

Colophon

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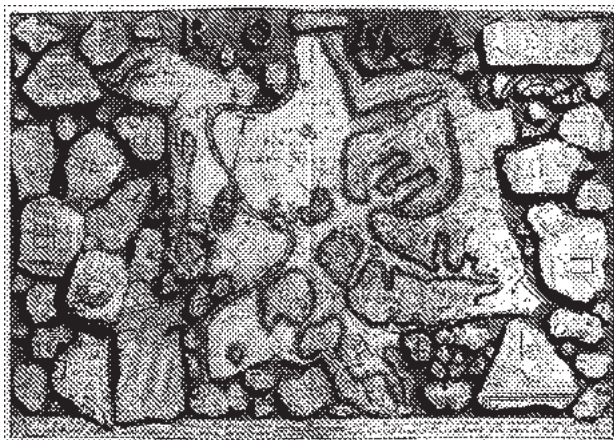
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Hybrids

Esperanto is based on relation and just like a pidgin language makes identities blur. It is a hybrid. Language parts of different origins are forged into a composite language, artificial and concrete at once. Its elements relate to each other in the generation of new meanings based on the in-between. Esperanto as a transnational language is a considered cross-breeding with Universalist ambitions; it is a modernist invention that met resistance in real life. Its failure to become a commonly spoken language is a fact, just as modern architecture has not become part of the mainstream: there are other kinds of lingua franca today. Like Esperanto, architecture intended to constitute a common ground appears instead to be sectarian in the midst of contemporary pluralism. Seen this way, the failed artificial language appears as a mirror image of the failed ambitions of modern architecture to be relevant as a social common ground. Moreover, Esperanto as a form of paradoxically planned creolization poses questions we see as architectural in yet another way: we do not draw from a singular past but constantly compose and recombine various genealogies that we regard as fundamental. This makes us think of architecture not as one tradition or one culture. Rather it appears to be a network of influences absorbed and constantly recombined. If on the one hand the claim for an architectural universalism seems to be in stark contrast with the concept of spontaneous mingling and transformation, on the other hand this claim appears to be integral to sustaining a position in the presence of a pluralist culture of indifference. Following this paradox, the challenge of a common ground in architecture appears to reside in the question of whether our discipline is capable of being, at once, ideologically founded and inclusivist: making spaces of a shared heterogeneity.

Curatorial Architecture

Common ground implies an architecture that overcomes self-expressive indulgence and instead acts curatorially, at once defining authorship



differently and gaining new authority. Key to this self-understanding is a new attention paid to context, seen not as a historical or local condition but as a way of displaying reality in order to change it. Context is not what you find but what you design to make the found visible: The act of decontextualising any particular object and recontextualising it in a specific way recreates the object by charging it with new meaning. Context then is not a passive container but an active part of an object's performance—therefore, transforming the context is a way of changing the objects within it. The shift from designing objects towards the design of contexts is at the basis of curatorial architecture: the collecting and selection of already existing things produces additional value while invention through the creation of new objects appears to be of less importance. Objects collected change their identities by way of relating to a different whole. A successful collection will structure the included items by generating a logic that transcends any single component within it: the collection is a designed context in which each object acquires importance in relation

to the collection's overall logic. We look at the collection as an ideology that does not exist a priori but is based on existing things, and as a way of transforming plurality into a specific order through a curatorial maneuver. Being collectors means being translators, following Édouard Glissant who delineates the art of translating as collecting the expansion of all ways of being. Glissant looks at the necessary loss in the act of translation as a positive moment of approach towards the other, a loss that creates a new landscape in between two languages and two identities—if we are ready to inhabit this in between space. Curatorial architecture collects fragments of reality that are transformed through the act of displaying them in a different context.

Archipelago

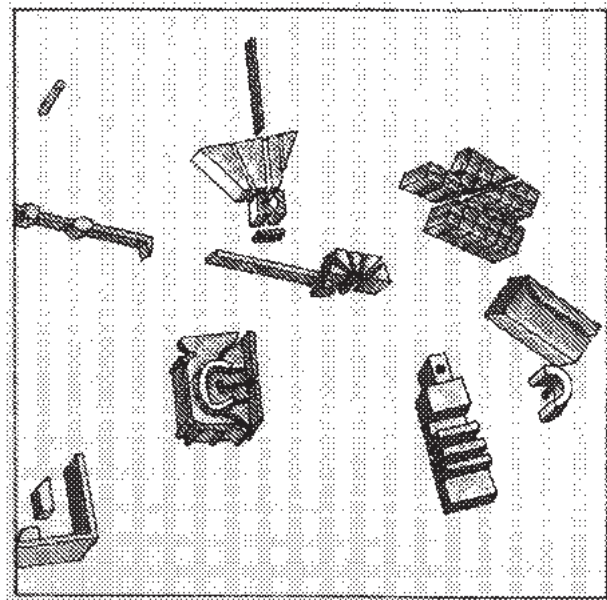
Oswald Mathias Ungers' 1977 design *Cities within the City* for Berlin as a green archipelago is a curatorial project: He makes a collection of Berlin by selecting a number of city morphologies to be preserved and highlighted while proposing to erase all the remaining urban fabric in between. The result is a collection of urban islands in an immense landscape garden, appearing like exhibits in an open-air museum. Ungers' model is distinct from Villa Adriana and most other architecture museums in that the architecture on display is neither replicated nor translocated but remains an 'original' in its likewise original place. On the other hand, what distinguishes the archipelago from the real city is the fact that each island is appropriated to become one part within a collection of spaces and thus acquires new meaning through the ideology that structures the collection. Ungers provides the design of a context. He makes a case for a different understanding of architecture and how it gets transmitted historically. *Cities within the City* is an argument in favor of a curatorial authorship, one that leaves behind the technocratic model of city planning. It embraces the heterogeneous and the contradictory, as it is found in contemporary urbanity, and makes it the foundation of a collection to be

designed by curatorial architects. Based on conservation through elimination, the archipelago substitutes the conventional model of accumulation by a model of reduction, much like Cedric Price's *Case against Conservation*: 'The existing built environment will not provide the human servicing it should to the urban community until it is wholeheartedly recognized that a high rate of destruction of the existing fabric is a positive contributor to the quality of beneficial social change.' The archipelago city is a three dimensional tack board that accommodates urban fragments as found. It assumes the quality of a montage when read as a visual narration, an urban analogy of Aby Warburg's atlas. It is an exhibition to be experienced like a landscape by moving visitors, who develop their proper parcours. An appropriation by all means, Ungers redesigns Berlin by appropriating what already exists through selection and collection in order to show it as his exhibition.

Perception Machines

When Le Corbusier designed the roof terrace for Charles de Beistegui in Paris, he created an archipelago of another type. The method of collecting in this case was not physical but optical, framing the view onto the city in such ways that only certain parts were visible and, because of their visual isolation, making them appear to be closer than they actually were. De Beistegui could make his personal exhibition of Paris by moving the hedges, thus reframing the city through a selected display of its scattered monuments while ignoring the huge urban expansion in-between. Corbusier once more made a full-scale model of his urbanist vision after already having exhibited the *Plan Voisin* some years earlier in the form of a pavilion for the *Exposition des Arts Décoratifs*. Upon entering it, the visitors found themselves all of a sudden inside a unit of the Immeuble Villa, fully furnished and completed by a terrace overlooking the park. In both instances, Corbusier made the visitor experience his urban vision directly rather than through scale models, plans or images. He designed perception machines that, along with Kiesler's Raumstadt, create a genealogy

of the modern architecture exhibition as an unmediated spatial experience in full scale. Drawing from these models, the architects associated with the Independent Group in London after WWII set out to make their own demonstrative exhibitions, starting with *Parallel of Life and Art* at the ICA, a three dimensional collage in which they employed simple reproductions of photographs and images of all sorts scattered over the walls and hung from the ceilings. The space to be experienced turned into the exhibit itself while the role of the artists and architects involved—in this case Eduardo Paolozzi, Nigel Henderson, and Alison and Peter Smithson—became that of curatorial designers. The exhibition followed El Lissitzky's *Kabinett der Abstrakten* and the *Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme* in its totalizing design of the space and



also in its collaborative and collective production process, which involved a sculptor, two architects and a photographer. A shift occurred: as photography and space mutually enclose one another, display and exhibit start oscillating. Collaboration became a central issue in exhibition making, with authorship taking place exactly in-between the disciplinary fields, oscillating between architecture, sculpture and photography.

Photographic Space

'Gropius wrote a book on grain silos, Le Corbusier one on aeroplanes, And Charlotte Perriand brought a new object to the office every morning. But today we collect ads.'

