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Feminist Performative Architectures: making place in and with public space

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Declaration

I, the author, confirm that the Thesis is my own work. I am aware of the University's Guidance on the Use of Unfair Means (www.sheffield.ac.uk/ssid/unfair-means). This work has not been previously been presented for an award at this, or any other, university.

Helen Stratford

Abstract

Bringing together concepts of performativity from feminist theories and methods from architecture, performance and art practice, this thesis sets out to develop an interdisciplinary multi-modal performance-based practice research methodology that researches how particular public spaces are performed. Led by an enquiry which stems from and includes my own interdisciplinary practice, itself located in-between architecture, performance and socially engaged art, it investigates in what way this methodology might interrogate recently developed public spaces, or those situated within regeneration frameworks, in order to address how dominant power relations are reproduced in, by and through these spaces.

Central to this thesis is a critique of the current context of undertheorised notions of performativity in architecture alongside a ubiquitous neoliberal glossing of public space. In order to address both concerns, this thesis reframes performativity as both feminist research methodology: an emergent, performance-based yet situated practice, and research subject: a way of thinking critically about or through the place of public space. This implies a reviewing of the performative position of the researcher, examining how this position changes and occupies multiple sites that influence spatial production, and a reviewing of public space, examining in what way public spaces might be equally multiple.

Through the practice research this thesis extends Judith Butler's performative theories on social constructions of gender, Rosi Braidotti and Donna Haraway's embodied and situated accounts of subjectivity and Karen Barad's posthuman performativity. These theories are placed in dialogue with key thinkers and practitioners in public space, performance and participation. These include Sophie Wolfrum's 'performative urbanism'; Teresa Hoskyns and Doreen Massey's critiques of public space; Cathy Turner, Juliet Rufford and Dorita Hannah's investigations into crossovers between theatre, architecture and performance; Doina Petrescu's research into socially engaged participatory practices in architecture and Sarah Pink's reflexive ethnographic methodologies. In order to develop the implications of these references for a feminist approach to repracticing public space, they are also considered alongside feminist performance, art and architecture practices, including those of Mierle Laderman Ukeles, Celine Condorelli, Thandi Loewenson, Sophie Handler and feminist collective 'taking place'.

With reference to Barad in particular, rather than designing solutions the practice research methodology developed through the thesis proposes that 'feminist performative architectures'

generate topological spaces; ‘situations’ developed through emergent outcomes, interaction, dialogue and provocation with other people, places and politics that include the non-human. Ultimately, this thesis expands the spectrum of practice-led research methodologies and modes of researching public space. It critiques objectified accounts of ‘placemaking’ by extending understandings of public spaces through making visible their performativity in ways unavailable to conventional architectural research methods. Finally, in creating relational and situated spaces that embrace difference, it argues that ‘feminist performative architectures’ themselves generate alternative public spaces that open up ‘other’ possibilities formerly repressed through layers of sedimented social practices and material presence.

Keywords:

feminist, performativity, public space, theory practice, performance based methodology, performance-based participatory methods, performative architectures, multi-modal methodology.

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Prelude

Market Meditations video link

Introduction – Performative Conditions

The starting point of this practice-based PhD is my own interdisciplinary practice located in-between architecture, performance and socially engaged art practice. My practice uses a multi-modal performance-based methodology, embracing representations, actions, events and objects, to generate 'performative architectures' – situations that make visible the performativity of public spaces in order to critique and challenge the power relations through which they are produced. This thesis investigates in what way this methodology operates as a means to engage others in questioning and transforming spatial 'prejudices' within the current state of public space. From this basis, it examines what new spatial and design knowledge performativity can bring to the understanding and production of architecture and urban politics in public space.

In architecture over the past twenty years the term performative has become prevalent, yet it is still largely conflated with performance, whether relating to the performance of material technologies, environmental parameters, creating spaces that perform or spaces for performance.[1] Similarly, in new developments and regeneration strategies, in a neoliberal context of increasing privatisation and securitisation, there has been an equally ubiquitous glossing of the term 'public space'. Public space is everywhere, and yet nowhere.[2] In contrast, in feminist theories of performativity, performativity is not limited to bodily actions or movement but all manner of social, cultural and material conditions that have subjective and transformative effect.[3] In this context, public space is rather understood as 'performative conditions' – 'acting space' – acting and activated at the intersections of design, legislation, policies, everyday activities and routines, with social, cultural, economic and political

[1] See Dorita Hannah, *Event Space: Theatre Architecture and the Historical Avant-Garde* (New York: Routledge/Taylor & Francis Group, 2019); Juliet Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, 2014 edition (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York, NY: Palgrave, 2015); Hilary Sample, *Maintenance Architecture* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2016).

[2] See Doreen Massey, *For Space* (London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2005); Doina Petrescu, 'How to Make a Community as Well as the Space for It', Re-Public: Reimagining Democracy, 2007 <http://seminaire.samizdat.net/IMG/pdf/Doina_Petrescu_.pdf> [accessed 10 October 2019]; Jack Shenker, 'Revealed: The Insidious Creep of Pseudo-Public Space in London | Cities | The Guardian' <https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2017/jul/24/revealed-pseudo-public-space-pops-london-investigation-map> [accessed 13 February 2021].

[3] See Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993); Judith Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, First Harvard University Press paperback edition (Cambridge, Massachusetts London, England: Harvard University Press, 2018); Karen Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter', *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 28.3 (2003).

implications.[4] Therefore, 'feminist performative architectures' operate within a 'critical feminist tradition' that examines, critiques and develops tools that make visible and counter 'how power, in the form of political hegemonies and social injustice has been resisted and reconstructed through spatial practice'.[5]

This thesis positions my practice within this conceptual framework but also within a broader artistic and critical landscape. It brings together theories and practices from feminism, architecture, performance studies and socially engaged contemporary art practice in order to analyse in what way working in-between these disciplines opens up questions around how public spaces, within both urban and rural contexts, are performed. Yet, going beyond an examination of theories and practices, this thesis develops through case studies that examine in what way my own performance-based practice research develops a new interdisciplinary research methodology at the intersection between art, performance, ethnography and civic action, that responds from an architectural perspective.

In this context, I use the unique position of my situated practice – working with other artists, architects, curators, communities and publics in public space – to examine how performance-based methods might work with bodies, hierarchies, habits and actions, in order to critique the conventions by which public spaces are reproduced within architecture and urban design. Projects have been chosen because they focus on spaces that are considered 'public' and have been or are in the process of being designed or re-imagined according to particular regeneration programs or visions. In each case, visual and performance-based methods, not only question how these visions meet 'users' understanding and use, but also how the performativity of the researcher-practitioner herself figures within these relationships. In this way, this thesis focuses on the use of these methods to interrogate issues of representation, actions, participation and agency, in order to ask: how do these methods differ from conventional architectural practice and what kind of spatialities do they produce?

This introduction outlines my practice research and the practical and theoretical interdisciplinary context within which it is located. In order to outline in what way this thesis develops this context, I discuss literature across the fields of performance studies,

[4] Doina Petrescu, 'Acting Space: Transversal Notes, on-the-Ground Observations, and Concrete Questions for Us All', in *URBAN/ACT* (Paris: aaa-peprav, 2007), pp. 319–28.
[5] Meike Schalk, Thérèse Kristiansson, and Ramia Mazé, 'Anticipating Feminist Futures of Spatial Practice', in *Feminist Futures of Spatial Practice: Materialisms, Activisms, Dialogues, Pedagogies, Projections*, ed. by Meike Schalk, Thérèse Kristiansson, and Ramia Mazé (Baunach: AADR, Art Architecture Design Research : imprint of Spurbuchverlag, 2017), pp. 13–24 (p. 14).

architecture, urbanism, socially engaged art practice, geography, feminism, ethnography and practice as research. On this basis, I introduce how the terms 'performativity', 'public space' and correspondingly 'place' remain problematic within architectural and urban design, how feminist theories have problematised them and why a performance-based research methodology is appropriate in these contexts. Elaborating on these issues, I develop an argument that the gap between the (theoretical) visions and rhetoric surrounding the conceptualisation of public spaces – by architects, urban planners and all manner of authorities – and the (practiced) lives of those that both maintain and use these spaces – including the 'gap' between 'researcher' and 'researched' – not only continues to be the most urgent of these issues to address but is also where other possibilities lie. Outlining how the situated and participatory approach of my practice research aims to address this gap, I argue that the originality of my multi-modal methodological approach resides in the contribution of both 'theoretical' and 'practical' knowledge in this area. I thereby examine how a feminist methodology that works in-between both might feed back into the future development of architectural research and design practice.[6] Finally, I detail the aims and objectives of this research inquiry, introducing my research questions and setting out how the chapters and structure of this thesis begins to answer them.

Performativity in Architecture

Since the early 2000s, performativity has gained increasing currency in architecture. Yet, in the fields of social science, performance studies, and contemporary art, the 'performative turn' has been identified as starting much earlier. Theorists and practitioners in these fields include sociologist Ervin Goffman, language philosophers John Langshaw Austin and John Searle, theatre directors Richard Schechner and Peter Brook, the 'activities' and 'happenings' of artist Allan Kaprow and the performance-based works of feminist conceptual artists

[6] In the thesis I detail how this approach is informed by a genealogy of feminist methodologies that operate between theory and practice. In 'Only Resist: A Feminist Approach to Critical Spatial Practice', Jane Rendell lists many theorists and practitioners who have been important in 'developing feminist architecture that intersects theory and practice […] operating through different writing modes and other forms of performative and participatory practice', many of whom are discussed within this thesis. See Jane Rendell, 'Only Resist: A Feminist Approach to Critical Spatial Practice', *Architectural Review*, 2018 <https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/only-resist-a-feminist-approach-to-critical-spatial-practice> [accessed 26 March 2021]; Jane Rendell, 'A Place Between: Theory and Practice', *Public Art Journal*, 1.2 (1999).

including Mierle Laderman Ukeles among many others.[7] Writing and teaching in the 70s, architect Bernard Tschumi famously defined the paradox of architecture through the notion of 'event space', through which architecture is defined by activities taking place in spatial relation to it.[8] Yet, in his writings Tschumi does not directly refer to performance, the specific use of the terms 'performance' and 'performativity' start to emerge only much later.[9]

Events, conferences and publications, with a direct focus on performance and performativity in relation to architecture,[10] include 'Performative Architecture' exhibition at TU Delft 2004, addressing the context of digital media in architecture; 'Performative Architecture' conference at University of Pennsylvania in 2005, with the associated publication *Performative Architecture: Beyond Instrumentality,* addressing the use of 'digital technologies of quantitative and qualitative performance-based simulation to offer a comprehensive approach to the design of the built environment'.[11] The primary focus of these

[7] See JL Austin, *How To Do Things With Words.* (Second Edition: Oxford University Press., 1955); PeterBrook, *The Open Door: Thoughts on Acting and Theatre*, 1st Anchor Books ed (New York: Anchor Books, 2005); Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (London: Penguin Books, 1990); Lucy Lippard, *Materializing Six Years: Lucy Lippard and the Emergence of Conceptual Art.*, ed. by C Morris and V Bonin (New York and Cambridge, MA: The Brooklyn Museum and The MIT Press, 2012); Allan Kaprow, *Essays on the Blurring of Art and Life*, ed. by Jeff Kelley, Expanded (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2003); Hans-Thies Lehmann, *Postdramatic Theatre* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 183; Gray Read, 'Introduction: The Play's The Thing', in *Architecture as a Performing Art*, ed. by Gray Read and Marcia Feuerstein (London: Routledge, 2013), pp. 1–14 (pp. 2–3); Richard Schechner, 'The Street Is the Stage', in Richard Schechner, *The Future of Ritual: Writings on Culture and Performance* (London ; New York: Routledge, 1993), pp. 45–93; Richard Schechner and Mady Schuman, *Ritual, Play, and Performance: Readings in the Social Sciences/Theatre* (New York: Seabury Press, 1976); John R. Searle, *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language*, 34th. print (Cambridge: Univ. Press, 2011). Also, see chapter one for an introduction to the work of Mierle Laderman Ukeles and chapter two for a discussion of the work of feminist performance artists.

