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Space Place

Unknown Quantities 6

Unknown Quantities is an experimental interdisciplinary publication. The sixth issue focuses on the theme of space and place, examining the duality of the two notions in relation to each other, taking into account geographer Yi-Fu Tuan's observation that "place is security, space is freedom: we are attached to the one and long for the other". We as editors have relied on this premise as a starting point to gather a collection of written and visual works from a wide range of contributors. Through the lens of their respective practices, the contributors raise social and political concerns as well as critical ideas about perception, culture and identity regarding space and place.

Our understanding of these concepts focuses on the transient position of the self within local and global environments. We invite you to get lost in the following pages, explore these ideas and find your own relationship to space and place.



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A Blue Frontier

Hannah Kelly

"So we came to the Aeolian island. In that sea-cradled fastness ..." lies a collection of softly bobbing structures on the horizon, an assemblage of interlocking platforms that come together and then disperse in one fluid motion. Neighbours raise a hand in greeting as they combine. The small crowd mills in various directions, stepping off the home platform and onto the shared ones that gently rock under the weight of their movement. They weave from one to another until they reach their various destinations. Every few days the platforms interlock for residents to acquire bread and groceries, make social calls to the local café, visit the diving platforms on good days and the indoor cinema on the bad. Outside interlocking days, friends can arrange their own visits to each others' home platforms or simply drift in the basking sun.

The coast of Tahiti was to play host to the first 'Floating City' in 2020. A floating city is an artificial island that allows humans to live permanently on water. The idea was developed by The Seasteading Institute, a not-for-profit company that seeks to make floating cities a reality. The Institute's aim is to build a liberal, self-sustainable 'micro-nation' as a way to circumnavigate issues which include rising sea levels, overcrowding and poor governmental systems. The agreement between The Seasteading Institute and French Polynesia has recently been abandoned by the state of Polynesia due to an increasing concern as to whether the deal was in fact beneficial to the country.² But perhaps this is a minor difficulty on the way to achieving the company's long-term goals. The technology to build these cities is sufficiently developed to beg the question whether we can begin acquiring ocean waters for human property, a venture known as 'blue frontierism'. Further, it is necessary to question the right by which humans may lay claim to these waters.

Jurisdiction over oceans and seas decreases the further one moves from land. A country has full ownership over ocean waters within 12 nautical miles of its coast. From 12 to 24 miles, the waters start to become more neutral as a nation has less

sovereign control here. Within 200 nautical miles lies the Exclusive Economic Zone.³ Here, countries have ownership over the natural resources in this oceanic area but those resources are still technically in international waters. If a city were to float outside this region, it would be free to assert its own governing system and way of life.

Micro-nations are small geographical areas that attempt to create their own country. These 'countries' are effectively blank slates. The third EU definition for a new state is that it respects the fixed position of national borders.⁴ Most micro-nations do not care for this requirement. They exist within already established borders, which is why they are largely unrecognised oddities. They pursue independence for various reasons: development of experimental societies and governing systems, tax evasion, or pure entertainment. The blue frontier moves beyond this. It has the ability to be legitimate. The floating city of The Seasteading Institute was to rest within 200 nautical miles of Tahiti, as it otherwise wouldn't have been able to support the full force of the Pacific Ocean. In that way, it would become a micro-nation.

Since the turn of the century, several physical projects have explored the floating city. The year 2000 saw an airplane in Japan land on a buoyant airport in Tokyo Bay. Then Singapore introduced a drifting football field for the 2010 Summer Youth Olympics, followed by Seoul opening three solar-powered islands that floated on the Han River in 2011. In 2014, the Indian state of Kerala installed a floating solar power plant; Japan followed suit that same year, producing a solar-powered wind turbine in the Pacific Ocean. Japan is now looking to create carbon-negative floating skyscrapers by 2025.⁵

The idea of taking up residence in oceanic cities is not beyond our capabilities. What happens when a 'place' seeks out new 'space'? The notion of place can be explored. You can view attachment to home in two respects, through belief systems or cosmic structures. In cosmic structures, centrality is a key concept as it attaches home to the centre of each



Space, Santiago Rodríguez

individual's universe. Here, the stars float around one's home, creating a centre. Movement from this centre will not prove catastrophic. Humans are resilient and as the cosmic concept is not tied to a physical position, it moves as we move. That is not to say that humans do not attach geographical bonds to place, which has occurred in belief systems throughout history in varying cultures. People in Ancient Mesopotamian towns not only believed that a certain place held their home, but that place was also the residence of their gods.⁶ Even modern seafarers will view their ship as their home and the crew, their family. But most find the idea of a permanent 'place' alluring, somewhere to leave behind and return to from their travels. The idea of floating cities rests in between, symbolising both the ship and the land. It would seem that new nations await.

The Seasteading Institute seeks to solve some fundamental problems in the ocean, including better legal and governmental systems which champion freedom and equality, a society that is more experimental, restoration of the environment and economic growth. Whether this is plausible remains to be seen. I have however, a few concerns of my own. Firstly, that this is merely a safe haven for the world's wealthiest to evade tax, which is not so forgiving in democratic climates. Moving to deeper concerns, could this signal the beginning of a new wave of colonialism? A way of using the gaps in the Laws of the Sea (as outlined above) to commence 'water grabbing'? This 'colonialism' would differ from

its predecessors as the blue frontier has no colonial history – no one has lived here previously. At the same time, it is difficult to separate this movement from the history of North American colonisation, with these places becoming a multitude of floating city-states. In current unsteady political climates, it is undeniable that there is a dispensation towards the exit sign. Rather than trying to fix the problems that exist, we create whole new structures. This raises the question: what will be the condition of these 'islands'? A refuge or an exile?

The new technology which permits us to create viable floating cities is exciting and allows us to question basic foundations of our society. Countless students, academics and practising architects have produced theoretical projects and research with their take on this idea. As a design problem it allows the architectural student to merge the neighbourhood, city, territory, state and country into one grand built expression. But perhaps the idea should remain within the realm of theoretical practice until we can approach it with the degree of sensitivity that it requires.

It is important not to overlook the Arctic dispute in this regard. The scramble between various countries for coveted resources at the North Pole could someday soon be the fate of our oceans.⁷ Oceanic waters are soon to be as valuable as oil: protecting them is paramount. They cover over 70 percent of the Earth's surface. This cannot be quickly overlooked in our haste to carve out new places within space. The ocean now, space next.



Negatives

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Giovanna Del Sarto

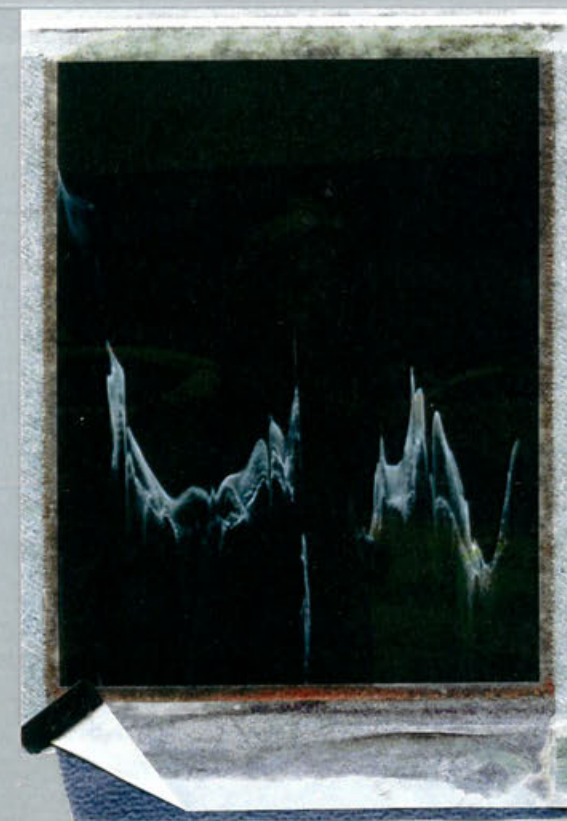
The recovery of the negative becomes an allegory of a human being's deprivation of their own identity. Upon arrival in a new country, they are cleansed of their respective cultures through a process of no-paper camp detention and obtain a new identity compliant with the specifications of the new country.

Instruction to recover a FP100c negative

Remove any excess paper
Face it down on the glass
Tape it to the glass
Pour bleach over it
Remove the bleach
Hang it up
Scan it

WARNING!

This process may expose you to humanity





Life in a Permanently Temporary Place

21.583331 92.016666

Märta Terne

Temporary permanence is a self-contradicting state many million refugees find themselves in after having escaped brutal violence, persecution and injustice. Refugee status provides little freedom and few rights. A refugee camp is designed for a temporary life, but many end up existing there for decades because there is simply nowhere else to go. During a mission in the Cox's Bazar region in Bangladesh, near the border to Myanmar, I meet Sanah, 15, in a temporary shelter made of a woven bamboo structure covered by large pieces of tarpaulin provided by aid agencies. It is a 15-square-metre single-room space with a mud floor functioning simultaneously as a kitchen, bedroom and living room, while also having to allow space for her children to play. This has been Sanah's home since last year.

A heavy monsoon rain falls while we sit on her floor. The wind grabs hold of the tarpaulin sheets that shake and flap loudly, making the entire structure move gently. Her husband was killed in their former home; she lives in Kutupalong camp with her two children and a group of relatives who also managed to escape Myanmar alive. It is by no means safe to return to Myanmar yet and she has no idea how long she will remain in this permanently temporary situation. The hilly camp area, which was covered by a dense jungle before the influx of refugees, is currently home for up to 800,000 people who, just like Sanah, are from the Rohingya tribe, a Muslim stateless minority group from the Rakhine state in Myanmar.

Despite many unimaginably painful memories from the past as well as a difficult and vulnerable situation with an uncertain future, there is an apparent will to uphold a dignified life in this temporary setting that reaches far beyond sight, shelters stretching out in all directions over hills and valleys as far as the eye can see. Walking through the crowded camp – which, I have been told, is the most densely populated place on Earth – I wonder if I would have the energy and imagination, if even for a second, to fantasise about other worlds, allowing myself an escape from my state of limbo. In Kutupalong, people shop for food in the busy afternoon market to cook for Iftar later in the

evening when families and friends gather to break the fast together during Ramadan. A man gets his hair cut in one of the barbershops and laughing children chase each other in the narrow alleys between the never-ending rows of bamboo huts. I think about how humans have a need to work and care for others, and wonder how one manages for so long to carry unprocessed emotional trauma while wanting but not being able or allowed to contribute.

A refugee patient whose story I was told earlier that day – a woman who arrived at a primary health clinic in tears – told the medical staff about her escape from Myanmar during which eight men shot and cut her son to death in front of her eyes before they gangraped her for many hours. She was pregnant at the time, and while her life could be saved thanks to intensive care in Bangladesh, she lost the baby. How does one even begin to process such an experience? The Rohingya have been the victims of persecution for decades. Their homes have been burned to the ground, their lives uprooted and they have lost family members in indescribable violence. Yet a basic human dignity remains, along with the will to get up in the morning, get dressed, play and learn with one's friends, and provide for one's family, even when life seems impossibly difficult.

I pass a classroom in a structure painted bright blue; school children repeat their teacher's words out loud and, nearby on an empty piece of land, a group of boys play football in the heat. I think to myself that a refugee camp without children would be deafeningly silent.

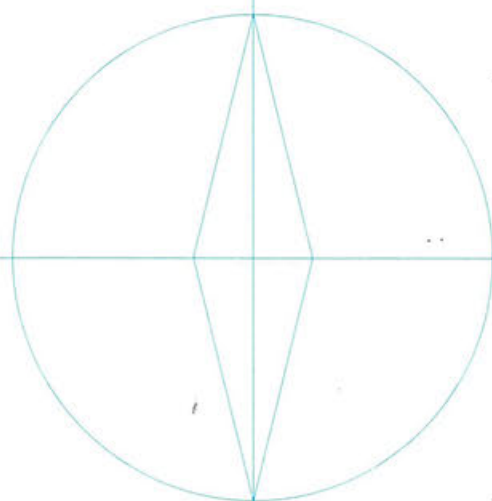
In the late afternoon, 22-year-old Mohammad guides me towards my landmark somewhere in the camp – the big mosque. I seem to have lost my bearings in this never-ending camp but he has no difficulties navigating his way through the identical narrow alleys over the countless bamboo bridges and steep steps of sandbags up and down the hills of Kutupalong camp. He shows me his handwritten CV, kept neatly folded in his pocket; in Myanmar he was a middle school teacher and he is optimistic about finding a job through one of the many aid agencies operating in the camp.



Images by Märta Terne



Images by Márta Terne



The Legal Status of Ice

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Irene Stracuzzi

What is an Arctic border?