The Smithsons' were aware of the paradigm shift that occurred in architecture with the powerful impact made by modern media images. Collecting mass-production advertising and attaching it to their tack board to look at every day, they confronted themselves with the new imagery. Still, in the exhibition *This is Tomorrow – Patio and Pavilion* at the Whitechapel Gallery, they took care with the physical space, using reflecting sheet metal walls with a rustic wooden hut in its center, while letting Henderson and Paolozzi work on the photographs and objects to be displayed within the space. Differing from Mies' approach in his MoMA exhibition, in which he had used giant blow-up photographs of his European projects to create a full scale spatial experience and thus made images turned into architecture as his fundamental display strategy, the Smithsons' were more interested in the relational moment. They addressed collaboration as a moment of passage, understanding their architecture as finished and unfinished at once. Reportedly leaving for the CIAM meeting in Dubrovnik, they did not oversee the completion of the installation by their fellow artists, granting freedom to them as first inhabitants and users of their installation. In this way, their space became a conditional display but not yet a fully finished object, waiting to be completed through its use. As yet another expression

of designing by way of translation, the collective authorship enacted in this exhibition is a demonstration of architecture as both, disciplinary and open-ended, and as such is a collective form of art. The expressive material surfaces of *Patio and Pavilion* reflect a brutalist sensibility that positions the exhibition space as an active presence, to which the art work is made to react with the same degree of involvement.

Exhibiting Common Ground

Responding to David Chipperfield's call for an exhibition of *Common Ground* at the 13th Venice Biennale of Architecture, two interventions built in grey stack bond brickwork at the entrance of the Palazzo delle Esposizioni at the Giardini have been realized. Both interventions define a threshold, one outdoor and the other indoor, slowing down direct access into the building. Two specific places have been created that invite the visitor to meet and linger, to sit down and watch. The place outside is a plinth embracing an existing tree, which sits at the steps leading to the central entrance. Facing both the alley and the portico, it can be used as a bench and activates the passage in front of the Palazzo as a place of gathering. Its counterpart inside is

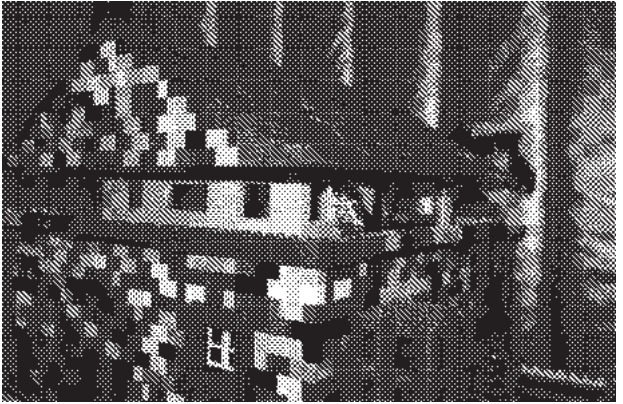


in the first room following the foyer, the historical Sala Chini, which has been changed in such a way that the axial movement from one side to the other is interrupted, creating a deviation into a central space of the same dimensions as the plinth outside. As a hollow, cut out from the building volume, the space marks a Z-shaped parcours leading from both sides to its centre. Both interventions are full scale models of architectural space, acting as stations in a parcours. Using brick as a unifying material allover, inside and outside, horizontal and vertical, the surfaces turn from an exhibition background into an architectural presence, defining space while expressing their material objecthood. The brick is laid vertically, its large upper side facing the room and using minimal joints. As a result of the brick firing, each brick is slightly different in dimension and colour. The brick is 22.5 x 10.6 x 4.85 cm, produced by Petersen Tegl in Broager, Denmark, a centuries old brickmaker who over the past thirty years has developed a way of producing brick according to contemporary technological standards while keeping the characteristics of its historical predecessors. *Komuna Fundamento* embraces the relation between the architectural object and its physical construction, including the production of the material, its transportation and the way it is assembled and built on site. The collaboration with Petersen Tegl brought about the choice of brick D99, a dark grey brick with varying shades obtained from the ordinary red brick made from local clay in Broager. Its colour is achieved through a reversible process of oxygen reduction applied to the red brick.

The Installation

Candida Hoefel and Armin Linke are both artists working in and with space. In their photography, space becomes a material that is manipulated, distorted and recomposed. Neither do interventions in their work exclusively happen in the moment when a picture is taken, or in postproduction. Interventions also happen in their exhibiting practice, in the individual ways each artist displays their photographs through framing and installing in specific environments.

In their respective practices photography is exhibited by way of spatial intervention that actively involves architecture. The two photographers are involved from the beginning in the installation process, as their works are materially integrated into the architectural structure. Hoefel's photograph of the Lauder Academy in Vienna pictures a corner window. The work is set into the brick clad walls so that it becomes a window in its own right: The interruption in the grey brick surface, the cutting of a display frame into it, allows the photographed situation to be enacted in the actual space of experience. Linke's photographs of *Performative Architectures* enter the space as free floating display objects that are suspended in the middle of the room. Sixteen images are shown in two transparent frames installed at an angle in such a way as to trigger visual montages for the moving visitor. Exhibiting the space and mode of display itself, the assembled photographs are arranged in groups that create their own narrations when experienced by the viewer in succession. Together with the grey brick environment these images form yet another image incorporating the brick surfaces into the constellation as in-between space. Hoefel and Linke approach architecture from opposite directions and their combined presentation in the Sala Chini creates a sort of heterogenous order in which their artworks are granted autonomy and at the same time interact through their specific installation. Architecture is exhibited as part of a curatorial action in space that is neither foreground nor background but a transformative media of the in-between. Following the logic of translation, the installed architectural space puts contrasting imagery from various other places into a relationship. It produces yet another archipelago.



For Kuehn Malvezzi's presentation at the 13th Architecture Biennale in Venice, Armin Linke was invited to show a selection of photographs from his archive. The archive consists of photographs taken on the artist's extensive journeys around the world. In recent years, these photographs have been distributed and exhibited in many different contexts, forms and spatial arrangements, in art and architecture exhibitions, books, web-based publications and other venues. As a photographer, Armin Linke keeps reconfiguring the way his images relate to one another and restructuring their mode of presentation.

Hila Peleg The strongest impression one gets when looking at your photography is that a great traveler is behind the camera lens. What motivates your travels? How do you choose your destinations? What is it that you are seeking?

Armin Linke I travel extensively to places where technology is changing the landscape, to see how these changes influence the way people live in such territories. For some time, I was looking at places where strong changes were made without technology or by self-organization; e.g. bottom-up organized urban structures. Most recently, I traveled to places that were already subject to popular mass media and very familiar due to documentary media images. I tried to take a slow look, and include details from an inside point of view, in order to challenge conventional media coverage.

In my projects, I seek to explore how space is used and how infrastructures are implemented. It began fifteen years ago when I read in an Italian newspaper about the Three Gorges Dam, which was under construction in China. At that time I was still living in Milano. What was interesting to me was not only the impressive architectural construction of the dam, but the fact that two

million people would be displaced, which meant that new homes and a whole new infrastructure had to be constructed for a huge number of people. This is like flooding a city approximately the size of Milano and reconstructing it somewhere else. I felt this was of historical interest and should be documented along with the places that were destroyed, transformed and rebuilt.

Traveling is crucial to my practice, but only as a kind of fieldwork. To take a picture you have to be physically present in the space you want to document. Of course it depends on the project and you don't necessarily have to travel far afield. For example, I am doing a project on how the space is used in front of my house. I live in front of the Axel-Springer Verlag building that publishes the daily newspaper Bild, so I am interested in how the street was used during May 1st (Labor Day) and on May 2nd, when there was a centenary celebration for Axel Springer, the founder of the publishing house: two events at almost the same time and in almost the same space that created two very different temporary infrastructures. Sometimes you have to travel far away, but sometimes the interesting events happen right in front of you.

HP In this presentation you have chosen to show sixteen photographs, which you arranged in four sets of four images each. Could you tell the story of each photograph? And about their particular juxtapositions?

AL The first set has to do with landscapes. In the upper left corner we have a photograph of an architectural installation during the G8 Summit in Genoa (Italy 2001). In the image one sees ordinary architecture, but changed by a striking intervention. This wall is part of a grid of about 450 separating fences that were installed temporarily throughout the city. When the picture was taken, nothing specific was happening. This superstructure that cut through the whole city was still under construction. In the background, there is very elegant Italian architecture from the 30s and 40s and then this gigantic fence

inserted between these buildings with people moving along either side. It is about the theatricalization of space and two different structures that also define the urban space aesthetically—two types of intersecting grids. While each blocks the other's spatial logic, they co-exist for a certain period of time.

The next picture was taken at The Venetian Hotel, Las Vegas (Nevada, USA 1999). The water is meant to connect although visually it separates. This involves an aesthetic choice. In both images you have lines through the image, connecting or disconnecting. In both, there is a given situation and an add-on that is inserted into an environment, a crossing of natural and artificial. Also, with this photograph taken in Las Vegas you don't know if what is depicted is a model or the original. There is a dislocation in space, time and context.