[8] In 'Spaces and Events', Tschumi argues that 'architecture – its social relevance and formal invention – cannot be dissociated from the events that "happen" in it'. Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, Paperback ed., 5. print (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1999), p. 139. In *Event-Space* Dorita Hannah observes how while Tschumi's specific mention of this term is not prevalent in his texts, architectural historian K. Michael Hays has repeatedly cited him as its author. Hannah, p. 44.

[9] In 'Performance/Architecture an interview with Bernard Tschumi', Omar Kahn and Dorita Hannah state that while using the terms 'experience' and 'event', Tschumi does not specifically mention 'performance'. Omar Khan and Dorita Hannah, 'Performance/Architecture an Interview with Bernard Tschumi', *Journal of Architectural Education*, 61.4 (2008), 52–58 (p. 52) <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1531-314X.2008.00187.x>.

[10] Earlier conferences focusing on spatiality and performativity in relation to visual culture, include 'Performing Spaces – Spatialities in Visual Culture' International Workshop, Kunstahalle Zürich and Freie Universität Berlin 2003, organised in collaboration with Kulteren des Performativen a collaborative research centre based at Freie Universitat Berlin from 1999 to 2011. Kulteren des Performativen researched 'performativity as a constitutive characteristic of cultures' from the Middle Ages to the early modern period and contemporary culture. 'Kulturen Des Performativen' <http://www.sfb-performativ.de/> [accessed 26 March 2021].

[11] *Performative Architecture: Beyond Instrumentality*, ed. by Branko Kolarevic and Ali Malkawi (New York: Spon Press, 2005), p. 3.

particular events and publications is the ability of spaces to accommodate and adapt to users' needs through digital means.[12]

In terms of theories that more directly and critically address experiential aspects of architecture, David Leatherbarrow's seminal essay in the aforementioned *Performative Architecture* publication 'Architecture's performance unscripted', points towards a different relationship with performativity.[13] His focus on what a building *does* rather than *is*, opens the notion of performativity in architecture towards an alignment with performance and performance art.[14] This alignment starts to more clearly define itself through the terms 'Performance Design' and 'Performance Architecture' around 2005/2007 in the work and writings of theatre producer Dorita Hannah[15] and architect, curator and writer Pedro Gadanho, who signals 'architecture's capacity to produce commentary regarding the ongoing transformations of culture and society'.[16]

Other events and conferences that mark and consolidate what has been described by Gadanho as a 'performative turn'[17] within architecture include 'The Rise of Performance Architecture' conference in Brussels 2011 and the architecture conference and public space competition 'Performance Architecture' in Guimarães Portugal, European Capital of Culture 2012, curated by Gadanho, alongside the 'Performing Architecture' graduate symposium at Princeton 2012. In addition, a focus on performance architecture in terms of links with site specific performance and performance art, is further developed through the 2011, 2015 and 2019 editions of Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space[18] and PSi (Performance Studies international) #21 'Fluid States - Performances of Unknowing' lead and curated by Hannah. A similar focus provided the basis for the installations around this

[12] Which as theatre and architecture scholar Juliet Rufford observes are frequently 'simply sensational replacements for conventional materials and do not substantially alter our experience of space'. Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 37.
[13] David Leatherbarrow, 'Architecture's Unscripted Performance', in *Peformative Architecture: Beyond Instrumentality.*, ed. by Branko Kolarevic and Ali Malkawi, 2005, pp. 5–20 <http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/qut/detail.action?docID=235309> [accessed 18 February 2021]. See also David Leatherbarrow, *Architecture Oriented Otherwise*, Writing Matters, 1st ed (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2009). Leatherbarrow's theories are discussed in relation to the performativity of architecture in chapter one of this thesis.
[14] Leatherbarrow, *Architecture Oriented Otherwise*, p. 43. See also Hannah, p. 1.
[15] *Performance Design*, ed. by Dorita Hannah and Olav Harsløf (Copenhagen ; Lancaster: Museum Tusculanum, 2008).
[16] Pedro Gadanho, 'Architecture as Performance', *Dédalo*, 02 (2007); Pedro Gadanho, 'Architecture as Performance | Shrapnel Contemporary' <https://shrapnelcontemporary.wordpress.com/archive-texts/architecture-as-performance/> [accessed 11 March 2021].
[17] See Gadanho, 'Architecture as Performance | Shrapnel Contemporary'.
[18] See also the work of Dorita Hannah at Prague Quadrennial 2003.

time including Andrés Jaque Architectos *IKEA Disobedients*, at MOMA New York, curated by Gadanho in 2011; talks, performances, and workshops under the heading 'Performing Architecture' at Tate Britain 2013 including the work of 'performance architect' Alex Schweder[19]; the festival and interdisciplinary conference 'Performacity' hosted by Kaserne Basel 2014, and the ongoing Performa Biennial in New York[20] alongside the 'Viral Institute of Performance Architecture' (VIPA), describing itself as 'a transient and fluid international assembly of performance architects'.[21]

These dialogues between performance and architecture are supported by publications focusing on the intersection of performance, architecture and urbanism including 'Performance/Architecture' issue of *Journal of Architectural Education* (May, 2008), Vol. 61, No. 4 and more recently the double issue of *Kunstforum* (2013/14) edited by Heinz Schütz focusing on 'Urban Performance'. Books including *Performance Design* by Dorita Hannah (2008), *Architecture as a Performing Art* edited by Marcia Feuerstein and Gray Read (2009), *Performance and the City* edited by DJ Hopkins and Kim Solga (2009), *Theatre and The City* by Jen Harvie (2009), *Performing Cities* by Nicholas Whybrow (2014), *Dramaturgy and Architecture* by Cathy Turner (2015), *Performative Urbanism* edited by Sophie Wolfrum and Nikolai FRhr. V. Brandis (2015), *Theatre and Architecture* by Juliet Rufford (2016), *Performing Architectures* edited by Rufford and Andrew Filmer (2018) and *Event Space: Theatre Architecture and the Historical Avant-Garde* by Dorita Hannah (2018).[22]

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[19] Alex Schweder, 'Alex Schweder | Performance Architecture' <http://www.alexschweder.com/> [accessed 11 March 2021]. Schweder also claims to have coined the term 'Performance Architecture' in 2007.

[20] Performa, 'Performa' <https://performa-arts.org/> [accessed 28 May 2021].

[21] 'Viral Institute of Performance Architecture', *Viral Institute of Performance Architecture* <https://performarch.wordpress.com/> [accessed 28 May 2021]. Members include Alex Schweder, Kyveli Anastasiadi and Aliki Kylika. VIPA launched at Prague Quadrennial within the International Federation of Theatre Research (IFTR) working group Theatre and Architecture, for which Hannah is currently joint convener with performance theorist Andrew Filmer. Other contemporary developments in visual art include the workshop 'City as Performative Object' led by artists Esther Polak and Ivar van Bekkum. 'The City as Performative Object | Polakvanbekkum' <https://www.polakvanbekkum.com/done/unfolding-landscapes/the-city-as-a-performative-object/> [accessed 28 May 2021].

[22] In recent years, there has also been a growing focus on scenography in relation to architecture. Whilst this field is outside of the focus of this thesis, notable authors include Thea Brejzek, Rachael Hann and Juliet Rufford. See *Expanding Scenography: On the Authoring of Space*, ed. by Thea Brejzek (The Arts and Theatre Institute, 2011); Thea Brejzek, 'Material, Space, Performance' (presented at the The Bartett Research Exchange, London, 2013); Thea Brejzek and Lawrence Wallen, *The Model as Performance: Staging Space in Theatre and Architecture*, Performance + Design (London: Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, 2018); Rachel Hann, *Beyond Scenography* (New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2019); Juliet Rufford, 'Scenography and the Political Economy of Design', *Norwegian Theatre Academy Essay Anthology Eds. Sidsel Graffer and Karen Kipphoff Section 2: Scenography and Space* <https://www.academia.edu/39123470/Scenography_and_the_Political_Economy_of_Design> [accessed 22 April 2021].

In these conferences, symposia and publications, there has been an increasing shift away from the performance of architecture itself – as building and as functionality – towards the actions of 'users' at the level of the individual body. This shift invariably references theorists and philosophers who focus on political and performative implications of cultural and social practices and actions, including Judith Butler, Michel de Certeau, Henry Lefebvre and Jacques Rancière, alongside architects, contemporary art critics and thinkers including Tschumi, Nicholas Bourriaud, Claire Bishop and Grant Kester, accompanied by repeated references towards historical contextualisations in architectural practitioners such as the Situationist International and the avant-garde practices of the Bauhaus.[23]

However, in mainstream architecture practice and theory this shift still largely conflates performativity with performance whether as evaluative criteria or action, rather than a recognition of how the built environment is part of wider social and political contexts. The first two chapters of this thesis critique how the relationship of performance to architecture frequently becomes reduced to one of three definitions. These include: evaluation, evaluating 'user experience' to measure how well a building 'performs';[24] design, creating or supporting performances or performance spaces, and representation, including the formal or 'tectonic' expression of 'dynamic' spaces that often also literally perform.[25] In contrast, moving away from the material manifestation of performance, this thesis researches notions of performance and performativity that rethink the fabric of architecture itself as a 'social space'.[26] Here, in

[23] See Michel de Certeau, 'Walking in the City', in *The Cultural Studies Reader*, ed. by Simon During (London: Routledge, 1993); Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984); Henri Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life: The One-Volume Edition*, One-vol. ed (London: Verso, 2014); Henri Lefebvre, *Writings on Cities* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996); Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991); Jacques Rancière, *The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible*, ed. by Gabriel Rockhill, Bloomsbury Revelations, Paperback ed., 1. publ (London: Bloomsbury, 2013); Nicholas Bourriaud, 'Berlin Letter About Relational Aesthetics, Berlin: Biennale Für Zeitgenössiche Kunst.', 2001. In addition to these references see also Claire Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship* (London: Verso, 2012); Jen Harvie, *Fair Play: Art, Performance and Neoliberalism*, 2013 edition (Basingstoke: AIAA, 2013); Grant H. Kester, *Conversation Pieces: Community and Communication in Modern Art* (Berkeley Los Angeles London: University of California Press, 2013); Melissa Trimingham, *The Theatre of the Bauhaus: The Modern and Postmodern Stage of Oskar Schlemmer* (New York: Routledge, 2012); Nicholas Whybrow, *Art and The City* (London: I. B. Tauris & Co Ltd, 2010).

[24] In terms of 'post occupancy evaluation' and 'building performance' see Karim Hadjri and Carl Crozier, 'Post-occupancy Evaluation: Purpose, Benefits and Barriers', *Facilities*, 27.1/2 (2009), 21–33 <https://doi.org/10.1108/02632770910923063>; Sample.

[25] See *Architecture as a Performing Art*, ed. by Gray Read and Marcia Feuerstein (London: Routledge, 2013); *Performance and the City*, ed. by Kim Solga, S. Orr, and D. J. Hopkins, 2009 edition (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Jen Harvie and Tim Etchells, *Theatre and the City*, 2009 edition (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave, 2009); Juliet Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, 2014 edition (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York, NY: Palgrave, 2015).

[26] Here, this thesis follows what performance theorist Shannon Jackson identifies as the 'social turn' in art practice, in which 'formal questions of aesthetic experimentation' are joined to 'socio-political questions'. Shannon Jackson, *Performing Art, Supporting Publics* (London: Routledge, 2011), p. 3.

order to counter the aforementioned and often apolitical use of performativity as evaluation, design or representation, architecture is recast as 'acting' on and with us.[27]

In architecture, art and performance research contexts this position resonates with research in participation and design by architect Doina Petrescu; research emerging from architect/artist groups including feminist collectives such as UK based 'taking place', Stockholm based MYKET, New Beauty Council and feminist architectural theorists and practitioners at KTH Royal Institute of Technology; Performative Urbanism Lab for Spatial, Social, and Scenographic Experimentation, Concordia University, Montreal, and the MA in Situated Practice at the Bartlett School of Architecture UCL, London.[28] In recognition of this practice research as a valid methodology, of relevance and value to architectural practice and education, initial stages have been published in *Demystifying Architectural Research*, by RIBA publishing. They have also formed the basis of teaching on Masters courses in Architectural Design, Urban Design and Participation in Architecture and Urban Design at the University of Sheffield.[29]

The practice research of this PhD and the projects it considers were completed prior to 2020, in public spaces where social distancing or lockdown measures were unheard of. However, writing this thesis during a global pandemic inevitably brings with it specific reflections. It is a time when public space in the UK and Europe has emptied, yet simultaneously become more policed and contested than ever. When measures were first introduced to control the spread of Covid-19 the physical environment remained largely unchanged, but its use and perception changed immediately, to dramatic effect. This situation threw into sharp relief the performance of public space; how the way public spaces are practiced deeply defines their reproduction.

