender manifested in unique corresponding mental characteristics. They believed that science, and in particular physiognomy, could in fact determine the relative positioning of power between men and women. Clearly ascribing to an essentialist, nature-given understanding of gender, they all believed that what looked like a woman, acted like a woman; and what looked like a man, acted like a man.

Weininger argued strongly for the view that women are by nature inferior.[46] Yet at the same time, he indicated there was no absolute distinction between the sexes. For him, there was no pure male and no pure female. Rather, in the same way that 'there are transitional forms between the metals and non-metals, between chemical combinations and mixtures…and between mammals and birds,' there were only transitional forms between male and female.[47] Surgical anatomy had revealed that in the bodies of both men and women could be found a 'rudimentary set of parallels to the organs of the other sex'.[48] 'There is always a certain persistence of the bisexual character, never a complete disappearance of the characters of the undeveloped sex.'[49] In any given body, through a set of ratios of the proportion of 'male' to 'female', or 'female' to 'male', Weininger developed his 'Laws of Sexual Attraction' that explained why two people, to include those of the same sex, are attracted to each other.[50] Those bodies with a higher proportion of characteristics of the opposite sex were more prone to what he called, 'homo-sexuality'. This certainly ran counter to the arguments of those who believed that homosexuality was acquired or a choice.[51] For Weininger it was physiological. Indeed, based on his law, he argued for its de-criminalisation.[52]

Geddes and Thompson were both eminent British biologists. While today architects know Geddes primarily from his prescient ecological work in planning, both men were known for their holistic interpretation of the sciences. Unlike Weininger, they were the preferred source of contemporaneous feminists because they argued that 'to dispute whether males or females are the higher, is like disputing the relative superiority of animals and plants. Each is higher in its own way, and the two are complementary.'[53] However like Weininger, they believed they had found mental differences commensurate with physiological differences between the sexes. Now evidenced in cell metabolism and categorised under 'intellectual' and 'emotional', those differences fell not surprisingly into the usual stereotypes of the era. Those appropriate to this study include the notions that females 'have indubitably a larger and more habitual share of the altruistic emotions', and they 'excel in constancy of affection and *in sympathy*'.[54] And that 'share' was as essential to the body as human cells.

In *The Alternate* Sex, Leland interpreted the individual strengths of the sexes differently. While he believed that women would always be inferior, he allowed that there were specific traits peculiar to women in which they excelled.[55] And like Weininger, and likewise based on anatomy, he concluded that

> *in exact proportion to male developments in women, or the female in man, there is a corresponding masculine*

> *or feminine degree of mentality*. This granted, it may be admitted that there must be, in accordance with what there is left of the other sex in all of us, just so much of its mind.[56]

This portion of what there is left Leland called the 'alternate sex'. From the man's perspective, i.e., his, it was those attributes of women that were evident in men that most interested him. Leland believed the common stereotypes of his era, that 'woman in ordinary life thinks and acts less from reason and reflection than man, and much more from emotion and suggestion and first impression.'[57] But he claimed further that it was the woman in man that was more familiar with the memory cells of the brain and therefore assisted in memory.[58] She was also the 'spirit of the Dream'.[59] He concluded that it was the alternate sex in man that provided the 'material', 'action' and 'suggestion' for 'Imagination'.[60] Obviously, as the purveyor of memory, dreams and the imagination, the woman in man was a welcome visitor. Leland argued that she should be nurtured because her presence leads to genius. 'Great geniuses, men like Goethe, Shakespeare, Shelley, Byron, Darwin, all had the feminine soul very strongly developed in them… The feminine aid is not genius itself, nor poetry, but it is the Muse which inspires man to make it.'[61] And about the disadvantaged men without evidence of the alternate sex, 'they rarely produce anything original, or in accordance with Beauty, because they lack Imagination. Now all of Imagination is not due to the inner-woman by any means, but there would be none without her.'[62] With the promise of the genius of Goethe, Shakespeare and Darwin, and her role in dreams and imagination, surely Sullivan would have welcomed that woman into his brain.[63]

The 'alternate sex', this 'woman in man', this gendered trope, what Leland sometimes called 'the Lady of the Brain', is humourous and disturbing.[64] But in some way, Sullivan bought it. There are too many similarities between the writing of the two. Both placed dreams and the imagination in a fundamentally anterior relation with reason. Leland stated, 'so, as the flower precedes the fruit, Imagination and Poetry precede Reason, and Woman Man.'[65] Sullivan 'saw that Imagination passes beyond reason and is a consummated act of Instinct – the primal power of Life at work.'[66] He too agreed with sympathy's 'feminine' roots when he traced its genealogy from the heart. 'That from the heart comes forth Sympathy into the open: the subtlest, the tenderest, the most human of emotions; and that of Sympathy is born that child of delight which illumines our pathway, and which we call Imagination.'[67] And in his last important essay, 'What is Architecture: A Study in the American people of Today', (1906), we read where he sounds the most like Leland.[68] Here, Sullivan admonishes the American people and their architects. After repeating *three times* in succession, that they were in dire need of 'great thinkers, real men', he asserts,

> You have not thought deeply enough to know that the heart in you is the woman in man. You have derided your femininity where you have suspected it; whereas you should have known its power, cherished and utilized it, for it is the hidden well-spring of Intuition and Imagination. What can the brain accomplish without these two![69]

Sullivan argued that 'real men' 'cherish' in their own hearts, the 'woman in man'. In the language of Leland, the language that he knew and that was available to him, he posited a power that was expressly 'feminine'. In more than just the spirit of the text, he agreed with Leland – he used the same words. For Sullivan, writing in 1906, 'femininity' was *power*. In 1922, writing in the *System*, he prioritised it such that the 'spiritual group' that 'sees as in a dream', the dream of woman's purview, and the 'emotional group' that 'embraces every power of feeling', i.e., of the heart, were both *above* the 'intellectual group' or what he called 'the cachet of manhood'.[70] In an inversion of the prevailing cultural

norms that elevated the power of the male over the female and of masculinity over femininity, Sullivan, in his essay on ornament with its ascending ladder of the five groups of 'powers', outlined a hierarchy where the powers most associated with women are both 'stronger' and higher than those associated with men. If there were any implied contamination of sympathy by 'femininity', it mattered not to Sullivan. He 'cherished' it.

But clearly the issue is more than 'femininity' or gender. From Whitman to Weininger to Leland and to Sullivan himself, there is an implied subtext of sexuality. As to Sullivan's understanding of Weininger's claim that all humans are 'bisexual' or his call for the decriminalisation of 'homo-sexuality', a few things remain clear. Weininger's use of the term 'bisexual' did not have the same meaning it holds for us today. For Weininger it meant that within the human body, sex characteristics of both genders are empirically evidenced.[71] As historian George Chauncey indicates, 'at the turn of the century… *bisexual* referred to individuals who combined the physical and/or psychic attributes of both men and women. A bisexual was not *attracted* to both males and females; a bisexual *was* both male and female.'[72] For Weininger, any conception of gender that determined a binary mutually exclusive opposition of 'female' and 'male' would have been nonsensical. All humans are both.

Chauncey also indicates that what is today understood as 'homosexuality', as an expression of desire, was then understood as gender 'inversion'. Consistent with Leland's characterisation, Chauncey indicates that it was conceptualised as a 'third sex' or an 'intermediate sex' falling somewhere between men and women.[73] Regarding the cultural understanding of 'homosexuality', the differences between Whitman's 1860 and Sullivan's 1922 were profound. In the interim homosexual behaviour had been brought under the regimes of science and medicine, characterised, categorised, and pathologised. As Foucault suggests, in Whitman's time, 'the sodomite had been a temporary aberration'; by the time of Sullivan's autobiography, the homosexual was now a 'species'.[74] 'The nineteenth-century homosexual became a personage, a past, a case history, and a childhood, in addition to being a type of life, a life form, and a morphology, with an indiscreet anatomy and possibly a mysterious physiology.'[75] While Sullivan's femininity might be a breach of the code of masculine conduct, homosexuality was a breach of the essence of the man itself.[76]

Beyond the books already described, Sullivan's library offers additional clues of what he probably knew.[77] In it one finds some of what historian Douglass Shand-Tucci calls 'telltale signs' of homosexuality: books by or about 'Michelangelo, J. A. Symonds… [and Richard] Wagner'.[78] While Wagner is generally not considered to have been homosexual, books about him were often considered just such a sign. Sullivan's library had books on the composer's life, work and music.[79] His love of Wagner was well known. Frank Lloyd Wright described it as 'extravagant worship'.[80] He also had one book in which two of the 'telltale' signs combined: John Addington Symonds's (1840-1895) two-volume biography of Michelangelo. In it, Symonds, the renowned English poet and cultural historian, illustrated how intervening redactors had bowdlerised all the pronouns of Michelangelo's sonnets to erase the evidence of apparent homosexuality. Symonds restored the original pronouns and Michelangelo's homosexual bent.[81] While there may have been debate whether Michelangelo engaged in homosexual behaviour, with Symonds's biography Sullivan at least had convincing evidence that the painter of the Sistine Chapel wrote love sonnets to another man.

Sullivan also had books *about* Whitman. He owned one volume of Horace Traubel's diaries, *With Walt Whitman in Camden* along with Edward

Fig. 5: Façade detail of the Carson Pirie Scott and Company Store, Chicago, IL, 1899, 1903. Louis H. Sullivan, architect. Richard Nickel, photographer. Richard Nickel Archive, Ryerson & Burnham Archives, The Art Institute of Chicago.

Carpenter's *Days with Walt Whitman*, (1906).[82] The diaries recount Whitman's warm and affirming correspondence and conversations with and about Symonds, and Carpenter as well.[83] The latter, whom Chauncey calls the 'gay sociologist', or the 'gay intellectual', included in his small book the incident where Whitman met Peter Doyle, the man who would be the poet's lover for almost a quarter of a century.[84] It was a 'quite romantic' scene, described by Doyle in an interview.[85] Today it is recognised as just another piece of *explicit* evidence of Whitman's homosexual behaviour that for years redactors had distorted to erroneously portray as 'homo-social'.[86] Carpenter, who expended one whole chapter on the subject of Whitman's sexuality, what he euphemistically titled 'Walt Whitman's Children', concluded,

> Whether this large attitude towards sex, this embrace which seems to reach equally to the male and the female, indicates a higher development of humanity than we are accustomed to – a type super-virile, and so far above the ordinary man and woman that it looks upon both with equal eyes; or whether it merely indicates a personal peculiarity; this and many other questions collateral to the subject I have not touched upon.[87]

'Touch upon' he did. After fifteen pages of 'telltale' signs, Carpenter disingenuously left it up to the reader to decide.

When Weingarden establishes the influence of Whitman upon Sullivan's architecture, we must ask: does that include the poet's sexuality? Beyond the reading of the poetry, which as indicated invites considerable interpretation of transgressive sexual content, Carpenter's book provided first-hand affirmation on the part of the poet himself.[88] Sullivan's well-known adulation and repeated references to Whitman suggest his acceptance, if not endorsement of it.[89] This interpretation is further reinforced by his awareness of Michelangelo's affections as presented by Symonds. And it was upon Michelangelo that he bestowed his highest *architectural* honour. Of Sullivan's three-day excursion in Rome at the completion of a term at the École des Beaux-Arts, he spent *two of them* in the Sistine Chapel, 'alone there, almost all the time.'[90] Speaking about the experience he wrote,

> Here [Sullivan] communed in the silence with a Super-Man. Here he felt and saw a great Free Spirit. Here he was filled with the awe that stills. Here he came face to face with his first great Adventurer. The first mighty man of Courage. The first man with a Great Voice. The first whose speech was Elemental. The first whose will would not be denied. The first to cry YEA! in thunder tones. The first mighty Craftsman.[91]

Having communed for two full days in silence, with frescoes teeming with 'a vision of a company of naked mighty men', Sullivan dubbed Michelangelo the *first* master-cum-'mighty Craftsman'.[92] Then, suggesting considerably more than just a non-normative claim of 'homosexuality', he continued for another full page-and-a-half in the same gushing, breathless, hagiography and capped it off with another quote from Whitman: the title and first line of 'THERE was a Child went forth every day'.[93] In the intimation of the words that follow, 'the first object he look'd upon, that object he became'; and in the next line and the next and the next line after that, the child in endless fusion with a world of 'early lilacs', 'the Third-month lambs', 'the field sprouts', 'the barefoot negro boy and girl', 'the schoolmistress', 'his own parents', 'the blow, the quick loud word, the tight bargain, the crafty lure', 'the streets themselves and the facades of houses', a teeming world with 'shadows, aureola and mist', together with Whitman *and Sullivan* suggest consubstantiation with the naked mighty men, Michelangelo, and even themselves; for 'these became part of that child who went forth every day, and who now goes, and will always go forth every day, / And

these become part of him or her that peruses them here.'[94] At the very moment that Sullivan identifies Michelangelo as the first master craftsman, at the pinnacle of his hierarchy of powers, he returns us to Whitman. As if needing to remind us yet once again that if we are ever to fully understand architecture, we must understand sympathy; and if we are ever to fully understand sympathy, we must 'enter into a unison with nature's powers and process; to observe – in a fusion of identities'. Deliberately constructing an alternative epistemology that transgresses the binary oppositions of self and other, life and lifeless, subject and object, male and female, and heterosexual and homosexual, Sullivan offers an emotive and fluid ontology where categorical being dissolves in vital consubstantiation – identities fuse – and they are eroticised.

Notes

1. Louis H. Sullivan, *The Autobiography of an Idea* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1956), 55.
2. Louis H. Sullivan, *A System of Architectural Ornament*, (New York: The Eakins Press, 1967), not paginated.
3. Sullivan, *Autobiography of an Idea,* 55.
4. Robert Twombly, *Louis Sullivan: His Life and Work,* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), 399.
5. Jennifer Bloomer, ''D'Or'', in *Sexuality and Space*, ed. Beatriz Colomina (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992), 175.
6. Lauren S. Weingarden, *Louis H. Sullivan and a 19th-Century Poetics of Naturalized Architecture*, (Farnham, UK and Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2009), 8; 215–237.
7. For similar arguments, see Gail Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995); Jackson Lears, *Rebirth of a Nation: The Making of North America, 1877–1920* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2009); Thomas C. Leonard, *Illiberal Reformers: Race, Eugenics & American Economics in the Progressive Era* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016).
8. Sullivan, *System of Architectural Ornament*, not paginated.
9. For this model of a superior human Sullivan might have been influenced by G. Stanley Hall's 'cosmic super-man,' or Herbert Spencer's 'ideal man'. But his description comes closest to a conflation of Nietzsche's Übermensch with Edward Carpenter's description of Whitman as the 'master-workman.' In his library Sullivan had G. Stanley Hall, *Adolescence: Its Psychology and Its Relations to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education*, vol. 1 (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1904); Edward Carpenter, *Days with Walt Whitman: With Some Notes on his Life and Work* (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1921 [1906]), 105; and Friedrich Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra: A Book for All and None*, trans. Alexander Tille (New York: Macmillan Company, 1896). Frank Lloyd Wright indicated that Sullivan was greatly influenced by Spencer and that he gave Wright a copy to read. There was no Spencer in the auction catalogue. Frank Lloyd Wright, *An Autobiography* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1932), 95.
10. Ibid.
11. Louis H. Sullivan, *Kindergarten Chats and Other Writings* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1979), 149.
12. Louis H. Sullivan, 'Ornament in Architecture', in *Louis Sullivan: The Public Papers*, ed. Robert Twombly (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 82. Louis H. Sullivan, 'What is the Just Subordination?' in *Louis Sullivan: The Public Papers*, 31 and 35.
13. *The Compact Oxford English Dictionary*, 2nd ed., s.v. 'sympathy'.
14. Louis H. Sullivan, 'The Artistic Use of the Imagination (1899),' *Louis Sullivan: The Public Papers*, 66.
15. Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (Boston: Thayer and Eldridge, 1860), 221.
16. Sullivan, *Autobiography of An Idea*, 25, 37, 40, 61, and 236.