The third picture is of Thongil Street, Pyongyang (North Korea 2005). I was there on an exchange between the Architectural Academy of North Korea and a university of architecture in Italy. In this picture, one can see an architectural response to the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, the ideal of modernist modular structures: skyscrapers, a long street, wide rows of windows. What is interesting is that this street can be used as an airport for military purposes. So it is capable of being transformed into something else. And there are not very many people in the street, so it also looks like a stage set with extras. It is obviously inhabited but it is also an image in itself, of an ideal of modern social housing. In this set, there are three different forms of architecture: the Venetian reproduction, the fascist architecture in Genoa and propagandistic social housing in North Korea. Basically, three modernistic moments.

The fourth part of this set is an image of the Segantini Museum, St. Moritz (Switzerland 2004). One sees a visitor looking into a landscape, a landscape painting, who is standing in an artificial space—a museum gallery. To me it was important to include this image in the set because the museum's rotunda can

also be related to the space of the central Biennale pavilion, Padiglione Italia. Segantini was supposed to make this panoramic 360° painting for the Paris Expo in 1898—proto-cinematic entertainment architecture and an immersive situation, which should be financed by hotels in the Engadine, but the Engadine Village of Pontresina opted out and it was never constructed. The whole idea was to create a 'pre-Las Vegas' of the Engadine Swiss Alps in Paris.

The second set is similar but instead of exterior spaces, it's all interior spaces that are also very much about display. In the first image, a table and chairs are overlooked by a map of the globe made by Fra Mauro in 1460, possibly one of the first images of globalization. Insight and outlook by means of a cartography that represents the world—or what it was supposed to look like. It is science fiction from the past, an exterior from another time and space that now functions as a constant presence in a meeting room at CNR National Research Council, Fermi Conference Hall, Rome (Italy 2007). The image is part of the Roman Cities Project, *Fori Imperiali*, where I photographed all the architectures of institutions listed in the Italian constitution.

The next image is a display in a shop that sells water in Nukus, Aral Sea (Uzbekistan 2001), where from the 1960s to the 80s a lot of waterside structures were built to produce cotton, which ultimately caused the lake to recede by 50%. Today there is no water so people have to go to this shop to buy some. What I find interesting is that it is a picture of logistics. You see the way water is displayed, how it is packaged, the fact that it has to be transported, that the water has to be filtered and packaged in bottles.

The third image is taken at the Babylon Museum (Iraq 2002). It is a fascinating place with displays consisting of a standardized module showing historical images of the Babylon tower. Actually it is a series of light-boxes, a form of presentation that is also used a lot in art.

In the last picture, the Fori Romani, we see the musealization of an open space and you have this poster that depicts a reconstruction of the space behind it. Again, very theatrical and again it creates a window between inside and outside, past and future, reality and representation.

In the next set we have the topic of laboratories, although not all of the pictures were actually taken in laboratories. Maybe it is about a mental structure, about creating models for something or recreating a situation in unexpected places. *Wild Blue*, swimming pool, Yokohama (Tokyo, Japan 1999), presents an artificial tropical island. It recreates a certain atmosphere; or rather, it reproduces certain aspects without having to remodel the whole situation. This is not for scientific purposes, but for leisure and entertainment. In this sense, the tools of a laboratory have been used to reconstruct and test a situation in order to create a consumerist experience.

The image above is a kindergarten which also functions as an educational museum display for young children inside a Nuclear Power Station, in Kashiwazaki Kariwa (Japan 1998). There are seven power plants in this one facility. The display explains how nuclear power is used; in a way it is a propaganda installation: it shows how secure the technology is. In a certain sense, it is a laboratory in which to play—with the absurd aspect that this place is inside the area of the nuclear power plant.

The image on the lower part of the display shows the reconstruction of a place: it is a model of a small part of the surface of the planet Mars. It is located in NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Mars Yard, Pasadena (California, USA 1999). The Mars Exploration Rovers were tested on this landscape model.

The last picture in this set is a Lego house that I found at the studio of the Italian architect and designer Ettore Sottsass, Milano (Italy 1999). I was

visiting Ettore Sottsass and we were doing portraits at his studio. So I spent the whole day with him. I also brought a very small snapshot camera and while I was doing this other work, I sort of mapped the studio, as my own ... and there were some pictures I really liked, because they were more intuitive, with the beauty of a haiku instead of this classical refined photographic image. Compared to more epic landscapes or panoramic images, they represent the sketch.

The fourth set starts with *Guiyu* (China 2005), a place where computers from all over the world are recycled. I was invited to work there with a film director who was making a music video using this site. When going through the city I found this cinema screen that was hanging like a sculpture, an interruption in public space but also a way of activating space. It is a cinema screen made of cloth—a readymade and an intervention at the same time.

On the next image is *Parque del Retiro*, Madrid (Spain 2011) with trees cut into shapes, also a sort of sculptural intervention, but more institutionalized and very different since it is the Royal Garden, so it's an architectural device. The image also has this cinematographic quality.

The third photograph was taken at the *Jasenovac Monument* (Croatia 2010). It is situated on the site of the *Jasenovac* concentration camp of the fascist *Ustasha* regime in WW II. It was designed by the architect Bogdan Bogdanovic in 1966, who uses concrete as an organic symbol. It's particularly interesting to see how the landscape is being used and how the historical traces of the concentration camp have been erased and transformed into an aesthetic view of a garden—I like the idea of taking an aesthetic approach and not playing on strong emotions or harping on the negative, educational aspect.

The fourth image of the fourth set is *Teatro Regio*, Torino (Italy 2005) by architect Carlo Mollino, a striking masterpiece of engineering, and in the

back, the Mole Antonelliana, another eccentric building in Torino, which was constructed as a synagogue and has now been converted into a film museum. It creates a strange dialogue between sculptural architectures that were constructed for different functions in the city's sociopolitical sphere.

I like the idea that a point of view generates a dialogue. The viewpoint from the top of the building itself shows the fly tower—a technological device that is ordinarily placed out of sight. I like the way Mollino transforms this box into a sculptural moment. So this is not so much a classical architecture photograph, but an image that draws attention to the infrastructure of the theatrical spectacle. I see these four images as theatrical platforms. The images include elements that are not classical architectural elements, but nevertheless they are typical urban decorations seen in completely different settings.

HP How would you describe the strong involvement of your photography practice with architecture? And what were the particular considerations at work in your choice of the photographs for an architecture exhibition?

AL Before I became a photographer I wanted to become an architect. For me the photographs are something like an extension of architecture. Architecture for me is about the use of space. I'm interested in photographs that show how people are affected by space, space as a kind of language, and how they relate to it.

The selection for the Biennale was made together with the architects Kuehn Malvezzi specifically for the space they designed. Their presentation is centrally situated in David Chipperfield's exhibition *Common Ground* at the Architecture Biennale. They designed an architectural installation in the Giardini's main pavilion—which is a z-shaped structure made of bricks—so there is a very strong spatial and structural notation. We tried to find images

that, in a certain way, relate to typical images of architecture; they had to speak about architectural structures. The images had to create a dialog with architecture without being classic architectural pictures.

The images we chose are not made to represent architectural designs. They are examples of certain archetypes of spaces that all are artificial products, and that speak about the technological, social and economic structures that produced them. While the pictures do not serve the function of documenting architecture, they want to trigger a discussion about architecture. For example, in some pictures you can see this sort of failure of a modernistic utopia; you have various layers of historical moments and, today, some of the places in the photographs have already been completely transformed, compared to the phase when they were planned and constructed.

HP For this presentation, you printed 16 images on identical format photographic paper, leaving irregular white borders. The photographs are then mounted back to back, or opposite one another, within framed glass panels. These large transparent surfaces are suspended from the ceiling inside the Kuehn Malvezzi brick structure. Can you say something about the choice of format and the specific modular character of the presentation?

AL Over the last few years I have developed a system to handle large numbers of images because I'm not interested in exhibiting the single image as a classical art object, but more in showing bigger groups of arranged photographs. I like the idea of a montage of images: to use the gallery space as a kind of editing machine. The wall is like a storyboard of a film and since every space is different, you need a sort of module, similar to film editing software such as that used in Final Cut.

I have a module of 50x60cm blank white photographic paper. For example, if I choose the Sottsass Lego image, which is a 35mm negative film snapshot, I use that format to present it together with a classical plate-format (10 x 12 cm), or also a panoramic format. Basically that allows me to link pictures of entirely different backgrounds and camera techniques (each camera has its own diagonal format). Photography is then presented as an installation and, through the means of framing, as part of the spatial editing tool.

Normally when you print an image on photographic paper you would tend to fit the frame so that it has the exact measurements of the image and you would only see the photograph—which in that sense is the actual art piece. You could also use a passepartout, which already is part of the framing device and masks everything but the image. In this case we start from the photographic paper, which is commercially available in a standard size of 50x60cm. To project the image into this module I defined the rule that, when it is a horizontal image, it starts at the top of the sheet of photographic paper, and when it is a vertical image, on the left. Basically, this is a graphic device and is not used so much in art. The paper format is industrialized. Photography is an industrialized procedure, and by using this standard, I make the technical reproduction of the image recognizable.