Geographically, the Arctic is a space demarcated by a line on a map, a circle of latitude approximately 66 degrees north of the Equator. But an Arctic border can also be defined according to climate and temperature, geological features, water and ice properties, or to the soft laws and agreements that specify legal obligations of the region. Even the myths of early 20th-century explorers provide mental frameworks for an understanding of the Arctic as the last frontier, a cold Wild West at the edge of human civilisation. Still, many borders need to be fixed on the Arctic map. How will they be defined and what will be the consequence of this virtual reorganisation of space?

Today's views on the Arctic are changing as a result of sea warming. Where the collective imagination of the cold North once resonated with the images of Roald Amundsen's or Robert Peary's expeditions, it is now increasingly common to see the Arctic ice pack on travel destination brochures. Spectacular icebergs and ancient glaciers are just a click away. Yet tourism is not the only sector affected by climate change. For the countries that border the Arctic Ocean – Russia, Canada, Denmark, Norway and the United States – an ice-free ocean means new economic opportunities. Map in hand, new borders can be drawn everywhere.

On 2 August 2007, Russian explorers in a submarine famously planted a titanium flag on the polar seabed, 4,261 metres below the North Pole. Photographs of the event were distributed worldwide, evoking memories of earlier expeditions in which European powers gained possession of *terra nullius* by simply staking their claims. Russia's foreign minister declared that the flag-planting was part of an effort to prove that the underwater Lomonosov Ridge, hence the North Pole, was a geological extension of the Russian continental shelf.

Peter MacKay, Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs at the time, stated less cautiously, "This isn't the 15th Century. You can't go around the world and just plant flags saying 'We're claiming this territory'". Adding to the collection of bombastic declarations, a spokesman from Russia's Arctic and Antarctic Research Institute, Sergei Balyasnikov, declared, "For me, this is like planting a flag on the Moon". Although photographs have neither meaning nor repercussions in international law, the fuss ignited by the Russian venture demonstrated that the Arctic, including the Arctic frozen waters, had indeed become claimable.

According to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea treaty, the high seas – including those of the North Pole – are not owned by any country. As with any other nation, the five Arctic states have their rights limited to an Exclusive Economic Zone of 200 nautical miles adjacent to their coasts. However, upon ratification of the treaty, each country had a ten-year period for filing its claim to an extended continental shelf. In order to meet the legal definition and gain access to the resources below the seabed of a contested continental shelf, the states must provide as evidence bathymetric and seismic data. What results from the situation is an unusual type of international conflict, in which authority is not wielded through the brutal use of military force, but through the possession of information. According to the Government of Canada itself, in the Arctic "the currency of sovereignty is scientific data".

The prize for these Arctic countries is undoubtedly new areas for fisheries, access to shipping routes and mineral wealth. In fact, the Arctic might very likely store immense offshore oil and gas reserves, as much as an eighth of the world's undiscovered resources, making it the largest unexplored area for petroleum remaining on Earth. It is of little

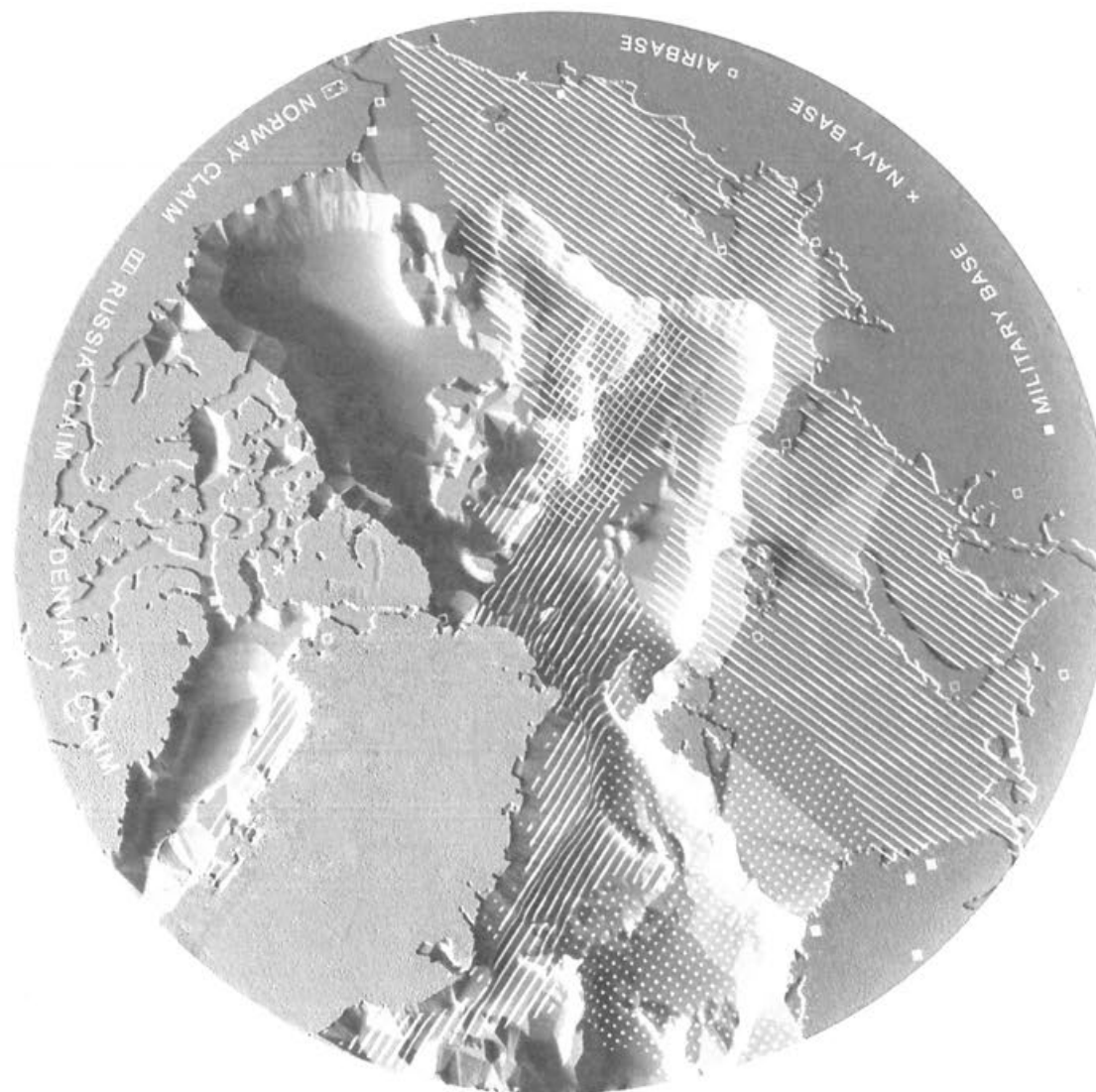
consequence that extraction in this region is an extremely expensive and difficult task and that the impact of a possible oil spill would deeply affect the Arctic's fragile ecosystem. Although there is no consensus on the potential riches to be gained from drilling, there is a general conviction that onshore oil and gas drilling will be dwarfed by the Arctic's undersea fields.

The ideological reasons motivating the pursuit of territorial supremacy in the Arctic should be searched for in recent colonial and cartographic history. Scarcity of information over many centuries resulted in an image of the Arctic as *terra nullius*, a frozen, uninhabited space belonging to no one and free for conquest. Indeed, the images of flag-planting recall 16th-century depictions of Spanish conquistadors announcing their sovereignty in the 'new' land. However, the recent discovery of natural resources in the Arctic gradually changed this perception, turning it from 'nobody's land' to a place 'empty, but full' of riches. Despite mankind's technological progress, however, the Arctic remains an inhospitable region where scientific research and operations are still tough and expensive. Even the most up-to-date surveys on its seabed geological formations – which have a fundamental role in solving the ongoing dispute – can only be partial. To a certain extent, the Arctic is still an area of white spaces on territorial maps.

14

The Arctic Ocean border dispute is not an isolated phenomenon; the ownership of the South China Sea, contested between China and other neighbouring countries, may be the fiercest example. In fact, the tendency to demarcate every last piece of unclear space – whether land, water or airspace – brought the emergence of more than 26,000 km of borders in the world during the last two decades. However, the race for control over the Arctic Ocean stands out in the global geopolitical panorama. The historical exiguity of information on the region, the difficulty of operation due to the harshness of the climate and the immaterial nature of the claims, which rely solely on maps, are all elements that make this case an interesting paradigm of contemporary borders. It is impossible to prove that without the modern 'rationalisation' of maps, state borders would not exist. What is certain is that cartography and the process of bordering go hand in hand, inevitably entwined. Their role in shaping our collective consciousness should not be diminished.

3D model exploring the overlapping border claims by means of a projection, Design Academy Eindhoven, Ronald Smits



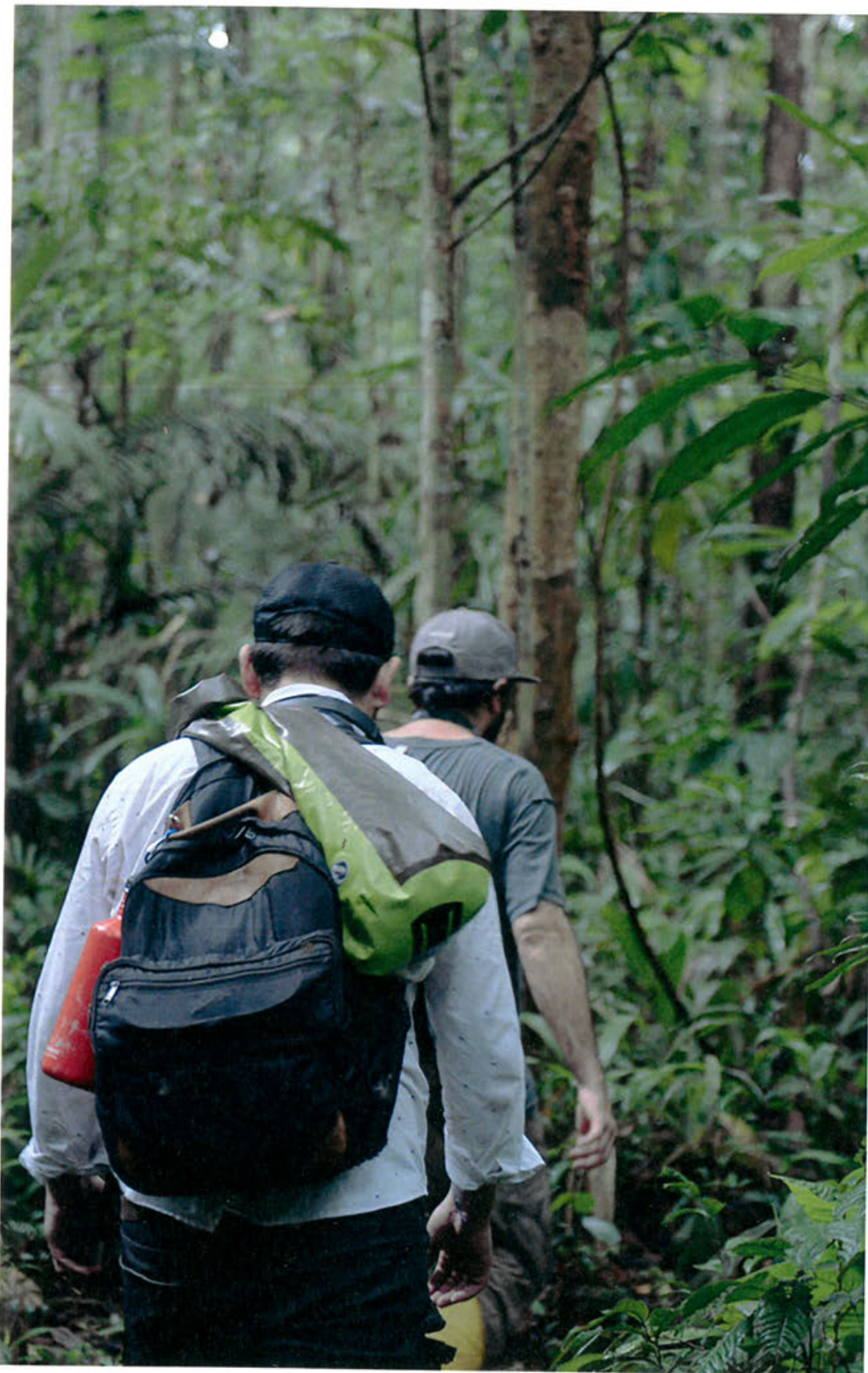
15

breaths like hothouse hydrangeas
hungry bloated bulging like a sausage
overstuffed. putrid – flying. guts.
spitting petals drenched in kerosene
your words erode and tell me swallow
hard to lather in my throat my own
desires. on your veins and bones I feed.
I spread my lips. so tell me what does
it feel like your insides bursting like
fireworks crackling bloody flowing and
delicious down my hands and fingers
in a salty taste of bleach translucent



Slanted House 52.520008 13.404954

droplet firecrackers crunching
thoughts popping like scarlet cherries.
black silhouette take me home to the
dark stillness of our gas radiator's hum
solemnly stepping into the glowing
nightshade's stare. magenta streaks in
my eyes. my ankles – purple moons
and poppy red toes steaming over the
bathtub. swallow me whole sulphurous
hard water. grasping for strands of
electrified hair I can soak finally in
your corrosive milky moonlight.