17. Sullivan, 'The Artistic Use of the Imagination (1899)', *Louis Sullivan: The Public Papers*, 66.
18. Weingarden, *Louis H. Sullivan*, 234.
19. Sullivan, 'A System of Architectural Ornament', not paginated [emphasis added].
20. Sullivan, *Autobiography of An Idea*, 56 [emphasis added].
21. Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*, (1860), 23–104. This is the edition in Sullivan's library that was sold at auction. In later editions Whitman revised the title to 'Song of Myself'.
22. Ibid., 23. These are the fourth and fifth lines of the poem. The first through the third are the famous beginning, 'I CELEBRATE myself, / And what I assume you shall assume, / For every atom belonging to me, as good belongs to you.' Whitman's shared atoms would be consistent with Sullivan's sympathy.
23. As a kind of name dropping, Sullivan might simply be saying that he is aligning his work with Whitman's. This too would be consistent with the thesis.
24. Whitman observed the spear of grass. Sullivan seemingly in a hurry to dream did not. Robert Atwan suggests that it is the same Calamus grass that provided the title for the often-homoerotic poems of the 'Calamus' section of *Leaves of Grass*. The shape of the grass suggests phallic imagery. That symbolism is further reinforced with the 'spear'. Robert Atwan, 'Observing a Spear of Summer Grass', *The Kenyon Review*, New Series 12, no. 2 Impure Form (Spring, 1990): 17–19; 21–2; 24. Gary Schmidgall offers a similar interpretation; see Gary Schmidgall, *Walt Whitman: A Gay Life* (New York: Dutton, or The Penguin Group, 1997), xxv, and 70.
25. Sullivan, *Autobiography of An Idea*, 56.
26. Ibid., 23, 34, 68, 68–9, 69–70, and 86. Sullivan placed himself in relation to these men in the terms of 'adoration'. It was not unique to this story. In variations of adoration, including worship, honour, and idolisation, this general power relationship with men appears throughout *Autobiography of an Idea*, 57, 68–69, 85–86, 101, and 247.
27. Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*, (1860), 40.
28. Ibid., 39–43.
29. Sullivan, *Autobiography of An Idea*, 86.
30. Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*, (1860), 25.
31. Sullivan, *Autobiography of An Idea*, 86.
32. For additional symbolism of the poem, see Atwan, 'Observing a Spear of Summer Grass,' 17–22.
33. Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*, (1860), 27–8.
34. Ibid., 28.
35. Edwin Haviland Miller (ed.), *Walt Whitman's 'Song of Myself': A Mosaic of Interpretations* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1989), 65. In this collection of critical interpretations, Miller includes Michael Orth's (1968) comments and critique.
36. Geoffrey Saunders Schramm, 'Whitman's Lifelong Endeavor: *Leaves of Grass* at 150' (The Walt Whitman Archive: http://www.whitmanarchive.org [accessed, 20 October 2013]), 3. Sullivan's circumspection is understandable. From today's perspective, it is difficult to imagine, but Whitman was severely censured for the sexual content of his work. According to Geoffrey Schramm, the *New York Times* wrote of the 1860 edition of *Leaves of Grass* (the edition Sullivan owned), that 'If possible, he is more reckless and vulgar than in his two former publications.' When his employer at the Department of the Interior found a copy in his desk, Whitman was fired. The 1881 edition was banned in Boston as obscene literature.
37. Miller, *Walt Whitman's 'Song of Myself,'* 74. Sculley Bradley (1939) made this comment.
38. Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*, (1860), 36.
39. Sullivan, *Autobiography of An Idea*, 78. On the Atlantic coast in Newburyport, MA, Sullivan used the term the 'sea.'
40. Sullivan, *Autobiography of An Idea*, 79.
41. Ibid.
42. Miller, *Walt Whitman's 'Song of Myself,'* 67. Albert Gelpi describes it is 'a bearded body in the woman's position.'
43. Unless it is clearly coming from the cited reference, throughout this essay I will qualify 'feminine' and 'masculine' with quotes. Determining the characteristics of anything as either is problematic. By definition they presuppose an insufficient and dangerous essentiality regarding the properties of gender.

44. Emory Holloway (ed.), *The Uncollected Poetry and Prose of Walt Whitman* (New York: P. Smith, 1932), 83. Whitman wrote of his power, 'of slipping like an eel through all blandishments and graspings of conventions.'
45. Williams, Baker & Severn, *Catalogue at Auction* (Chicago: Ryerson and Burnham Libraries, 1909), not paginated.
46. Otto Weininger, *Sex and Character* (New York: G. P. Putnam's, n.d.), 252. He wrote, 'However degraded a man may be, he is immeasurably above the most superior woman.'
47. Weininger, *Sex and Character*, 2–3.
48. Ibid., 6.
49. Ibid., 5.
50. Ibid., 29.
51. Ibid., 45–6. Weininger used the term 'homo-sexuality.' Knowing that the preferred and affirming, but still inadequate terms today are 'gay' or 'queer,' I nonetheless opt for the term 'homosexuality.' Coming from Sullivan's era and the oppressive regimes of medicine, religion and the law I chose this term precisely because it situates the discourse back within the language of the era.
52. Weininger, *Sex and Character*, 51.
53. Patrick Geddes and J. Arthur Thompson, *The Evolution of Sex* (London: Walter Scott, 1989), 289. A rather dubious endorsement for women's equality, Geddes and Thompson based these findings on the study of evolution. They would make their position quite clear regarding women's suffrage when they wrote, 'What was decided among the prehistoric Protozoa cannot be annulled by Act of Parliament' (Ibid., 267). See also Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*, 153.
54. Geddes and Thompson, *Evolution of Sex*, 271. Obviously, Sullivan was aware of the association. He characterised the 'feminine' as 'intuitive sympathy, tact, suavity and grace'; see Sullivan, *Kindergarten Chats*, 23 [emphasis added].
55. Charles Godfrey Leland, *The Alternate Sex or the Female Intellect in Man, and the Masculine in Woman* (London: William Rider & Son, Ltd., 1904), 4–6. Later in the book, having illustrated the strengths of women, he stated that 'there is small difference indeed as to which is the Superior Sex in the transaction – which ye may all reason out everyone his or her own way, drawing everyone his or her own conclusions' (Ibid., 77).
56. Ibid., 35. Emphasis in original.
57. Ibid., 62.
58. Ibid., 65.
59. Ibid., 62.
60. Ibid., 68.
61. Ibid., 41.
62. Ibid., 42.
63. It is likely that Sullivan would have agreed with at least three of Leland's five choices for genius: Goethe, Darwin and Shakespeare. Sullivan had seven volumes of Goethe and a volume of *Shakespeare's Works* in his library. In his autobiography, he described his reading of Darwin, among others, as 'an enormous world opening before him'. Sullivan, *Autobiography of an Idea*, 249.
64. Leland, *The Alternate Sex*, 33
65. Ibid., 73.
66. Sullivan, *Autobiography of an Idea*, 236.
67. Sullivan, *Kindergarten Chats*, 133.
68. 'With the exception of his books,' Robert Twombly calls this essay Sullivan's 'last major theoretical work.' Twombly, *Louis Sullivan: The Public Papers*, 174.
69. Sullivan, 'What is Architecture,' *Louis Sullivan: The Public Papers*, 187 and 190. More authors cite Sullivan's essay of twenty years earlier, 'Characteristics of American Architecture' (1885) where he deplored an American architecture that was not 'virile.' Suggesting that he was asking for a more 'masculine' architecture, he assessed the contemporaneous architecture as having a 'marvelous instinct,' and 'stubborn common sense,' but as if hidden behind a veil of American Romanticism it was like the emasculated Hercules at the foot of Omphale. Sullivan called for the awakening of an authentic power in the making of a distinctly American architecture. Narciso G. Menocal, *Architecture as Nature: The Transcendentalist Idea of Louis Sullivan* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1981), 17. Sherman Paul, *Louis Sullivan: An*

Architect in American Thought (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1962), 32–5.

70. Sullivan, 'A System of Architectural Ornament', not paginated; Sullivan, *Autobiography of an Idea*, 176.
71. Weininger, *Sex and Character*, 5; 45–52.
72. George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture and the makings of the Gay Male World, 1890–1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994), 49.
73. Ibid., 48–9.
74. Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume I: An Introduction*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 43.
75. Ibid., 43.
76. And it was against the law. Sodomy laws in the United States were not even begun to be repealed until 1962.
77. In addition to those listed, the library also included Max Nordau's *Degeneration* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1895), 13. Nordau outlined the decadence, with hints to the sexual 'decadence', in *fin-de-siècle* France.
78. Douglass Shand-Tucci, *The Crimson Letter: Harvard, Homosexuality, and the Shaping of American Culture* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2003), 146. Shand-Tucci was describing the 'telltale signs' that he found in a library from about 1912. Chauncey offers similar 'telltale signs' and indicates that within gay folk-lore of 1890–1940, the 'heroic figures' from the past who they claimed were 'gay' included Michelangelo, Shakespeare, Walt Whitman, Oscar Wilde, and Julius Caesar. Chauncey, *Gay New York*, 283.
79. Julien, *Richard Wagner: Sa Vie et Ses Oeuvres;* Nohl, *Life of Wagner*; and Upton, *The Standard Operas*, of which the most pages were devoted to Wagner. The library also included fourteen volumes of what were identified as 'Oratorios, etc.' Williams, Baker & Severn, *Catalogue at Auction*, not paginated.
80. Wright, *Autobiography*, 101.
81. John Addington Symonds, *The Life of Michelangelo Buonarroti*, vol. 2 (London: John C. Nimmo, 1893), 93–179.
82. It is unclear which of the three published volumes Sullivan owned: 1905, 1908, or 1914. Given that he auctioned his library in 1909, it seems likely that he owned the first volume that covered the dates 28 March to 14 July, 1888. But it should be noted that Sullivan is mentioned in the third volume. Whitman saved a letter that Sullivan had sent him. Traubel read it and recorded Whitman's response. Horace Traubel, *With Walt Whitman in Camden (November 1, 1888 – January 20, 1889)* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, Inc., 1961 [1914]), 25–6.
83. Chauncey, *Gay New York*, 107, 144, and 231. Carpenter was known for his positive portrayal of and advocacy for homosexuality and homosexuals, whom he called 'Uranians', in a number of treatises and books, to include *Love's Coming of Age*. Any close reading of Traubel's diaries discloses numerous tell-tale signs.
84. Rodger Streitmatter, *Outlaw Marriages: The Hidden Histories of Fifteen Extraordinary Same-Sex Couples* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2012), 1. Carpenter says the relationship lasted ten years; see Carpenter, *Days with Walt Whitman*, 149.
85. Carpenter, *Days with Walt Whitman*, 148.
86. Whitman's homosexual behaviour is so generally accepted today that Schmidgall would characterise his claim that he fathered six children 'the most hilarious lie of Whitman's career.' Schmidgall, *Walt Whitman: A Gay Life*,
87. Carpenter, *Days with Walt Whitman*, 151–2.
88. Both editions of Sullivan's *Leaves of Grass*, 1860 and 1872, included the explicitly homoerotic 'Calamus' poems.
89. For known references made to the poetry of Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* in his autobiography, see: Sullivan, *Autobiography of an Idea*, 25, 37, 40, 56, 61, 236, and 249.
90. Ibid., 234.
91. Ibid. In this instance Sullivan uses a variation of G. Stanley Hall's 'cosmic super-man.'
92. Ibid., 207–8, and 234. Sullivan dubbed Wagner the other 'master craftsman' in only slightly less passionate terms. Whitman is the only other person he speaks of in the same laudatory terms but he never

explicitly refers to him as the ‘master craftsman’ or ‘mighty craftsman.’

93. Ibid., 236.
94. Whitman, ‘There was a Child Went Forth,’ *Leaves of Grass*, 221–3.

Biography

Daniel Snyder is an architect practicing in the firm of Daniel E. Snyder Architect, P.C. He has taught at the Savannah College of Art and Design and is a recent graduate of Yale University’s Master of Environmental Design program. Along with his practice he is currently working on an upcoming book entitled *The Tender Detail: Ornament and Sentimentality in the Architecture of Louis H. Sullivan and Frank Lloyd Wright*, under consideration for publication by Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018, of which this essay is a part.

Position

Me as a Building

Andreas Angelidakis

I often talk to my analyst about work. Sometimes I'll be complaining about a collaboration that is not working out, other times I'll be excited about an idea for a space I came up with, or a challenging proposal that came my way. He says that psychoanalysis is the interior architecture of the soul, and that sounds kind of right: you rearrange things, you understand how to treat a space, you place feelings and thoughts in a way that makes sense and gives you comfort.

In one particular session, I spoke about a student project that I was considering revising for *documenta* 14, a thesis of sorts at Columbia University with Keller Easterling. The subject of the thesis was 'Unauthorized Architecture', and it was an effort to understand my attraction to the weird unfinished or overfinished concrete frame buildings that make up my hometown of Athens. Back then, I had talked about a new paradigm for architecture, one that turned the typically linear sequence of 'design, construct, inhabit' on its head. These buildings were constructed, then sometimes inhabited, and later on designed. Then they were designed some more, constructed some more and further inhabited. A loopy process that never seemed to end, as these buildings adapted to circumstance and struggled to stay legal. Usually a young family would build one of these frames without a proper building permit, taking advantage of legal loopholes. They would perhaps complete one storey of the frame as an apartment, or perhaps the ground floor as a shop. As the years pass and the family grows, they might finish a second apartment for one of their kids, then another and so forth. So, it became typical for an entire family, and their children's families to all live in the same building. These forever-developing, unauthorised concrete buildings became portraits of the typical Greek family, and subsequently portraits of a nuclear family society.

But I wondered to my analyst if this reading was enough to justify my fascination with these unauthorised buildings; enough to justify a life-long fascination. He replied: ‘Well, you were unauthorised as a kid too, just like these buildings’. He was referring to the countless sessions in which I had talked about my first memory as a child: I am combing a doll’s hair, hidden away on the kitchen balcony, where no-one would see me. Playing with dolls and trying on my mother’s dresses and makeup was something my mother allowed, though it was not to be known publicly. Boys should be playing football and army, not hair and makeup.

His comment startled me. Had I been seeing myself in these illegal buildings? Had I been looking for some kind of reflection of myself, in structures that I thought were inexplicable and fascinating? Did I see some kind of queerness in these unauthorised structures, a queerness that I knew as familiar, but grew up considering unauthorised behavior?