Beyond this immediate effect, the pandemic has also highlighted how performative instruments or 'apparatus' of measurement and representation are reproductive of particular ideologies. Whether recasting human populations as a 'herd' or through endless exponential graphs that populate news feeds, the virus, or rather the measures implemented in its response have made visible social, cultural and economic inequalities which, for some at least,

[27] Petrescu, 'Acting Space: Transversal Notes, on-the-Ground Observations, and Concrete Questions for Us All'.
[28] See 'Takingplace.Org.Uk' <http://www.takingplace.org.uk/> [accessed 1 April 2021].
[29] Helen Stratford, 'Market Meditations', in *Demystifying Architectural Research: Adding Value to Your Practice*, by Anne Dye and Flora Samuel (London: RIBA Publishing, 2019), pp. 91–95 <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9780429347528> [accessed 22 April 2021].

remained invisible until they became part of this critical state.[30] While, the registering of these interactions brought with it a sense of helplessness and despair, conversely, it consolidated the relevance and pertinence of this research that examines in what way performing otherwise might have real social, physical and material effects.

Feminist Performativity

In *Socially Engaged Art and the Neoliberal City*, urban theorist and practitioner Cecilie Sachs Olsen describes how performativity is often used with a focus on the social and apparent apolitical freedom of individuals. An understanding which, as she observes, 'risks seeing performance and performativity as offering an unmediated authentic relationship to the world, escaping the limits and demands of the social and material context'.[31] Following this critique, this thesis argues for a return to the feminist origins and development of performativity, in order to reappraise, revalue and repractice the term by addressing its social and material relation to architecture.

Central to Judith Butler's notion of performativity is the 'foundation' or acceptance of sexual difference as given.[32] She challenges the acceptance of sex as a 'pre-cultural component of identity'[33] and her strategy is 'not merely to contest "sex," but to articulate the convergence of multiple sexual discourses at the site of "identity" in order to render that category, in whatever form, permanently problematic'.[34] For Butler, 'culture is a process', it is identity formation in-the-making.[35] Following the 'speech act' theories of Austin and addressing the writings of Jacques Derrida, Butler argues that 'gender reality is performative which means, quite simply, that it is real only to the extent that it is performed'.[36] In this context, activities and practices are the very means by which we come to be who we are. With a particular focus

[30] See also Rosi Braidotti, '"We" Are In This Together, But We Are Not One and the Same', *Journal of Bioethical Inquiry*, 17.4 (2020), 465–69 <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11673-020-10017-8>.
[31] Cecilie Sachs Olsen, *Socially Engaged Art and the Neoliberal City*, 2021, p. 25. Here, Olsen refers to feminist cultural geographer Catherine Nash who describes how this notion of the term can 'constitute a retreat from feminism and the politics of the body'. Catherine Nash, 'Performativity in Practice: Some Recent Work in Cultural Geography', *Progress in Human Geography*, 24.4 (2000), 653–64 (p. 662) <https://doi.org/10.1191/030913200701540654>, quoted in Olsen, p. 25.
[32] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity : Tenth Anniversary Edition* (Taylor & Francis Group, 2006, 2014), p. 175 <http://public.ebookcentral.proquest.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=180211> [accessed 27 February 2021].
[33] James Loxley, *Performativity (The New Critical Idiom) Routledge* (London: Routledge, 2007), p. 116.
[34] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, p. 174.
[35] Loxley, p. 118.
[36] Judith Butler, 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory', *Theatre Journal*, 40.4 (1988), 519 (p. 527) <https://doi.org/10.2307/3207893>.

on the nature/culture divide, her writings deconstruct binary formations, produced through everyday iterations of 'social conventions'.[37]

According to philosophers Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, the central purpose of language is in issuing 'order-words' or rather *mots d'ordre* – statements by which 'social obligations' are implemented.[38] Their particular analysis of Austin's speech acts unpacks performative relations between actions and speech – connecting *mots d'ordre* to their location which can be extended spatially. For Deleuze and Guattari 'a performative statement is nothing outside of the circumstances that make it performative'.[39] This spatial application of the 'circumstances' of performative statements is developed by philosopher Dieter Mersch. In relation to the theories of Butler, Mersch directly connects the performative to the architectural, or rather the urban, in terms of the 'mediality' of spatial and temporal material contexts.[40] It is this spatial application of *mots d'ordre* that inform the starting point of this thesis. The role that places play in the formation of the self, the positions we repeatedly adopt in a public street, square or institution, in order to examine how actions or utterings might challenge and reimagine those roles and the places that produce them.

While performativity in and of itself is not necessarily feminist, notions of embodied and 'situated knowledges' are embedded in a long lineage of feminist practice.[41] Architectural historian and critic Jane Rendell argues that performativity is central to a feminist approach to spatial practice, thereby situating it within a feminist tradition as a means of thinking through the body, in order to question what a body is and how bodies are gendered.[42] Starting from feminist readings of spatial relations, this thesis is grounded in feminist critiques of the 'neutrality' of space. Alongside Butler, feminist theorists, including Elizabeth Grosz, Donna Haraway, Dolores Hayden, and Doreen Massey, have focused on how public space is steeped in a history of patriarchy informed hierarchical structures.[43] This thesis examines in what way

[37] Judith Butler, *Excitable Speech: A Politics of the Performative* (New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 155. See also Loxley.
[38] Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus* (London: The Athlone Press, 1998), p. 79.
[39] Deleuze and Guattari, p. 82.
[40] Dieter Mersch, 'The "Power" of the Performative', in *Performative Urbanism: Generating and Designing Urban Space*, ed. by Sophie Wolfrum and Nikolai Frhr. v. Brandis (Berlin: Jovis Verlag, 2015), pp. 39–48 (p. 40).
[41] Donna Haraway, 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective.', Feminist Studies, 14.3 (1988), 575–99.
[42] Rendell, 'Only Resist'.
[43] Elizabeth Grosz, *Architecture from the Outside: Essays on Virtual and Real Space* (MIT Press, 2001); Donna Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium.FemaleMan_Meets_OncoMouse: Feminism and Technoscience* (New York: Routledge, 1997); Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscape*, 4. print; Massey, For Space.

a feminist performance-based methodology offers critically reflective ways to make visible how these power structures are manifest and reproduced.[44] On this basis, it aims to propose methods that challenge and resist prejudices and hierarchies reperformed through public spaces, thereby creating the conditions by which other visions and performances of public space might start to be approached.

Public Space

Feminist theorists and practitioners have argued that in contemporary regeneration strategies and developments, public space is everywhere and yet nowhere.[45] According to Petrescu, 'The notion of "public" has been variously articulated, i.e. "public realm", "public sphere" or "public space," each time conveying an ambiguity and multiplicity of meanings'.[46] Supported by Western epistemological notions of abstract space as container, public space is historically presented as 'absolute', 'neutral' or 'timeless', a 'background' upon which the life of the city is 'performed', implying an apolitical 'public' space that is open to all.[47] Yet, while the term 'public' somehow implies a 'democratic' space, it can never be taken for granted that public space is either democratic or indeed public.[48] Massey critiques the ubiquitous use of this term. She argues that 'the tendency to romanticise public space as an emptiness which enables free and equal speech does not take on board the need to theorise space and place as the product of social relations which are most likely conflicting and unequal'.[49]

Similarly, art and architecture historian Malcolm Miles argues that in contemporary 'public' spaces 'social mixing' is not ascribed in equal measure and is more akin to 'social ordering'.[50] Moreover, for Miles cultural practices play a key part in this social ordering. In his appraisal of the role of art practice in recent gentrification and redevelopment processes in the US and the UK, Miles argues that 'culture has been co-opted to redevelopment in service,

[44] The notion that the built environment repeats hierarchies and discriminations specifically around gendered bodies is also examined by feminist and queer architect Katarina Bonnevier. See Katarina Bonnevier *Behind Straight Curtains: Towards a Queer Feminist Theory of Architecture* (Stockholm: Axl Books, 2007).
[45] Massey, *For Space*; Petrescu, 'How to Make a Community as Well as the Space for It'.
[46] Petrescu, 'How to Make a Community as Well as the Space for It'.
[47] See Edward W. Soja, 'The Socio-Spatial Dialectic', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 70.2 (1980), 207–25; Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*; Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007).
[48] See Shenker; Dolan Cummings, 'How Public Is Public Space?', *Blueprint*, 281, 2009, 44–52; Teresa Hoskyns, *The Empty Place: Democracy and Public Space* (London: Routledge, 2013); Massey, *For Space*; Anna Minton, *Ground Control: Fear and Happiness in the Twenty-First-Century City* (London: Penguin Books, 2012); Susan Lacy, *Mapping The Terrain: New Genre Public Art* (Washington: Bay Press, 1995); Petrescu, 'How to Make a Community as Well as the Space for It'.
[49] Massey, *For Space*, p. 152.
[50] Malcolm Miles, *Limits to Culture: Urban Regeneration vs. Dissident Art* (London: Pluto Press, 2015), p. 116.

not of local needs, but of the symbolic economies by which cities compete globally'.[51] According to Miles, 'So much for the liveable city; now it is the profitable city'.[52]

For Miles, within contemporary 'public' spaces, culture has been instrumental in implementing 'social ordering under neoliberalism'.[53] Here, as curator and cultural theorist Pascal Gielen argues, in the 'creative city' that which appears fluid, comprising 'creative zones, fashion districts, flexible workplaces and lounge bars', in fact forms part of an 'urban strategy' of 'fixed *place* within a well thought-out urban space'.[54] Similarly, architectural critic Douglas Spencer argues that 'The architecture of neoliberalism cannot openly acknowledge […] antagonisms or contradictions'.[55] Instead, for Spencer, in its replication of the 'putatively progressive and evolutionary forces of the market',[56] 'its smooth surfaces and fluid forms' perpetuate a rhetoric that 'denounces the very thought of them'.[57] In this neoliberal 'creative city' artists working in public space are transformed into 'creative entrepreneurs' who fit within a global 'marketing plan' that strives to differentiate one city from another.[58]

Against the ubiquitous use of the term 'public space', which belies this climate of increasing privatisation, this thesis aims to develop a performance-based methodology to research and critique how spatial practices interact with social and political contexts to produce the state of public space at this crucial time. In the context of Miles' and others identification of the instrumentalisation of cultural practices and public space to serve neoliberal ends,[59] this thesis examines in what way interdisciplinary methods, based in representation, action and participation, might unpack and mobilise the 'public' of public space. It examines the potential of these methods to make visible the plethora of 'undemocratic' power relations, including classed, gendered, and neoliberal practices, which compete to determine what types

[51] Miles, p. 1.
[52] Ibid., p. 132.
[53] Ibid., p. 116.
[54] Pascal Gielen, 'Performing the Common City: On the Crossroads of Art Politics and Public Life', in *Interrupting the City: Artistic Constitutions of the Public Sphere*, ed. by Sander Bax, Pascal Gielen, and Bram Ieven, Arts in Society, no 20 (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2015), pp. 273–97 (pp. 286–87).
[55] Douglas Spencer, *The Architecture of Neoliberalism: How Contemporary Architecture Became an Instrument of Control and Compliance* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), p. 162.
[56] Ibid., p. 5.
[57] Ibid., p. 162.
[58] Gielen, pp. 286–87.
[59] For public art curator Jes Fernie recent developments in public space have led to 'the removal of a sense of physical and mental freedom to move beyond fixed codes of prescribed behavior.' Jes Fernie, 'Cut Your Nose Like Your Hair', *Art in the Public Sphere*, 7.1 (2018).

of 'public' or 'publics' can use these spaces and how.[60] Simultaneously, it examines what alternative spatialities and public spaces are created through these ways of working.