4.624335 -74.063644

Space: context and content

Felipe Rodríguez Gómez & David Vélez Rodríguez

Introduction

Every inanimate and organic object has a resonating frequency at which it vibrates the most. The human body does it at 106 Hz. Exposure to this frequency produces a sense of discomfort and anxiety in the listener. In addition, our auditory perception works in such a way that we tend to ignore sounds with repetitive patterns even if they are loud and highly noticeable.

In a study made this year by a group of scientists from the Nofer Institute of Occupational Medicine in Poland,¹ it was revealed that even at discreet levels, low-frequency sounds have a negative effect on the performance of tasks requiring visual functions and concentration. Sounds in the subsonic frequency range (under 30 Hz) are unnoticeable by our auditory system; without realising it, we can be exposed to them and their negative effects.

Sound artist Leonel Vásquez² has spoken about the scientific and cultural importance of listening to the sounds inside our body and presents clinical auscultation as a great example. There is valuable and relevant information travelling inside our body in the form of acoustic mechanic waves. For example, as Vásquez mentions, the baby inside the womb begins to experience the world through its skin and auditory system. The womb is a resonating space with its own reverberating properties helping the baby in their first contact with the exterior. In the Indian vedas, sound is linked to the creation of the universe, as the sound Om; because its vocalisation produces deep vibrations, it is considered the seed from which the universe was born. As Christoph Cox says,

'noise' is the background hubbub of life, the ceaseless sonic flux. Just as objects fill visual space, noise is what fills the auditory field [...] Background noise [*le bruit de fond*] is the ground of our perception, absolutely uninterrupted, it is our perennial sustenance, the element of the software of all our logic.³

Our body is a space that inhabits a space; but where does our body end and where does space begin? Does such a limit actually exist?

Inner Space

Experiencing space results from the convergence of all the senses of the body. However, inside the mother's womb we can only approach the external world through listening. Sound is our first approach to the world. Thus it becomes the cognitive, creative and social development of any individual. The mother's voice becomes a tool to interpret the world before inhabiting it. We begin to wonder if its qualities shape the way we perceive the world.

Some researchers are weak critical realists and assume that our perceptions need not be identical to any part of the objective world, but that they do accurately portray its true structure. Colours, for instance, might not exist apart from our perceptions, but colours nonetheless accurately convey aspects of the world that exist even when we don't look [...] The interface theory of perception allows that natural selection might have shaped our perceptions to be analogous to interfaces that hide the complexity of objective reality and instead provide a useful guide to behaviour. If so, then space-time could simply be our desktop, and physical objects with their colours, shapes, textures, and motions are just icons of that desktop.⁴

According to Donald Hoffman's theory of the interface of perception, all the senses would just be mechanisms for subsistence, leaving aside the question of precision in terms of the perception of reality. In this case, we would go from approaching the term 'sound' and its qualities of the perception of reality (fidelity) to 'listening' in terms of purpose in the relationship with the

environment (context). It would no longer be sound preceding listening, but listening allowing sound to exist.

On 24 April 2016, we performed the concert *La voz materna como contenedor del ego* (The voice of the mother as a container for the ego). The contemporary cultural theorist and psychoanalyst, Didier Anzieu, suggests that this 'envelope of sounds' contains the emerging ego of the infant like a skin, becoming a replacement for the womb. Psychoanalysts have argued that the interplay created between the voices of the mother and infant is significant in the development of the ego. The maternal voice has been seen as an acoustic container that surrounds and nurtures the child.

In this concert, Felipe entered an isolation tank* wearing an ECG sensor headpiece that read his brain oscillation as he floated on salt water at 37°C, wearing also eye pads and listening only through the tank.

Close to the tank, his mother read to him and the audience the folktale 'Gobelino'; a story he used to listen to when he was a child. Meanwhile, David processed Felipe's brain waves and transformed them into sound waves, allowing the audience to experience how the mother's voice affects the brain.

Spaces of memory

These interpretations of the external world experienced by the child in the mother's womb will later cement their sonorous memory. However, once the world has been fully experienced we cannot leave aside the overlapping of the senses as a constant of the human being when approaching the environment, nor the influence of one sense over the others.

Cooking is usually associated with the senses of taste, smell and even sight, but the relationship between cooking and listening is a field that has not yet been fully explored. Sounds like boiling soup, the whistling of the pressure cooker, onions being chopped or oil being fried can immediately evoke memories and awaken desires and expectations. The relationship between cooking and sound dates back thousands of years to when the first rituals of cooking food with the presence of music were performed.

For thousands of years, listening has been a very important sense while cooking. In Japan, restaurants that serve tempura avoid using

background music to allow the crispy sound of the frying fish to fill the space. Writers Judy Hevrdejs and Sara Kate Gillingham have each researched the influence of listening in the culinary, discovering that many cooks are guided by sounds when they prepare food.

In *Concierto #3*, Madi Castro, a cook from San Bernardo del Viento, showed us how she learned to prepare dishes from the Colombian Atlantic Coast guided mainly by sounds.

Madi explained to us their importance, for example she has the ability to determine when a fried fish is ready and when it's not by the sound. Working with food clearly illustrates that sounds are embedded in our memory. Food is linked to generosity, gratitude, warmth, affection, desire, pleasure and a number of other emotional responses that are meaningful for us; the sounds produced from cooking take us back to places in our memory that otherwise would be harder to trace.

Environmental Spaces

Our ecosystem is the most determining space of our existence. However, defining the ecosystem, understanding it and dimensioning it have been a problem for us. In physical terms, it is impossible to understand and value it entirely. But in symbolic terms, it is possible to generate approximations that allow people to appropriate and protect it. Through sound, it is possible to generate a connection with the distant landscape, similar to the relationship that the baby in the womb has with its future external world. Sound, through expanded listening, is a tool that allows the human being to get an idea of the importance of their natural environment.

Our work with field recordings in the Amazon allowed us to appreciate the sounds of the jungle while also raising concerns about the potential extinction of species and their habitats. With the project *Acción Conservacionista Sonora* (Conservationist Sound Action), we wanted to alert the population of both developed and developing countries about this very serious problem that

*In the early 1960s, John C Lilly conceived the isolation chamber as a device used for sensory deprivation with the purpose of isolating the body from external stimulation. It has been argued that the isolation tank resembles the conditions in which we last experienced the womb.



Felipe inside the isolation tank, Santiago Rodríguez



Felipe's mother reading Gobelino, Santiago Rodríguez



Madi cooking for Concierto #3, Pablo Gómez

endangers the survival of human life in the world in a not so distant future. The potential shortage of safe water and the increased production of greenhouse gases are problems that threaten the habitat of future generations. Tropical forests are the second largest oxygen providers in the world behind coral reefs and they are facing a frantic deforestation where every minute the equivalent area of 20 football fields is cut down. Unfortunately, very little is done about it.

Tropical forests are all located in countries with developing economies where the laws that protect resources are corrupted and not rigorously applied. Countries with developed economies have strict laws and regulations, but the environmental resources that need to be protected are located in developing economies, making it essential that the effort to protect the natural resources of the world becomes global and thoroughly enforced where needed.

We wanted to use the 'voices' of these animals to project them in public spaces as a way to alert people about these issues. By using available sound systems, we work under the premises of resourcefulness and self-sustainability, something that should be mandatory in any productive process today. During the installation setup, all the owners of the sound shops play the sounds we recorded of the Amazons.

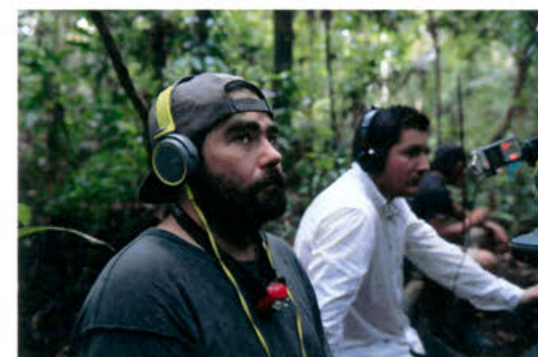
On 12 June 2017, we presented the project in La Novena (9th Street), a commercial place for electronics and sound equipment in Bogotá. With the help of Carlos Sánchez, founder and director of the Technology Museum, and the local store owners we used the equipment they had available and with 20.000+ watts of power we projected the sounds that we recorded in the Amazon.

For a few minutes we recreated the sound pollution of the area with natural sounds, in the process raising the question of how we inhabit our daily life spaces and how the sounds of our everyday life affect us. As a central axis for the production of the sound intervention, the community of La Novena participated in coordinating and executing the project using equipment from their businesses, allowing the inhabitants of the sector to take ownership of the sounds they reproduce daily by developing a co-creative process of re-signifying, redefining and reproducing sound. This intervention allowed us to introduce the idea that the physical impact generated in the Amazon also has an environmental impact on a global level.

Context and content

Throughout the various pieces and concerts we have created, space has always been a problem. The aesthetic sense given to spaces and bodies of sound is very compelling. The notion of space working simultaneously as a container and as content provides a strong metaphorical potency. The boundaries between unoccupied and occupied are something we like to transgress and question in our sonic exploration of space and body.

Trying to understand space raises the question of what consciousness is. From this process the question returned: what, then, is space? Is it the inside (the womb, the body interior or the inner listening), is it the outside (the skin, the unknown, the communication or the interpretation process), is it memory (the significance and re-signification of reality and the symbolic) or is it all of them? Listening is a tool we should use more often to understand the world.



Field Recording in the Amazon, Lina Velandia



Topo(lò)philia

46.123120 14.184690

Janja Šušnjar

Have you ever lived in a village as if it was your home?

Have you ever dreamt in a forest as if it was your garden?

Architecture is *firmitas*, a story told by stones; it is *utilitas*, an echo of the rain, dropping on the sloping roof in synopses; and it is *venustas*, the opportunity to hear a poem of merry and disappointed days of dwelling between the sky and earth. Architecture is a demanding art that belongs to the realm of poetry; its function is to give man a place to dwell.

I would like to sum up my understanding of architecture, as the art that offers man a place to dwell, by grounding it in the narrative of my own experience of a place which, despite the architects' anonymity, largely corresponds to the assumptions of my ideal. And I wish for these assumptions to become the foundation of my creation in the future. Martin Heidegger says:

Man's relation to locations, and through locations to spaces, inheres in his dwelling. The relationship between man and space is none other than dwelling, strictly thought and spoken. When we think, in the manner just attempted, about the relation between location and space, but also about the relation of man and space, a light falls on the nature of the things that are locations and that we call buildings [...] The nature of building is letting dwell. Building accomplishes its nature in the raising of locations by the joining of their spaces. *Only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build!*¹

Through a careful observation of our experience, we can understand that it is our presence (our perception, our synaesthetic experience and our awareness) that creates place from the spaces in which we are located. The experience is the synthesis of observations of the phenomenon through senses and memories: the hypothesis is that perceptions intertwine with the memories of past lives and those of the future.² Our dwelling is not limited to the narrow spaces of the house, the village and the city, but basically living on Earth, continuous movement along paths, overcoming obstacles with bridges, connecting other places to a single world.³

The village Topolò/Topolove is located at the end of a road on the Italian-Slovenian border, surrounded by forests and without any restaurants or shops, without the most basic services such as a bus connection. Topolò/Topolove, a village of 15 inhabitants and more than 120 residential buildings and outbuildings, is certainly not an ordinary place. The difficult and exhausting history, the geographical remoteness, the topological specificity, the issue of identity, the emigration from economic and political distress, the earthquake in 1976, the removal of the border, the beginning and 25-year tradition



There is something about topos and something about love in this village, Janja Šušnjar

of the arts festival of Stazione di Topolò, also known as Postaja and Stazione: all create a complex network and layering of factors that, over time, define it as a place of dwelling.