When speaking about my work in these psychoanalytic sessions, I had often stumbled upon realisations. Sometimes I realised that, in a particular project, I was trying to reenact or even reverse a recent reality of my life. The Troll project was an interesting example of this: I spoke to him about a modernist building that, I imagined, felt disillusioned with the city, gathered its powers, stood up, and headed for the mountains where it would find peace and quiet. In the video project that followed, I gendered the building as ‘she’. The analyst saw it as me resurrecting a building, making it alive, making it walk again. I treated it as an architectural fantasy, a vision I had while driving through the city. He suggested that I was trying to resurrect my mother who had recently passed away. But the part of the video that emotionally resonated more with me was not the ‘coming to life’ part. It was the ‘going away to the mountain’ part where, lying down and covering herself with earth, the building becomes a mountain. Or perhaps she went away to die? Because in architecture, mountains usually signify death of some sort. Was the building me or my mother?

Work in this context was a way to deal with life, in ways that I didn’t really know how to, but looking for myself in these buildings was a step in a new direction.

Image: ‘Troll or the Voluntary Ruin’, video, 2013. Author


ΤΣΙΜΕΝΤΟ
ΝΑ ΦΥΤΕΨΟΥΝ
ΑΠΕΡΓΙΑ
ΕΝΩΣΗ
ΕΚΑΤΟΜΜΥΡΙΑ

My behaviour as a kid was textbook queer, even my own mother admitted as much when I finally came out to her in my early twenties. She was shocked that she hadn't figured out my queerness by herself, even though the clues were there: playing with dolls? Check. Trying her makeup? Check. Hanging out only with girls? Check. Effeminate? Check. The list could go on.

Now, I began thinking of these buildings as potentially queer, but what was it that could make a building queer? Was it enough to be unauthorised? Or perhaps understanding buildings as portraits is queer enough as an architectural process, so that the building in question does not need actually be gay? Or was I recognising that these buildings had to essentially build themselves, much like a gay boy growing up in a heterosexual family? Kids model themselves on their parents, but what happens when you're gay and your parents are straight?

Athens is a city that was forced to build itself several times. First in 1922 when 1.5 million refugees arrived from the coast of Turkey, in what used to be a town of hardly 200,000 inhabitants. The Asia Minor Greeks were placed in camps outside the city limits, and governments struggled to provide housing. The refugee camps gradually became suburbs, either with social housing provided by the state, or more commonly from the refugees' own initiatives to provide a home for their families. Soon after, the first legislation appeared, declaring all structures built outside the city limits as unauthorised.

A similar scenario recurred in the 1950s, when the Marshall Plan focused its funding on the city of Athens, essentially leaving the countryside a post-war financial ruin, while the city's infrastructure was updated extensively. Recent studies describe this as simple cold war geopolitics: NATO wanted the population gathered in one place, because a large part was communist, and they did not want Greece going over to the Soviet Block. The plan worked, and over the course of a decade half the population of Greece moved to Athens. Again, the government could not provide all the housing, and the city once again had to build itself up. Without any parents to model herself on, or urban planners to teach her how to walk, Athens became somehow queer. Neither Western nor Eastern, neither modern nor traditional. Never European and not Middle Eastern enough, Athens and her buildings had to figure out how to become themselves, how to shape their own identity.

Image: 'Troll or the Voluntary Ruin', video, 2013. Author

In the installation for *documenta* 14, I made a fictional company that would investigate the parameters of the making of Athens. The company would look at facts and issues, and come up with a report to be presented at the Kassel leg of *documenta*. While working in the space and tweaking the material I had collected and produced, it became evident that as much as I was talking about Athens, I was also talking about the 'making' of myself. Mixed in with historic images of the city and its building typologies, I put a picture, found in a family album, of myself at four years old in front of a mirror, trying to comb my unruly hair. I almost put another picture of myself in there, as a depressed teenager, right before I rebelled and didn't become a civil engineer as my parents wished. Architecture was a compromise, not too far from myself, but not really me either. Was being an architect a kind of excuse for being gay? Would I have been happier if I were a hairdresser, forever playing with my mom's dresses? Somehow – at least in my eyes – takes on these questions, without really providing answers, either to me or to the city it is meant to be studying.

When I talk about cities or buildings, I have to stop myself and check to see if I'm not really just talking about myself. At other times I wonder what the ingredient is that makes me queer? What are the elements of my queerness, and how do I go beyond the superficial cliché of the queer? I haven't been in a gay bar in perhaps a decade, I don't hang around with the boys much, I don't identify much with 'gay culture'. On the other hand, I am a shaved-head-and-bearded man with an affinity for fashion, I take my antiretrovirals religiously, and I watch RuPaul's Drag Race. A walking cliché who doesn't want to be categorised? Is that queerness? Conformity masquerading as something 'other'?

If I were to attempt to define queer space or queer buildings, I would probably fail, and not because my gaydar is off, but because every time I would have to come up with the elements that make up the queerness of the psyche of the particular building. Or the particular city. I wouldn't even know how to elaborate on Athens being a queer city, because maybe she's not even queer but identifies as trans and hasn't told us yet. And how would her heterosexual population feel about that? Would they be alienated, suddenly in the belly of a monster they no longer recognise, like the monster in Alien growing inside somebody, just the other way around? Or would each inhabitant recognise themselves in their city, see themselves in their home, understand their psyche while the furniture in their living room? Which just makes me shudder, because it makes me wonder about the psyche of the homeless person.

Image: 'Troll or the Voluntary Ruin', video, 2013. Author

Biography

Andreas Angelidakis studied architecture at Sci-ARC in Los Angeles, and Columbia University in New York. He describes himself as ‘an architect who doesn’t build’. Instead he has developed an artistic voice with the exhibition format acting as vehicle for ideas and medium for his artistic practice. As architect, participant and curator, he has contributed to various exhibitions in Kassel, Athens, Thessaloniki, Liverpool, Vilnius and New York. Recently, he curated the exhibition 'OOO Object Oriented Ontology' at Kunsthalle Basel (2017).

Position

Strategies for Living in Houses

Colin Ripley

> Everyone has the right to adequate housing, including protection from eviction,
> without discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity.
> (Yogyakarta Principles, 2017)[1]

> See the girl on the TV dressed in a bikini
> She doesn't think so but she's dressed for the H-Bomb (For the H-Bomb)
> (Gang of Four, 1979)[2]

Despite the significant developments over the past decades in areas of queer rights, and even despite the introduction of legislation around non-discriminatory housing in many jurisdictions, housing remains a problem for queer people. We have evidence of this all around us, whether it takes the form of homelessness for queer youth, discriminatory landlords, or the cultural difficulties faced by queer seniors in retirement communities and long-term care facilities.

The problem of queer housing can never go away because it is a central component of queerness. The problem of queer housing remains persistent and recalcitrant because the *house* – the single-family house and by extension apartments, condominiums and the like – is a central structure of heterosexual hegemony, the primary architectural expression of hetero-normativity. All housing, at least in the developed world, is designed and constructed from within that hegemonic tradition, using models that assume hetero-normativity in its users: even if the client for a new house is, for example, a gay couple, all decisions made in the design are made from within a straight tradition, all construction is produced by a construction industry formed around non-queer hegemonic industrial and business practices, all materials sourced and processed from within an exploitative colonising regime of resource extraction. And what would be different anyway? Wouldn't our hypothetical gay couple want the same things as everyone else: a master bedroom with ensuite bath, a guest bedroom or maybe a room for the kid, a yard where they can sit out and a patio for barbecuing, a living room with a huge TV…

The nuclear family and the industrial suburban house share a common origin and a linked destiny. Both were born in the aftermath of the Second World War. The nuclear family would not have been imaginable as a concept prior to Hiroshima (and does not figure in American literature of the 1930s), and the industrialised suburb, such as Levittown (but this is equally true of the Case Study Houses in California) is inconceivable without the industrial war machine in America. And both of course depended on a whole set of new interlinked infrastructures for their creation and nourishing: new mobilities offered by the mass-produced car; new infrastructures of highways and schools; new industries needing to be fed such as advertising and finance; new ubiquitous modes of communication and indoctrination – the telephone but most importantly television. *The creation of the nuclear family was at the core of the new industrial complex that drove America's postwar affluence.*

The relationship is even deeper than simple common origins, but is implicit, constitutive and constructive: as much as the industrial suburban house is a product for the nuclear family, the nuclear family is a product of the industrial suburban house. Take for example the Levittown Cape Cod House from 1947, which confronts us in the famous 1950 photograph by the American photographer Bernard Hoffman for Life magazine.[3] [Fig. 1] There are two critical artefacts in this photo – three if we include the car, of which only a tiny fragment appears in the corner of the image: the Cape Cod House, in the background, and the nuclear family, in the foreground, described in the caption as Bernard Levey, truck supervisor, and his family. The perfect scene of house and nuclear family is not just presented once, but three times, with the Levey family in front of three houses: the houses they purchased in 1947, 1948 and 1950. So this is not simply a snapshot, not a memorialising of the arrival of the new Levittowners for the family scrapbook, but a staged and carefully repeated photograph, designed and produced to clarify and emphasise exactly the relationship between house and family. This photograph is a manifesto.

A closer look at the house reveals the very precise way in which it serves the needs of this concept of family – and no other: bedrooms that crystallise the family structure and roles, isolating and stabilising sexual functions; the bathroom that hides all bodily functions, producing shame and anxiety around the physical; the kitchen that reifies gender roles within the family while at the same time – in the new, mechanised kitchen of Levittown – eliminating anything dirty or natural. The cleansing and standardisation of programme is clear in form and materiality as well, with the simplest possible rectilinear form and industrially produced materials and equipment, focused on concepts of reproduction – or at least reproducibility – and repetition, while relentlessly, if ironically, privileging privacy and opacity. The house is designed to produce and maintain the idea of the nuclear family as a concept and as a social construction, not to serve the needs of the actors in that family drama, or the needs of their bodies. Caught between the industrial need for reproducibility and the structural need for separation, crystallisation of roles and denial of the biological, the body is squeezed, the erotic is removed, and psyches and identities forced into little boxes with locked doors.

Fig. 1: Truck supervisor Bernard Levey (rear left) standing with his family in front of their home in new housing development. Levittown, New York, 1950. Photo: Getty Images: The LIFE Picture Collection. Getty #50324702.

As destructive as this scenario has been for society at large, and ironically for the family itself, this is not our concern here. Instead, we are concerned with what is missing: there is no place in this monoculture for queer bodies of any kind. *For queer people, the suburb is an extermination camp.*

This is where Third World Gay Liberation, in their seminal *What We Want, What We Believe* from 1971, made a crucial strategic error. Along with the laudable and clear item '5. We want the abolition of the institution of the bourgeois nuclear family', they included a much weaker and destructive item '8. We want decent and free housing, fit shelter for human beings'.[4] While free housing is laudable – and the topic for another article – decent housing, indeed any housing at all, is, again, the primary architectural expression of heteronormativity. The provision of decent housing can only bolster the bourgeois nuclear family. In short: *Queer housing is a contradiction in terms. Not even a queer architect can design a queer house.*

But where does this leave us, as queer people living in a straight hegemony? Where does it leave us as *humans with bodies*, craving shelter and safety and a place to live that is in accordance with our experience of self and of living in the world? What strategies can we mobilise, what strategies have we mobilised, for living in houses? We know there are different types of strategies, strategies of hiding, of denial, of shame, of activism. There are strategies of the quotidian – ways of surviving within a structure that is at best oppositional or constraining, and that at worst ignores and nullifies our very existence. In these strategies we remain victims, even when at our most violent, even when at our most present and most visible.

Strategies of occupation: We make use of houses, shelter in them, sleep and eat and fuck in them, but without allowing the houses to contaminate ourselves. We do not identify with them, they are not expressions of who we are. We are an occupying army, interested in using but not in stewarding. We know these houses do not belong to us, and we do not dwell in them. We are squatters, we paint graffiti on the walls and leave empty champagne bottles and used condoms on every surface.

We play house. We mow the lawn, we paint the trim and clean the gutters. We host dinner parties with the family next door and holiday celebrations for our own extended families. We pretend that we belong in this house. I understand: we need to belong, we yearn to have a place, but somehow, we know deep down it's just not possible. So we keep trying: we get married. We buy tasteful modern furniture and the best kitchen knives. We agonise over paint colours and lighting fixtures. Our house is a doll's house, and we are the dolls. *For children, playing house is never about the house. It's always about gender and sexual roles. It's about pretending to be something you can't.*

We use the house to hide our difference, to project an image of normalcy. This establishes a radical dichotomy that mirrors that of our own divided psyches. This strategy is about hiding and dissimulation – but not assimilation – and it produces an interior energy that is by its nature unstable. Architecturally, this is a strategy of radical interiority, a strategy of the closet. And like any closet, the interiors of our houses contain a collection of wonders as well as skeletons, fantastic and phantasmic images of our selves and of our shame.

We walk through the front door and into the bedroom. We strip off the trappings of normalcy, the suit and tie carefully set aside for tomorrow, replaced by the skin of leather. In the basement, we know, in the

dungeon, hidden from view of the normal world, another shameful body has been waiting, patiently, for its punishment.

We are thieves in our own houses, penetrating its flesh and infesting its being. Knowing our presence is unwanted, we enter by stealth. This is a variant strategy of occupation, but instead of occupying as an army, instead of setting up camp in the territory of the enemy, we enter the body of the house as a virus. We bring our degenerate customs, our lovers, our open marriages and abnormal *menages*. Bit by bit we change the tissue of the house, its ability to support (hetero) life. And then we spread the contagion out of the house, into the neighbourhood, the city, the country, with networks gleaned from Facebook and Grindr. Or we sit dormant, like Genet in the house of Jacky Maglia, waiting and watching.[5]

Strategies of Avoidance: We come to understand, somehow, that living in houses – despite the strategies of occupation – is deadly and poisonous to our souls. There's no place like home, literally. Some of us, more prescient than others – or perhaps more stubborn, or more unlucky – know that there are no workable strategies. We can't live in houses.

For some of us this means making our own habitations in abandoned factories or storefronts – until these too become housified, re-developed for the market, that is: for the straight market. For others it means living outside of hegemonic forms: in shelters, or rooming houses, in hotels (like Genet, again, with a packed suitcase always under the bed) or on the street.[6] These are maybe the strongest of us, those who realise that any move to living in houses is to deny our queerness, to accept colonisation and subjugation. For us, there really is no place like home.

But of course, in the end we all know, deep down, that there is only one acceptable strategy. We need to demand an end to houses and to all existing housing. We need to *burn it all down* and start again. We need to produce means of shelter that are not simply expressions of the hetero norm, structures that allow all of us to be who we are in whatever social and material systems we choose. We live in tents and huts of our own making. We sleep wherever and with whoever we want. We build a new world in our own image.