The images presented here are all from different periods and are taken with completely different cameras and negative formats. This is one of the reasons for the white borders; that is, the image or the photographic paper is treated like a module in which the image is inserted. In deciding how to display the pictures, we did not want to deny the module. On the other hand, we did not want the images to interact directly with the pavilion's grey bricks for various reasons: the bricks are a very strong element and, of course, we are not in the usual, neutral white cube situation, where you would expect images to be wall-mounted. Hence the idea was to do the editing in space and not on the wall.

On the one hand, we wanted to achieve a certain lightness, a floating structure suspended from the ceiling that reveals the framework that both separates and connects space and image. On the other hand, the frame is important to give the images a sculptural physicality, so that these light panels would not get lost inside this explicitly determined space. The frame also provides a certain focus as a method of framing content.

Intuitively, a lot of these images have a grid, like bricks or intersections, and I hope that this, along with the transparent display elements, really creates a connection to the physical space. Moreover, the display of the images in vitrines transforms them into artifacts; you might say the images become anthropological documents. My photography archive could certainly be considered a study on how space is used and how symbols are placed to define social and political structures and processes.

HP There is no explicit mobilization of the political in your photographs. What is the political in your work?

AL To me, the production and presentation of images is a means of asking questions, rather than describing a situation or propagating an ideology. While such photography might appear close to the interests of documentary photography, it tries to go further in the way it poses questions—mainly by making room for spectators to stage their own ideas about space.

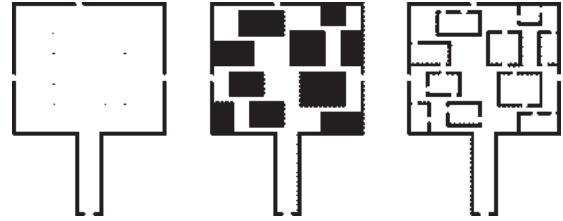
Kinaesthetic Narratives

Architecture is not simply a platform that accommodates the viewing subject. It is a viewing mechanism that produces the subject. It precedes and frames its occupant. For example, Loos' interiors: there seems to be a stage, waiting for the scene. But a separation between physical and visual perception occurs and while the gaze is directed, the path may be blocked. An exhibition situation has been created in which the inhabitant is both viewer and being viewed, depending on their point of view. Even though theatrical, it isn't theater but its opposite. Loos turns every situation, even and foremost the domestic interior, into the paradigmatic museum condition.

Museums are anti-architecture. They are spaces that do not fit their use as they are typological hybrids. The typical museum is a space built for a use other than exhibiting, starting with the Uffizi, an office building Vasari designed for the Medici and which even kept the name of its original use once the upper floor was converted into a museum. In the late 18th century palaces like the Louvre in Paris were transformed into museums, while the 20th century saw the industrial warehouse advance as art exhibition space. There are of course museums designed and built as such, and very consciously so: Dulwich Picture Gallery, Altes Museum, Guggenheim, Neue Nationalgalerie, Beaubourg are exemplary inventions. But putting these model museums in a line, what makes them similar is their difference. They do not belong to a genealogical series in which they mutually inform one another but much rather stand out individually. They have in common a typological reference to buildings outside the museum sphere and are similar only inasmuch as they are all appropriations of heterogeneous alien typologies: Soane appropriated the studio, Schinkel the temple, Wright the parking deck, Mies an office building and Piano/Rogers the factory.

The impermanence of the museum typology is caused by the instability inherent to the way it structures perception. The moving subject's gaze and physical movement in space is not organized hierarchically, as with theatrical structures

where the spectator is immobilized and set apart from the action on the scene. The exhibition viewer is thrown into a situation, unbound as their movement in space is undetermined and over time continuously readjusts according to momentary perception. If the theatrical view is based on distance and a predetermined time regime, the exhibition view is informed by immediacy and involvement: the audience moves through the space and there is no stable scene, the viewer being spectator and actor at once. This perceptive structure separates the gaze from physical movement, it generates viewing axes that don't correspond with but contradict the path to be walked. It is a shift that occurs once the baroque garden scheme of theatrical perception is challenged by the landscape garden, a constitutive shift for the birth of exhibition making.



Constellations: Contemporary Staedel Museum Frankfurt

The architecture of an exhibition and by extension of a museum is a matter of urbanism, its focus being on spatial relations, on parcours and infrastructure rather than on singular architectural events. An exhibition is a city model or a model city. It is full-scale and scale model at once and hence can be understood as a prototype. Like urban landscapes exhibitions accommodate a heterogeneity within which singular events are diverse and yet connected by a curatorial principle—while assuring an overall constellation that relates different elements, each exhibit is granted its autonomy. Oswald Matthias Ungers' conceptual proposal for a green city archipelago argues for an urbanism that follows the curatorial model: by selecting morphological parts of the existing built fabric and isolating them through erasure of the in-between, a collection of morphological events will be generated in which the individual parts are autonomous islands, each following its own internal rules. Arguing in favour

of diversity, Ungers' model fosters the presence of heterogeneous parts while calling for an urbanist who, as a curator, would select and relate the divergent elements. The key concept of order here is constellation: to structure an urban landscape according to the precise configuration of the volumetric relations means overcoming a figure-ground logic in favour of a spatial view in which the in-between space is just as important as the built parts.

The exhibition architecture for the collection of contemporary art in Frankfurt's Staedel Museum follows the constellation concept: a free constellation of cubes. As spaces within a space, the cubes are situated in the museum extension like buildings in a city, creating an autonomous exhibition site within each of their interiors. Artist's rooms as well as curated rooms are developed independently, while their outside walls form a third space with one another. Like urban squares that form sequences according to the visitor's movement, once experienced physically, the in-between spaces create choreographies between each artist's rooms. Through asymmetrical visual axes and directions of movement between the cubes, visitors experience the museum as a dynamic concatenation of spaces.



Constellations: Okwui Enwezor's Documenta11

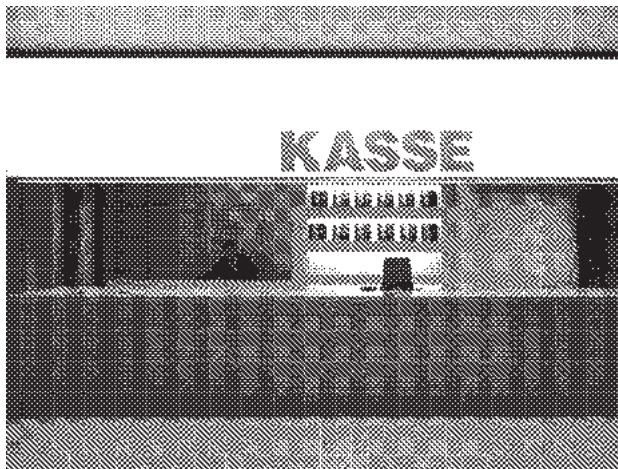
'What we found absolutely exciting about it was the logic of the navigation of the space as a kind of urban design. It's not so much galleries, but it's a kind of space that has certain values that relate to communities, sociality, democratic space, or the idea of the plaza for example. And then the alleyways through which you move and then enter into these vistas that constitute the galleries. We were really quite taken by the surprising turns the design presented, because what was being implied or expressed specifically was not just simply a navigation system, but the subjectivity of the viewer. Exhibitions are really perambulations, they are metaphors for how we walk from one thing to the other, so that you have that relationship between temporality and spatiality constantly inscribed with the stopping and moving, thus creating a narrative, a link between forms, ideas, images, concepts. There is a way in which the narrative is constantly being restaged by the viewer, which is basically the way in which curatorial plans work.'

Okwui Enwezor, 2009

Documenta is a temporary museum. The architecture for Documenta I was a conscious hybrid of two main spatial narratives informed by the kinaesthetic types of the enfilade and of the gallery. That is, on the one hand a direct flowing movement from space to space, like that of the Dulwich Picture Gallery, and on the other hand a movement along a corridor connecting and at once separating the spaces, as with the Uffizi. The two kinaesthetic principles have been interwoven by separating the singular spaces from each another, inserting a corridor in-between, and leaving the entrances facing one another. The resulting structure has the characteristics of both gallery and enfilade through a cross-breeding that generates a hybrid of the two identities. As a consequence, the visitor's movement in the exhibition is manifold and each individual creates their subjective parcours, a concatenation of decisions in each space to either follow the flow of the enfilade or to turn left or right into the corridor and direct oneself to a specific space without passing the others.