Five years have passed since I encountered Topolò for the first time. A very good friend invited me to visit the arts festival of Postaja/Stazione – a meeting, a gathering, a workshop, a residence, a celebration, a joy – not a common festival, not even a usual event. Since 1994, every July, Topolò becomes a dwelling place for various artists, their families, friends, friends of Topolò and locals. Postaja is deeply connected to the identity and history of the place, which are both starting points to produce art. Topolò is a place where art happens, but also art happens for Topolò; projects by artists are usually realised through a collaboration with the guests of the village and local children, most of all, with the place itself. It is not a show and there are no exhibitions. Everything takes place in the squares, in the streets, in the fields, in the woods and in private homes, using what is available. Very soon I felt attachment to a place that is wider than its borders.

Since then, I have been returning regularly. Every time I look forward to the bend which opens up a view on the village where I discovered friends, love and my favourite book. As I ascend to the island in the midst of forests, hills and valleys, I imagine that I am returning to another home, where a safe shelter is waiting for me like family. I arrived there when the village was empty, when the snow was falling and when birds were just starting their spring anthem. After five years I decided to stay there for a longer period; to experience this place, to dwell in it.

I came to explore a place that can easily be perceived as domesticated, a place I recognise as my own. I questioned myself about qualities and characteristics Topolò may have, reasons why it had such an impact on me and the people I got to know there. Over the past five years, I have occupied the space and dwelled there.

Studying the concept of dwelling in an attempt to better understand the relationships among people and their surroundings, I relied primarily on the phenomenological texts of Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty, anthropologist Tim Ingold, Yi-Fu Tuan and his 'topophilia', and architects Juhani Pallasmaa, Christian Norberg-Schulz and their associates. I was interested in identifying the quality of that place (Topolò), described as miraculous by a multitude of sensitive people and yet it has seen the number of its inhabitants fall from more than 400 in the 1920s to under 20 today.

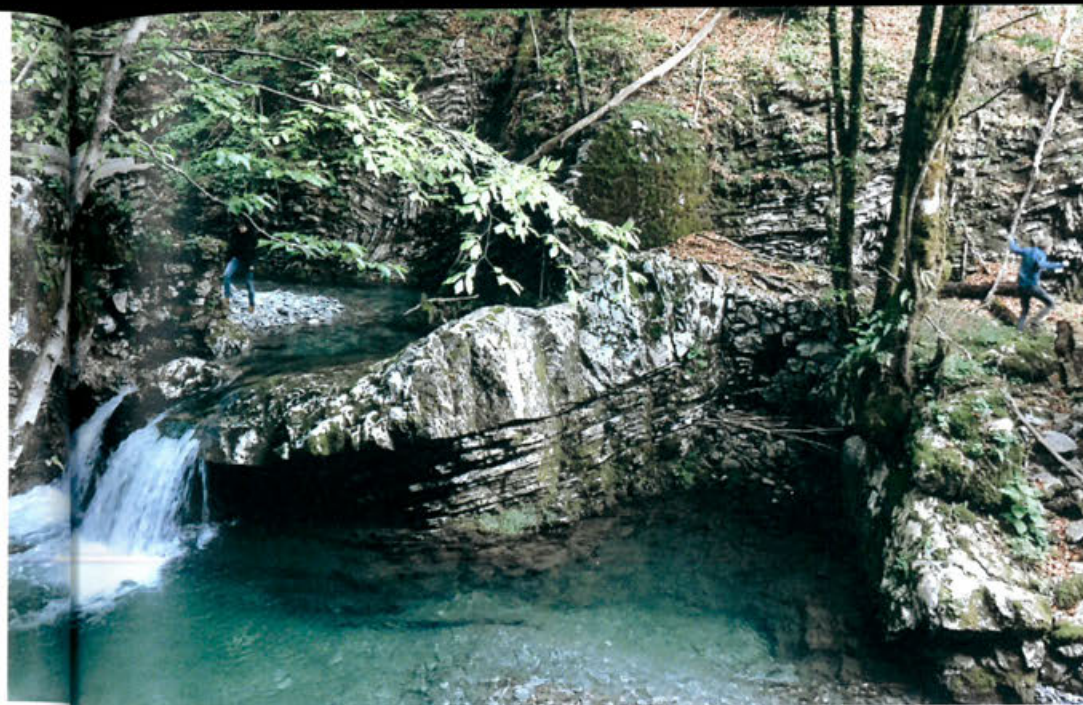
Aware of the complexity of the context of the border village, which is increasingly embraced by chestnut forests, I let myself experience the atmosphere with infinite observations. The desire for a deep understanding of explicit space led me to conversations, walks, sleepless nights, read words and floating thoughts. Studying phenomenologists in the fields of psychology, philosophy, anthropology and, last but not least, architecture, led me to a methodologically undefined study for which my own presence in the environment was at the same time a precondition and a tool. I consciously ignored established hypotheses, predictions and definitions, focusing instead on generating theses, discoveries and understandings.

During a stay in a remote environment where the voice of birds and the effusive stream are stronger than the sounds produced by other inhabitants, my awareness of being in the place of my research was complemented by questions. These largely addressed the relationship between nature and man, how place becomes such, when and how space becomes domesticated, where the boundaries between the wild and the domestic lie, to what extent nature survives unharmed and slowly outgrows previously man-made fields, mills and haystacks... What does it mean to dwell in a specific place, to inhabit a border?

In the first place, *being* is the establishment of a relationship between man and environment. This relationship occurs through the identification or sense of belonging to a particular place.

Living in the village as if it were a house and walking in forests like endless gardens was an opportunity to deepen and re-establish a relationship with the world, to internalise primary living needs and to observe changes in nature in relation to the experience of one's own existence, as well as the relationship to architecture as a fulfilment.

My experience of the village, which I was forced to perceive as a house because of my living conditions, was largely an experience of architecture. The synaesthetic experience of changes in natural processes and the perception of time through shifting shadows in faded walls, the internal embrace of four seasons through walks to toilets during midnight snowfall, waking up in silence without chatter and sirens, walking into a room with a chair and a wardrobe, being without internet connection, discovering the open and closed spaces of the village intended for intimacy and socialising, crossing paths



The water is clear, clean, fresh
Each of us chooses the favorite shade of blue, Janja Šušnjarić



Life at a slower pace, Janja Šušnjarić

and observing the stones under the feet, discovering the meanings of space and place, the wisdom of using material in traditional structure, integration with the landscape through the drywalled terraces almost overgrown by blackberries, the breakfast ritual in the house on the other side of the village where the fire warms up every cold morning; deep experience and memory relative to the slow but full everyday.

"Experience of the place, space or the house is the dialogue", writes Juhani Pallasmaa in *The Embodied Image*.⁴

In this dialogue, memories – the elements of our imagination – are created. The interplay of consistent correspondence creates a new architecture of experience. It is a source, a precondition and at the same time the purpose of an architect's work to offer people a place for experience, a place for dwelling.

Mortals dwell in that they receive the sky as sky. They leave to the sun and the moon their journey, to the stars their courses, to the seasons their blessing and their inclemency; they do not turn night into day nor day into a harassed unrest.⁵




Silence becomes even more intense with the first snow. Janja Šušnjarić



Dong, the primary session begins, Cornell opens the starting window. Sun, lights and noises start to populate the scene. City is finally activated. People running within a grid overcrowded by tall buildings, very slender skyscrapers. The endless repetition of windows. Inside, groups resembling happy families; sleeping kids and nannies operating noisy vacuum cleaners. The morning breeze and the smoking chimneys. Flying ships draw trajectories in the sky, fleets of carriages occupy the streets.

The city still looks calm, likely recovering after a night of fear and loathing. The streets are clean, and no singular particle of dust animates the stratosphere. Homeless people being trapped in sleeping loops, still knocked down from the night before. The market stalls filled with tons of goods. Seagulls seek their morning prey.

The terraces full of plants with morning light. It looks like an explosion of green. The plants come from everywhere: Malaysia, Palinuro, Rinconada, Socotra, Pitcairn. Before leaving the house, Cornell takes care of them, water and insecticide to prevent them from getting dry and yellow. A read of the newspaper, a look at the weather forecast, raincoat in hand, bowler hat on head and go. The home-to-work journey is like running in a field of obstacles, thus focus is essential: blue screen errors are always around the corner.

 The durian, a friendly fruit covered with thorns. If you want to avoid a fine in Singapore, the mother city of this fruit, do not use public transport; it is forbidden to transport it because of the nauseating smell. Incredible but true, the durian fascinates several fans who, without being overwhelmed by the smell, can spin it, open it and enjoy the pulp.



DONG.

(Ab)Normal

0.000000 0.000000

Cornell starts the city jungle process: the traffic, the lianas, people waiting impatiently at the metro stops, tangles, confusion, masters awaiting the needs of their dog, chaos, noise, smells ... way too much for early mornings. In the city there is always a smell of fried food, long-lasting and sickening, night and day, always the same. An olfactory experience powerful enough to anaesthetise the nose. Who knows the deal with the simulation of smells, so precise it specifies even their origin.*

Dong. Cornell sets the subprogram, naming it 'Factory'. The mouse clicks onto the locker room. Blue suit and gloves, the modelling phase begins: the twins Finger, the sailor Gregory, Leila the former nun, up to Mario the alchemist. A meticulous and repetitive work.

Trim, remove, stretch, put back and sew. Trim, remove, stretch, put back and sew. Trim, remove, stretch, put back and sew. Trim, remove, stretch, put back and sew. Trim, remove, stretch, put back and sew.

Notification at 13:00, lunch. Momentarily paused, Cornell observes the meals configured by previous programmers. Bread and sardines. Coffee with half a teaspoon of untreated cane sugar to conclude.

Leaned in a remote corner of the courtyard, the bins for recycling. Always respect Nature. The Routine starts again. Trim, remove, stretch, put back and sew. Trim, remove, stretch, put back and sew. Trim, remove, stretch, put back and sew. Trim, remove, stretch, put back and sew. Trim, remove, stretch, put back and sew.

Last dong. Cornell proceeds with the saving procedure. He begins with the greetings: Mario the alchemist, Leila the former nun, the sailor Gregory, up to the Finger twins. Somebody is waiting for him outside the simulation. It's Alfred, with a backpack on his shoulder. Rocks by rocks, step by step, a walk of many kilometres, 2099 metres high, Cornell and Alfred arrived at their place. The absolute nothingness, the cosmic nothingness ... it depends on the points of

view! Nature, trees, mountains, rocks, animals, a sun that is about to set, the orange sky tending to pink.

Cornell lies on the lawn to have the vision of the sky straight in his eyes. Sure, he can't smell nature, but he can perceive the beauty of the whole anyway, through all the lines of his code. The humidity of the grass, the ants walking under his body, the chirping of the birds, the rustle of the plants, the wind scratching his face. No dong, trim, remove or stretch. Everything is silent, everything is in harmony. Only branches that slam each other, falling leaves, flying insects. Alfred points out that they are not alone, there are also cows with them incessantly eating grass. They open their mouths, tear the grass and close their mouths: a series of repetitive actions exactly like trim, remove, stretch, put back and sew. For a moment, Cornell indulged in believing himself to be a cow. He touched his body, feeling conscious of his form and reassured himself of feeling human. Unfortunately, it is nothing but an injected feeling.

An algorithm has no body; an algorithm is only code.



Opposite: At the starting window, (Ab)normal

Panor at the factory, (Ab)normal



Natural subprogram, (Ab)normal

⊙ △ An Instrument of Sight

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Oliver Redmond

Can architecture tell the story of space and by doing so, create a sense of place? On a brisk October afternoon, I found myself cycling through Dublin's north inner city. I cruised by Croke Park and peddled out to Fairview.

In 1920, a sliver of Dublin Bay, three kilometres in length, was reclaimed from the sea. Over the following 30 years, it was landscaped to become the Clontarf Promenade. This public thoroughfare runs along the city's north east coastline and serves as a major amenity to the area. When I reached the seafront, I locked my bike close to Fairview DART Station and fixed my gaze on the panorama of the bay. In my 24 years of living in Ireland's capital, I had never set foot along this particular stretch of coast. In fact, Dublin Bay in general had somewhat eluded me. The temperate and often gloomy climate in the city had always deterred any of my seaside-related notions. With this in mind, on that particularly crisp October afternoon, I found myself baffled by the beauty of the place. Moving North along the coast, a narrative began to unfurl before my eyes.

There was a rhythm to the place, I would stop and start and stop again, all the while being visually engulfed by a multitude of stimuli. Moments of repose would occur when I would meet one of 17 shelters which dot the promenade from start to finish. When under the cover of these structures, my visual experience of the place would change. Their roofs and walls would block my peripheral vision and my view of the bay would become more condensed and focused. Designed in the 1930s by Dublin Corporation architect Herbert Simms, these shelters, in practical terms, provide bathing facilities and places to sit. In experiential terms however, they structure a visual narrative. Dublin Bay is that narrative and it is presented to people through a series of still, framed moments provided by the shelters.