Strategies of Intervention: Beyond simple occupation of the house, alternate to leaving it entirely, there are strategies in which we address directly the material fact of the house. These have been tentative, knowing that the structures of the world that define the house are too strong for any real attack. We bring the closet to the street: we paint the eaves in rainbow colours. We restore the gingerbread, make a garden with a water feature. We call this the Halloween Parade: it is a strategy of costuming – it is the house in drag. In some ways, this is the most aggressive strategy of all, a strategy of de-norming and appropriation, a strategy of queer colonisation. We re-make the house in our own image. This is also the strategy of queer gentrification.

From another view, this is a strategy of amazing restraint – of weakness and victimhood. We make changes that cannot cause alarm, that are easily restored, and worse, that increase our property values – strengthening along the way the hold of the hegemony. It is a strategy of fear – we are determined to be good citizens. It is also a camp strategy of (self)-denial and (self)-mockery, the obverse of strategies of closeting. It is in the end a localised and personal expression of self and of desire, but it denies the political reality in

which we live, the absolute hegemony of the norm. Can we go further? Can we find a way to trans-form, to trans the form of houses, to make our houses like our bodies sites for resistance? Can we approach the issue as architects, determined – despite the impossibility stated above – to operate projectively, through design, to develop strategies that extend beyond the everyday, beyond idle practice, beyond avoidance, beyond fear and weakness?

As a way to work through what this might mean, we propose eight architectural strategies for re-occupying the Cape Cod house discussed earlier in this article for queer bodies, minds and hearts. These strategies are not exhaustive nor particularly rigorous, and are described in only schematic terms, but they offer modes by which the key programmatic formal and material components we have listed of the Cape Cod House can be attacked, made invalid, or *détourned* for queer uses. We seek to make of the Cape Cod House a site for our pain, our longing, our anger.

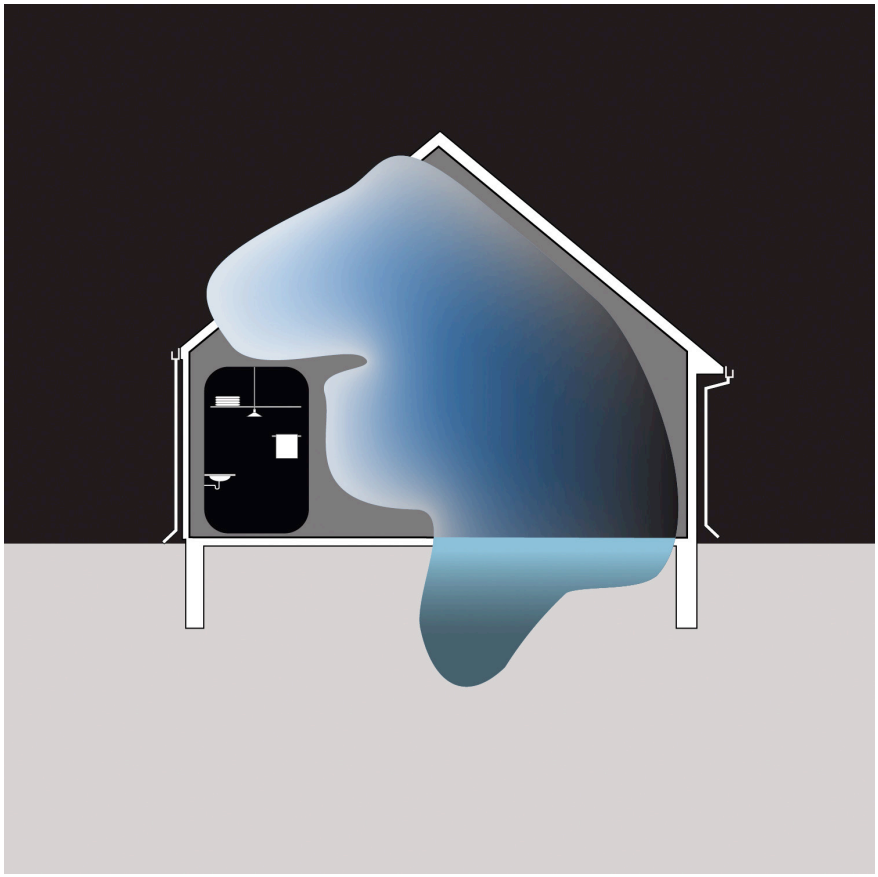
House One (dreams) inserts a pure interiority of *another* into the external frame of the Cape Cod House. It is an alien presence inhabiting the shell of its host. The insertion describes a container that is of and for the body, muscular in form in opposition to the rectilinear and industrial language of the host, and formed of materials that only exist in the imagination: structured of emotion, layered with dreams, surfaced with desire and the feathers of mythical birds and the skins of our lovers. We enter this queer world naked, through an antechamber where we remove the vestiges of the straight world, wash its dirt off our bodies, and store our outside selves. [Fig. 2]

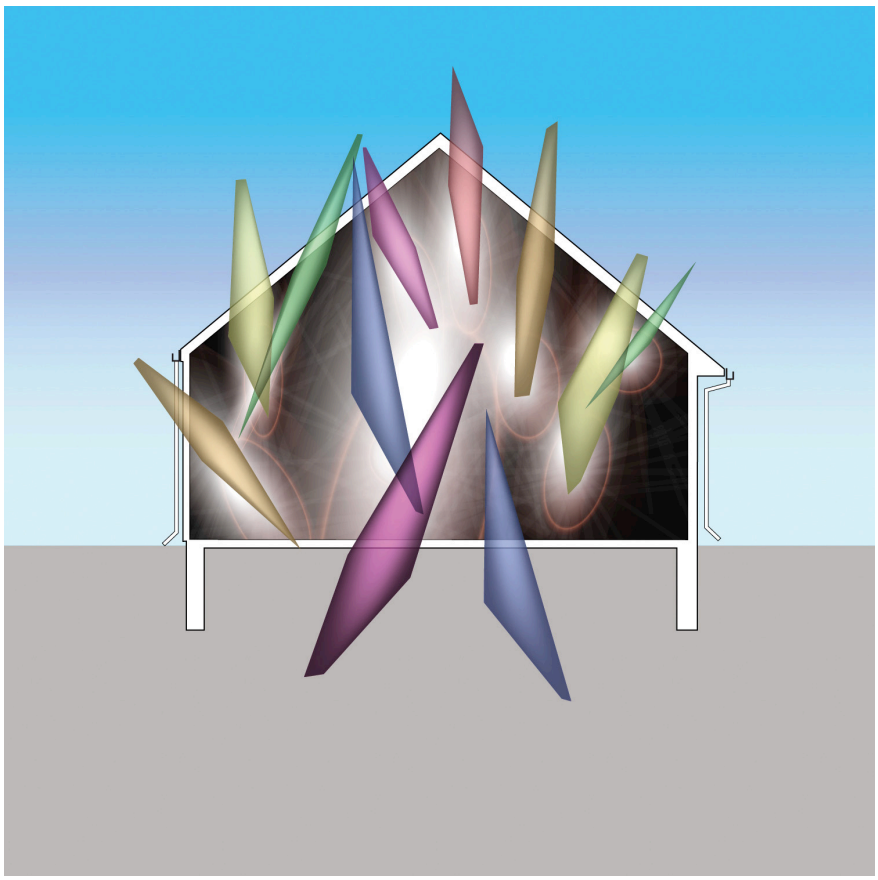
House Two (shards) is a display of violence to the Cape Cod House that disrupts the form and function of the house and of the family. Function here is provisional: we sleep, we eat, we bathe, we fuck between the shards, opportunistically making use of space and objects as it comes to hand, as their position and being changes day to day. We work around the anger, living our lives anyway. [Fig. 3]

The shards are slivers, violent and dangerous, some material harder and clearer than glass, formed perhaps of the semen of the gods. When they fall to the ground they do not shatter, but penetrate the earth – we hear its moans. They bring light into the darkened interior, a light that is both milky and soft and at the same time hard and uncompromising. These shards are our souls.

Fig. 2: House One (dreams). Image: author.

Fig. 3: House Two (shards). Image: author.





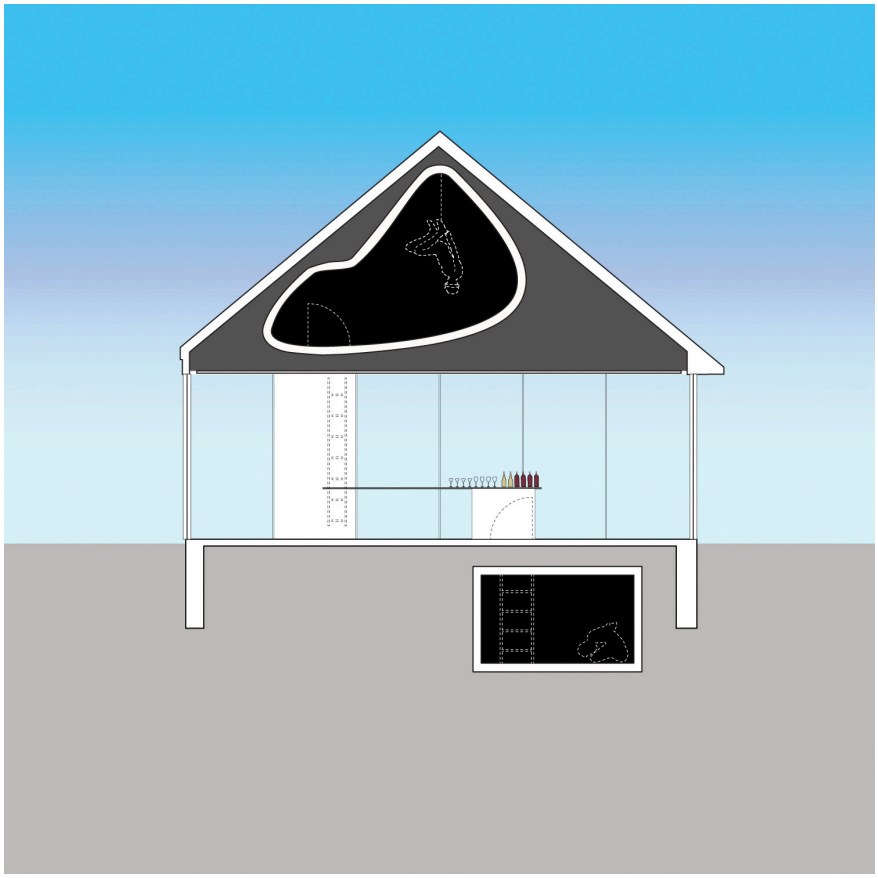
House Three (nightmares) replaces the exterior walls of the house, on all sides, with glass, transparent and open to view to all. The house has been opened, like our lives. Interiors are pristine white surfaces, and necessities of life are discretely hidden away in sleek white cabinets, inscrutable. We invite friends and neighbours for sophisticated garden parties, wine tastings with local cheese pairings. In some versions, a velvet curtain runs the perimeter: but in principal the curtain is never drawn. [Fig. 4]

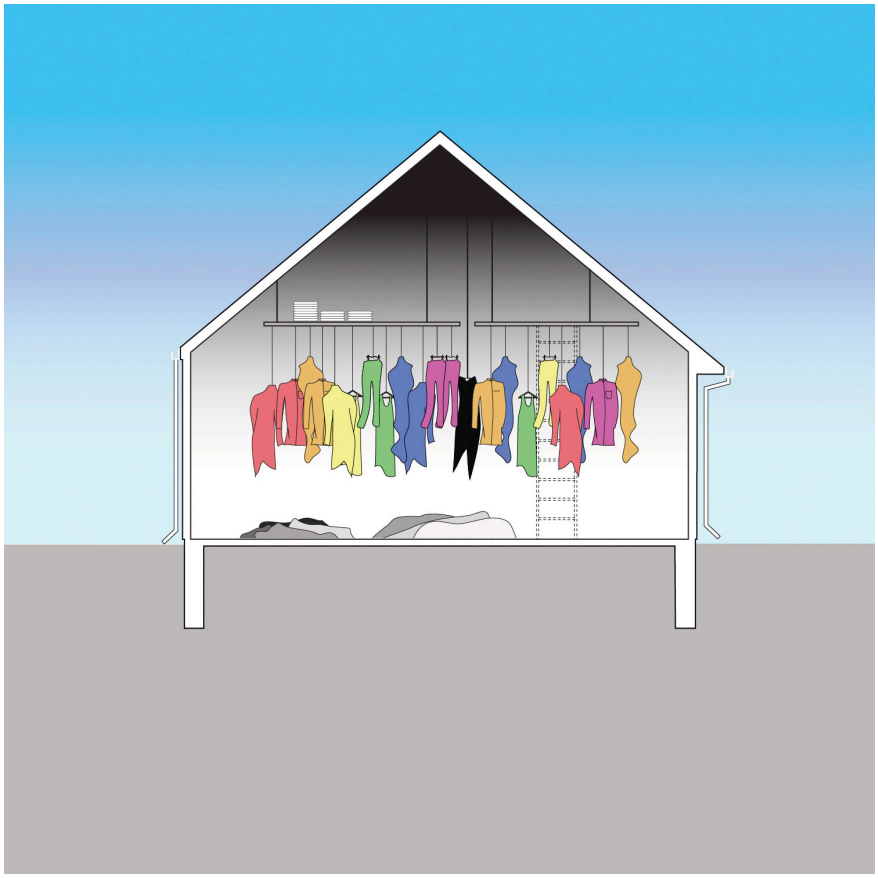
Also hidden, away from view and from hearing, in anechoic soundproof cells above and below the party, are our darker secret fantasies, our psychic victims, our unspeakable carnal transactions, bound, gagged, stored away for future use.

House Four (identity) is a simple closet: we live between the rows of our identities, suspended from above from a complex machinery of wires, bars, chains and pulleys, like a crazed dry cleaner's shop, or like Duchamp's *Moules Malic*. We sleep on piles of underclothes scattered around the floor, or climb into the mechanism, impaling ourselves on the machinery. Memories and previous parts of ourselves come back to us as the machinery moves the clothes, as we try to find space among last year's linen pants and dressing gowns for our new identities. We live our lives surrounded by the smell of old clothes, the lingering and intoxicating scent of bodies, not all of which are our own. [Fig. 5]

Fig. 4: House Three (nightmares). Image: author.

Fig. 5: House Four (identity). Image: author.





House Five (infinity), maintains the internal divisions of the Cape Cod House, but lines each room and the outside of the house with mirrors. The material of the house is removed, the form rendered insubstantial. The interior becomes an infinite reflection of our infinite psychological being, with each space extending on forever in all directions. This house is the universe. [Fig. 6]

Each space becomes an infinite landscape, designated for a single use: bathing, sleeping, eating. The house becomes a maze, and we lose ourselves in it, unable to find anymore the entrances and exits, all of which have been hidden carefully or rendered only accessible with difficulty. This house, like all houses, is a prison, but an infinite and beautiful prison, and aside from chance encounters that may or may not ever happen, we cannot know if we are the only inmates.