The architecture for Documenta I was developed in a process involving first the curators and later the artists of the exhibition. Again, there is an urbanist model also with regard to the way the different players were involved. Rather than defining a finite form from the outset, the first design was a modular matrix based on the superimposition of the two visitors' movements. Differing from a masterplan by not defining a figure-ground or a volume-space relation but instead implementing a structural principle like the rules of a game, the plan for Documenta I could be read as a model of a process-related urbanism. Working within this scheme, the curators specified the number of individual spaces and assigned the first rooms to specific artists, each artist's needs determining the dimensions of the group of spaces. Proximity of specific artists and positions, as well as distance between others, could be produced through the spatial relations inside the plan. For the next step, the artists themselves were involved. Like inhabitants claiming their homes, they often challenged the curators' assignments and even the dimensions of the singular rooms. The layout underwent continuous re-elaboration until a more complex order was

found that reflected the chosen appropriation of each space by the artist exhibited. But the interest the artists' took in the other spaces was very limited. Consequently the in-between spaces remain the responsibility of curators and architects. The public space that unfolds in-between the individualized rooms is not a neutral residual space but is a complementary counterpart where the visitor can feel at home: the threshold within which memory comes into being. As with the stairs to the Roman Capitol Square by Michelangelo, the slow perception of the square builds step by step, starting from the lowest point and changing during one's climb up the stairs to create a narration. The stairs put the square on show and become its display.



FG Your practice demonstrates critical capacity and skill when engaging themes like 'narration' and 'revelation'. It matters not if the spatial problem at hand has to do with artworks to be displayed, objects to be conserved, determining a precise landscape to be disclosed, or the development of the physical body of an architectural interior. Your project is always able to put itself together and shape itself; producing a theory and revealing a succession of moments in space and time, in which the visitor is encouraged to discover a story. The design of each work of architecture follows a model of development of the skeleton, the body and the space, a model with a curatorial character: the project unfolds like the display scheme of an exhibition. This is why, starting with the awareness and critical consciousness that informs your attitude of design of space, I would like to ask you, in this short conversation, to explore not only the direct relationship between curatorial design and display, but also to try to redefine the shape, the role and the format of today's exhibition as a cultural device.

These questions are especially interesting in this moment of transformation, for artistic practices and above all for the form of institutions conceived to host and present to audiences the various formats of display machinery. I would like to try to pose the problem without immediately analyzing the spatial question—the possible design of the space in which an exhibition takes place—and instead reverse the viewpoint to focus, first of all, on the actor that is complementary to the design of the exhibition space, namely the audience. I'd like to try to hypothesize three possible 'positions', 'figures' of visitors, which already have produced different exhibition formats and which might generate other display architectures in the future.

The visitor is a traitor.

*(‘Every spectator is either a coward or a traitor’, Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 1963).*

In her short essay *Is a Museum a Factory?*^[1] Hito Steyerl comes to an compelling

conclusion about the relationship between the display and content of Documenta11, an event for which you handled the exhibit design and the composition of the exhibition spaces. The film material in the show was of such quantity that no visitor, during the 100 days of the event, could possibly have managed to see all of the footage presented. The only alternative would have been to replace the individual gaze of one spectator with a multiplicity of gazes. The eyes of a community that would then share the experience of the show, reconstructing fragments and segments in an attempt to put the whole organism back together. As Steyerl underlines, partial experiences—the fragments of a possible visual mosaic—could be edited into different, infinite sequences and combinations: the multitude of visitors would have been able to assemble and recombine images, making every spectator into a co-curator. Your display design responds precisely to this scenario, reacting to a necessity—to diversify the possibilities of use of space, sampling every variation, classifying it and deploying it anew in the available containers.

What intrigues me most in this case is the possibility of conceiving of the vertigo of an exhibition that can never truly be grasped, through which the experience of the gaze is posited as partial, incomplete. The visitor is encouraged, even obliged, to ‘betray’ the truth—the cinematic, in this case—of the show. Taking this curatorial and spatial model to extremes might lead to interesting and unexpected results. What do you think? Is it possible to imagine a space that could be experienced through an infinite range of variations?

KM The visitor’s perceptions are the starting point of our design method, and perception is closely linked to the movement of the body. Space per se is a mental construct, not an objective given. It only exists to the extent that we produce it, in practice. Therefore, when we design it we immediately think about the infinite ways a concrete space can be produced by the visitor, not just the resulting object, which seen from outside might appear to be an architectural container.

In this sense, the spatial design can have an open form in which there are very precise physical parameters defined by us, but without any pre-set itinerary or path. Users of the space become co-authors because they create their own route, their own narration in a space-time sense.

When we were invited to take part in the competition for Documenta11 we had to come to terms with the large scale of the exhibition, but without knowing what the works would be. A difficult task, because the guidelines were very generic, though at the same time they insisted on the possibility of being able to display any type of media, so very specific solutions were required. Rather than designing exhibit rooms or specific displays, we concentrated on forms of movement of the visitor, and precisely on two main movements: continuous (the equivalent of the classic enfilade), i.e. the possibility of passing from one room to the next in a continuous way, and discontinuous (the equivalent of the classic gallery), where the route can be rationalized by means of corridors. In this way we gave visitors two tools, two movements, whose infinite combinations would generate infinite narrations. We designed not just the hardware, but also the software, a way of utilization. Visitors cannot possibly see everything, so they have to betray, to the extent that they have to choose and combine. The visitor thus becomes the subject of the experience, the co-author and co-curator, in the sense you have outlined above.

The visitor is listening secretly.

FG The project of the narration, communication and display of dOCUMENTA (13) is based on a different and equally interesting logic. The show tends never to openly present itself to the eyes of the audience: the large banners between the columns of the Fridericianum have been removed, the graphic design of the posters in the city of Kassel were supposed to take form only as a sequence of large colored rectangles. Many of the works have to be discovered, waited for, tracked down—for instance, conceived as a residence for writers, the Chinese pavilion in the Auepark is a clear metaphor for the

idea of space and time that is specific to dOCUMENTA (13). The show seems to come to life as the project of the staff of curators and intellectuals that produced it and conceived it, urging the audience to eavesdrop, to secretly listen to a narrative, instead of being its protagonist. The space of separation that apparently distances the audience from the work is, at the same time, a place of astonishment and encounter. There are no architects on the staff of dOCUMENTA (13). I would very much like to imagine how to design this space of mediation and negation, exploiting this curatorial model as a strategy. Is it right for an architect to have this role? What do you think?

KM Just because architecture is not seen and not mentioned does not mean it does not exist. And one does not always need an architect to do it. What definitely always exists is a spatial project, when you make an exhibition. We are seeing an evolution of roles, given the fact that curators, who were once all art historians and specialized experts, are becoming more and more like the directors of a staged experience that combines semantic and pragmatic aspects—modes of experience of the works. The visitor to the exhibition does not come to terms only with the works, but also with their display and therefore with the rhetoric of the presentation. The borderline between work and display can also dissolve or get blurry. This situation creates a field in which artists, curators—and at times architects—collaborate, to design exhibitions and displays. We have called this work among the various disciplines Curatorial Design because it combines heterogeneous activities. To get back to your idea of seeing the situation from the vantage point of the visitor: observing the pragmatics in the linguistic field, we see the personal context of the visitor-reader as a further aspect of the work, given the fact that in the reading a pragmatic act is performed.

The visitor is an ambiguous participant.

FG How can an architect come to terms with artistic practices in

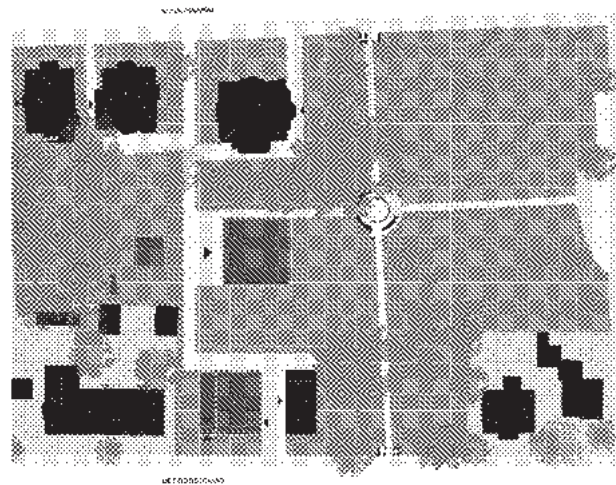
transformation? How can the architect redesign space for the works of artists who, by strategy and content, operate by shifting contexts and breaking down the subtle barriers between reality and fiction? Is it possible to design museums of the future for the performances of Tino Sehgal, or performances like *Resistance* (2006) by Roman Ondák?

KM The question of new practices and their relationship with museum space arose a long time ago, with Fluxus and actions, emerging as Institutional Critique. Action, performances and the ephemeral already contradict, in themselves, the idea of exhibition space. What remains is the documentation of the actions, of happenings and performances, which in turn becomes artwork. The Russian pavilion at the Venice Biennial in 2011 curated by Boris Groys contained the work of Andrei Monastyrski, entitled *Empty Zones*. Empty is the adjective with which Monastyrski defines the action and the performance. It is empty because it is unreal and fake, and becomes real only through the documentation. The production of the documentation, then, is what gives consistency to the art action. The photographs, texts and videos appear in the space not as solid objects but as symbols that leave room for free interpretation. The display for the production of the documentation becomes, in turn, a symbol inserted in a network of references and associations.