These moments are unlocked one after another as the user moves their way along the promenade. From point A to point B, from start to finish, one is introduced in a sequential manner to Dublin's visual icons. The Poolbeg Chimneys, Killiney Hill,

the Dublin Mountains, etc. The formula goes something like this: while movement allows for panoramic views of the city, stillness provides framed sights; the panoramic vistas draw attention to multiple things as a person moves and the framed snapshots focus attention on specific elements as they rest. People tend to spend time contemplating the specifics, and, afterwards, they are more informed of their significance in the context of the panorama. It is simple yet very effective and, by the end of my late October stroll, I was entirely mesmerised.

The Clontarf Promenade was not, as I had initially mistaken it, merely a stretch of landscaped coastline; instead it was a tool – an instrument which was carefully tuned to articulate 'space' and its contents in a way that evoked the perception of 'place'.

Space is fundamentally concerned with geometry, physics and other mathematical measures that attempt to map and define it. Experientially, we perceive it through our senses; we see, touch, taste and smell a space, and its contents around us. What separates one spatial region from another is our ability to give things meaning. We categorise and symbolise things, inanimate objects become landmarks and icons. Our maps do not commonly record the spatial reality of the Earth, rather, they communicate to us our collective fabrication of the world. Humans make place to give meaning to the vastness of space. The Eiffel Tower symbolises Paris, the Matterhorn accompanies Zermatt and the Poolbeg Chimneys signify Dublin City. We have, on a collective and societal level, transformed these objects of matter – both natural and artificial – into cultural icons. Architecture is a potential tool in our arsenal when it comes to making place. If used correctly, architecture can enhance our understanding of the space around it. Like a story, the elements of that surrounding space can be introduced by architecture to its user in a sequential manner.

[...] 'Let me recall for you that man seated at his table [...] the furniture, the walls, the openings to the outside [...] all speak to him.' The building here offers structure to the narrative and acts as a protagonist in its drama.¹

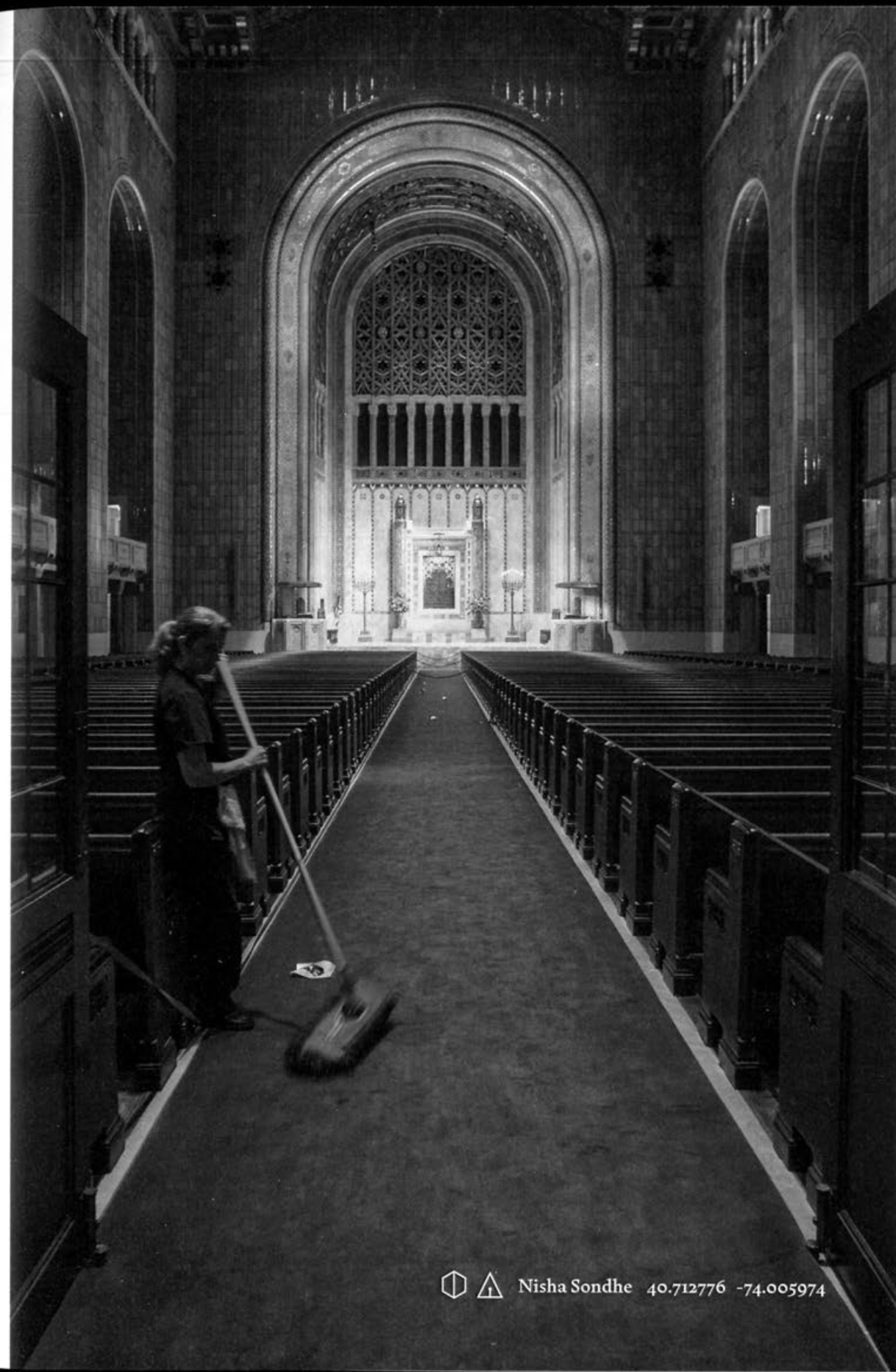
Here, Flora Samuel quotes Le Corbusier when he describes the communicative relationship between man and the room. Le Corbusier alludes to architecture's ability to communicate a spatial narrative to us through our senses. The idea that we 'read' architecture seems logical considering the fact that visually, it speaks to us through things like form and materiality. Buildings can organise and structure the visual experience of a place. The sequential nature of movement through architecture is ordered and enhanced using the promenade. The unfolding journey is an informative one; a place is thoughtfully revealed to us as we make our way through it. As in Clontarf and the Acropolis, the careful consideration and design of this journey manifests as the promenade, a narrative device.

Contemporary architecture is not overly concerned with the poetics of a narrative device. Instead, there is a general trend that dismisses 'place' and glorifies 'space'. Although typically beautiful and wonderful to inhabit, such pieces of spatially concerned architecture are often disconnected from their surrounding contexts. Their aim is to create forms which harness space in interesting, sophisticated and aesthetically pleasing ways. Space is undeniably liberating and the potential to shape it is seemingly endless. Place, however, is inherently political and a tool such as architecture, which defines and influences how we perceive place, should be highly respected. Architecture of this kind, that is, which confronts or manifests more political agendas, requires a certain type of backing. The average profiteering developer does not tend to be such a supporter. The architect of today, therefore, eagerly searching for purpose in the world, flocks to the romance of space rather than the politics of place.

This is not to say that the modernist, determinist architecture of the 20th Century which often asserted social doctrines was without its catastrophic faults. Place was to be master-planned and imposed, and I believe this was as egotistically blinding as the introspective, spatially obsessed architecture of today.

Rem Koolhaas says, "Where is nothing, everything is possible, where is architecture nothing else can happen."²

The truth seems to lie somewhere in between these conflicting schools of thought. The passion of the early modernists for the politics of place and the contemporary architect's awe of the beauty of space are both extremes on a spectrum. Herbert Simms' promenade scheme in Clontarf, for instance, seems to be an example of the middle ground. There, architecture, in the form of shelters, tells a story of space and by doing so creates, in my experience, a profound perception of place. I was in Clontarf that biting day in October, not Paris or Zermatt, and my understanding of that truth was evocatively heightened by the structured story presented to my eyes through architecture – an instrument of sight.





Place, Space, Communication Power of Art and Political Protest

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Jelena Zenko Milović

The political party *Za Grad* (For the city), in which I participated as an activist, was established in 2013 in Zagreb, Croatia, just before the local elections.

Za Grad was mostly formed by young Croatians who wanted to focus on their city, achieving tangible targets and concrete results. To this day, it remains a small left-wing green party focusing on the environment and the protection of the public spaces that were developed through time and collective effort by each local community; these spaces are often sacrificed, sometimes for 'development' purposes, sometimes by plain corruption. *Za Grad* is known for campaigning to save the green patches of land throughout the city and for defending 'spaces' of cultural and historical importance against devastation, while simultaneously addressing issues of traffic pollution and encouraging the development of cycling infrastructures.

Our core aims have been to fight for the acceptance of diversity in a deeply conservative society and against the hate speech that has become increasingly present in the political sphere. The core values of the party include encouraging active participation of citizens in politics, transparency in two-way communications between institutions and citizens, and supporting professional research as the basis for defining development strategies as well as for good decision making.

In such a context, many of the values we took for granted, such as tolerance, multiculturalism, freedom of expression, democracy, transparency and equality, all came under continuous threat from different sides.

In our political context, we conclude that, in terms of finding ways to catch the attention of the wider public, we should pursue new art interventions and guerilla

actions. There are four major guerilla art actions that our party has implemented.

The Rainbow in front of the building of the Croatian Bishop Conference is the first one. It was executed the night before the International Day Against Homophobia as a statement for people of non-heterosexual identities that are still being marginalised and harassed in Croatia. We chose the space in front of a major Croatian Catholic Church institution, with the intention to make it a place where a good part of the blame for this particular intolerance could and should be placed. On one side of the rainbow we wrote "ljubi bližnjega svoga", a quote from the Bible meaning "love those close to you", while on the other side we wrote "ima jedna duga cesta" meaning "there is one long road", which is a line from a popular Catholic song in Croatia. The rainbow, and our words, were washed away early in the morning, but our piece was covered in all the major media and reached a wide audience.

Another project was a big pink papier-mâché piggy bank placed in front of the Ministry of Education with a sign that said "Donate a Minimum for the Curriculum". It was a protest against cuts in state budget for education, with the attacks by conservative social and political forces on the overall system of education. Again, the space in front of the Ministry was transformed into a place for specific political protest against the overall policies of the ruling coalition. In this action, I participated in making the piggy bank prop.

The 'Miss of Inefficiency' was an art installation in front of the Ministry of Justice, which took longer to prepare because the symbolic prop was made out of cast. The 3D glasses suggest that the Ministry of Justice is looking solely through the lenses of two

ima
jedna
duga
cesta

ljubi
bližnjega
svoga

main political parties (SDP, The Social Democratic Party and HDZ, The Croatian Democratic Community). 'Miss of Inefficiency' was ball-chained to the symbol of K standing for *krupni kapital* (big capital) with the letter K taken from the logo for Konzum, the leading supermarket chain in Croatia owned by the richest tycoon in the country. The aim was to say how big market players are influencing politics in general and in particular the Ministry of Justice. In this action, I participated in making the statue as well as placing it in front of the Ministry of Justice during the night with a few of my colleagues. The night action was exciting since we had no idea if the police would be able to identify us from the surveillance camera footage.

'The Avenue of Dead Entrepreneurs' was a guerilla action made in front of the building of the Tax Administration. Taxes in Croatia went up to 25%, the amount of money that the Croatian state takes from the small entrepreneurs is pushing them out of business. In the past 20 years a great number of small businesses closed or went bankrupt. The puppets represent the dead entrepreneurs. I made them in full size using different materials such as newspapers, papier-mâché, clothing and paint. After each guerilla art action we would inform the media over anonymous internet accounts.

Our actions are a means to respond artistically to the current negative political and social dynamics by speaking on specific issues in creative, funny and provocative ways in order to make political statements that link particular actions with wider issues, including the overall frustrations of the people. In the process we transform the bland space of a government institution to place of political-artistic protest, thus producing meaning through action.

Participating in a creative way to prove a political point is both exciting and engaging. In this way we are saying that politics and dealing with politics don't have to be boring, it isn't just for the elite in suits and ties, it can also be fun. For us it is important to have fun along the way in order to keep going. Despite the negativity and depression that are floating above Zagreb and Croatia, positive political impact is still possible. During the last local elections in 2017, the party of *Za Grad* joined together with the political parties of *Zagreb je Naš* (Zagreb is Ours), *Nova ljevica* (The new left party), *Radnička Fronta* (Worker's front) and *Orah* (Sustainable development of Croatia) and reached great success by forming a club of representatives within the Zagreb city assembly, called *Lijevi blok* (The left block).