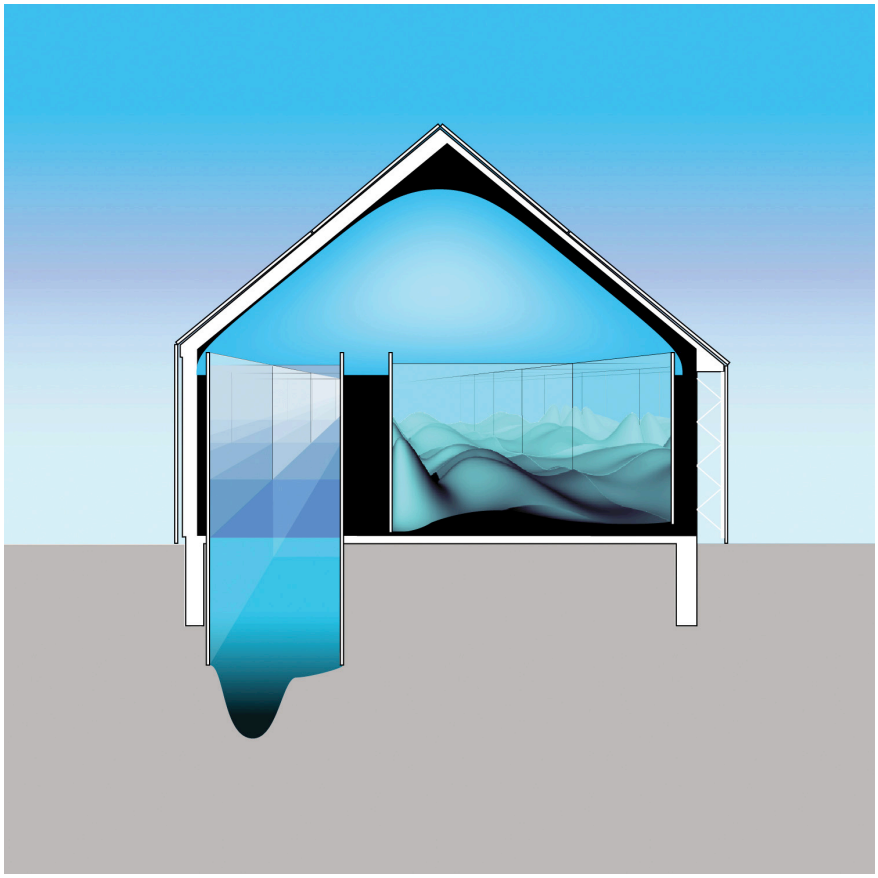
We cannot know either that in the interstices between the rooms, behind the mirrors, the guards are watching us.

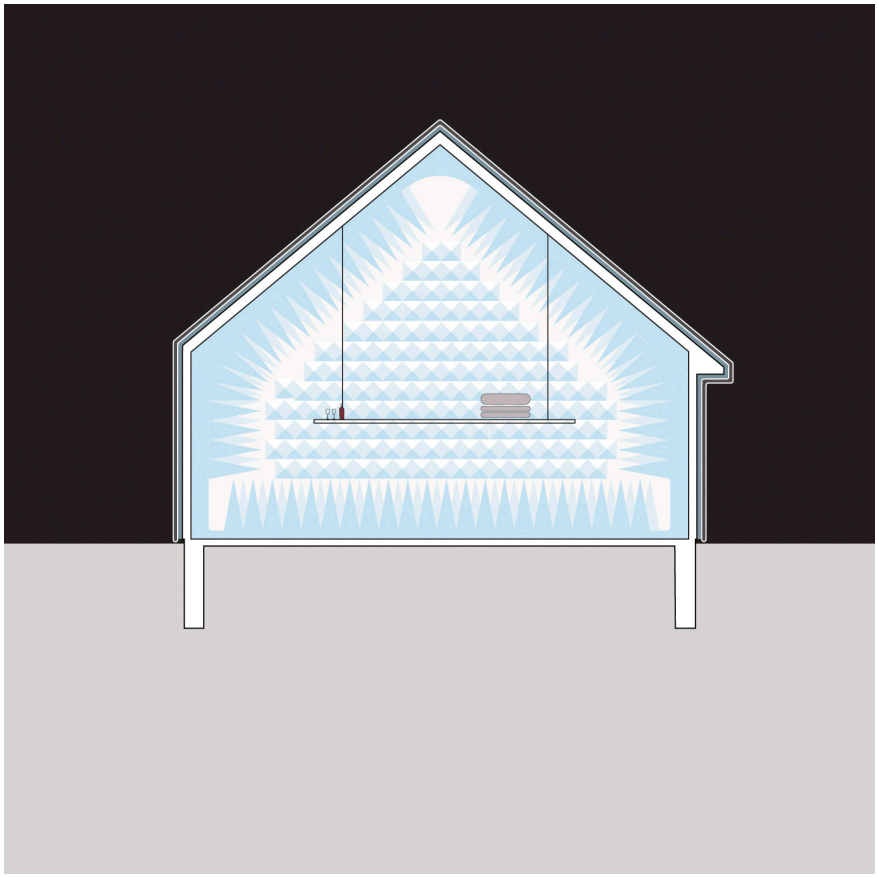
House Six (silence) is an anechoic chamber: the walls and ceiling of the Cape Cod House are lined with sound absorbing foam, the exterior is covered with lead sheets. In the centre of the house is a mesh platform on which we live our lives, suspended in soundlessness. This house is not about secrets, about hiding ourselves from the world; instead, it is about silence, about finding a space in which the insults of the world cannot reach us. This is a house for being alone with our thoughts. Don't ask, don't tell. [Fig. 7]

Maybe this house could go further. Unknown to us, invisible to the inhabitant, the house has been outfitted with a finely tuned sensory net, able to detect, record and analyse the energy patterns in our brains. These patterns – our thoughts – are stored by the house for future use, or for broadcasting on the internet or indeed to the universe. Or to other minds, in other bodies, in other houses.

Fig. 6: House Five (infinity). Image: author.

Fig. 7: House Six (silence). Image: author.





House Seven (water): the ground floor is replaced with a pool of heavily saline water. We float on this surface, our bodily functions accommodated through a mechanism of tubes and wires connected to machines: food, wastes, orgasms. On a cloudless night, or occasionally on fine days if the sun is low, the roof opens like the wings of a butterfly, and we float beneath the stars. [Fig. 8]

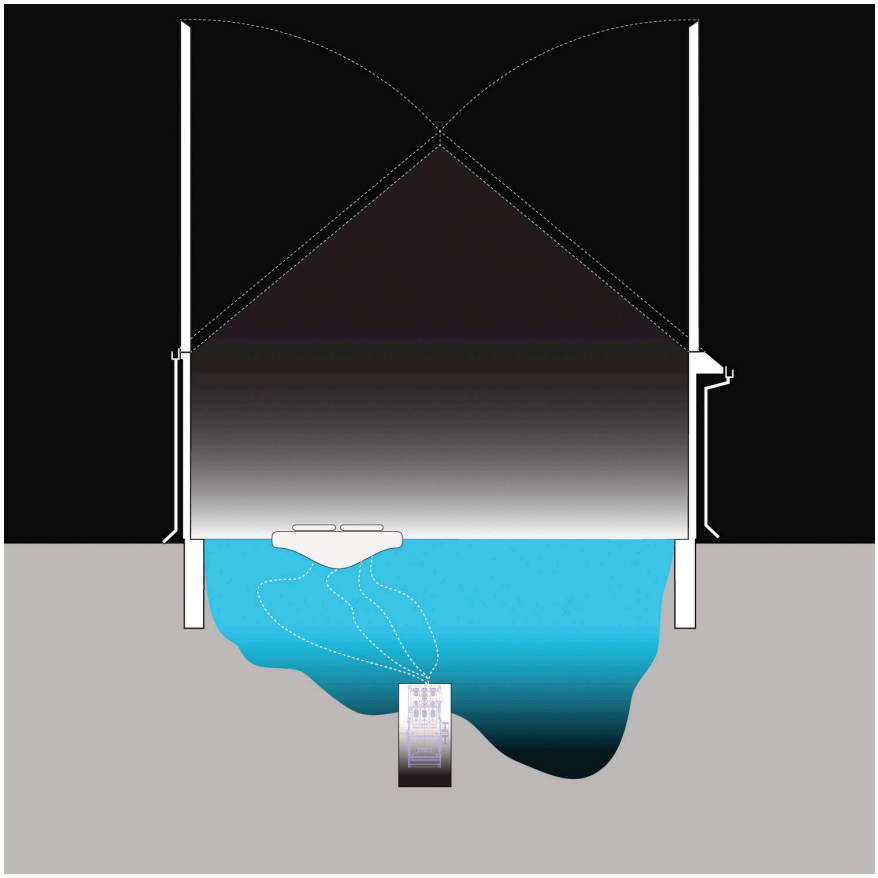
An alternative version of the floating house is not so calming. In this version, the laws of gravity are suspended within the house, and all objects – furniture, knives, dreams, lovers – float freely in the space.

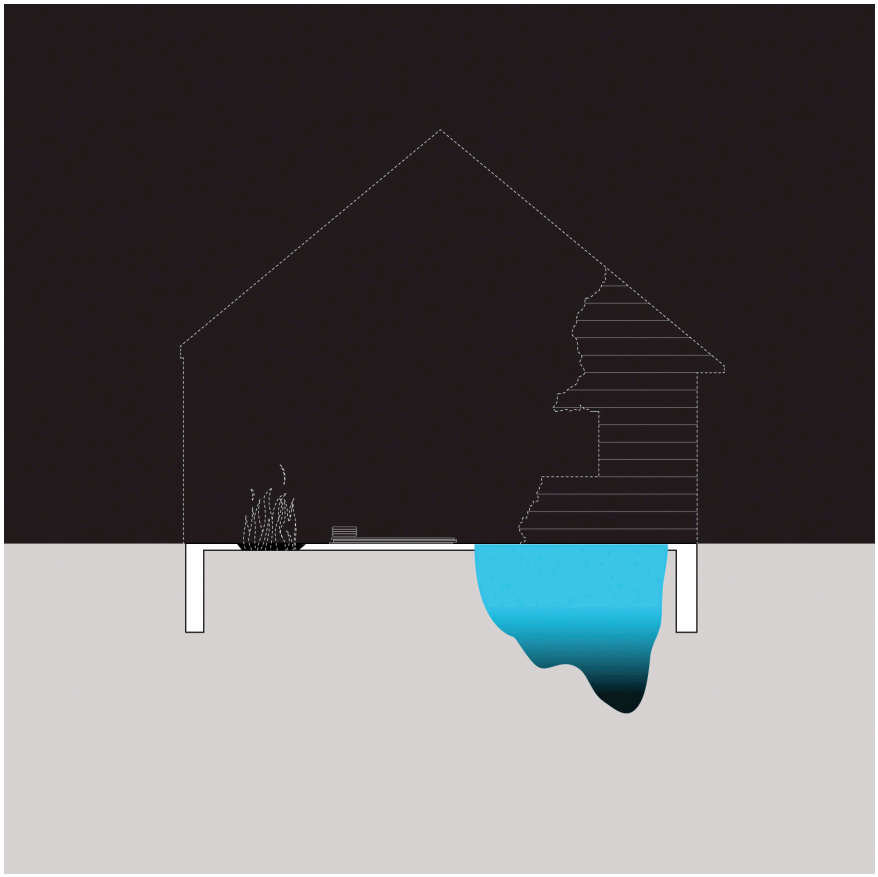
Clearly, in this version the roof is not opened – or only once.

House Eight (fire), the Final House, or the House at the End of Time, takes the design argument to its logical conclusion. The Cape Cod House has been demolished – set on fire most likely, and there are likely remains of the house, burnt-out walls and rusted nails, asphalt shingles and stained carpets, on the site. Where the house once stood, we have placed the necessities for our new lives, unencumbered. [Fig. 9]

Fig. 8: House Seven (water). Image: author.

Fig. 9: House Eight (fire). Image: author.





Notes

The author would like to thank Ryerson University and the European Graduate School for their assistance in this work. Special thanks to Ruslan Ivanytskyy for his assistance in the preparation of images.

1. International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), *Yogyakarta Principles - Principles on the application of international human rights law in relation to sexual orientation and gender identity*, March 2007, http://www.refworld.org [accessed, 01 November 2017].
2. Gang of Four, *I Found that Essence Rare* (vinyl recording). London: EMI, 1979.
3. 'Levitt Adds 1950 Model to his Line', *Life*, May 22, 1950, p. 141.
4. Third world Gay Liberation, 'What we want, what we believe' in Timothy Patrick McCarthy and John Campbell McMillian (eds.), *The radical reader: A documentary history of the American radical tradition*. (New York: The New Press, 2003), 589–592.
5. This is a reference to a house that Jean Genet designed, and had built, in the late 1940s, in La Canette, near Cannes. The house was a gift to his lover, Lucien Sénémaud, on the occasion of Sénémaud's marriage to Ginette Chaix. Jacky Maglia was Chaix's son from a previous marriage, and lived in the house for many years. On a visit to the house in 2005, Maglia told me about the times Genet would come to stay, briefly, in the house, sleeping in a room with a view down the hill (which has now become the kitchen). The implication was that Genet was always on the lookout for the possible arrival of the police. According to Albert Dichy, in an interview from 2005, this was one of three houses that Genet designed, had built, and gave away to former lovers on their marriages to women. For more information about the house in La Canette, see Edmund White, *Genet: A Biography* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993), 315.
6. This is a reference to a likely apocryphal story that recounts Genet's purported habit of always living in hotels, with a packed suitcase under the bed in case he needed to make a quick getaway. I have not been able to find a reliable source for this story.

Biography

Colin Ripley is a Professor in and Past Chair of the Department of Architectural Science at Ryerson University in Toronto. He is also a director of RVTR, which operates simultaneously as an award-winning architectural practice and as an academic research platform. He is the author or editor of several books and journal papers on a wide range of topics, including megaregional urbanism, responsive envelope systems, sonic architecture, Canadian modern architecture, and the modern concept of the house as understood through the writings of Jean Genet. Currently, he is working on a doctorate in Philosophy, Art and Critical Thought at the European Graduate School.

Position

Stalled! Transforming Public Restrooms

Joel Sanders

At different moments in American history the public bathroom has been a crucible that has registered social anxieties triggered by the threat of a series of marginalised groups entering into mainstream society. Historical milestones include debates sparked by the introduction of the 'ladies' room to accommodate women entering the workplace in the early twentieth century, the fight to abolish segregated 'coloured' bathrooms by the Civil Rights Movement during the 1950s and 60s, the fear of contamination posed by gay men using public lavatories during the AIDS crisis in the 1980s, and the pressure to make bathrooms accessible to people with disabilities tied to the passing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990. In each instance, the public restroom transforms an abstract concern into a tangible peril by virtue of it being a physical space. It has the power to conjure nightmarish scenarios that compel 'normal' citizens to physically interact with 'abnormal' people whom society has preferred to render invisible.

In the United States, public restrooms are again a contested site; this time sparked by the spectre of allowing a new constituency – transgender individuals – access to the public restroom belonging to the gender with which they identify. A long-simmering moral panic over the presence of transgender people in sex-segregated public toilets began escalating in the spring of 2015, as an unprecedented wave of mass culture visibility for trans issues. It intersected with recent changes in the federal government's interpretation of existing civil rights protections against sex-based discrimination. Two high-profile examples have been the Campaign for Houston to repeal HERO, an equal rights ordinance, and North Carolina's House Bill 2. They resulted in the boycott of the state by numerous corporations and organisations. Currently, more than two dozen similar bills attempting to restrict gender-appropriate public toilet access for transgender people have been introduced in statehouses across the United States. And the Trump administration has retreated from transgender-supportive interpretations of existing laws put forth by the Obama administration.