FG These considerations, the three possible visitor types as well as real or visionary curatorial models, prompt us to explore the question of the space of the exhibition as the environment in which it takes place, but also as true material available to the curator. In a moment in which modes of relation and experience of the work are changing and multiplying (the works of artists are being transformed, and above all the strategies of communication for those same works are being modified), space is repositioned, taking on a new function in the logic of a show's construction [2]. Your role, the approach of Curatorial Design, seems to be more crucial than ever.

You have touched on the spectator as co-author, the porous and intentionally blurred borderline between work and display in today's artistic practices, the pairing of the void designed for the action of the performance and the presentation of its traces or documentation. Each of these reflections offers a precise clue in the process of approaching a definition for your idea of architecture. The spaces for art you have designed often contain an interesting degree of ambiguity. On the one hand, they are designed for a precise context, thanks to your use of a series of devices at the edges of visibility; on the other, they seem almost incomplete, open to the unpredictability of use. The space of seduction is mysterious and hard to decode. The grand voids and the agora designed for the competition of the Humboldt-Forum in Berlin load with meaning the reconstruction of the architecture's facade: The void is the space of possibility and, at the same time, is key to giving meaning and power to the monumental reconstruction of the facade of the museum. Could you describe how, in this case and for other projects, you have used the void as critical space?

KM The agora of the Berliner Stadtschloss goes back to Schinkel's idea of creating a relationship between the castle and the Altes Museum: it is an empty threshold that attempts to contextualize the new museum with its permeability. The relationship is above all visual: from the agora you can perceive the context containing the cathedral and the Altes Museum. It creates a context around the new building, a constellation without hierarchies. In the project for the addition to the Weltkulturen Museum in Frankfurt we avoided a monolithic architectural assertion, opting for an archipelago formed by existing buildings and those we would add. The voids formed between the buildings take on a new meaning and create tension between the various functions. Our guiding concept is a complex, non-ranked whole that corresponds to the constellation and the archipelago: what the Smithsons also called 'conglomerate order'; all their projects are based on a critical void capable of creating relationships between diverging realities.



FG The strategies for content distribution by artists have changed extensively. Opacity, hidden and intentionally-lateral channels seem to be modes of communication that are preferred over transparency. The art system is based on a subtle game between communication and its absence. Can you explore this theme in relation to the increasingly crucial role graphics play in defining the identity of institutions. Could you tell me something, in this sense, about the project for Schirn Kunsthalle?

KM Unlike art projects that can play with the ambiguity between absence and presence of communication, institutions require great visibility. The Schirn Kunsthalle is a very important institution in Frankfurt that organizes exhibitions conceived for a large audience. In 2002 the new director, Max Hollein, asked us to update the image of the Kunsthalle. We developed the project together with the graphic artist Chris Rehberger, because the request

of the client was for functional renewal, but also for a new, legible Leitsystem. So we thought about combining the two things, creating oversized, pseudo-monumental signage: luminous walls featuring giant inscriptions to indicate different functions. The idea was to translate, on a scale of 1:1, the inscriptions usually found on an architectural layout, and to put the two-dimensional character of paper and graphics into a three-dimensional space, using the technology of luminous highway signage, created to be easily perceived in motion.

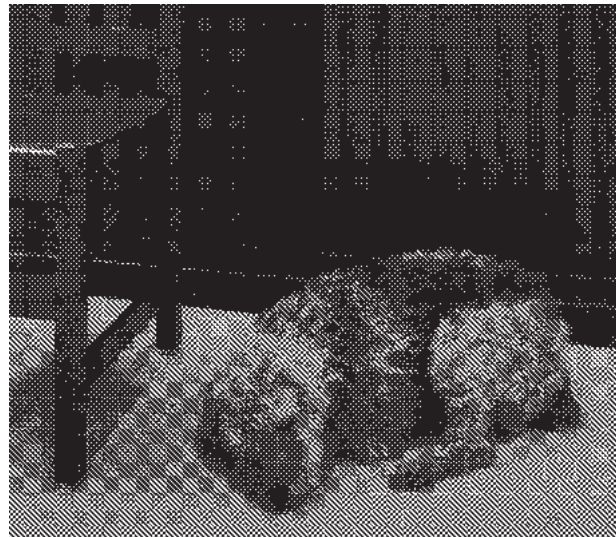
We immediately compared the museum to an airport or a supermarket where orientation based on a logistical concept must be immediate, and every place must be easy to reach quickly. I believe we were somehow influenced by certain Fischli Weiss photographs of banal everyday places, but also by big toy stores with their oversized signs. In general, this everyday aesthetic comes from the techno culture of Berlin in the 1990s, in which we grew up, as did Rehberger: strong neon lights, references to urban signage. One interesting example was that of the luminous signs of Daniel Pflumm and his various clubs, including the Panasonic in an abandoned slaughterhouse, which displayed his obsessive videos on monitors hanging from the ceiling. In that moment a very effective contemporary culture of display was created, very different from that of a museum.

[1] Hito Steyerl, *Is a Museum a Factory?*, E-flux Journal Reader, (Berlin: Sternberg Press, Berlin 2009).

[2] cf. Carson Chan: *Measures of an Exhibition: Space, Not Art, Is the Curator's Primary Material*, The 6th Momentum Biennial Reader (Milan: Mousse Publishing, 2011).

Models, by Way of Display

To what extent can architecture change the logic of a competition brief? Is it possible to address the guidelines of a competition and still extend its framework? Can a competition entry for a state architecture project, rather than reinforcing a political program, provoke the continuation of the decision-making process?



The projects for the German embassy in Belgrade and the so-called Humboldt-Forum, an ethnological museum set in the to-be-reconstructed facades of the Prussian castle in Berlin, are two competition entries that expand the concept of the competition draft and create models to activate potentials of political debate. In both cases, the historical facades and their relation to the contemporary urban and political situation are conflictual.

The city as a heterogeneous collection of buildings appears to be in a state of permanent flux similar to an exhibition where the relation between exhibits is subject to change due to changing curatorial perspectives. The two projects regard the political directive to erase and and reconstruct a historical facade as an act of curatorial intervention into the city's landscape. But who curates the city?

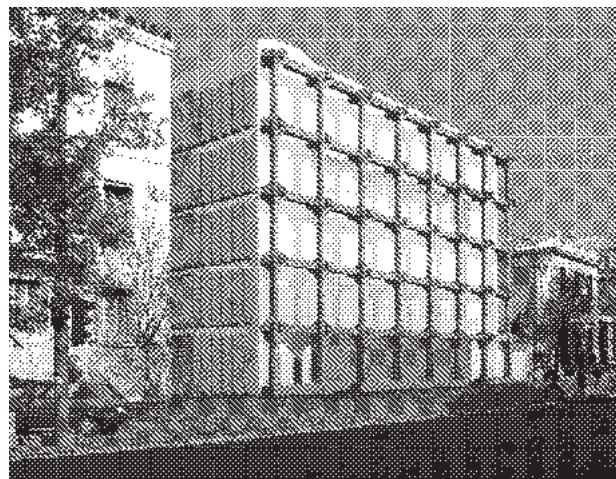
This moment of the sovereign's intervention becomes the starting point for an architectural design approach that proposes a building as an agent that leads to an ongoing negotiation: How can a building be planned in order to mediate such circumstances? To what extent is an architectural concept able to renegotiate the issue and reach into the political?

It occurred to us that the architectural problem in these two public competitions would not be to construct a new facade but is found in how we frame and display an existing one that appeared to be politically conflictual. The embassy's Yugoslav Second Modernism front, and the vanished Baroque and neoclassical facade of the museum accordingly need to be understood as exhibits that are subject to framing and display. That is, they can become subject to a different perspective. While the draft for the embassy suggests preserving an existing facade that the competition brief asks to be erased, the entry for the museum creates a script for the designated reconstruction of an erased Baroque facade, with the goal of generating a display of the political process of reconstruction.

For the competition judges, the conservation of the brutalist concrete structure and the use of the embassy's newly built facade as a display for this artifact proved to be unacceptable to the aims of this project.

The plan for a slow, perhaps never-to-be-completed application of all Baroque elements seemed promisingly programmatic but failed as reconstruction of the neoclassical dome had been consciously left out.