⌘ △ Ayesha Singh 28.613939 77.209023



⌘ ● Lucija Šutej 46.051430 14.505970



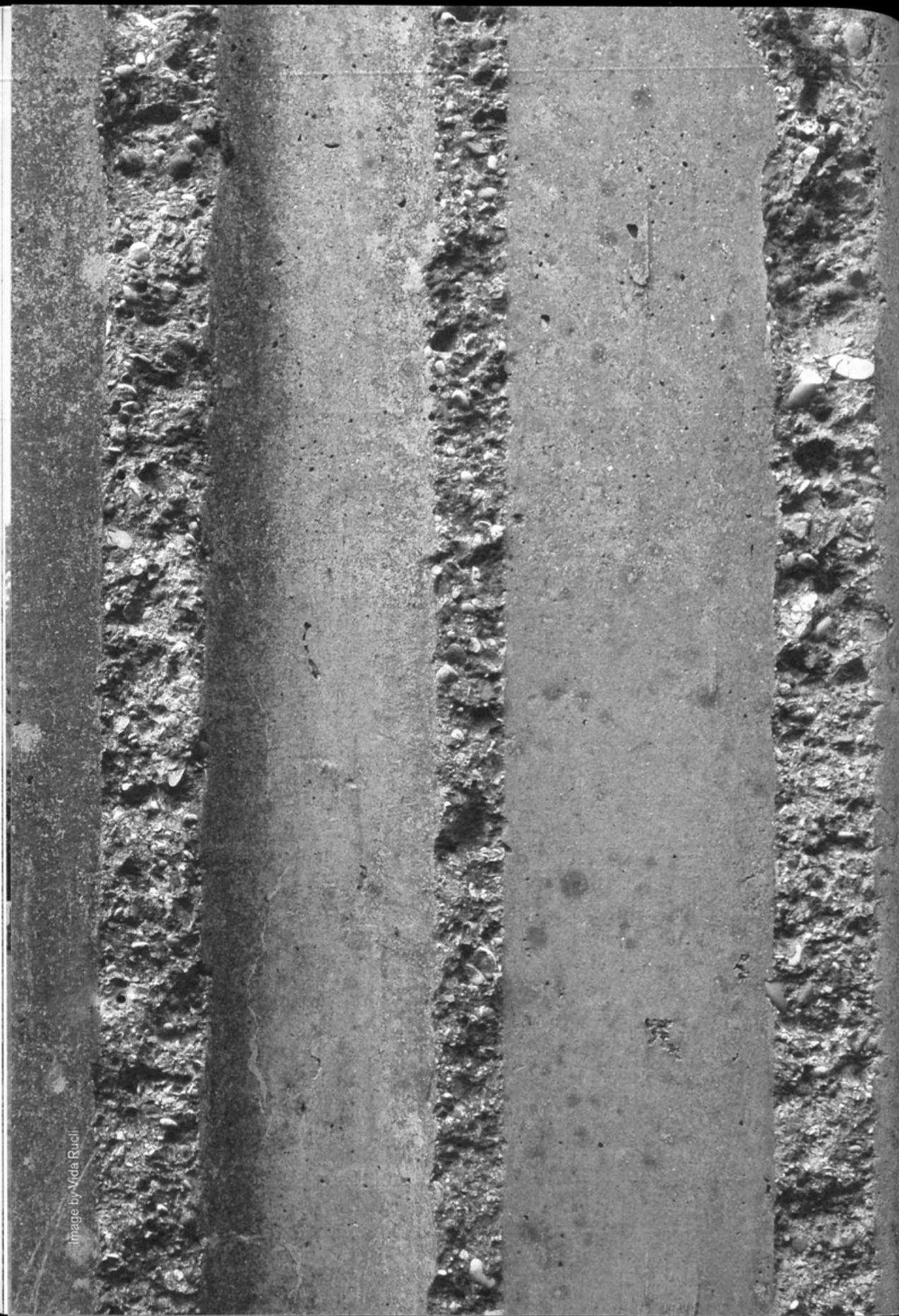


Image by Vida Rucli



A reflection on memory places in Socialist Yugoslavia

46.177280 13.603990

Vida Rucli

A forest of high pines, dark light passing between them. No grass or low bushes, only the pines and under them the earth. The hill is signed horizontally by four-metre-long low concrete blocks functioning like stairs, giving a rhythm to the random growth of trees and to your walking. At the top of the hill, at the end of an almost ritual walk, a large bright clearing, and, at the centre of the eye's focus, a tall concrete cylinder composed of diverse vertical segments. The sculpture is encircled by concrete blocks and walls, and, around them, the pine forest extends limitless.

This is the description of one monument among the thousand that were built between 1947 and 1980 in Socialist Yugoslavia: the Revolution Memorial in Kozara (1970-72), one of the best known works of sculptor Dušan Džamonja. This large number of monuments is almost entirely dedicated to the People's Liberation War that took place during World War II, against the occupiers. Socialist Yugoslavia was almost obsessed with the preservation and transmission of this memory, which led to a hyper-production of memory sites all across state territory and to a very rich diversity in the style and type of monuments.¹

The best examples of memorials to World War II share certain characteristics. One of the most interesting is the relation between the central body of the monument (usually a bigger sculpture which also functions, in many cases, as the focal point of the entire memorial) and the landscape around. Even more impressive is the relation that these memorials establish between the visitor's own body and the memorial site. The visitor's perception of the monument and its context is grounded in a living, moving, reacting body.² The space is corporealised,³ discerned physically rather than optically.⁴

These experiences are seldom described. Most times, the information that circulates about these monuments, particularly on the internet, points to the impressive 'imposing', 'abandoned', 'fascinating'⁵ character of the sculptures, which is also typically what photographs emphasise. The landscape around is rarely described or shown in its complexity.

Maybe it is precisely the complexity of these projects (usually designed by large groups of artists and architects) that is so difficult to represent with just a few powerful images. Perhaps, even, the medium of photography is inadequate, because movement, the act of walking and of approaching, has a key role in the understanding of the memorial itself.

Through talking about the specificity of the chosen sites, the strong link between landscape and sculptural objects, and the importance of experiencing such complexes, we'll arrive at a definition of these memorials as places.

The site: Landscape

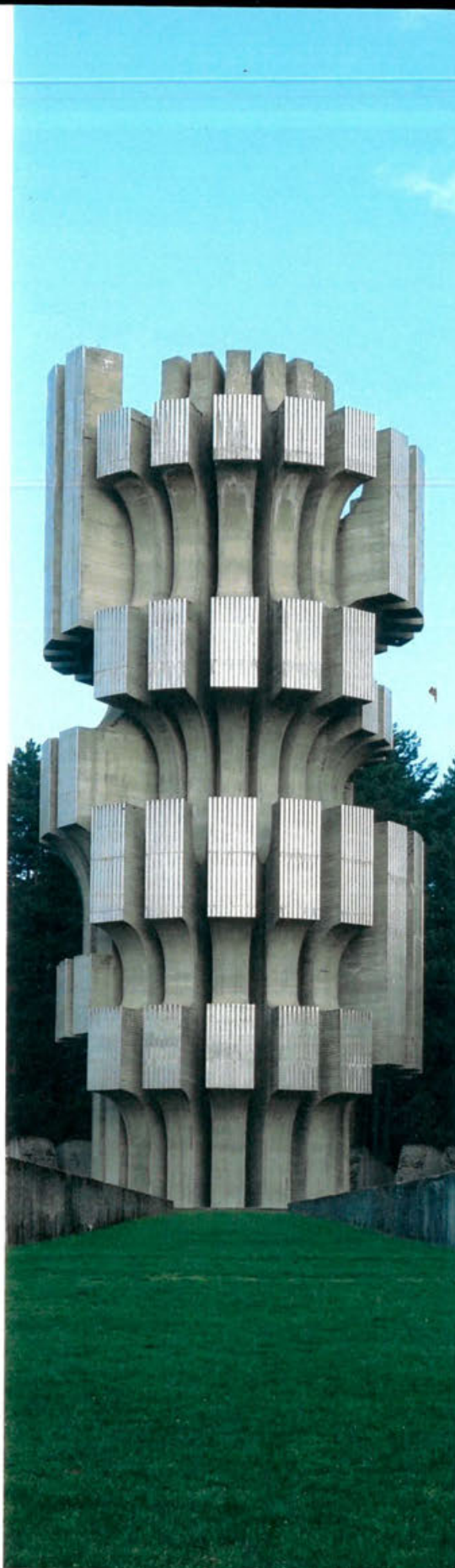
"The monument before being a form is a site"

Giulio Carlo Argan⁶

Monuments and memorial complexes in Socialist Yugoslavia were built in diverse locations: former concentration camps (memorial complex in Jasenovac, *Kampor Memorial* in Rab), forests where tragic battles took place (*Revolution Memorial* in Kozara, *Memorial to the Pohorje Battalion* in Osankarica), clearings that witnessed important victories (*Memorial to the Battle on the Sutjeska*, Tjentište), specific places in the forest where hospitals and camps had been built (memorial complex at the Partisan Hospital on Javornica, Drežnica)⁷ and elsewhere. These locations have something in common: they are all sites where something happened, not just designated spaces deemed good spots for memorials. These sites were carriers of significance, the right places for performances of social memory⁸ because it is there that history happened. All are authentic sites of suffering, and, because of this authenticity, the monuments are carriers of a meaning that differs from that of monuments to specific events located in other contexts.

These monuments are pauses in space: instead of just generally remembering a specific episode, a moment in time, memorials located on the site of important events are markers of territory. The function of these monuments is thus at the same time spatial and temporal. Temporal because they recall crucial past events, keeping them alive in memory; spatial because they give a place to this memory. The bond between memorial complex and site makes the monument the signifier, and the territory the signified.⁹

Through the monument, a new layer of significance is added over the landscape.



Images by Vida Ruci

Through this spatialisation of memory,¹⁰ the landscape becomes a verb, a process¹¹ "where social and subjective identities are formed".¹²

When talking about landscape and monument, landscape itself (in Argan's words, the site and not the form of the monuments) is the repository of "symbolic space and time, the most generally accessible and widely shared aide-mémoire of a culture's knowledge and understanding of its past and future."¹³

With the monument there is a redefinition of the site;¹⁴ the homogeneity and neutrality of the space previously defined geometrically and quantitatively, are ruptured¹⁵ and, with its signification, symbolic content and qualitative definition, it becomes place.

"Landscapes are, in the final analysis, placescapes; they are congeries of places in the fullest experiential and represented sense."¹⁶

The place and the body

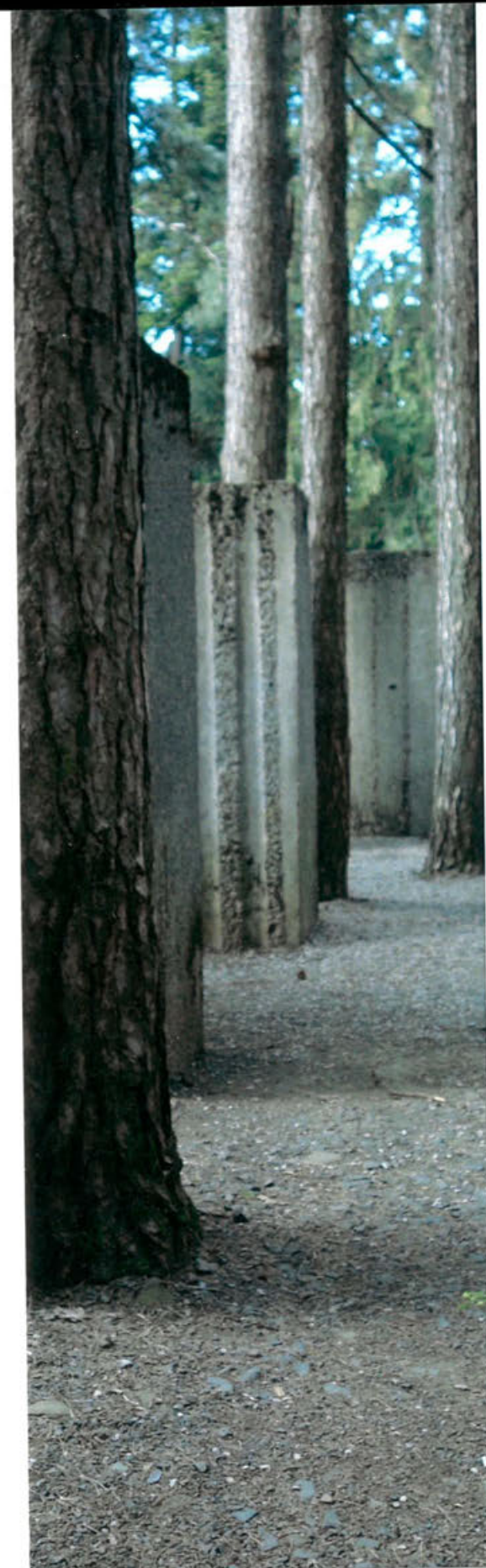
"Place is an organised world of meaning"

Yi-Fu Tuan¹⁷

After driving on curvy streets between forests and little villages, the landscape opens in front of you. You find yourself in a valley with small hills, a lake, a few farms and houses, and, on a hill, a concrete sculpture, the shape and dimensions of which you can't understand until you are in front of it. There is a portal under which you can walk; then, after a ten-metre-long concrete path, you reach the main sculpture. You are in the Memorial to the Revolution of Moslavina in Podgarić (which is also an ossuary), again by sculptor Dušan Džamonja.