Both sides of the debate pose this issue as one of safety. Advocates cite high rates of violence faced by trans people, and in particular trans women of color. Naysayers claim that transgender women pose a threat to cis-gender women, by portraying trans women as predatory men masquerading in dresses to stalk sexual prey in the ladies' room. Lurking beneath this unsubstantiated fear are longstanding societal anxieties about human embodiment that bathrooms have historically harboured: they include abjection, misogyny, homophobia, and disability. Yet a new, and perhaps even deeper threat provoked by society's newfound awareness of transgender people is the notion of gender ambiguity: trans people call into question the presumption that anatomy is destiny, demonstrating that there are multiple ways of expressing one's gender identity independently from one's biological sex. This increasingly calls into question the way in which bathroom design perpetuates – through spatial segregation – an outdated binary conception of sex (a conception that besides posing a problem for trans people, also excludes intersex people, and those who identify as non-binary or genderqueer).

Stalled!, an interdisciplinary design research project spearheaded by architecture professor Joel Sanders, gender studies professor Susan Stryker, and law professor Terry Kogan aims to shift the terms of the debate in three fundamental ways. First, while all-gender restrooms have received considerable media attention, few cover it from an architectural perspective. We need to regard public restrooms as a social justice issue with design consequences that can be solved with innovative architectural solutions. Secondly, we can no longer accept sex/gender segregated restrooms as a given that answers to the ostensibly objective needs of privacy based on anatomical difference. History teaches us that the first sex segregated bathrooms were instituted in the 1880s in response to women entering the workplace. A product of prurient Victorian values, 'ladies rooms' were invented as havens to protect women whose mentally and physically vulnerable bodies threatened to corrupt men. Thirdly, we need to expand our purview to create inclusive restrooms that not only meet the needs of the trans community, but encompass the needs of all embodied subjects of different ages, genders and abilities.

There are two prevailing design approaches to gender neutral bathrooms – the single unit and multi-stall solution. The single unit solution is the generally accepted code-compliant solution that retains sex segregated bathrooms and supplements them with a single-occupancy room re-labeled/designated as Gender Neutral. But this single-occupancy solution spatially isolates and excludes: it stigmatises non-conforming individuals, not only trans but also the disabled, from mixing with other people.

Respectively, we advocate a de-segregated multi-stall solution that has received support from many trans activists. This alternative treats the public restroom as one single open space equipped with European style, fully enclosed floor-to-ceiling doors that ensure visual privacy. This solution has a number of advantages. No longer will gender non-conforming people who don't fit the binary need to choose between two unacceptable spatial options that don't align with their identities. By consolidating a greater number of people in one rather than two rooms, there are more eyes to monitor, reducing risk. Most importantly, multi-stall responds not only to the needs of the trans community, but also accommodates the rising needs of a wider range of differently embodied subjects of varying ages, genders, and abilities. For example, in this way a father can accompany his young daughter, or a woman can take her elderly male friend to the restroom.

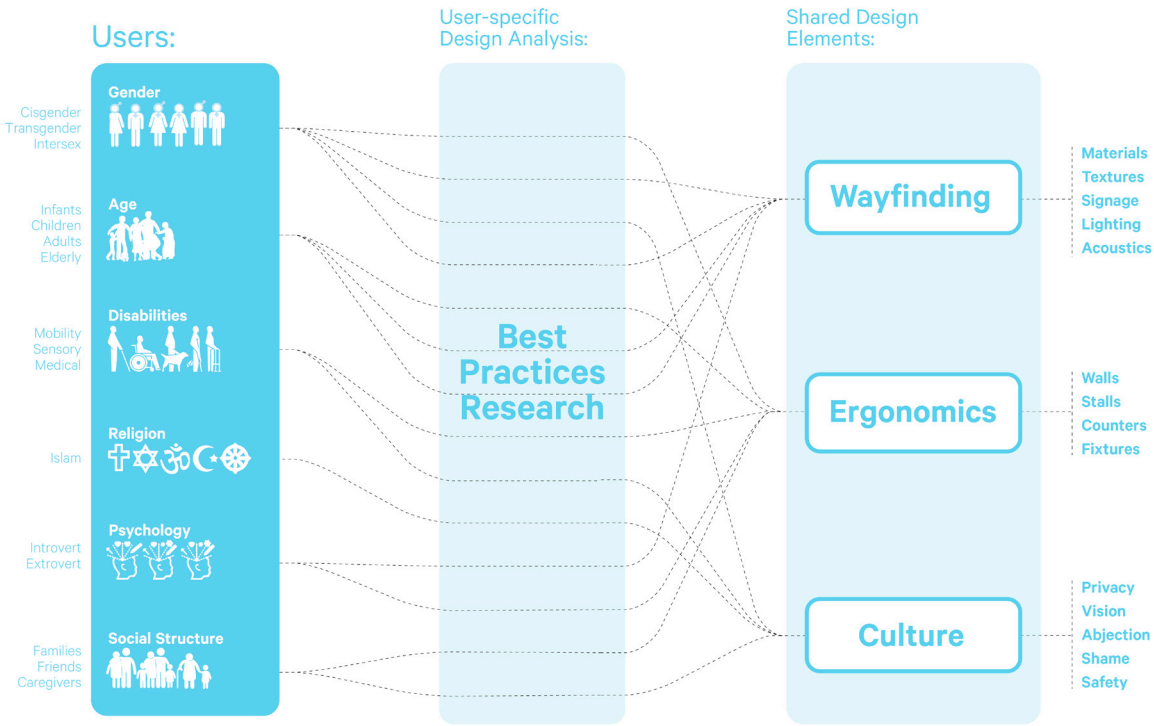
Just as we ended the racial segregation of public toilets in the past, and expanded access for a wide range of physical abilities, so too can we design truly inclusive public restrooms that serve diversity and justice, safety and sanitation. But implementing inclusive desegregated bathrooms is not without challenges. To begin with, it requires changing existing legislation and building codes. Desegregated restrooms require a complicated variance. Hence, Stalled! includes an initiative to amend the International Plumbing Code (IPC), the model code that governs most construction in the United States, to allow for multi-user, all-gender restrooms in new and existing buildings. Next, it requires changing deeply ingrained social attitudes about spatial practices related to three activities – grooming, washing and eliminating – that people consider natural, universal and inevitable. We would need to recognise instead the socially constructed nature of bathrooms, as historically contingent sites of social exchange where social, psychological, technological and ecological forces converge.

While important in their own right, bathrooms are only a point of departure to generate a larger conversation about the relationship between environmental design, the human body and social equity. The controversies surrounding transgender bathrooms are just one example of how the civil liberties of non-compliant bodies – women, blacks, Muslims, immigrants and the LBGTQ community to name a few – are imperiled both in this country and around the world by denying people access to public and private space. In other words, these are political issues with architectural ramifications. Architects and designers must step up to the plate and explore the design consequences of these urgent social justice issues. First, we need to become aware of our own complicity by not turning a blind eye to the way the seemingly innocent conventions of architecture reproduce problematic cultural assumptions about ‘normal’ bodies. Then designers, working in collaboration with activists, lawyers, code experts, engineers and graphic designers need to form coalitions to develop a new design approach that enables a broad range of differently embodied people of different ages, genders, religions and disabilities to productively interact with one another in public and private space. In the process of discovering creative design solutions that include the needs of diverse human bodies, we can change social awareness: accessible public spaces that foster mixing will breed tolerance and respect for human dignity and difference.

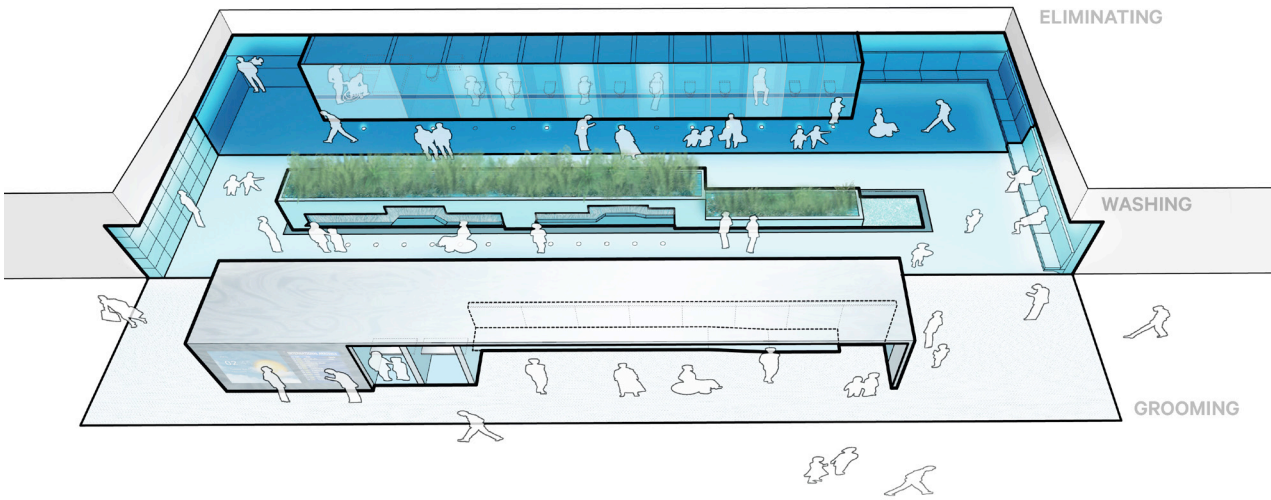
Airport restroom case study

Stalled! is developing restroom prototypes that can be implemented in a variety of generic sites, from smaller footprints in institutional buildings to high volume facilities in airport concourses. We chose an airport as a case study because it is a high volume, mixed-use public space where a diverse constituency spends extended periods of time, catering to their mental and physical needs while they wait – checking social media, eating and going to the bathroom.

Our scheme for the airport restroom takes as its point of departure the standard dimensions of a typical gender-segregated airport restroom. Our goal was to explore different ways that a wide range of embodied subjects could mix together in public space, based on the understanding that the seemingly commonplace and universal activities that we perform in restrooms are shaped by the convergence of biological, cultural and psychological factors.

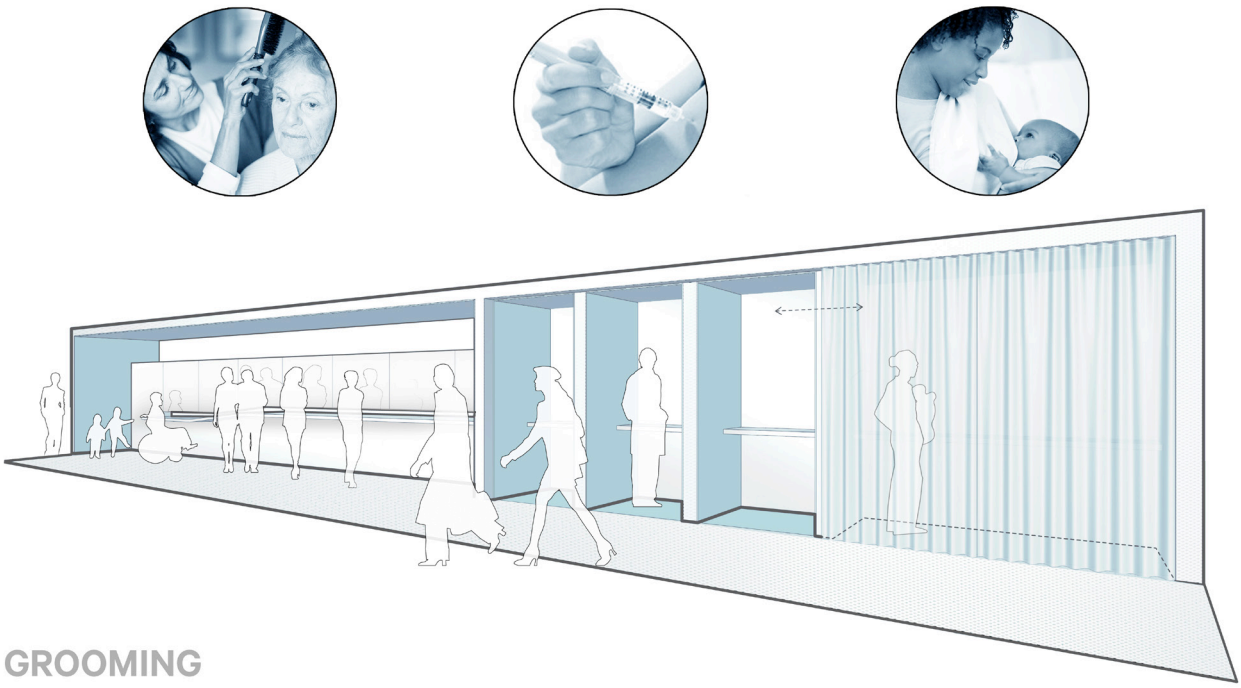


Diversity design methodology: Our design methodology involves researching the design consequences of the specific needs of user groups categorised by age, gender, religion and disability, and then finding creative solutions that could be shared between them. Three factors guided our design decisions. 1) Creating a space that would promote physical and psychological well-being to counteract the subjective feelings about abjection, shame, privacy and propriety that bathrooms evoke in users. 2) Integrating interactive fixtures and technologies that conserve water and are easy to handle for those with manual disabilities. 3) Devising way-finding that uses color, texture, and dramatic lighting in lieu of signage as devices to assist people with physical and sensory disabilities to navigate through public space.



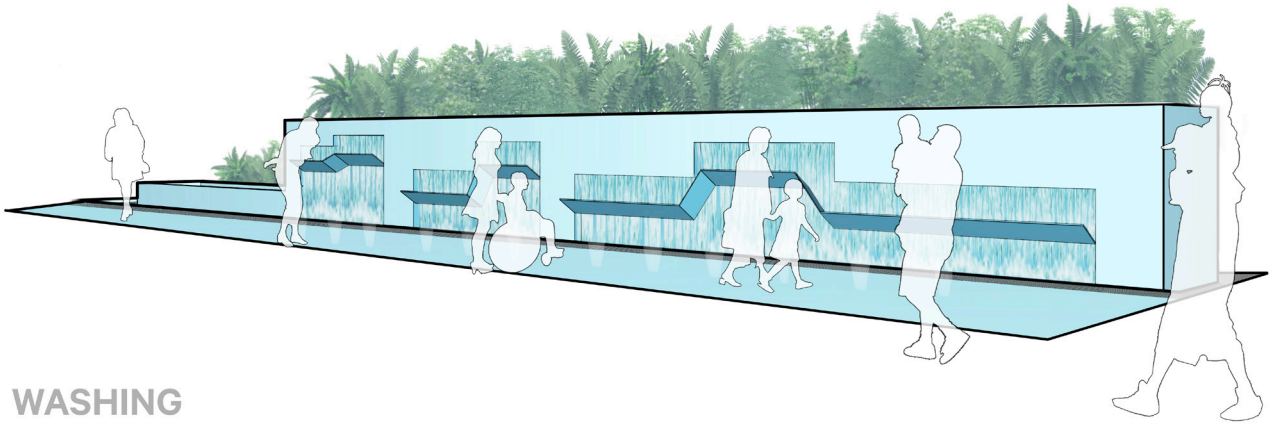
Activity zones: Treating the toilet stall as a privacy unit allows us to eliminate the barrier that typically divides adjacent men's and women's rooms as well as the wall that separates them from the concourse and instead reconceive of the public restroom as a semi-open agora-like precinct that is animated by three parallel activity zones, each dedicated to grooming, washing, and eliminating.