Place

Across the UK and Europe, the increasing privatisation of public space is coinciding with a rise of political ideologies – bolstered by both 'natural' and 'human' made disasters – that foster a sense of 'belonging' and a return to a more stable and defined idea of place.[61] In this context, this thesis examines in what way feminist performativity might interrogate these ideas that support specific notions of public space, in order to move beyond them. Butler is a key figure here. Her most recent publication *Notes Towards a Theory of Assembly* explores visibility and agency in the shifting and contingent public spaces of mass assembly.[62] Correspondingly, Massey's 'relational politics of place' offers a critique of place as a localised practice, somehow separate from 'wider spatialities of the relations of their construction'.[63] Equally important in this genealogy are Grosz's writings that undermine the acceptance of architecture's role as the 'containment or protection of subjects' through opening a thinking 'differently' '*in*' and '*of* architecture'[64] that is ongoing and 'becoming'.[65]

In the theories of Butler, Massey and Grosz, fixed and exclusionary notions of place, and the specific subjectivities and models of knowledge they sustain, are critiqued by arguing that place is constructed and relational. Likewise, feminist philosophers Karen Barad, Rosi Braidotti, and Donna Haraway locate the production of subjectivities within equally shifting

[60] Hoskyns; Massey, *For Space*; Minton; Petrescu, 'How to Make a Community as Well as the Space for It'; Lacy.
[61] This thesis sits within a wider critique of a 'sense of place' as fixed and enduring. For a summary of the history of the notion of place in Western society as inherently and essentially 'infused with' specific and enduring 'meaning and feeling', see Gillian Rose, 'Place and Identity a Sense of Place', in *A Place in the World? Places, Cultures and Globalization*, ed. by Doreen Massey, The Shape of the World, 4, Reprinted (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2003), pp. 87–132 (p. 88). Similarly, in *Event-Space* Dorita Hannah argues how 'the catastrophes, wreaked by nature and humanity – and more and more by a combination of both – marking the first two decades of this millennium, tend to demonstrate the desire to shore up the borders, step up the surveillance, and generally regulate material and immaterial space: that of thought as much as physical habitation'. Hannah, p. 312.
[62] Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*. Butler theories are informed by recent mass assemblies including those by the Occupy movement alongside protests in Taksim Square in Turkey and by protest groups including Black Lives Matter.
[63] Massey, *For Space*, p. 181. Geographer Gillian Rose has also argued how 'place' relates to notions of territoriality bound up in dominant ways of thinking and traditions of architectural practice and theory in the West. Gillian Rose, pp. 100–104.
[64] Grosz, p. 59.
[65] Ibid., p. 6.

power relations.[66] Differences in the approaches of these theorists are highlighted throughout the thesis, yet what connects them is that they do not deny that places hold specific and embodied meanings, but argue that these meanings are constructed over time through memory, action and implementation.[67] In the context of these grounded yet relational places, this thesis argues that a feminist performance-based methodology is appropriate to reveal the inherent performativity of public space, in order to open the way towards alternative ideas, concepts and spaces that might be deemed 'public'.

This thesis examines in what way a feminist performative approach, which uses public space as a framework to explore 'performative architectures', might be claimed as a form of architectural practice. Here, the use of the term 'architecture' rather than 'spatial' or 'spaces' is strategic. It not only responds to the need for a critical reviewing of performativity within architecture but also responds to feminist practitioners' calls to reclaim and redefine the term.[68] Similarly, the plural use of 'architectures' follows the multiple places and voices implied through the notion of performativity.[69]

Participation

Rather than focusing on places as 'buildings' for others to inhabit, this thesis builds on the aforementioned relational feminist conceptual frameworks in order to examine how public spaces are produced through collective interrelations of people, place and practice that are multiple and ongoing. Here, participants include networks of inhabitants or residents who use

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[66] See for example Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*; Rosi Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects: Embodiment and Sexual Difference in Contemporary Feminist Theory, Gender and Culture*, 2nd ed (New York: Columbia University Press, 2011; Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium.FemaleMan_Meets_OncoMouse.*

[67] Similarly, feminist geographers Geraldine Pratt and Pauline Hanson argue that 'gendered, racialised and classed identities are fluid'. They are composed through geographies of place, space and time, but are constructed in 'different ways in different places'. Geraldine Pratt and Susan Hanson, 'Geography and the Construction of Difference', *Gender, Place & Culture*, 1.1 (1994, 5–29 (p. 6) <https://doi.org/10.1080/09663699408721198>.

[68] In 'Architectural Flirtations, Formerly Known as Critique', architect Brady Burroughs suggests that '"contemporary feminist practitioners interested in architecture" cannot afford to give up the term architectural, if the intention is to change it'. Here, Burroughs refers to Rendell's term 'critical spatial practice', claiming that the use of spatial, rather than architectural, risks relegation to the margins 'leaving the bastion of architecture located firmly at *the center*, unchanged'. Brady Burroughs, 'Architectural Flirtations, Formerly Known as Critique: Dethroning the Serious to Clear Ground for Generous Architectural Conversations', in *Feminist Futures of Spatial Practice: Materialisms, Activisms, Dialogues, Pedagogies, Projections*, ed. by Meike Schalk, Thérèse Kristiansson, and Ramia Mazé (Baunach: AADR, Art Architecture Design Research : imprint of Spurbuchverlag, 2017, pp. 225–37 (p. 226.

[69] The plurality of performativity is recognized by Jackson in her critical appraisal of the 'performative turn'. Here, Jackson foregrounds 'performance as a site of group co-ordination in space and over time'. Jackson, *Performing Art, Supporting Publics*, p. 3. See also Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter'.

the spaces, workers who maintain them, architects who design them, city authorities who regulate them alongside incidental passers-by. Yet, they also include non-human participants, which connect public spaces to 'nature' and ecological lifecycles, alongside the social, physical and material elements of the space itself. This thesis examines how the conceptualisation of public space as performative assemblage might be extended into a participatory practice research methodology that enables participants themselves to experience and take part in the performativity of public space, while expanding who those participants might be.

These participatory processes, which are developed through the practice research, are placed in dialogue with a broader history of participation in architecture, urban design and socially engaged arts practice.[70] Here, while setting my practice research in the context of 'relational' architectural and art practices, this thesis develops feminist notions of relational in order to ask in what ways 'users' become part of, or implicated within, the research process, thereby researching how participation influences spatial knowledge production.[71] From this basis, this thesis examines in what way a synthesis of methods blended from live art, socially engaged practice and reflexive ethnographic methodologies[72] might be more constructive for generating participatory public spaces than those developed in conventional consultation methods in architecture.

The Position of the Researcher-Practitioner

In relation to participation, my situated position forms an integral part of my research practice. This thesis reflects on the choices I make, the voices or positions I adopt and the effects they have on my own and others' perception of specific places. In this way, it examines the performative position of the researcher-practitioner in order to interrogate the wider ethical implications of this way of researching for the generation of spatial knowledge in relation to public space.

[70] See Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*; *Architecture and Participation*, ed. by Peter Blundell-Jones, Doina Petrescu, and Jeremy Till, Digit. print (London: Taylor & Francis, 2009); Markus Miessen, *The Violence of Participation* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2007).
[71] Rosi Braidotti and Lisa Regan, 'Our Times Are Always Out of Joint: Feminist Relational Ethics in and of the World Today: An Interview with Rosi Braidotti', *Women: A Cultural Review*, 28.3 (2017), 171–92 <https://doi.org/10.1080/09574042.2017.1355683>.
[72] Sarah Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography: Images, Media and Representation in Research*, 2. ed (London: SAGE Publ, 2007).

Situated knowledge has a long history in feminist theory and is rooted in an awareness that all knowledge comes from positional and 'partial' perspectives.[73] This situated position is a challenge to the conventional position of the 'researcher' or the 'intellectual', who speaks the 'truth' to those who have 'yet to see it'.[74] While its trajectories are directed by my findings, my situated practice research acknowledges the editing process that stems from my own position within this process. Throughout my practice research, my 'roadmap' and my position is key, both in terms of framing theoretical standpoints but also in analysing the modes of relations that are constructed with others.

The ethical implications of this situated position are difficult to conceptualise within conventional historical, sociological or empirical research methods. This has already been demonstrated by the struggle to define this type of research through the ethical approval framework of the University of Sheffield. Within this conventional framework, the standard university ethics approval forms, designed to protect participants in the research process, typically serve to bolster the position of the 'expert' researcher, while performatively transforming people and places into 'objects of study'.[75] Within ethnography and practice as research methodologies these ethical implications of the position of the researcher have been extensively analysed. This thesis refers to immersive and reflexive methods used in these methodologies, including 'deep hanging out'[76] and 'knowledge in action'.[77] It investigates the conceptual problems these methods raise for research in architecture, while also analysing the productivity generated within these ways of working.

As a development of these methodologies, this thesis reflects on the implications of Haraway's figuration of the 'modest witness' for ways of researching. According to Braidotti, the 'modest witness' 'is neither detached not uncaring, but a border-crossing figure who

[73] Haraway, 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective'.
[74] Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze, 'Intellectuals and Power: A Conversation between Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze', in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice: Selected Essays and Interviews*, ed. by Donald F. Bouchard, trans. by Sherry Simon, Cornell Paperbacks, 1. printing, Cornell paperbacks, [Nachdr.] (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 20), pp. 205–17 (p. 207).
[75] In this context, signed consent forms that claim to offer protection through transparency and accountability. can performatively reproduce the position of the 'researcher' and the 'researched'. See also Cecilia Sachs Olsen's discussion of the role ethics as 'social codes' within institutional frameworks that can limit participants' actions. Olsen, p. 184.
[76] Clifford Geertz, 'Deep Hanging Out', *The New York Review of Books*, 1988, 69.
[77] See Robin Nelson, *Practice as Research in the Arts: Principles, Protocols, Pedagogies* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Donald A. Schön, *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

attempts to recontextualize his/her own practice within fast-changing social horizons'.[78] Similarly, for Rendell 'critical spatial practice'[79] operates in this in-between and interdisciplinary space – at a 'triple crossroads: between theory and practice, between public and private, and between art and architecture'.[80] For Rendell, rather than remaining in separate disciplines, with distinct identities and methods, interdisciplinarity moves 'between and across disciplines' questioning 'the ways in which they work'.[81] My practice research is similarly located in-between. This thesis examines how it is not only located in-between art and architecture, theory and practice, but also in-between myself and others, in order to reflect on how my research position produces or is produced by the place I take up in the practice.