What is interesting about this memorial is not only the shape of the main sculpture but its relation to the hilly landscape around. Approaching the sculpture, on a slightly sloping road, the visitor at first sees it against the forest green background of the hills behind; getting closer, because the point of view of the spectator in relation to the monument changes, there is a moment when the sculpture shares the horizon of the hills behind it and, finally, stands out against the sky. In an extremely elegant way, the bodily movement of the spectator is included in the architectural design.¹⁸

Sequentiality and quasi-cinematic effect (similar to film montage) make this monument particularly interesting. The fact that its relation to the context combined with the changing position of the viewer continuously transforms the structure, transforms the spectator who, by definition, holds a still position, into an active user, a bodily subject.



Being attentive to the topography of the place, the dialectical relation between one's perception of the place in its totality and the space as walked,¹⁹ the time of peripatetic walking,²⁰ the sequentiality of sights²¹ and the rich sound effects makes the visitor understand that they are in a meaningful place where time and past are made visible.²²

The monument and time

"The event is the basis. Sometimes even a fragment of an event can lead to the solution. This is why [...] the impression of those who have taken part in is precious"

Zdenko Kolacio²³

Starting from an old barn, you enter the forest. You walk, without following a specific path, between high pine trees with thin trunks. The landscape around you is brownish, pine branches begin to spread quite high over you. The ground is barren; the sensation of drifting, losing direction. On the ground among the trees, you suddenly see a small granite block. You notice, then, that there are quite a few of them, in part radially distributed. Some blocks are bigger, they mark the location of Partisan shelters. Others, smaller, each with a mark carved on a side, reproduce the supposed military positions of the 69 fallen Partisans.

Memorial to the Fighters of the Pohorje Battalion (1959) by architect Branko Kocmut and sculptor Slavko Tihec (he made the central bronze statue of two expressive human figures) is part of another category of memorials, less generally known because less imposing. These are places of memory that contain lighter and less invasive sculptures, letting the landscape speak alone. Trying to maintain the place as it was during the events commemorated, the emphasis shifts from the work of art itself to the viewer's experience.

As we have seen, memorials are spatial and temporal landmarks loaded with memory and their impact is much stronger if they are located on the site where the event they commemorate took place than when outside their original context. Memorial places must be understood in terms of experience: moving through them, the body activates them, and, likewise, places activate bodies²⁴ through a dialectic of walking through the memorial landscape and looking at it. The sculptural experience arises with the presence of the bodily subject out of the wandering space, the clairvoyance of the vision²⁵ and the temporality of perception.

In this way, memorial sites become places, points of symbolic activation, commemorative landscapes composed by landmarks that provide spatial and temporal coordinates for remembrance.²⁶

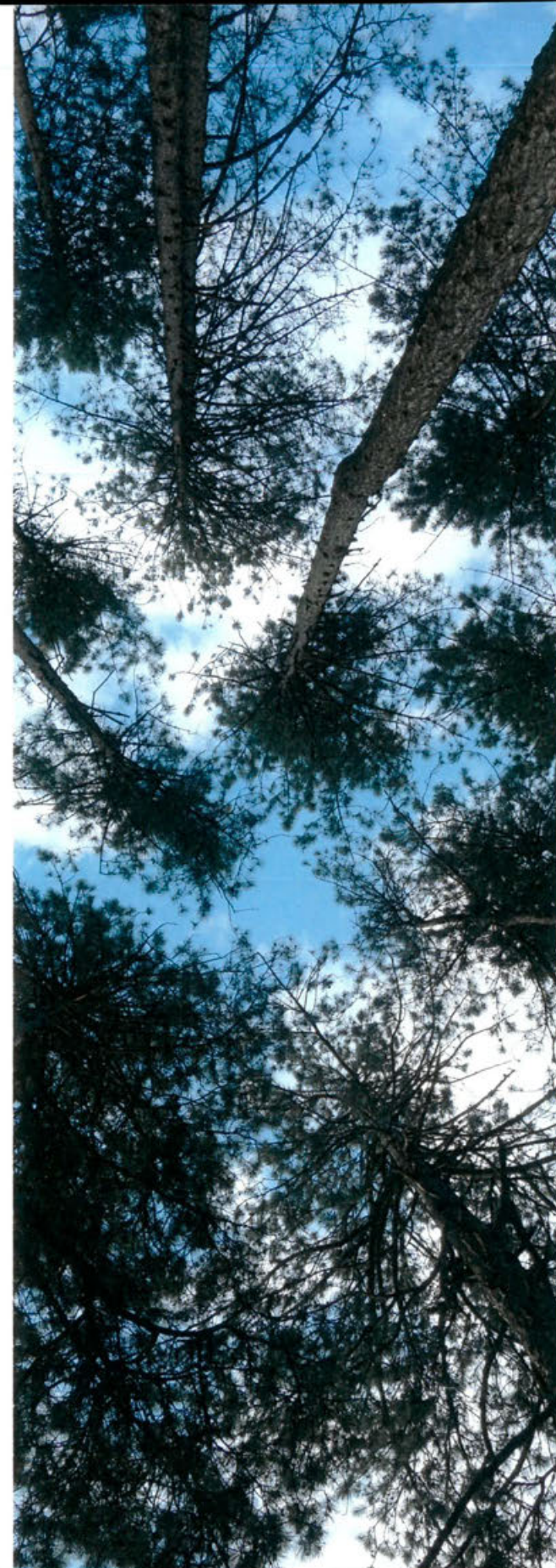


Image by Vida Rucil

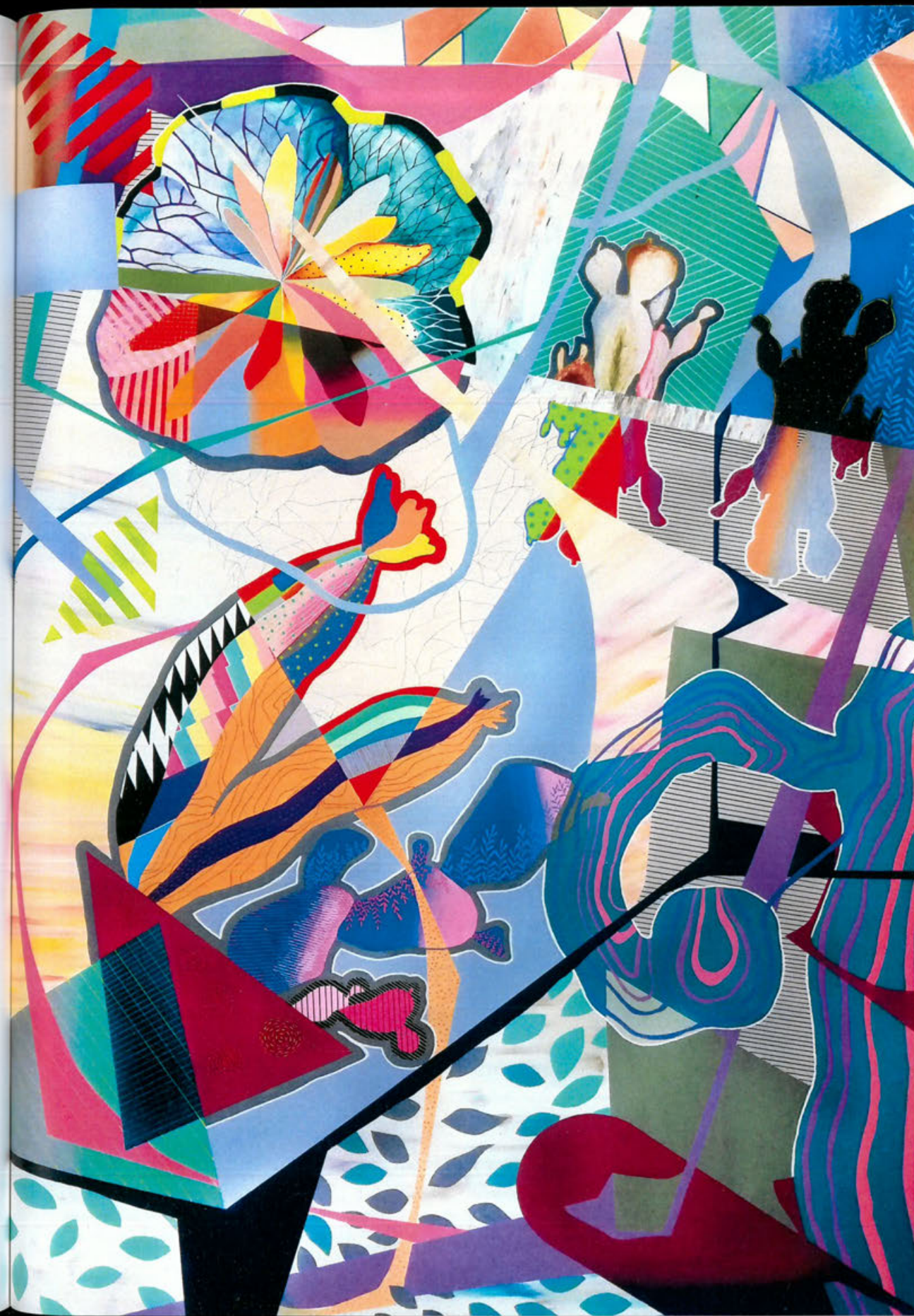




fig XX

Images from Google Arts and Culture



Wunderweltraum

10.4880100 -66.8791900 Ana Helena Arévalo

If we look back to the establishment of the very first Institutions, there was minimal to no attention given to the arrangement of the works of art (WOA) within the space that contained them.^A These places acted as allegorical structures, grand-scale reliquaries, didactic display racks, and colossal storage units for priceless masterpieces, esoteric artefacts and cultural fossils.

The understanding of space as a direct, determining factor upon the WOA and the experience of the audience is a modern posture. The white, immaculate walls, the eerie silence, the chilly air, the solemn ambience, the sterile atmosphere, the standard procedures and orthodox protocols generated an overall divine simulation: Museum-going as a quasi-religious experience. Even if the geographical place changed from one institution to another, spaces inevitably remained the same, as they (deliberately or not) followed an almost step-by-step guide determined by a cultured/cultural elite and accepted, to a certain extent, under the pretence of collective consensus.

The reaction against the 'Art Space'^B was only intensified with the rise of the White Cube as hegemonic structure, which inevitably perpetuated the mysticism surrounding the WOA. The principles set forth by the White Cube alienated the audience from what they were confronting, while posing constraints that challenged the capabilities of both the artists and the artworks. In 1972, Robert Smithson introduced the notion of 'Cultural Confinement'.¹ He built upon the understanding that artists were not confined, but rather their output was. By exiting, stepping away, displacing, or somehow transcending the fixed walls of the Institution, the WOA would be liberated and the artist, consequently, would (re)gain control over the seemingly unchangeable, self-governing apparatus.^C

The limits – or rather, the parameters – delineated by the Institution, however, go far beyond the physical attributes of the space that encompasses a WOA. These (institutional) parameters not only have an impact upon the actual physical infrastructure and the creative potential of the artist, but also on the experience of the visitors.^D It (the Institution) takes on multiple forms, simultaneously acting as tangible barrier, geographical frontier, virtual periphery, systematic framework, adaptable interface and invisible membrane. The (new) fluidity of the boundaries established by the Institution goes hand in hand with both the democratisation and the commodification of art and culture overall.^E

This new accessibility inevitably dilutes and redefines established parameters while at the same time making them even more permanent.^F Over the years, Institutions have taken on multiple functions including sanctuary,⁵ amusement park,⁶ factory⁷ and/or database,⁸ almost in a proactive attempt to comply with the zeitgeist.^G Nevertheless, the blind compliance (by the Institution) with the contemporary need for immediacy comes with underlying implications that ought to be carefully addressed. As Art Spaces evolve into must-see icons for ideal post-modern tourists, cultural assimilation is slowly transforming into cultural consumption. This ultimately has an impact upon the quantity and quality of the material showcased as viewers are constantly bombarded with ever-changing information that strives to address the widest audience possible; and as a result, both the message and the experience can end up being oversimplified to oblivion.