In order to create a display situation, in both cases we created a model, not only of the building, but of a political and architectural design process: The two design proposals aim to produce a discourse regarding possible changes in the city's landscape and expose the historically-developed situation as political and consequently curatorial. With these two projects we envisioned the ability of architecture to become an event, at once political and cultural, conceptualizing the event as the artist George Brecht imagined it: A score to be interpreted as an event that is not only perceived, but that comes into being through its audience. While it might appear unfeasible to make the public participate actively in an architectural design process, it could be asked how an architectural concept could maintain a certain openness: Can the realization of a project be compared to the interpretation of a musical score? If so, in what way can an architectural realization be compared to a musical interpretation that relies on the decisions of the interpreter rather than the composer?



Model and Display: the design for the German Embassy in Belgrade 2009

Spoils

Bogdan Ignjatovic, who was born in Belgrade in 1912 and worked with modernist Dragiša Brašovan in the 1930s, designed the German embassy facade in 1970. The use of exposed concrete is reminiscent of structural ornament like that used in Gordon Bunshaft's 1965 Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale campus. The embassy facade today appears as a spoil of brutalist architecture even if the structure behind it is a detached building without any relationship to it. Still, the facade is a fragment in the urban landscape of Belgrade that stands out.

It stands out also as a political fragment since it marks the end of the Hallstein Doctrine. This self-imposed West German ban of 1955 forbade diplomatic relations with states recognizing the GDR. Thus West German embassies hardly existed in socialist countries until the late 1969 when Willy Brandt became chancellor and abandoned the Hallstein Doctrine. He decided to reactivate diplomacy with all states that recognized the GDR, installing and building new embassies above all in the East European capitals.

There seems to be no need to erase the historical facade even if the building behind it needs an update. Simply, the facade is autonomous in relation to the building and has found its place within the city as an exhibit. Our design acts in favor of preserving the facade spoils and, in a first step, isolates them by eliminating the building structure behind it. The second move is to provide the facade with a new backdrop, a display element in the form of a new building. This building, adjusted for elevated security standards, is a closed volume opened only on to an internal patio that filters the city around it.

The architecture of the new embassy building accepts the inherent split

between inside and outside, programme and appearance. It transforms a necessary inward orientation into a different form of communication: much like a museum, an embassy can not display any of its real function on the outside. While embassies and museums need to maximize protection of their interiors, both buildings want to communicate cultural and political permeability. Hence the facade becomes a screen. Once we are ready to present it like an exhibit, it will display political messages through its historical and architectural form.

Model and Display: the design for the Humboldt-Forum Berlin, 2008

Artifact

Accepting the demolition of the war ruin in 1950 as a historical fact, the physical substance of the Prussian castle is gone. Still, paintings and photographs depicting the castle have been preserved and precise knowledge of the historical building stereometry is available.

An architectural model can be made. Rather than trying to build a three-dimensional image, making a full-scale model means rendering the exact mass. At first glance the new building might not bear much resemblance with the pictures we know, so it will be in that sense an unsuccessful copy. Still, following the historical construction in brick and being conceived visually as a bare brick construction similar to the secondary facades of Karl-Friedrich Schinkel's Neue Wache, in its structure and relief the model is a precise volumetric copy of the vanished historical building. The brick model is a building volume for the ethnological museum in its interior and, at the same time, this structure may become a display element facing the urban space. Depending on private sponsor contributions, it might exhibit stone replicas of Baroque facade ornaments, as envisioned by the public authorities. It might also stay bare, as its brick relief is a perfect surface.

The reconstruction will enact a visible debate without proposing a final outcome. As long as parts of the stone ornaments are missing, the building will oscillate between being a display and being an exhibit. Programmatically complete and incomplete at once, the display is autonomous and suggests the possibility of stopping the process at any time. With the ornament application being detached from the facade design, the possibility for debate on the adequacy of historical reconstruction becomes opened up again. The brick perimeter is a third element to be inserted in between the museum and the replica facade. As autonomous construction, the perimeter is independent of the building programme and of the visible ornament reconstruction. It is an in-between element which is both relational and hybrid. But the thick brick wall also becomes sculptural and frees itself from the museum volume on the west side of the building. It is freestanding in between the urban context of Unter den Linden and a large hall created in front of the museum: a generic space open to manifold uses and readings, a threshold between the city and the museum.

Urban Parcours

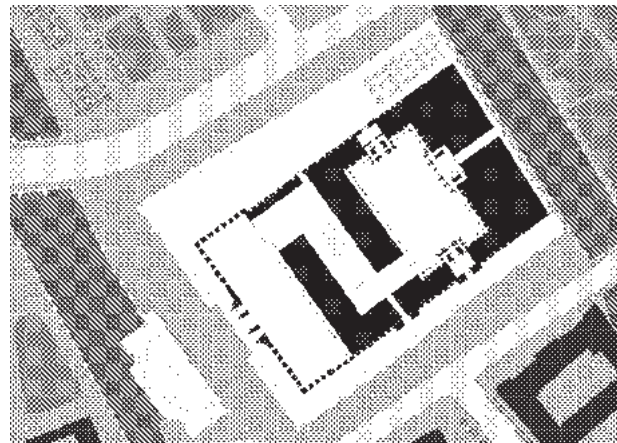
Schinkel designed his Altes Museum in relation to the castle, but in 1828 he would not succeed in realizing the large garden as a common ground he envisioned existing in between the two buildings. The king rather chose to cut the garden off at a point far away from the castle in order not to relate the buildings at all. Instead the castle was fortified on its northern side and an empty square was located next to it. Schinkel's perspective drawing makes us look through the columns of Altes Museum across the Lustgarten and onto the castle as if it were a unity connected by a central axis with fountains adjacent to it in sequence.

As a new construction, the ethnological museum today opens up the possibility of formulating a late reply to Schinkel's request: the large hall inside the brick

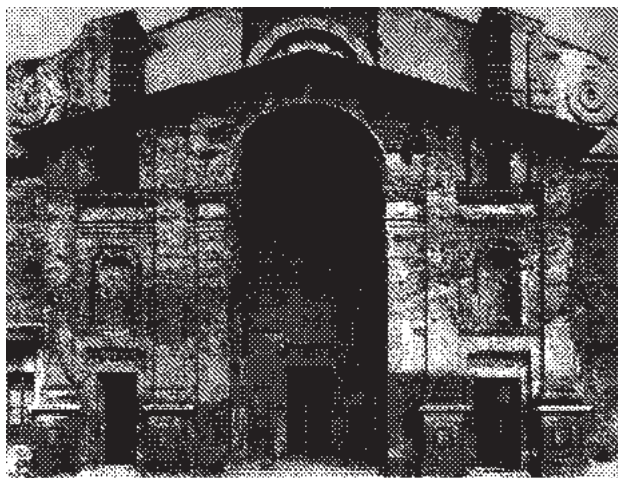
perimeter communicates with the Altes Museum, and the Lustgarten frames the view onto the urban space in between, allowing movement in and out by perforating the perimeter wall down to the ground. On its upper level, a circular parcours makes the visitors experience the city and the large hall from yet another perspective. In contrast the museum becomes an asymmetrical meander that detaches itself from the historical volumetry of the perimeter outside

An image already made

The historical castle was demolished in 1950 following a decision by Walter Ulbricht, General Secretary of the governing communist party. The void that resulted has never been filled again, even though the parliament of the German Democratic Republic was built on part of the huge square in 1976. What remains from the castle is its image. An image that is not derived from personal memories, given the generational gap, but an image based on photographic reproduction.



A full-scale 3-D mock-up made from a castle rendering printed on plastic membranes was erected on the original site shortly after the German reunification in 1993. The illusionistic model had the desired effect on public opinion. All of a sudden a majority seemed to be in favor of reconstructing the vanished historical building and the federal parliament prepared to vote. The officials at Heritage and Preservation felt ill at ease. 'Conservation, not restoration', their basic assumption since the Venice Charta in 1964, would be obsolete once total reconstruction was allowed. Apparently, image might win over substance, a copy beating the original. A paradigm shift occurred: Alois Riegl's *Alterswert* has been substituted by a Warholian pleasure in trivial reproduction and flatness. The castle first and foremost was mediatic, as it was a contemporary event and not a historical fact any more. To be produced through private sponsorship, the replicas would have no age as they were to be neither old nor new: they were decidedly both.



The new can be the old, if a change of place occurs. De- and re- contextualisation of objects from their place of origin may turn unspectacular artifacts into artworks. However, the Baroque facades return to their original context. This is a place that has changed over the past fifty years during which the castle was gone and in fact makes the Baroque forms look alien today: they are out of place and thus become readymades. Considering that not a spatial but a temporal logic occurs these are readymades of a kind different than Duchamp's fountain: they are in the right place but in the wrong time.

Re-enactment

George Brecht conceived the event as a score to be interpreted.

Spring, 1961

-Sitting on a black chair. Occurrence.

-Yellow chair. (Occurrence.)

-On (or near) a white chair. Occurrence.