Slip-resistant sheets of diamond plate, tile, and rubber differentiate each of the three activity zones painted a different shade of blue for the visually impaired. After debating the merits of different color options, we finally chose blue because research indicates that it is soothing, associated with water, health, and hygiene, and a complementary background color for deaf signing because it contrasts with skin tones.



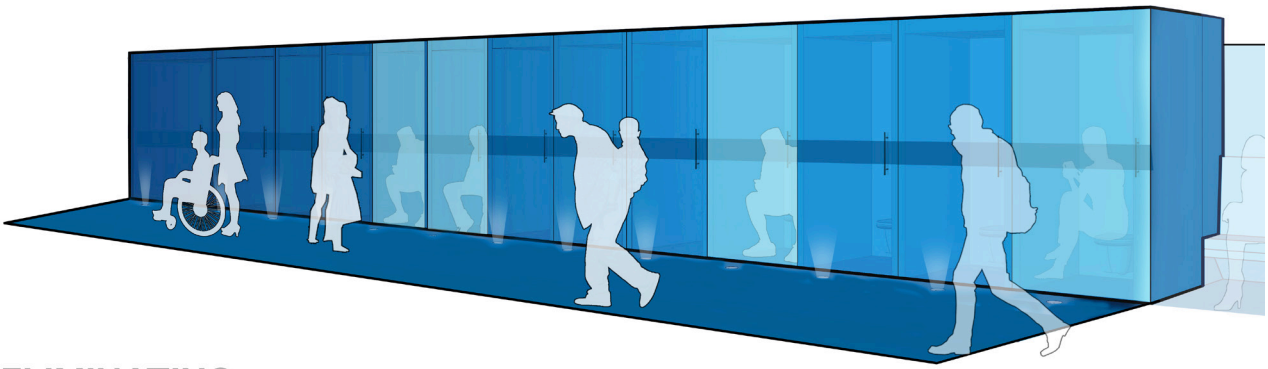
GROOMING

Grooming station: Immediately adjacent to the concourse, the grooming station features a smart mirror that disseminates information (flight arrival and departure times, weather, and retail) while they groom at a multi-level counter that serves people of different heights and abilities. Those who want privacy can retreat into curtained alcoves for breastfeeding, administering medical procedures such insulin injections, meditation, and prayer.



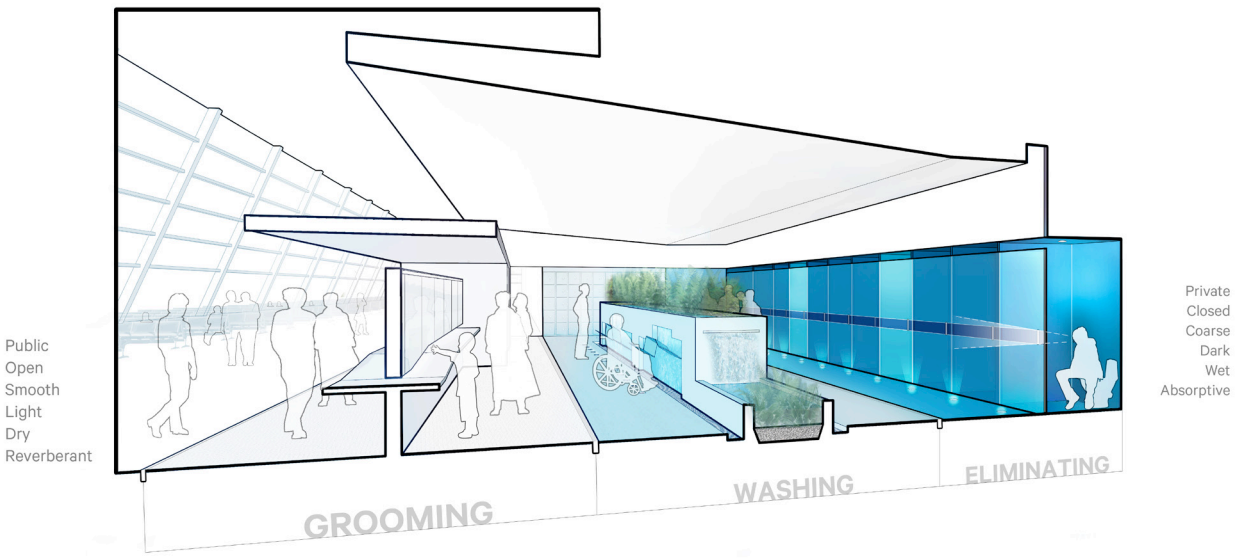
WASHING

Washing station: The communal washing station meets the needs of adults, children, people in wheel chairs, and religious people who use public restrooms to perform ritual ablutions for cleansing face, hands, arms, and feet. Inset floor lights indicate the location of motion-activated faucets inset into the wall that allows water to flow into an inclined splash plane placed at different ergonomic heights that is then collected and cleaned in a remediating planter before being recycled. The scent of plants and the ambient sounds of flowing water masks bodily sounds and odors.



ELIMINATING

Elimination station: Located at the back of the facility, the elimination station consolidates rows of bathroom stalls that offer acoustic and visual privacy. Unoccupied stalls are indicated by recessed floor lights; when entered, they turn off and the now occupied stall glows from within. From the inside of each stall, users can surveil their surrounding by looking through a band of blue one-way mirror located at seated eye-level. Stalls contain low flush composting toilets that treat human waste through aerobic decomposition.



Section: As users circulate from one station to the next, passing from the outermost grooming station to the innermost toilet wall, they experience a multi-sensory gradient that takes them from public to private, open to closed, smooth to course, dry to wet, acoustically reverberant to sound absorptive, ambient to spot lighting.

Biography

Joel Sanders is the Principal of his New York based studio JSA and a Professor of Architecture at Yale University. JSA projects have been featured in international exhibitions including MoMA, SF MoMA, the Art Institute of Chicago and the Carnegie Museum of Art. The firm has received numerous awards, including six New York Chapter AIA Awards, two New York State AIA Awards, an Interior Design Best of Year Award, and two Design Citations from Progressive Architecture. Editor of Stud: *Architectures of Masculinity* and *Groundwork: Between Landscape and Architecture* (with Diana Balmori), Sanders's writings and practice have explored the complex relationship between culture and social space, looking at the impact that evolving cultural forces (such as gender identity and the body, technology and new media, and the nature/culture dualism) have on the designed environment.

Interview

Between Delft and Stockholm

Brady Burroughs (BB), Katarina Bonnevier (KB), Katja Grillner (KG), Hélène Frichot (HF)
Initial questions by Dirk van den Heuvel and Robert Gorny (FP)

FP: With our trans/queer issue of *Footprint* we aim to break a spell that seems quite tenacious in architecture, namely the highly male-dominated, gender-biased and heteronormative framework of our professional practices, language and thinking. Luckily, we witness an increasing effort to break with old hegemonies that stem from binary oppositions and universalisations that overcode difference.

As we see it, you managed to develop a most interesting and inspiring approach to architecture and writing in relation to performances and the performative, making your own work an example of 'how to do things with words'. It seems to be specific to the School of Architecture at The Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm (KTH), especially your group *Fatale* for feminist architecture theory and practice, the *Mycket* collaboration, and the *Critical Studies in Architecture* group.

To start from here, with the feminist problem regarding a politics of location, could you situate this approach? Rather than answering the Freudian question 'where it began', could you elaborate in which 'milieu' your approaches came about and crossed one another and converged?

KG: Interestingly, I think, the experimental approaches towards a kind of performative critical spatial writing that have come to flourish in our environment at KTH, with many examples also from colleagues other than ourselves, for each one of us also draw distinct lines back to other key locations and situations in which we have been embedded and that have strongly contributed to our individual passion, courage and curiosity for pushing boundaries and shifting perspectives. These involve friends, teachers and forerunners such as Jennifer Bloomer, Jane Rendell, Alberto Pérèz-Gomez, Karen Burns, and Julieanna Preston.[1] This is important: each of us has brought to the KTH 'milieu' our own specific poetic modes and intriguing queries.

I was in some way the first of subsequent publications at KTH with my PhD-dissertation 'Ramble, Linger and Gaze' from the year 2000, which 'writes' an eighteenth-century landscape garden through a philosophical dialogue between two eighteenth-century characters and my own alter ego.[2] Throughout my PhD-training at KTH, I had also been offered good opportunities to pursue experiments in spatial writing with our architecture students in studio and workshop settings. Another institutional condition that probably served historically to promote the creation of our particular 'milieu', as you call it, was a substantial research grant from the Swedish Research Council from 2003–2007 which aimed at forming an academy for practice based research in architecture and design across Sweden.[3] Within that framework I ran a sub-programme with workshops, courses and exhibitions called Writing Architecture, which also drew international interest and participation. From 2011 onwards we have been a central part of yet another

large research grant from Formas supporting critical and experimental approaches to architectural research on a national level.[4]

In 2007, we formed FATALE out of a situation where all stars seemed to suddenly align for a feminist call to action (to be specific it was at a particular lunch, on the outdoor street-side terrace of *Divinos*, in late August or early September of that year). We have elaborated elsewhere on this moment of initiation.[5] Through FATALE, which formed at the same time as the academic subject Critical Studies in Architecture was established, we managed to create, together with our students (who came not only from the architecture programme but also came as continuing education students with diverse professional backgrounds, such as artists, planners, architects, journalists, conservation experts and more), a passionate, hopeful and forward-looking atmosphere. Ephemeral in their formations but bubbling with lots of humour, our courses, workshops, studios, conferences and salons have been mutually encouraging for participants – students, invited guests and colleagues at KTH.

And, for all the ephemerality that comes with what is situation-bound, where just as important as what is said, is how it is said, what gestures, glimpses and gazes do, how we sit and where there are material traces, what positions we take and how we play with them, we are also very proud of the more tangible materialisation that has come out of our efforts. Fresh from the press just now is the *Feminist Futures* volume edited by Meike Schalk, Thérèse Kristiansson and Ramia Mazé that was specifically developed from the architecture and gender course run under this theme in 2011.[6]

Queering institutions

FP: In the Netherlands the defense of a PhD is highly orchestrated as a play with professors in black frocks and all, completely ludic as in Johan Huizinga's definition of the term. Hence, especially Katarina Bonnevier's wonderful dissertation 'Behind Straight Curtains' was a mind-blowing exercise. To the Dutch, it embraced the ritual and theatrical aspects of the academic, just as it demonstrated the social ritual and playfulness of the salons (subject matter of her dissertation) and the way these salons acted as almost heterotopian places of refuge for voices that could hardly speak out in public space.

How do you view the re-appropriation of public space through your writing and research as performative acts? Is the salon, the seminar, the study still such a place of inbetweenness – perhaps in the way Henry Urbach has described the 'antecloset', a space where to renegotiate the terms of institutional norms?

KB: Thank you for your appreciative words about my dissertation! It is always super fun to hear how my writings resonate with different readers and within different (historic, geographic and social) situations. I very much regard *Behind Straight Curtains* as a masquerading device which functions in several ways; a performance in writing, passing as a dissertation, trying to ride the performative force in order to generate new (definitions of) architecture and, most importantly, to create spaces for 'girls like us'. And we do have some black frocks spectacles in Sweden too. For instance, I could not bring myself to go to the official doctoral celebration because of the rigid patriarchal and heteronormative rules of behaviour.

What is important when dealing with these questions and situations is that they are inscribed in our own bodies, we always put ourselves at risk and we cannot pretend to be other than vulnerable. However, these are also the reasons why they can make a difference. The list of public situations you mention, as well as writing and research as performative acts, are still productive attitudes. But let's expand the list. For instance, the group MYCKET (of which I am a part) is researching *The*

Club Scene by staging full scale re-enactments of legendary queer/lesbian/feminist (night)clubs as significant spaces for embodied knowledge production and body politics. The closet metaphor is not my favourite, it feels like a heavy burden, rigid and small (even if the 'ante-closet' is not the closet it still refers to the closet). We need to wander a much wider landscape! Currently, I think the space Gloria Anzaldùa named in *La conciencia de la mestiza: Towards a New Consciousness* (1982), 'la tierra entre medio' is the most accurate to describe the unstable, unpredictable, ambivalent and even frightening situation where terms are renegotiated. [7] Since institutions have such an ability to swallow or appropriate without really changing, we need to be always moving, turning around our preferences and twisting our motives.

On writing and role play

FP: It is a well-established fact that with the advent of the novel, women in particular embraced the medium of writing, both as readers and as authors. And when in the nineteenth century historiography as a scholarly discipline was established, the historical novel was discredited, in effect excluding many female voices from institutional discourse.

How to understand the intersections of gender, role-play, fiction-writing and historiography? Where do you see yourself in the larger field – from the emergent 'global' histories to inquests into so-called tacit knowledge communities?

KG: Fiction releases our capacity for play, for imagining other positions, inhabiting other characters, being another in another world, testing and experimenting while at the same time 'sitting still'. It allows us to let down our professional guards and as such it is not surprising that there is historically also a gender related story to the use of fiction. It has a clear power to shift established grounds, by messing with, undermining, undressing and simply humouring the serious 'what we know'.

KB: I turn to bell hooks to understand how we can see the past as a resource for our commitment to the present – to create a world where everyone can belong. It is not about rescuing the past in order to rescue ourselves, rather it is about starting from here and not from an opposition. To be clearer, I can continue to exemplify with *The Club Scene* where we evoke spaces of the past and connect them to the ideals and yearnings of the present. They are not replicas and do not simply represent a nostalgia that looks back with longing and idealisation, rather the historic clubs are actualised through the fictive and factual experience of them. They are empowering, filling the embodied archives of the participants with the experience of resistance towards the 'dominator culture'.[8] You are invited to change costumes and explore but you are not asked to play a role. But this materialised fiction-writing might just bring out another facet of our inconsequent selves. What is more, this obscure project also functions as a critique of the daylight normative discourse of architecture.

KG: Working from a situated knowledge perspective (following Haraway[9]), historical as well as current conditions remain open for critical revisits where decisive shifts in position and focus open up new situations and understandings.[10] In different ways, we all constantly play with fictional or semi-fictional modes of writing for this purpose. For example, Bonnevier entering into Nathalie Barney's salon or Selma Lagerlöf's Mårbacka, or Brady Burroughs into Aldo Rossi's Mozzo row house, renovating, refashioning, queering what was already there before, but which reappears and changes through these new accounts.[11]

This is equally true when it comes to projections of future conditions. In January 2015 Critical Studies ran the two week 'orientations' course for all (120) architecture masters students at KTH. Here Hélène Frichot, with Katja Grillner and Bettina Schwalm, set up a future oriented scenario for the

Stockholm inner-city island of Södermalm, renaming it 'Söder Pops Island' and imagining this island to have declared its sovereignty from Sweden, to be governed by the political party the Feminist Initiative. The students were asked to work in different 'guilds' in service to the feminist government, mapping and proposing interventions to the island as subjected to its new conditions.[12] An exercise in thinking and acting on the city out of imaginative positions, where the members in the guilds themselves acted out an assigned character. The resulting exhibition showed a great variety of responses, from eerie accounts of dystopic totalitarian conditions (reminding us now of something out of *The Handmaid's Tale*) to playful (and hopeful) realisations of utopian dreams.