A The (un)intentional disregard of the space grows almost directly from the primordial essence of the *Wunderkammer*, the Cabinet of Curiosities – encyclopedic spaces that contained all kinds of paraphernalia from natural to artificial, that somewhat replicated the intricate nature of the universe. These microcosms were, in fact, analysed and categorised thoroughly according to the inherent qualities of the objects themselves. The arrangement of these artefacts within the space thus depended upon the categories to which they belonged rather than in relation to the space itself.

B An Art Space, by definition, includes museums, galleries, and/or other cultural institutions. The ambiguity of the name itself, however, raises questions; it is unclear whether a space can be considered an 'art space' simply because it is designed to accommodate, preserve, and/or exhibit a WOA, or if it is the fact that a WOA inhabits the space at all that turns it into an Art Space.

C Robert Smithson's awareness of the limitations presented by the Institution, in terms both of his creative processes and the longevity and capabilities of his oeuvre, pushed him to go far beyond the 'outside' walls of the Institution. He rejected the idea of artworks existing in regulated places such as gardens and parks. He strove to find the opposite of a modern-day Arcadia – he defined this opposite as sites and non-sites – and within this wilderness and chaos, the WOA would truly be freed from all confinements. That is how his seminal work *Spiral Jetty*² found its way to its anti-pastoral industrial site on the shore of the Great Salt Lake in Utah, USA. Even if the artwork is in fact far beyond the reach of the physical enclosure of any Institution, it nonetheless belongs to one. *Spiral Jetty* is owned, supported and conserved by the Dia Art Foundation, which inevitably places the work under a predefined set of Institutional regulations, standards, and expectations. That is, under cultural confinement.

D The idea of Cultural Confinement – or of the boundaries themselves – should be considered open-ended. It is virtually impossible to exist autonomously without being confronted in any way with the boundaries. The notion of confinement is binary: it is both the enclosed inside and the boundless outside. Artists, artworks and especially the audience must take them (the boundaries) into account as a means of self-governance when they position/place/

locate themselves. This position³ can relate not only to the space (inside/outside), to the medium (analogue/digital), and/or the domain (physical/virtual), but also to the relationship with the Institution (institutional/anti-institutional), as even subversive tendencies that exist at the margin of the Institution often end up being (re)institutionalised.

E With the Museum Boom of the early 2000s and what Thomas Krens proposed as 'The Five Rides' of the Institution,⁴ museum-going transitioned from a religious experience to instant (affordable) mass-entertainment. This had an impact on the administration and ambitions of the Institution, as well as the consumption of the WOA and digestion of the art-experience by the audience now offered 'Spectacular' tourist opportunities. The fact that institutions are constantly tripping over themselves in an attempt to court sought-after artists with pieces for their collections as well as the investment and development of 'blockbuster exhibitions' has had a massive impact on the consideration of space. Artworks, artists and administrators must now address and answer these immediate demands, which result in further reassessment of boundaries themselves, pushing them towards new curatorial opportunities.

F Despite the clear expansion of the parameters, there is concurrently a restructuring of this confinement: the limits now respond to the meteoric rise of the (art) market and its underlying economic imperatives, the immediacy of mass media and systems of communication, the possibilities facilitated by cutting-edge modern technologies, the universal nature of contemporary issues that demand almost real-time solutions, and the plenitude of interlocking narratives portrayed by distinctive voices that require constant active acknowledgment from spectators.

G With the dematerialisation of physical space and the development of new spheres in which the WOA can exist, Google Arts and Culture comes as a result of the necessity (for the public) to bring things closer.⁹ This ultimately leads to the reinterpretation and reconsideration of space and its confinement as the viewer now takes on various roles as conqueror, collector and connoisseur. Having in mind the principles of the world's first recorded collections, Google Arts and Culture can be considered the contemporary rendition of the *Wunderkammer*. In comparison, Google Arts and Culture is a virtual dumpster for high-res, high-priced visual miscellany.

¹ Robert Smithson, 'Cultural Confinement', in *The Writings of Robert Smithson* repr, New York, 1979, 132-3.

"[Cultural confinement] takes place when a curator imposes his own limits on an art exhibition, rather than asking an artist to set his limits."

² Robert Smithson, *Spiral Jetty*, Great Salt Lake, Utah, USA: Dia Art Foundation, 1970.

It is a 460-metre-long, 4.6-metre-wide counterclockwise coil protruding from the shore of the Great Salt Lake.

³ See fig X

⁴ Paul Lieberman, 'Museum's Maverick Showman', *Los Angeles Times*, Last modified 2000, <http://articles.latimes.com/2000/oct/20/news/mn-39446>.

In 2000, Thomas Krens drew a parallel between museums and theme parks, in an attempt at redefining the role of the museum as 'cultural platform', while almost obliterating the boundaries between high and low culture altogether. He stated that 'The Five Rides' included: great permanent collections, great temporary exhibits, great architecture, eating opportunities and shopping opportunities.

⁵ Further reading: *Function of the Museum* by Daniel Buren

⁶ Further reading: *Museum's Maverick Showman* by Paul Lieberman

⁷ Further reading: *Is A Museum a Factory?* by Hito Steyerl

⁸ Further reading: *Is a Museum a Database?: Institutional Conditions in Net Utopia* by Mike Pepi

⁹ See fig XX

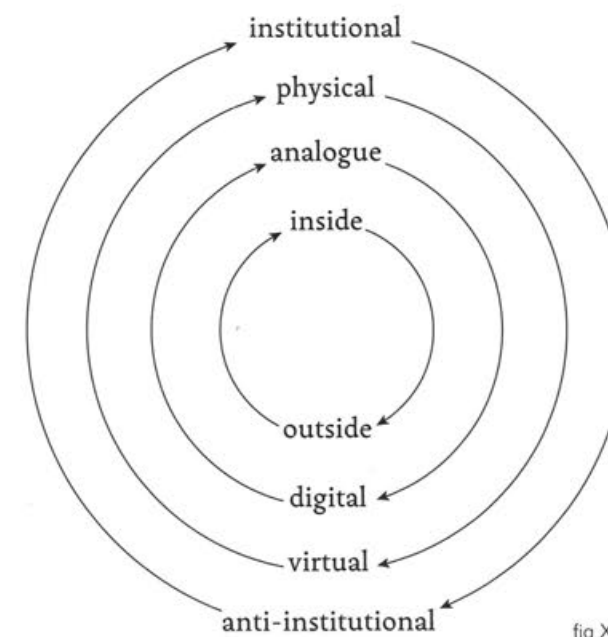


fig X



Image by ChrisTupper

SPACE TOURISTS. People don't just kill time any more they kill space too. There's no spatial awareness. Town planning and architecture for example it's all about what we can see not the things we can't see like the flow of energy. The people who dictate our environment have no knowledge or time or belief in the understanding of form, composition and perspective they have a deeper understanding of economics and schedule, it's just a job it could be any other job. You wouldn't let just anybody perform open heart surgery you'd want someone qualified and experienced so why isn't it the case for architecture and planning why do we allow people disconnected completely with no belief to infiltrate our surroundings? Space deprivation, Space is taken for granted. It's just accepted without any thinking at all. Then again if people don't think about the welfare of the animals that they eat chickens in cages for instance and the eggs from the caged hens why should they care or be aware of the space around them? "You are what you eat" and we are 'products' of our environment. No choice in town planning, people just accept it. Badly curated space. Fodder for the masses. There's no movement. Creativity's suppressed. Thinking' suppressed. Just static minds. Claustrophobic. Sometimes in a space you can feel your mind flowing free; invisible force, invisible waves. Like an idea it cannot be constrained by walls. Now people consume ideas in the same way they consume fast food 'without thinking' consume, forget. And Shops imitating galleries. TV imitating internet. Starbucks McDonald's H&M Topshop in London or all around the world they're the same. Standardised interior space. Spatially dictated to. No identity, standardised individuals. Losing their freedom to choose what they see and feel. Infiltrated indoctrinated memory space. A Blank canvas. Two metres square isn't restricted to two metres square the space may as well be two kilometres square or two thousand kilometres square; it's a mindset, visualised space. No boundaries, freedom of creativity. Open-mindedness, not restriction. Space is time. 'Society' wants to live at the speed of the internet. Superfast broadband. Don't absorb then move on to the next whim of entertainment. the mainstream museums and galleries for example are not places where you find like-minded individuals. just Overcrowded. Masses. Tourists. Consumers. Information virus not only killing time any more, killing space and ideas too. Contrived hunted plagiarised packaged experience. People just finding themselves in a space but having no idea why just because they are hypnotised into being there depriving that space for those that know why they're there, or not there. Corporate space. Out of context product placement. Consume moments. Consumption is not an experience. Improvise, not compromise. An idea develops in time and space ... not Cruise ship options 'everything catered for'; what about your own self? Inner space human spirit watch visualise project our own experience and imagination and not accept watered down blueprinted ideas, non-human simulated stimulation, packaged experience.

Negatives, p6

GIOVANNA DEL SARTO

Giovanna Del Sarto is a London-based Italian photographer specialising in documentary photography. She typically looks at the margins of societies and the aftermath of catastrophes, tracing experiences of precarious living to tackle her own ignorance and import stories, faces and voices seldom represented.

Adrift and Ascent, p30

JEREMY GEDDES

Jeremy Geddes is a Melbourne-based photorealist painter known for his paintings of cosmonauts and people floating, falling, colliding and drifting in barren landscapes. *Adrift and Ascent* arrange disparate elements together in a contextless space as a representation of transience.

Mumbai v New York, p36

NISHA SONDHE

Nisha Sondhe is a Brooklyn-based photographer specialising in travel and portrait photography. Although not a native New Yorker, she has been living and honing her craft there for the last 19 years. *Mumbai v New York* explores the exacting similarities of life in two seemingly different cities. Here, she explores temples and churches as places maintained by staff of a space reserved for worship.

Enveloped, p40

AYESHA SINGH

Ayesha Singh is a multidisciplinary artist from and based in New Delhi. Her practice examines manifestations of colonialism and social hierarchies embedded in the architectural pastiches that form part of our cities and homes. *Enveloped* is a site-specific installation in New Delhi. The weave is made using found cloth and mimics the pattern and process of creation from one of the mat weaver's objects adorning her earlier piece, *The Structure*. The work wraps itself around it, tackling its mass and scale, and enveloping it in cloth that has been made and imported from various locations and cultures.

Untitled, p41

LUCIJA ŠUTEJ

Lucija Šutej is London-based artist, working primarily with ink. The untitled piece is one artwork in a series of ink drawings. The cycle was created as an exploration of the medium ink in connection with surface/space. The full series is an experiment of how surface can be defined, namely by brushstrokes. The common line throughout the cycle is the use of a specific form created by brushstrokes, that is re-interpreted and re-invented again and again, pushing the boundaries of the imagination.

flOwhertz, p48

NATAŠA KEKANOVIĆ

Nataša Kekanović's practice builds on the idea of a polyvalence and fluidity of personality specific to artistic sensibility. Playful and poetic, *flOwhertz* questions the unity of artificial, sharp construction and organic beauty in relation to time, space and place. Fixated, square-like shapes represent utility, mechanical and male energy, which is imagined as time-bending. On the other side, you have organic flowers floating without root – the female aspect of reality. Together these make up the negation of fixated place with the pure extension of space.

Inner jacket and

Photography in the fourth dimension, p56

RAFA YUSTE

Rafa Yuste is a Spanish photographer and art director. Inspired by space and the cosmos, he builds escape capsules with his camera. These photographs are the product of an exploration based in discovering aesthetic universes. This is the fourth dimension: a space-time based exploration which defines an aesthetic, bringing time as a visual variable and space as an abstract stage. *Photography in the fourth dimension* offers the opportunity for the viewers to understand the relationship between the themselves and space.

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Edited and designed by

Julia Gros 43.834590 4.360860

Hannah Kelly 53.353584 -6.251495

Romina Krosnyak -34.901112 -56.164532

Marion Magrangeas 48.802200 2.129680

Jacqueline O'Connell 40.678177 -73.944160

Laura Smith 32.715736 -117.161087

Lucija Šutej 46.051430 14.505970

Santiago Rodríguez 4.624335 -74.063644

Simer Dhingra 28.613939 77.209023

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Reverse jacket:
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fourth dimension
Rafa Yuste



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Power of Art and Political Protest
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