In relation to the situated position of the researcher, while this thesis does not directly address issues of race or decolonisation, this reflexive position critiques the (colonial) researcher who does research *on* others by examining different ways of unpacking or approaching this position. For Braidotti, there must be a 'critique of the centre from the centre'.[82] In this ethical context, this thesis acknowledges that to a large extent I work from a position of privilege, but strive to work from this particular 'centre' to unravel the power structures that differentiate it and which different research positions occupy and replicate.[83] As feminist writer, educator and social activist bell hooks writes, 'it is not just important what we speak about but how and why we speak' and from where.[84] These aspects are not only relevant and crucial in the current climate, but also necessary to address any 'imperialist' notions of

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[78] Rosi Braidotti, 'Posthuman, All Too Human: Towards a New Process Ontology', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 23.7–8 (2006), 197–208 (p. 206) <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276406069232>.
[79] See Jane Rendell, *Art and Architecture: A Place Between* (London: I.B.Tauris, 2006).
[80] Further, Rendell states that the three particular qualities of these works are 'the critical, the spatial and the interdisciplinary'. Jane Rendell, 'Critical Spatial Practice', *Critical Spatial Practice | Critical Spatial Practice*, 2019 <https://criticalspatialpractice.co.uk/> [accessed 26 April 2021]; Rendell, *Art and Architecture: A Place Between*.
[81] Rendell, *Art and Architecture: A Place Between*, p. 11.
[82] Rosi Braidotti, 'Writing as a Nomadic Subject', *Comparative Critical Studies*, 11.2–3, 163–84 (p. 179) <https://doi.org/10.3366/ccs.2014.0122>. Here, Braidotti urges a reflection 'upon the affects and ethics of our own writing practices and the potency of our own figures of speech, so as to fully assess their potential for empowerment'. Ibid., p. 182.
[83] According to Braidotti, 'Nomadic subjectivity is a strategy to undo the many, localized, "hard core" identities that continue to be perpetuated also and especially in our globalized world. For me it is connected to the critique of the "centre", so long as we agree that there is not one, but that there are many scattered locations across the globe. And as you know, in terms of the European location, I connect this strategy to the critique and relocation of whiteness as a dominant category'. Braidotti in Pascale LaFountain and Rosi Braidotti, 'Deleuze, Feminism, and the New European Union: An Interview with Rosi Braidotti', *TRANSIT*, 4.1 (2008) <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4qf7717m> [accessed 26 April 2021].
[84] bell hooks, 'Choosing the Margin as a Radical Space of Openess', *Framework: The Journal of Cinema and Media*, 36, 1989, 15–23 (p. 22).

feminism and to push the thesis further in terms of its critical position, future transferability and impact.[85]

Research Questions, Methodology, Structure & Summary of Chapters

The central research questions I engage with in this thesis have been generated in response to the complex context of under-theorised aspects of performativity and public space outlined above. Performativity in architecture often becomes reduced to performance evaluation or design, whose claims to performativity simply exacerbate classed, gendered, commodified and exclusionary power structures. Thus, there is a need to theorise the implications of a performance-based methodology, which uses interdisciplinary methods to reconceptualise public space as performative, in order to explore the wider implications of this reconceptualisation for participatory architectural research and practice. This thesis will address this gap by examining the potential impact of my performance-based methodology through asking:

1. How might a performance-based methodology be developed in architecture that makes visible and tangible the performativity of recently developed public spaces or those situated within regeneration frameworks, in order to facilitate the rethinking of them by their users?

2. In what way might this methodology critique prejudices, hierarchies and 'undemocratic' spatialities reperformed through these contexts (and propose alternatives: new definitions of, new spatial knowledge and public space)?

3. What is at stake in these ways of practicing for participation in architecture and research practice? In terms of the production of new roles and spatialities?

4. What implications might these questions have in shaping future architectural research practice?

In order to explore these questions, there were a number of methods by which this research could have developed. In the context of feminist notions of performativity, with their connections to social and cultural processes,[86] one method would be to study practitioners whose work explores performativity through actions and interventions in public space in the

[85] Braidotti argues that 'feminists need to become fluent in a variety of styles and disciplinary angles and in different dialects, jargons, languages, thereby relinquishing the image of sisterhood in the sense of a global similarity of all women qua second sexing favour of the recognition and complexity of the semiotic and material conditions in which women operate'. Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, p. 36.
[86] Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*.

context of relevant theories and literature in this area. Yet, the key aspect of the research questions was that they emerged out of my practice. Therefore, in order to rigorously explore this overlap between these social, cultural *and* practiced aspects, it was necessary to combine these theoretical and practiced positions. This particular position is also informed by the trajectory of my research within a lineage of feminist spatial theory and practice that questions the conventions by which architecture is conventionally practiced in order to 'broaden definitions of what architectural activity might be'.[87]

Since the early 2000s, individually and in collaboration with other practitioners, I have practiced and taught professionally within both architecture and art practice. In this context, architectural practice has consistently formed a critical frame of reference for my research. At this time, I was working in leading architectural practices, but found the conventions of the profession offered little space to develop a critical voice of my own. Motivated by my own frustrations I sought out practitioners in political and professional contexts whose work explored ways architecture might be practiced differently. Inspired by earlier research into the Paper Architects in Russia, architecture student group Form-Trans-Inform in Romania and feminist collective Matrix in the UK, I started to examine further how the tools of architecture might be employed as a means of protest or resistance against over-riding sociopolitical structures.[88]

In this context, my practice research has evolved out of connections with educators, theorists and practitioners whose research is similarly situated in-between: in-between art and architecture, performance practice and writing, but also in-between practice and theory, creator and user, group and individual, while engaging with notions of the body and its extensions. Beginning in the late 90s and continuing to the present day, conversations with Petrescu and her work within Form-Trans-Inform, nurtured my research into practices that situate themselves between architecture and performance. In parallel, Rendell's teaching on gender and space[89] supported my investigations and research into the space between theory

[87] See 'Parlour: Women, Equity, Architecture', *ArchitectureAU* <https://architectureau.com/articles/parlour-women-equity-architecture/> [accessed 26 April 2021].
[88] In different ways these groups during the 80s and early 90s used the medium of architectural representation to question current orthodoxies in architecture around them as protests against political and professional repression. See Helen Stratford, 'Enclaves of Expression: Resistance by Young Architects to the Physical and Psychological Control of Expression in Romania during the 1980s', *Journal of Architectural Education*, 54.4 (2001), 218–28 <https://doi.org/10.1162/10464880152474538>; Helen Stratford, 'Micro-Movements of Resistance: The Questioning of Orthodoxies by Young Architects in the East and West in the 1980s and Early 90s' (unpublished Diploma in Architecture dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1998).
[89] On the Gender and Space module, Critical Theory and Architecture Masters at Nottingham University 1999.

and practice and the disciplines of art and architecture as a critically reflexive and transformative place.[90]

These conversations were supported by collaborations with both Petrescu and Rendell as part of the feminist collective 'taking place'. Located between the architecture school and contemporary art/architectural practice, 'taking place' focuses on the development of feminist approaches to architecture and spatial practice. Since meeting in 2000, as a group of women architects and artists we have sought ways to work together that emerge from the differences – intergenerational, disciplinary and personal – between each other and those with whom we work.[91] This has been explored through talks, events, publications and projects that have moved between the architecture school, arts institutions and public healthcare settings. For me, 'taking place' became a critically supportive platform through which I started to investigate how performance-based interventions might offer ways of reconceptualising spaces through practicing them differently. This aspect was further expanded throughout the 2000s in conversations and projects with performance artist Diana Wesser, from which some of the initial research areas examined in this thesis originate.[92]

From this starting point, deeply situated in questions of practice, it seemed fundamental that practiced experience would be an essential framework through which this thesis could examine the production of spatial knowledge in public space. This thesis aims to reclaim performativity as both theorised and practiced concept through which responses to, experiences and formations of public space might be opened up to critical examination. I am reflecting on conceptual frameworks, that explore relationships between performativity and public space, alongside art, architecture and performance practices, who work in similar methods/approaches. However, central to my methodology is the analysis and implementation of case studies that exemplify different instances of performative architectures, in order to develop a performance-based methodology that explores the research questions through practice research.

[90] Rendell, 'A Place Between: Theory and Practice'. See also Helen Stratford, 'Ethological Mappings' (unpublished Masters in Architecture dissertation, University of Nottingham, 2002).
[91] Katie Lloyd Thomas and 'taking place', 'The Other Side of Waiting', *Feminist Review*, 93.1 (2009), 122–27 <https://doi.org/10.1057/fr.2009.35>.
[92] This included a discussion with Kathrin Böhm, Emily Pethick, Doina Petrescu and Jane Rendell on 'Performative Architectures' organised in collaboration with Diana Wesser as urban (col)laboratory at the Showroom London, October 2011.

Hence, this thesis takes the form of analytical reflexive research, presented in written form, and practice research located within particular social and spatial conditions. In chapters one to three I am reflecting on and analysing three professional projects, which took place prior to the PhD, in order to identify three different methods or 'tools' that facilitate the rethinking and repracticing of specific public spaces.[93] In chapter four, these tools are built on, combined, tested and reflected upon through a further project completed during the PhD timeline within a non UK context in Slovenia. In relation to the case studies, the chapters are not chronological. Instead, they follow an order that experiments with developing an incremental iterative and emergent design process in order to propose a methodology that thinks and practices critically in the gap between performance and performativity, vision and use, theory and practice, which is also transferable [Fig. 1].

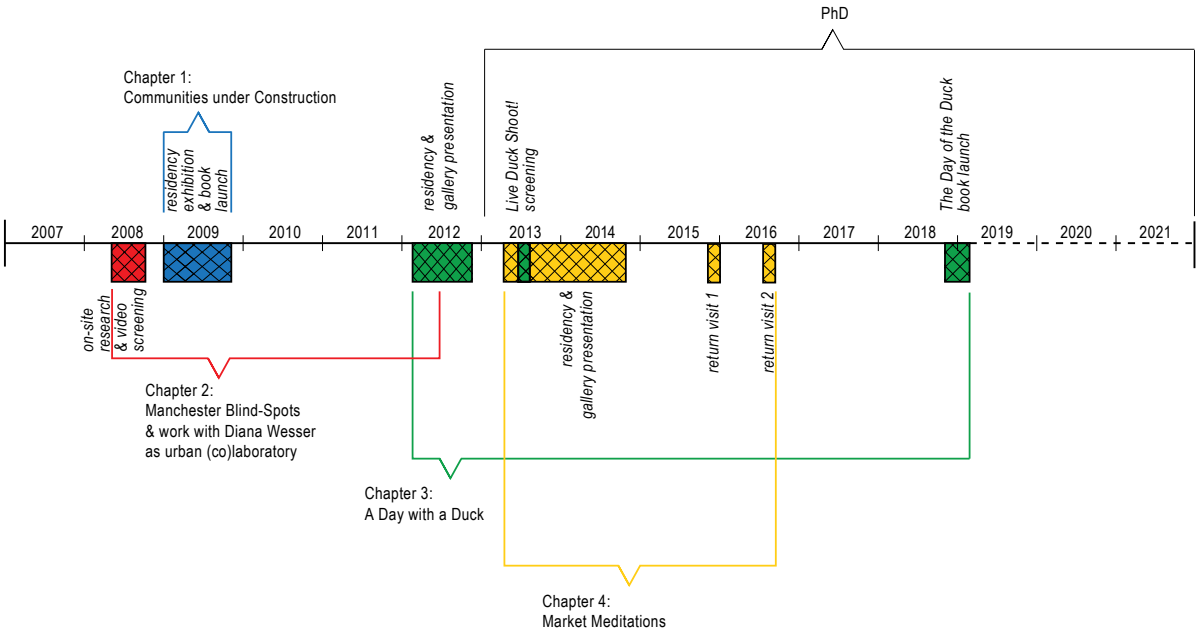


Fig. 1. Practice Timeline.

[93] This thesis refers to the use of tools and methods in an open-ended active way, acknowledging a 'multi-modal' approach, discussed in this introduction, in which methods are modified according to each research context rather than replicated. Tools and methods are selected over Michel de Certeau's 'tactics' because in de Certeau's theories the tactics (the practiced space of the walker) assume a hierarchical relationship to strategies (the place of planning and architecture) thereby separating space and place into an opposition which this thesis aims to critique. See also Massey, *For Space*.

Multi-Modal Approach

In architecture, practice research PhDs are still emerging, yet in art and design there is a growing expertise in practice-led and practice research.[94] Performance theorist Brad Haseman's theories on performative research are central constituents within these fields. In his 'performative paradigm' the process of artistic practice research 'inaugurates movement and transformation. It is performative'.[95] On this basis, for Haseman, 'practice-led researchers are formulating a third species of research, one that stands in alignment with, but separate to, the established quantitative and qualitative research traditions'.[96]

In *Practice as Research in the Arts*, Robin Nelson extends Haseman's theories by identifying what he terms a 'multi-modal' approach within practice research methodologies, comprising different ways of knowing: 'know that', 'know what' and 'know how' [Fig. 2]. 'Know that' being a more abstract conceptual and historical contextualization, 'know what' an autoethnographic critically reflexive mode and 'know how' deeply embedded within practice or rather 'praxis'.[97] Nelson argues that within arts practice research these three ways of knowing are not separate and continually inform each other.[98] At the same time, following *The Reflective Practitioner* theories of philosopher Donald Schön, Nelson places key emphasis on the situated practice of 'theory imbricated in practice' and 'enactive perception in the experience of "doing-knowing"'.[99]

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[94] See for example Paul Carter, *Material Thinking: The Theory and Practice of Creative Research* (Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Publishing, 2004).