Radical pedagogies

FP: From Judith Butler's performativity to role-play to enactment, your emphasis on situated or embodied knowledge-generation emerged and is embedded in the institutional milieu of the architecture school, as a highly imago- and logocentric place. How would you situate or distinguish your approach and its aims from an explicitly pedagogical angle? What do we have to learn or understand better?

BB: This reminds me of an interesting question I received during the public defence of my doctoral thesis 'Architectural Flirtations'[13] from my 'opponent,' Naomi Stead (then Acting Head of School at the University of Queensland), who asked about 'the cultural specificity of certain modes of performativity' in the work we do here in Stockholm. She made an observation/confession about the ambivalence, reservation, even at times discomfort, she felt (and recognised in her Australian colleagues) toward 'the kind of performativity that happens here.' She wondered why a group of Australian feminist/queer academics who were 'otherwise completely on the same page theoretically and politically' had trouble engaging with this kind of performativity, and admitted that 'there is no way that I would be able to undertake the pedagogical activities you describe with my own students.' I must also mention that these statements were made with my 'opponent' (and the entire grading committee) donning brightly coloured feather boas I had provided for the event, in order to enact some of the queer campy practices I call *architectural flirtations* during this academic ritual. I would humbly suggest that this reticence toward these practices was at least partly overcome in that instance, as the boas were offered as a prop to everyone beforehand, rather than by force or surprise, in a gesture of what I call *pedagogical stewardship*. And besides, we all looked gorgeous in them![14]

My answer was that although we do have the benefit of working within an environment that we have built up together, where we are not alone and where we not only support each other, but also learn from and challenge each other's efforts, I do believe that these practices are possible within other academic cultures. Although they take on different expressions, and sometimes even varying feminist positions, one thing we all have in common is the use of critical fiction (fictocriticism in Australia) and experimental writing as part of our pedagogical practices. Another element we share, inspired by Gavin Butt's ideas on 'scholarly flirtations', is the willingness to implicate ourselves and assume a more vulnerable position, inviting playfulness, humour, and the ability to take ourselves and our discipline a little less *seriously*.[15] In my own research, I describe this as learning to adopt a 'love ethic'.[16] By love ethic, I am referring to bell hooks' call to choose love and connection over alienation and separation, in order to resist 'cultures of domination'.[17] In terms of architectural pedagogy, a love ethic might mean choosing mutual exchange and learning (perhaps involving silly costumes or props) over the 'serious' critique and judgement involved in a conventional design crit. This vulnerable, 'weak', even queer, and most importantly situated position, as opposed to the 'strong', certain, habitual position

of the critic, disarms the situation and makes issues of gender, power, privilege, and ethics in architectural pedagogy visible, allowing for what I would suggest is a more conducive learning environment where necessary experimentation and failures are possible. (By the way, in the spirit of adopting a 'love ethic', I chose to attend the 'official doctoral ceremony' that Katarina mentions above; however, in order to reinterpret the 'black frocks' I wore a campy red boa there too!)

Trans-bodies

FP: Assuming here you have a more Spinozist conception of the body, can you explain your understanding and approach to bodily materiality in relation to the performative and to language? Where would you situate yourself in the larger field, where do your differing/differencing approaches form alliances with recent approaches to spatial writing (Rendell) or new materialism (DeLanda, Braidotti), eco-feminism (Bennett) or agential realism (Barad)?

HF: A formula, a refrain, an oft-repeated 'little phrase' is useful here with respect to the Spinozist conception of a (trans-)body, and that is: we do not yet know what a body can do. Less than a deficit of knowledge this is a speculative gesture directed at the possible: what future encounters and collective bodies might we form, in the process of our perpetual transformations? It's important to remember that a trans-body avoids an either/or (either man or woman), but goes for the both/and (everything at once and I reserve the right to change my mind too, thank you).

Feminist thinkers and practitioners have long explored the leakiness of mindful-bodies, their permeable thresholds, and how the stuff and thinking that forms a body is not just my or your own sovereign, self-same secured body, but joining with, then separating out from, a body of water, a body of sound, a body politic, a technological body, an architectural body, and so forth. Sometimes forming greater compositions, sometimes decomposing, and this depends on the encounters and relations with which a body forms an allegiance for the meantime. Because of this expansive sense of a body, its material and conceptual mutability, or its capacity to perform at the interchange of a material semiotics (entangling matter and meaning),[18] this also means that the environment as a body necessarily enters the performative scene. To paraphrase, a feminist materialist acknowledges the mangle of the human in the environment and the environment in the human.[19] Call this eco-feminism if you like. It is, to use yet another oft-cited Spinozist formula, a capacity to affect, and a sensitivity to being affected, which must be brought into our architectural and environmental constructions.

For us, if I can speak of 'us' as a collective body, an important construction is textual, and in this textual site-writing, spatial critical writing (we nod here to our friend Jane Rendell),[20] we are often multi-voiced, sometimes dialogical, frequently flirtatious.[21] If we find a concept-tool that we believe is useful, we put it to use, hence we are happy to create different transversal cross-sections (even irrational section-cuts) from Rendell to hooks to Braidotti to Ahmed to Butt to Bennett to Stengers to Haraway to Rawes to Barad to…

Trans-coding architectural knowledge

FP: If the body is not a given, and architecture is a material practice of permanent transformation, reconstruction, and re-enactment, where would you locate the greater conceptual promises of architecture as transitional or transitive material configurations?

We would be interested in your position towards architectural classification systems, typology (or typological thinking), historical styles, or disciplinary divides, especially in relation to such familiar tropes as the home and the social.

HF: There are some who have expressed exhaustion in what they perceive to be an excess of process driven approaches to architectural design. They say, enough with process, enough with perpetual transformations, back to the object, let us return to the masterpiece.[22] We hold firm in our dedication to the compositions and inevitable decompositions of architecture, we hold firm in these sometimes fast, sometimes glacial transformations. That is to say, we are carried along by other concerns and matters of care (Puig de la Bella Casa), ones that are situated, and acknowledge banal and everyday vicissitudes. All the same, some 'category work' is necessary lest we entirely lose our heads, that is to say, we need to be critically alert to how categories are constructed so that we can better challenge them.[23]

We must strategically position ourselves, and do so in response to the problems that confront us.[24] A taxonomical chart, as even a cursory investigation reveals, will never tame the wild profusion of things and sexes. But a category, a type, a signed concept, can be pragmatically useful from time to time. The abstractions of these organisational strategies allow us to stake a claim, when one is needed, pitch a tent and sink our heels in where socio-spatial oppressions become evident.

Nodding to the Swedish father of taxonomy Linnaeus, our colleague Sara Vall has had success in creating a critical taxonomical chart composed of 28 rooms to enable us to see the controversial site of Slussen from a different frame of reference, a critical spatial and poetic one. Slussen, an urban node between Gamla Stan and Södermalm in Stockholm, currently undertaking massive renovation, is shown as not just a knotted traffic infrastructure, but a collection of 28 discrete spaces where lives are being carried out for the time being. Or were, until the 28 rooms were demolished one by one, thereby dispensing with the makeshift taxonomical chart and returning the infrastructural node to something of a troubling tabula rasa.[25]

Spatial writing / drawing together

FP: Finally, we'd like to hear more about the truly 'troubling' questions. Donna Haraway's latest work for example advocates 'staying with the trouble', so that we can learn to 'become with' our material environments. What troubles you most about where architecture seems to be heading to nowadays? What sort of transformation is desirable? How to trouble architecture?

KG: Today, in 2017, it seems difficult to even begin to respond to a question about where *architecture* seems to be heading, the acute matter of concern, rather, is perhaps on the world, on current threats to democracy and civil society. Where are the basic humanitarian values that we may have taken for granted heading? How can architecture be significant in all this? What is it to be an architect, specifically, today? One great challenge is perhaps simply to stay in focus, somehow, to circle around and hover above precise spatial and material conditions, to instigate change in a specific context, be architecturally skilful in that, and yet critically understand what difference it makes in a bigger picture. We can teach architecture students to zoom in and out, and to shift positions, both within themselves, and to understand the complexity of the site and situation in which they might find themselves working. This is important.

HF: In many ways we are yet to learn even the fundamental lessons, and it is astonishing how the purported 'core of architecture' maintains its conservative status quo. The incredible work of the Australian group of architectural researchers Parlour (archiparlour.org), demonstrates how: the pay gap (between men and women); low pay (for almost everyone); the unequal representation of women in leadership positions in the profession

and the academy; unreasonable working hours and expectations; the disproportionate celebration of the idols and icons of architecture, still dominate the scene. What Parlour demonstrates is that collective action is possible and that tactical forms of feminist protest backed by well-researched statistics can make a change.[26] They have already been instrumental in introducing new policy frameworks into the AIA (Australian Institute of Architects) and raising consciousness about the challenges faced by women and minority groups in architecture through their website and their events. I've also noticed recently the open letter that the Architecture Affinity Group of TU Delft Feminists addressed to the Dean of the Faculty of Architecture at TU Delft on 8 March 2017, for international women's day.[27] I observed with a leaden heart the paltry and non-committal response they received from the Dean. It reminded me of the kind of lip service that led Sara Ahmed to resign her position at Goldsmiths once she recognised the yawning gap between what the administrators were saying and actual change on the ground. These are the kinds of trouble we need to stay with, not being afraid of being 'women who make a fuss'.[28]

When we framed the call for papers, and then curated the recent AHRA (Architectural Humanities Research Association) conference, *Architecture and Feminisms: Ecologies, Economies, Technologies,*[29] we paid special heed to where we located urgent contemporary problems. We argued that these pertain to our precarious natural and constructed environments, the destructive dominance of economic rationalism, and our poor critical take on technologies, also a domain where we still see insufficient participation from women. To stay with the trouble of each of these domains of concern there are in fact many inspirations we can draw on, which often requires extending our citational practices (not always referring to the usual suspects), drawing on other disciplines where this is strategic, and reinventing our own concept-tools to tackle the problems that we face, rejuvenating what Isabelle Stengers calls our ecology of practices.[30]

BB: Katja and Hélène have already raised urgent broader concerns, so I'd like to shift the focus for a moment and look inward. I'm interested in the kind of 'trouble' that many of us are embedded in as a condition of our discipline and profession. We've mentioned bell hooks a few times now, but I think her fantastic mantra bears repeating. How can we 'stay with the trouble' in identifying and shifting the ways that our research, teaching and practice reinforces or reproduces the values instilled by what hooks calls 'a system of imperialist, white supremacist, [heterosexist], capitalist, patriarchy'?[31] Hooks's words are a clear and tangible way to remind ourselves of the intersections of 'trouble' we encounter in architecture and the need to be critical about the critical projects we undertake. As one of my favourite feminist killjoys suggests, laying claim to a feminist/queer/critical position can lead to the dangerous assumption that one is immune to the possibility of exercising oppression on someone else. Sara Ahmed writes: 'the self-perception of freedom from norms can quickly translate into a freedom to exploit others'.[32] I think (and hope) that even if sometimes sluggish, architecture is moving towards a better understanding of these intersections, with efforts such as this themed issue; however, there remain difficult moments of 'doubleness' that we as critical architectural scholars/teachers/practitioners face every day. In what ways do we support the system mentioned above, consciously or unconsciously? Can we slow down and acknowledge these moments of difficulty, and use that vulnerability in order to bring about change?

In all of the following killjoy moments, I draw on my own familiar dilemmas, but use the pronoun 'we.' When we cite favourite feminist voices of colour such as bell hooks, Audre Lorde, or Sara

Ahmed in our academic work, and then still agree to serve on the organising committee of an international conference composed solely of other middle aged, middle class, white feminist academics, because it will raise important issues (but it also won't hurt towards tenure or that promotion to professor). When we deliver a stinging critique on the neoliberal effects on education or capitalist forces on urban development, and then eagerly volunteer free intellectual labour to contribute/edit/peer review for that high-ranking journal or prestigious publisher with exorbitant prices and minimal access, because we have an obligation and privilege to use our voice (but it will also advance the rankings of our institutions and our own careers). When we engage with students in design studio and encourage work that challenges gender norms, power relations and the status quo, knowing that they will most likely be judged in relation to the prevailing dominant image of what architecture is and who it's for, what architects do and who can become an architect, by someone with authority *over* them, because we want to change that (but it also provides necessary 'good examples' that help justify institutional inaction to prevent 'real' change and possibly supplements our own research). Or when we sit in design juries ourselves, adhering to the way it's always been done; same set-up, same criteria, same discussions, same values, because we may be able to inflect a new tone or exchange (but hey, we also have bills to pay, so we need this gig!) When we profess solidarity with our female counterparts and allegiance to ideas of equity in the profession, and then jump at the invitation to bask in the limelight of straight, white, male 'starchitects' (or starchademics) at an important event, exhibition, or conference, because we need access to power in order to affect power (and also, networks matter).

How do we constructively and critically rethink these dilemmas? I'm not suggesting that there are any clear or easy choices. In some instances, I have chosen not to participate at all, but I don't know whether *that* is the answer either. Only that we must 'stay with the trouble', echoing Hélène's words – dare to be feminist/queer/critical killjoys, and hold ourselves (collectively) accountable. When negotiating the very difficult and sometimes conflicting demands of our discipline and profession, I often look to the queer icon and internationally known drag queen artist RuPaul who says: 'When the going gets tough, the tough reinvent.'

Notes

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Biographies

Katarina Bonnevier, Brady Burroughs, Hélène Frichot, and Katja Grillner each have different positions, institutional affiliations and professional collaborations; however, they are all trained as architects and doctors of philosophy, and share an interest in critical theory combined with experimental writing practices. Likewise, they share political, ethical and social concerns, where feminist and queer theory intersect with the discipline of architecture. These diverge from, but are in no way limited to, their connections to the School of Architecture at KTH, The Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm, where each has participated in architectural research and education within Critical Studies.

Footprint is a peer-reviewed journal presenting academic research in the field of architecture theory. The journal encourages the study of architecture and the urban environment as a means of comprehending culture and society, and as a tool for relating them to shifting ideological doctrines and philosophical ideas. The journal promotes the creation and development – or revision – of conceptual frameworks and methods of inquiry. The journal is engaged in creating a body of critical and reflexive texts with a breadth and depth of thought which would enrich the architecture discipline and produce new knowledge, conceptual methodologies and original understandings.

In this issue, the following papers were peer-reviewed: 'Opening up Bodyspace: Perspectives from Posthuman and Feminist Theory'; 'A Surgery Issue: Cutting through the Architectural Fabric'; 'Trans-Architecture'; 'Louis H. Sullivan: That Object He Became'.

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