There is some leeway as to how this score can be interpreted. There are three chairs as objects in space and there is an instruction. The form of the artwork, though, will be found by a user or a group of users following the artist's instruction in this arrangement. The analogy to a music piece that must be interpreted by a musician or a theater play to be staged is apparent. Can architecture be thought of as an artwork that can be played like a musical notation? Re-enactment then would be a common practice in architecture and spaces would not look the same all the time but change their appearance according to their momentary use. Appropriation becomes an integral part of the design process and makes the user a coauthor.

Planning and building thus can be thought of as separate moments with different subjects. Realisation means more than executing a plan, it means taking decisions. In this sense the ornamentation of the facades become a

conscious act that will continue on over time. It will become the re-enactment of the historical facade as a performative exhibition taking place with citizens and politicians as players and interpreters. The process that will take place is architectural and political at once, and it is open ended. It might leave a result like Leon Battista Alberti's Sant'Andrea in Mantua, which has different facades and which—in the case of the secondary facades—has remained bare brick ever since it was built, just showing the relief of the plastic modulation but none of the stone cladding used in the front.

Repetition as Original

In the arts, re-enactment and repetition are familiar concepts. Even in architectural exhibition practice there are some examples, as shown by the doubling in 1999 of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's Gartenhaus in Weimar. Next to the original building a copy was erected in order to protect the original interior while providing visitors with the opportunity to experience it. The exhibit doubles: whereas one shows the original exterior and acts like a certificate of authenticity, the other shows the interior as a model of itself. Filip Noterdaeme went even further when he proposed to reconstruct and rededicate Walter Gropius' Bauhaus Meisterhaus in Dessau, in a never-ending 100-year rhythm as an ongoing performance of construction, destruction and reconstruction; e.g., in 2026 the replica should have been built, then in 2045 be destroyed once more by an air attack and in 2056 be once more replaced by a pitched roof building like the one built in 1956 on the same site.

Shifting to a conceptual—rather than material— conservation challenges our historical preservation practice and the very paradigm at its base. It defetishizes the architectural object in favor of its conceptual significance, while also moving artistic judgment from technical to performative parameters. Temporary constructions like the Ise Shrine in Japan can assume permanence, while ruins and relics of historical structures become less important. Key to

this approach is 'iterability' in Derridaen terms: as a conjunction of 'iter' and 'itara', that is an occurrence of repetition and difference at once. The originality of any event thus would not reside in its uniqueness but rather in its unique repetition of a past event. Conceiving architecture as a way of revealing reality by way of displaying it, attention is devoted less to the new than to the existing, less to invention than to appropriation.

Method as Form

'I believe the appearance of the work is secondary to the idea of the work, which makes the idea of primary importance.' (Sol LeWitt, *100 thoughts, thought15*)

1.

When a couple of years ago the American photographer Lewis Balz was asked to select books for *Curating the Library*, an exhibition and presentation of personal references manifested through books, he asked the curator to buy *When Attitude becomes Form*, a catalogue of an exhibition made by Harald Szeemann in 1969 for the eponymous exhibition staged at the Kunsthalle Bern. The exposition and the catalogue show a surprisingly congruent group, artists that were to become known as the minimal and conceptual practitioners of their era.

With the remaining money of the budget, the curator had to buy a selection of the available artist books by Ed Ruscha. Balz, chronicler of the traces, trails, transformations and leftovers of the appropriation and inhabitation of the American Landscape, seemed to have encountered a kindred soul in the far more direct and explicit attitude of the Los Angeles based painter. Curiously, he was not particularly interested in the paintings of the latter; rather, the far simpler attention paid to lost places and banal things, collected as photographs in the bookworks of Ruscha, seemed to have sparked the affection. The serialism of Ruscha's artist books tackles a theme that remains unrepresentable in a single work. As a series, the books are more successful in their implicit translation of a certain attitude. Together the books overcome the handicap of the single work, whose uniqueness cannot escape the impression of a slightly forced mise-en-scene; too enigmatic, and too romantic, a single work here presents too much content. In opposition to this, Balz coins Ruscha's seriality as an escape from too much content per piece, towards an indirect representation of attitude through serial form. Combining Ruscha's art-books with the title of the Szeemann exhibition serves for Balz as a statement of intent, a manifesto for a kind of cultural production that does

not base itself on the uniqueness of the single work but instead on the implicit performance of repetition.

2.

In the 1969 catalogue there is no Ruscha. Even though his artist books were made exactly in this period, at that time he did not enjoy a big following amongst the Conceptualists. There is, however, an interesting entry by Sol LeWitt called *wall markings* (1968). It is essentially one of the very first incarnations of his ‘wall drawings’, which he developed in the following years. Made through their description, the drawings introduce a radically different approach to the making of art and attitude about the status of the art-object. The wall drawings consist of an accumulation of rules and principles—guidelines—a method of drawing, that is preconceived, described one can say, in total disconnection from the context where each one might finally be executed. On the one hand, they seem to investigate how the description method of drawing can, through repetition, accumulate a critical significance, as the totality of drawings can be read as a search for form. On the other hand, they seem to present an idea of (art) form outside of its direct formal representation. One can ask: is the form of the wall painting the form of the painted drawing or is it the set of rules, the guidelines, the principles or the method that describe a possible outcome?

3.

LeWitt seems to be an all too likely candidate to be compared with the work of the German architect Oswald Mathias Ungers; the proliferation of the square in Ungers work is all too easily comparable with LeWitt’s most famous sculpture series, his ‘structures’. They are an ubiquitous set of transformations of the open cube, skeletal sculptures of endless transformations of the square. Comparing Ungers’ superficial minimalism with LeWitt’s minimalist superficial transformations would be a mistake, as it would not take into account the far more interesting conceptual complexities of associated with each artist’s practice.

Ungers developed his square pattern in the mid 1970 (perhaps his most prolific period) almost as a garment of a highly experimental pseudo-practice at that time. Reportedly, Hans Kollhoff partly claimed co-authorship for the particular feat of the squared facade. Whether or not this is true, it does give the gridded square an interesting provenance. As a pseudo facade, the relentless repetition of the squared grid became perhaps Ungers most radical annihilating design tool. Interestingly, the tool is not about the tool itself. One could argue that the very choice of weapon—a repetitive grid—reveals the target. As a poststructuralist, Ungers was well aware that the naive belief in repetition as solution (of the Structuralists) had to be eliminated from the inside, not by presenting randomness as an alternative, but by reclaiming the profusion of repetition, or seriality, as the one and only way out. By doing so, multiplication and repetition become method, not tool; the unit disappears, the relentless sameness makes all other elements—that which is already there—into protagonists. Repetition itself doesn’t solve anything. As a result, a very hybrid set of principles is allowed to surf on the waves of the self created sameness. The strategy allowed him to make designs with a remarkable wit and open mindedness: any place, any question, required another highly original hybrid typology. He (and his companions) could make a project without really designing anything. Thus the machine of method is able to develop a form. It is the ultimate incarnation of the scary architect, as it allows him to disconnect the responsibility of his own form giving from the actual question asked—he escapes from the responsibility of solving problems with form. Instead, Ungers only accumulates and mirrors what is already there. His serial form is elsewhere. The seriality of what are seemingly incarnations of the same tools makes the work. Ungers’ surprising method has a lot in common with LeWitt’s wall painting guidelines. Both appear to have been developed outside the context they tackle, as if the elements are defined before there is a site, a context, before there is a proper question asked. The best of Unger’s architecture does not involve design; it only organizes what is already there. LeWitt’s wall

paintings are not that different. They acquire their definitive form the moment they are executed in a specific place. Fascinatingly, one is never quite sure about the status of a specific drawing's form. Is it only a temporary incarnation of that what is implicitly there and hence a carrier of the context of the wall painting—or is the final form the painting in place? In Unger's work in the mid 70s, the dilemma was avoided as nothing was ever definitively executed. In the years after, his formal translation of the accumulated language of the previous years often looked like a bad copy of his own work. One of LeWitt's rules of his wall paintings was that the work should be executed (by others) with enough freedom as to make the executer the author of the painting. Hence, he should interpret, but also without too much input so as to avoid becoming a bad copy of the original, a fake Sol LeWitt so to speak. Sometimes one has the feeling Ungers only made fake Ungers once he materialized his method in a reduced and simplified form.

On the other hand, it is precisely in relation to the relative artistic autonomy with which LeWitt allowed his drawings to be executed, that one can understand the essence of Ungers' TU Berlin years. Each report of student projects of these years present a kernel of that other practice, in which serial projects executed by various authors according to a relatively fixed set of rules suggest a possible practice of method as form.

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Kuehn Malvezzi was founded by Simona Malvezzi, Wilfried Kuehn and Johannes Kuehn in Berlin in 2001. Their museum and exhibition architecture includes Documenta11, the Julia Stoschek Collection, the Friedrich Christian Flick Collection and the Museum Berggruen. Kuehn Malvezzi's entry for Humboldt-Forum Berlin was awarded with the jury's special prize and the German critics' prize 2009. They were exhibited in the German Pavilion at the 10th Architecture Biennial in Venice 2006.

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