[95] Brad Haseman, 'Rupture and Recognition: Identifying The Performative Research Paradigm', in *Practice as Research Approaches to Creative Arts Enquiry*, ed. by Estelle Barrett and Barbara Bolt (London: I. B. Tauris, 2010), pp. 147–58 (p. 150).

[96] Ibid.

[97] Nelson, p. 37.

[98] Nelson comments how Hazel Smith and Roger Dean in their publication *Practice Led Research, Research Led Practice in The Creative Arts* 'have constructed a model of an "iterative cyclical web" delineating cycles of "practice-led research", "research-led practice" and "academic research"', resonating with his dialogical interplay of 'know-how', 'know-what' and 'know-that'. Nelson, pp. 48–51. See also H Smith and RT Dean, *Practice-Led Research in the Creative Arts (Research Methods for the Arts and Humanities)*. (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

[99] For Nelson, a practice as research methodology 'is distinct from quantitative methodology (of the numerical data-based sciences), and the qualitative methodology of interpretative research of the "softer" social sciences and humanities (in which the assumption is that social reality can only be understood through social constructions such as language, consciousness and shared meanings). Like the latter, however, PaR methodology draws upon such approaches as hermeneutics and phenomenology but places even more emphasis on enactive perception in the experience of "doing-knowing"'. Nelson, p. 98.

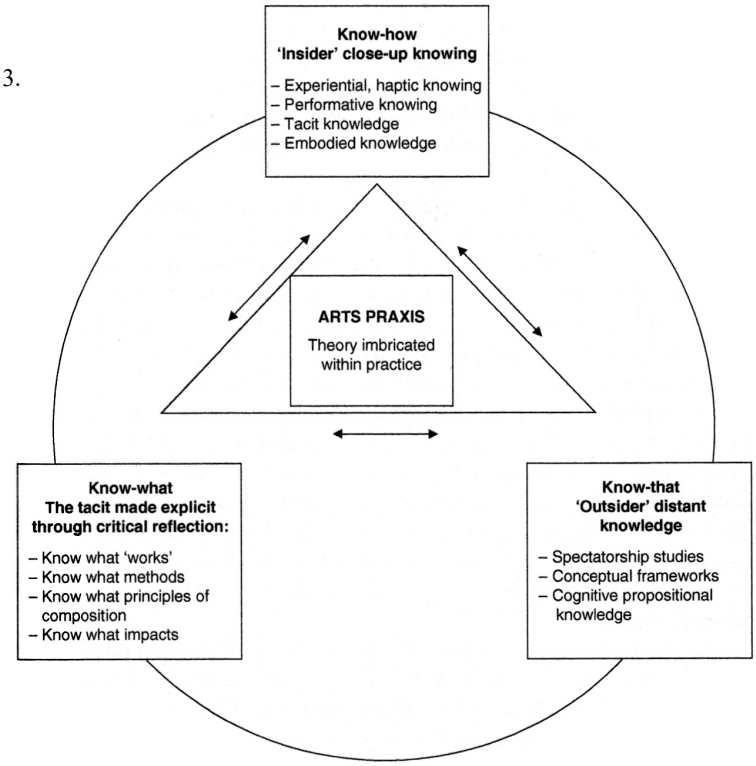


Fig. 2. Modes of knowing: multi-mode epistemological model for PaR.
From Robin Nelson *Practice as research* 2013.

In this thesis, the notion of different voices and associated knowledge embodied by a multi-modal approach is brought into architecture through asking what type of spatial knowledge does this methodology produce? Here, my research refers to the following methods: ethnographic (participant observation, participant questionnaires and interviews) autoethnographic (personal reflective accounts) visual and practiced (slide shows, photographs, drawings, films, events and settings) but it is the iterative processes between these where the research takes place. In the context of more 'quantifiable' methods of spatial practice and knowledge production, this thesis examines what is at stake when choosing this approach in ways of researching and understanding public space. Furthermore, it examines in what ways 'doing-knowing' might be embodied within the written form of the thesis itself.

Thesis Structure – Multiple Practiced and Written Positions

According to Nelson, a multi modal approach to practice as research has 'practice at its heart and it embraces modes of knowing (tact, embodied-cognition, performative) only recently […] acknowledged in 'the academy'.[100] For Nelson, this positions it as a direct critique of positivism, objectivity and the 'scientific method' as the criteria for knowledge within

[100] Nelson, p. 38.

academic research.[101] But critically, he argues, it is 'far from exclusive'.[102] Rather, than privileging practice, it 'reaches out to knowledge established by other methodologies' while calling into question the 'assumption of supremacy' of methods not located in practice.[103] Here, knowledge is identified as 'existing on a spectrum', therefore 'the pursuit of knowing might be best served by embracing all possibilities'.[104]

As a challenge to ways of researching that privilege theory over practice and vice versa, this PhD adopts this multi-modal approach as a means to foreground ways of knowing that 'embrace all possibilities', thereby working in dialogue with Nelson's triple articulation of knowledge production. Based around the idea that this PhD is a situated practice of 'doing knowing' and should therefore embody the aspects of which it speaks, the structure of this thesis is a performative experiment. Through convoking different modes of analysing, accounting and reflecting, it examines in what way the structure might set up different ways of knowing with the reader. These modes consist of a 'reflection on practice through theory' a 'reflection on practice through practice' and a 'reflection on theory through practice'.

'Reflection on practice through theory' offers a 'know that' more abstract conceptual framework and historical contextualisation of theories and practices in relation to the argument of the chapter; grounding concepts and identifying gaps in the territory.[105] 'Reflection on practice through practice' is written from the view of practice. In this section I write directly about one project and my place within it, giving an account of actions, timescale and interactions experienced. It is closer to what Nelson terms 'know-how' or 'procedural knowledge' as opposed to the 'propositional knowledge' of 'know-that'.[106] It offers an account of 'learning through doing'.[107] Aware that the reader can never experience this 'tacit' knowledge directly, it rather offers specific momentary insights into the practice processes.

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[101] Ibid., p. 26.
[102] Ibid., p. 38
[103] Ibid.
[104] Ibid.
[105] Nelson describes this writing method as '"know that", the equivalent of traditional "academic knowledge" […] drawn from reading of all kinds'. Nelson, p. 45.
[106] Ibid., p. 41.
[107] Nelson describes 'learning through doing' as knowledge 'gained incrementally,' recognising that the knowledge at work here is not simply 'rote-learned motor skills' but rather about a reflection in practice. Quoting Schön's *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think In Action*, Nelson describes this knowledge as '"knowledge in action" which supposes that praxis involves an intrinsically intelligent dialogue with the situation'. Ibid., pp. 41-42.

The insights and positions arrived at from these sections are reflected upon in a 'reflection on theory through practice'. This section examines in what way the practice research develops and extends the theoretical standpoints. Further, it illuminates the types of spatial knowledge and conceptions of public space produced through the practice research by reflecting on my position as researcher within it, in order to identify further issues and concerns.[108] In all cases, feminist frameworks interpret sources of both theoretical and practical knowledge in order to forge new concepts, new ways of knowing and new ways of working.

Critically, the sections are combined in different ways to express and critique the different epistemological positions examined through the practice research. The chapters are thus performative in that they explore the production of a particular way of knowing through the position that the practice takes up in relation to the theory. These different orders have been arrived at from reflecting on the particular research practice that forms the focus of each chapter and are vehicles to investigate the research questions, ground concepts and raise further issues and concerns in different ways. Here, the thesis investigates a way of writing that aims to express the multi-modal methodology of the practice research in its movement between different methods. At the same time, it aims to provide an example of 'knowledge in action'[109] that questions, blurs and sets up different relationships between practice and theory through which a new piece of work is developed.

The adoption of a particular mode of writing that reflects the ideas it contains and produces is a methodology found in feminist practice. It acknowledges that particular epistemological positions are produced through writing; how writing is as much a practice as any other mode of rethinking and reproducing place.[110] Like the two way arrows in Nelson's PaR 'Modes of Knowing' diagram, indicating a dialogic interplay between different modes of knowing, the

[108] In this sense, it comes closest to what Nelson describes as 'know-what', 'an informed reflexivity about the process of making and its modes of knowing'. For Nelson, this involves stepping outside of the practice in what also might be termed critical distance to reflect on 'what works'. For Nelson, it resides in 'teasing out the methods by which "what works" is achieved and the compositional principles involved'. Nelson, p. 44.
[109] Nelson, p. 42; Schön.
[110] Braidotti argues for a particular 'economy of writing', activating 'the "feminist theorist" as a working figuration or conceptual persona in order to innovate in both philosophical form and content'. Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, pp. 21–23. Similarly, for Rendell, the focus on performativity in relation to 'critical spatial practice' resides in the 'situated-ness of the historian/theorist/critic herself'. This is reflected in her site writing practice, discussed further in chapter one of this thesis, in which the 'spatial qualities of the writing become as important in conveying meaning as the content of the criticism'. For Rendell, this performative research questions the distanced objectivity of academic writing styles. Rendell, 'Only Resist'.

thesis's adoption of different modes of writing attempts to open up and question conventional distinctions between architectural theory and practice.[111]

The organisations of the sections are laid out in Fig. 3. In this diagram I have also indicated that the thesis structure follows a cyclical process. This is placed in opposition to the linear structure of conventional academic writing which typically takes the format of introduction, literature review, methodology, findings and conclusions; writing from a 'know-that' position in order to substantiate an 'objective' or 'quantitative' approach to knowledge creation.[112] Due to the interdisciplinarity of this research, rather than a clearly indicated literary review at the start of the thesis the relevant literature is interwoven throughout, modified according to the different positions explored in each chapter. In the same way, my practice research is positioned in a dialogue with practitioners in architecture, performance practice and socially engaged art practice in public spaces and institutions. As discussed above, the reason I have used this structure is because it is more appropriate to the nature of a multi-modal practice research approach, which moves iteratively between practice and theory, than a conventional thesis format which privileges a linear and 'scientific' model of knowledge progression.[113]

Within the thesis each chapter has a specific epistemological focus that it explores in relation to performativity and public space which is reflected in its structure and format. In chapter one, methods of critical representation that adopt and parody distanced positions of 'expert' observation, are examined in order to explore what is at stake in the 'neutral' conceptions of place and public space they support. On this basis, the chapter starts with a more distanced conventional research position developing an analysis through 'reflection on practice through theory'; a conceptual and historical contextualisation of theories and practices. This is followed by 'reflection on practice through practice' in which the practice account is written from the position of a narrator or 'know that',[114] situated at one remove from the subject. Finally, 'reflection on theory through practice' is located at the end of the chapter, thereby reflecting an expression and critique of practice as an application of theories and methods embedded within objective ways of conceptualising research and understanding public space.

[111] Thereby mobilising an 'interplay between "practical doing-thinking" and more abstract conceptual thinking'. Nelson, p. 29.
[112] Ibid., p. 45.
[113] Ibid., p. 26.
[114] Nelson, p. 45.

Chapter two examines in what way performance-based actions might develop embodied understandings of public space that expand notions of performance and performativity in architecture in order to challenge neoliberal and gendered structures of public space. In this chapter, the order of the sections remains the same as chapter one, with 'reflection on theory through practice' located after the practice account. However, this section develops a more critical relationship to 'reflection on practice through theory' in order to examine how the practice research develops the theories and practices analysed in this section. Furthermore, the 'reflection on practice through practice' takes the form of an autoethnographic account, thereby resonating more closely with the embodied nature of practice research.

Chapter three examines how relational understandings of public space and research practice might be developed through entangled participatory methodologies. On this basis, the reflection on practice through practice leads as an expression of the way the research questions and methods evolved out of the practice research. The subsequent section thereby comprises both 'reflection on theory through practice' and 'reflection on practice through theory' to examine in what way curating site specific and participant-facilitated situations reinterpret participation and address wider ecological aspects in the context of commodified and exclusionary notions of public space.

The organisation and focus of these three chapters, have been arrived at from analysing and reflecting on the methods and positions made evident through the practice. They are not distinct and there are overlapping strategies in each. However, for the purposes of the thesis I have selected three projects from which the insights are most relevant to identifying and evidencing these methods and which focus on particular research questions. Each has different implications for researching public space and each offer a critique of a particular way of constructing certain modes of spatial knowledge within architectural theory and practice, in relation to representation, action and participation. Together, they provide the basis for chapter four 'provocations-in-place' that brings these methods together in order to reflect on the material implications of this way of working and develop notions of agency. In this chapter, the three modes of analysing, accounting and reflecting are interwoven and performatively presented as equivalent, thereby offering a clearer reflection on the circular

and dialogic process by which each mode of knowing informs the other in the development of the practice research. [115]

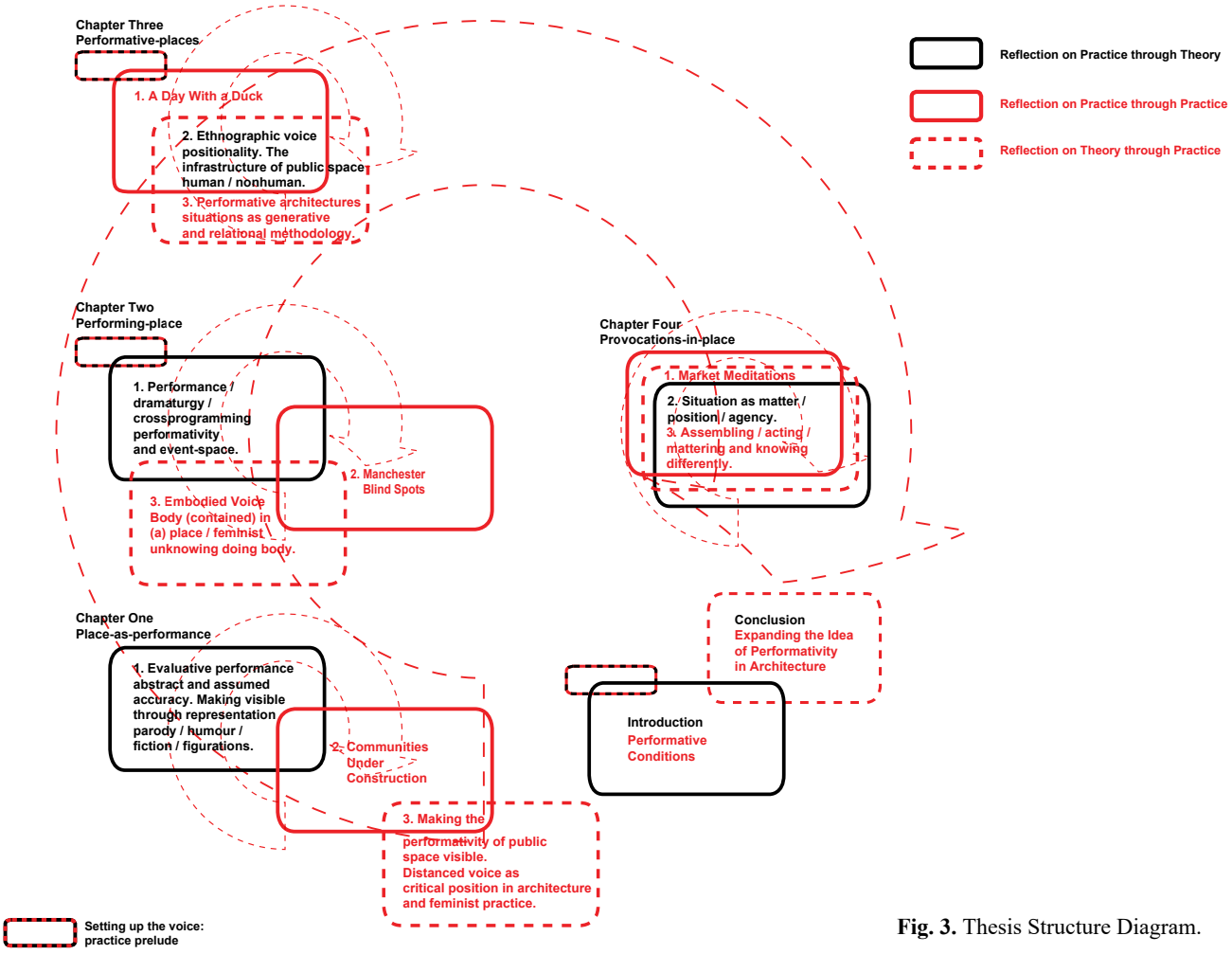


Fig. 3. Thesis Structure Diagram.

Ultimately, each chapter combines a reviewing of public space with a reflection on the position of the researcher. By no means does this reviewing and reflecting propose to deliver an exhaustive survey of theories and practices or issues in relation to public space. Rather it is a starting point led by the practice research that sets out the scale of the investigation

[115] In order to arrive at the structure, I analysed a selection of practice–led PhDs, PhDs by Design, and practice research PhDs in architecture and contemporary art practice. Including those from RMIT School of Architecture & Design, The Bartlett UCL and Malmo Faculty of Fine and Performing Arts, Lund University. This analysis has been formative in developing the structure of my thesis; exploring ways by which the practice research can become embedded within the thesis structure and format. See also Helen Stratford and Caterina Giuliani, 'DISCUSSION // How to Practice a PhD?', *Lines of Flight*, 2017 <https://linesofflight.wordpress.com/2017/12/06/how-to-practice-a-phd/> [accessed 26 April 2021]. This was also supported by participating in reflective events organised through the PhD by Design network from Goldsmiths, University of London, between 2014 and 2018 and practice as research seminars and discussions organised by Terra Incognita at University of Sheffield including a practice as research workshop convened by Professor Roberta Mock in 2018.

examined in this thesis. Through this investigation, it speculates on what a situated feminist performance-based methodology that makes visible and tangible the performativity of public space could look like, alongside examining what type of spaces this methodology itself might produce.

Chapter One – Place-as-performance examines how making visible overlooked and hidden performances through which public spaces are produced, offers methods by which to critique 'abstract' and 'neutral' notions of public space and 'architectural performance'. An introductory chapter, in many ways it sets out the territories of the PhD – raising questions that are developed throughout the rest of the thesis. Referring to Lefebvre's critique of the 'space of architects',[116] this chapter starts by arguing that, in contrast to their apolitical presentation, abstract notions of architecture and public space are performative. Through considering the street furniture documentation of Nils Norman alongside the performative urban theories of Dieter Mersche, it argues that what appears 'neutral' in fact enacts 'speech acts' or *mots d'ordre* that reproduce social, economic and cultural hierarchies.[117] From this position, this chapter foregrounds the work of Hilary Sample, Celine Condorelli and Mierle Laderman Ukeles, in order to examine how practices that make visible hidden actions of support and maintenance offer ways to critique economic, social, cultural and gendered aspects of spatial production.

Proceeding from this basis this chapter examines how the way things are made visible is key. Here, Deleuze and Guattari's active ability of theory and Butler's notions of subversive parody are placed in dialogue with the work of Theo Deutinger and Warren and Mosely to examine how adopting the authoritative voice of the architect, designer or planner can critique this position. Yet, this section also examines how parody risks repeating the very power structures under critique. It argues that embodied and situated feminist representational methodologies, found in the theories of Braidotti and extended spatially through the practices of Thandi Loewenson and Sophie Handler, offer ways to counter objectifying epistemological positions through practicing architecture 'otherwise'.[118]

This chapter then reflects on these methodologies by examining their application in 'Communities Under Construction'. This artist's residency focused on making visible

[116] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 297.
[117] Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*; Deleuze and Guattari; Mersch.
[118] Braidotti, 'Writing as a Nomadic Subject', p. 182; Mersch.

everyday overlooked performances of (mis) use and maintenance, otherwise excluded from the masterplan vision for the open spaces of a 'new village' in Cambridgeshire. It includes sections from the artist's book *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* that parodies the objective position of the masterplanner. In the final section, insights gained from the practice argue that a synthesis of the methodologies discussed at the start of the chapter generates a compelling critique of the social and cultural hierarchies reperformed through the public spaces of Cambourne. However, in reflecting on the limits of my own positionality within this project, it concludes by asking how might a methodology be developed that places greater emphasis on an embodied and situated entanglement with people and place?

Chapter Two – Performing-place examines how actions at the scale of the body might be used to research and critique power relations of public space. The primary focus of this chapter is on challenging conventional notions of performance in architecture and public space by examining how performance-based actions might act performatively in developing a critically transformative research practice. Here, I refer to the writings of performance studies scholars, Dorita Hannah, Juliet Rufford and Cathy Turner, alongside urbanist Sophie Wolfrum who examine crossovers and connections between performance and architecture. These theories are placed in dialogue with architects and artists, including Alex Schweder, the Situationist International and feminist performance art and protest performance, in order to reframe performance as a research methodology that makes visible the inherent performativity of architecture itself.

The reflection on practice develops this argument further. It examines in what way the project *Blind Spots Manchester*, made in collaboration with performance artist Diana Wesser, used performance-based actions to research and critique the gendered and neoliberal structures of Piccadilly Gardens Manchester. Here, the practice account is written from an autoethnographic 'know-how' position within the practice, thereby offering an insight into the embodied experience of the practice research. In order to examine in what way *Manchester Blind Spots* develops and critiques the arguments set out at the start of this chapter, the subsequent reflection returns to dialogues between feminist theorists examined in chapter one including those between Butler and Braidotti around notions of acculturated,

situated and embodied performativity. Referring to ideas around the unknowing 'doing-body'[119] found in the writings of performance theorists Carrie Noland, Susan Melrose and Beth Weinsten, it argues that *Manchester Blind Spots* uncovers aspects of power relations in public space unavailable to the 'objectifying' positions of conventional architectural research methods. It argues that these methodologies propose ways that public space might be performed differently. This prompts questions into how these embodied ways of researching and critiquing power relations might be extended beyond the researcher herself to other 'users' of public space?

Chapter Three – Performative-Places seeks to investigate how the performativity of public space, introduced in the previous chapters, might be extended into a participatory practice research methodology. As a means to exemplify how the research develops relationally through practice, the practice opens this chapter. It offers an account of *A Day with a Duck* – an artist residency that revolved around the occupation of a public space by a rare population of Muscovy ducks in the city of Ely on the edge of rural Cambridgeshire. The subsequent reflection is divided into two parts. By examining how *A Day with a Duck* troubles binaries of clean/dirty, domestic/wild, human/non-human, alongside the neoliberal structures they support, the first part develops Massey's relational notion of public space into notions of assemblage found in the theories of Braidotti, Haraway and Barad.[120] Referring to these theories it examines how the relational space developed through the practice extends participatory practices in public space by including the non-human. Considering the practice alongside Barad's posthumanist performativity and diffractive methodologies, it argues that active embodied engagement, between the researcher, existing social and cultural infrastructures, and participants, of all kinds, generates spaces that question the conventional ways public spaces are visioned and performed.

The second part of this section examines how the practice opens up broader questions in relation to the performative role of the researcher within participatory architectural practice. Here, participatory practices and theories, ranging from the Situationist International to the approaches of Doina Petrescu and Markus Miessen, ethnographic methodologies of Sarah Pink and emergent and reflexive practice as research methodologies, are placed in dialogue

[119] Carrie Noland, *Agency and Embodiment: Performing Gestures/Producing Culture* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2009), p. 195.
[120] Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter'; Braidotti, 'Posthuman, All Too Human'; Donna Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness*, Paradigm, 8 (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2003); Massey, *For Space*.

with the participatory methods exemplified in the practice. This part specifically examines in what way methods, which embrace 'social provocations',[121] improvisation and humour, alongside ethnographic, multi-modal and emergent reflexive research methodologies, hold the possibility to create accessible participatory spaces which open up questions rather than propose solutions. Here, the researcher-practitioner operates as a 'facilitator' who is complicit with and implicated in her surroundings. Returning to the feminist theories introduced in part one, this section concludes by arguing that this way of researching itself creates a relational and situated space, thereby problematising anthropocentric assumptions that underpin undemocratic processes in the production of public space.

In order to examine further implications of these feminist relational spaces, **Chapter Four – Provocation-in-place** focuses on questions raised by the previous chapter in relation to generation of agency within the production of public space. Throughout this chapter *Market Meditations*, a residency including performative workshops and exhibition focusing on a non-functioning market building in the town of Celje, Slovenia, becomes the primary means by which to structure the chapter. Here, as mentioned earlier, the three types of reflecting, or rather 'knowing', are brought together in dialogue with each other in order to reflexively combine and develop the methodologies developed in the previous three chapters.

The project's circumstances, outside of the UK within a contested public space in the context of city regeneration strategies, offers a heightened situation through which to explore the ethical position of the researcher, the transfer of practice methodology and introduce the notion of the researcher as 'mediator'. Picking up on Butler's notions of visibility as a means to public life,[122] this chapter specifically examines how a performance-based methodology might make space for actions and dialogues that challenge processes, practices and places that prevent certain bodies participating within public life. However, through examining how objects deployed in *Market Meditations* might themselves be considered performative, this chapter develops Barad's posthuman performativity of matter[123] through the specific material context of the market, thereby extending Butler's discursive and human-centred production of bodies.

[121] Jackson, *Performing Art, Supporting Publics*, p. 5.
[122] Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*.
[123] Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter'.

Here, considered alongside the practices of feminist collective 'taking place' and artist Krzysztof Wodickzo, this chapter examines how *Market Meditations* not only makes visible and tangible how public spaces are produced through assemblages of material and discursive forces, but also intervenes in these assemblages. Further, it examines in what way these interventions redefine the agency of those subjects whose actions and subjectivities are debilitated by the gendered and age-related discriminations reperformed by this particular public space. In this way, this chapter argues that 'feminist performative architectures' points toward an understanding of public spaces that enables them to be intervened in more directly politically motivated and even democratic ways. Ultimately it argues that, through creating feminist relational spaces, which generate situated, embodied and material understandings of the performativity of public space, these performance-based research methodologies create ongoing spatial negotiations that enable others to act.

Conclusion – Feminist Performative Architectures

This thesis expands the spectrum of practice-led research methodologies and modes of researching public space. It develops a multi-modal performance-based research methodology that extends understandings of public spaces by making visible their performativity in ways unavailable to conventional architectural research methods. This thesis proposes that this methodology enables power relations expressed through neoliberal, gendered, classed and age-related discriminations to be examined and critiqued. Yet, it also proposes the development of emergent and entangled methodologies that address dominant power relations manifest in objective ways of conceptualising both public space and research processes. Here, through expanding who and what are considered participants, this thesis argues that this methodology critiques objectified accounts of 'placemaking' all too present within contemporary public space regeneration frameworks, while also problematizing anthropocentric ideologies with wider ecological implications. In this way, 'feminist performative architectures' proposes an approach that opens up 'other' possibilities for public spaces formerly repressed through layers of sedimented social practices and material presence, thereby constituting a form of architecture. Here, performativity is reframed as both feminist research methodology: a performance-based, emergent, yet situated research practice that can be picked up and used by others. At the same time, it is reframed as a research subject: a way of thinking about or through the place of public space.

Chapter One

Place-as-performance

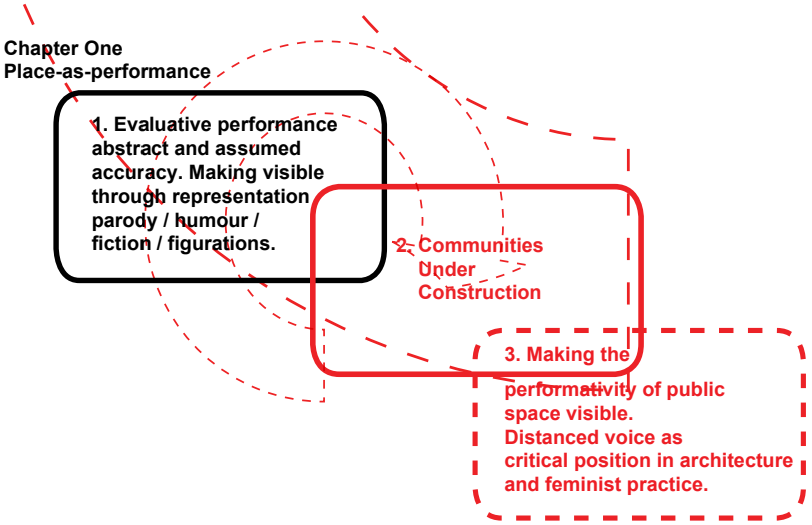


Fig. 4. Place-as-performance, structure diagram

Introduction

> As for the eye of the architect […] His 'subjective' space is 'freighted with all-too-objective meanings […] a moral discourse on straight lines, on right angles and straightness in general, combining a figurative appeal to nature (water, air, sunshine) with the worst kind of abstraction (plane, geometry, modules, etc.).[1]
>
> *The Production of Space*
> Henri Lefebvre

This chapter examines in what way methods of observation and critical representation that make visible public space as ongoing performances, might challenge and critique reductive, functional and abstract concepts of space and the 'neutral' notions of public space they support. It sets out the territories of the PhD – raising questions that are developed throughout the rest of the thesis. To do this it adopts a conventional academic structure, in which a literature and practice review or 'reflection on practice through theory' set up the theoretical and contextual framework applied and reflected upon through the subsequent research. This is followed by the 'reflection on practice through practice' written from the position of a narrator or 'know that', situated at one remove from the subject. Finally, 'reflection on theory through practice' is located at the end of the chapter, thereby reflecting an expression and critique of practice as an application of theories and methods embedded within objective ways of conceptualising research and understanding public space. The chapter embodies a traditional epistemological position, in which the researcher is located at a distance to what or who is being researched, in order to reflect on what is at stake in these ways of researching for understanding performance and performativity in relation to public space.

Making Visible – The Fragility of the Performative

In order to develop a critical methodology that challenges conventional representations of architecture and public space, I start by placing practices working between art and architecture in dialogue with theories of representation, performance and performativity. Evolving out of teaching and working in these areas, practices have been selected by focusing on those which redeploy the language of architecture to challenge and resist how dominant

[1] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 361.
[2] Nelson, p. 45.

power structures are manifest in architecture and public space. The analyses of these practices highlight the potential but also issues raised through these ways of practicing.

Initially, the practice of Nils Norman is read through the linguistic analyses of Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari and the performative urbanism theories of Dieter Mersch, in order to examine how Henri Lefebvre's 'space of architects', with its authoritarian 'logic of space', becomes manifest in public.[3] In Norman's *The Contemporary Picturesque*, the securitisation and privatisation of public space is made visible through analysing how street furniture acts as 'speech acts' or *mots d'ordre* in the mediation of particular urban spaces, with implications for who and what might take place within them.[4] Yet, this section examines how ad-hoc architectures demonstrate the fragility that resides within the performative which, following the feminist theories of Judith Butler, forms a key aspect of the urban theories of Mersch.

The potential of this fragility is developed further through analysing the practices of Celine Condoreli and Mierle Laderman Ukeles, alongside the writings of David Leatherbarrow, Hilary Sample, Jeremy Till and Francesca Hughes. The work of these practitioners and theorists on support, maintenance and error, shed light on the social, cultural and gendered aspects that efficient and functional notions of architectural objects, including 'building performance', exclude, and yet upon which they depend. This section analyses in what way this making visible exerts a performative force on abstract ways of conceptualising architecture and public space.

In these practices and theories there is revaluing of the categories of maintenance and error, in order to critique the image of architecture and hierarchies of creative production. Central to this revaluing, is the way people and practice are represented. This section continues by analysing practices and theories that mobilise the objective language of architectural representation in order to 'trouble' 'destabilise' and 'deconstruct' the tools by which 'the masters house' is constructed.[5] Works by Theo Deutinger, Warren and Mosely and General Public Agency, are read through Butler's theories on parody to examine how parodic and fictional tools might be employed to make visible the illusory aspects of 'normative' spatial production in architectural planning and development. Simultaneously, this section examines

[3] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 297.
[4] Deleuze and Guattari, p. 76.
[5] Audre Lorde, *Sister Outsider : Essays and Speeches / [Electronic Resource]*., Feminist Series (Trumansburg, NY: The Crossing Press, 1984), p. 112.

how adopting the persona of the distanced observer or omnipresent architect risks replicating the very power structures under critique.

To counter this position, this section concludes by analysing practices that redeploy the language of architecture to challenge and resist dominating power structures from situated positions within race, class, age and gender related prejudices, or invisibility within the architectural profession itself. Here, the political ability of theory as action, found in Rosi Braidotti's affirmative and situated philosophy, is extended through feminist representational practices of Thandi Loewenson and Sophie Handler. With reference to the pioneering feminist projects and writings of Jennifer Bloomer, Liquid Inc. Diller and Scofidio, Katie Lloyd Thomas and Jane Rendell, this section argues that these practices offer ways to critique the objective representational methods by which architecture is conventionally produced and framed. Placed in dialogue with the feminist theories of Butler, Braidotti and Donna Haraway it examines in what way these practices develop situated methodologies that, through 'consciousness-raising' and 'subversion of set conventions', contain the potential to generate new ways of thinking through and practicing architecture itself.[6]

Communities Under Construction

The second section of this chapter provides an account of the project 'Communities under Construction', a six-month artist's residency that focused on the open spaces of Cambourne, a privately developed new settlement nine miles west of the City of Cambridge. At the time, large areas of this 'new village' were still under ownership of private developers, whose primary goal was to sell houses. The 'show village' status of Cambourne meant that its open spaces appeared more maintained than others in the area. This drive to attract customers was supported via a website to promote the 'brand new community' created by 'Britain's leading house builders'.[7] On the home page a smiling middle aged white man dressed in a suit and tie, announces 'It's the perfect place to unwind. I can't wait to get home now after a hard day at the office'[Fig. 16].[8] This representation of the desired status of potential residents prompted me to explore and critique how this image of Cambourne was reproduced daily.

[6] Braidotti, 'Writing as a Nomadic Subject', p. 182.
[7] Cambourne Official Website [accessed 22 January 2009] [see Fig. 16]
[8] Ibid.

Rethinking the Position of the Researcher

The final section of this chapter analyses how, and in what way, the practice research in 'Communities Under Construction' develops a critical and situated methodology in relation to research in and with public space. To do this the 'know that' position of the researcher continues in combination with a 'know what' reflexive critique in order to analyse the spatial knowledge gained and the questions raised through the practice research in the context of the methodologies developed in section one. Ultimately, this final section and the chapter as a whole reflects on what implications the subversion of reductive architectural representation has for reconceptualising and critiquing 'neutral' definitions of public space. Yet, going beyond the specific application of these methodologies, it examines the implications and questions raised through these ways of practicing for the role of the researcher herself.

Section One – Making Visible

1.1 Making Visible I – *Mots D'Ordre* and the Fragility of the Performative

The Space of Architects

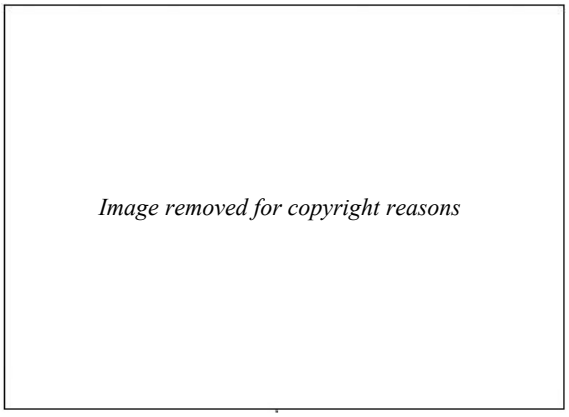


Fig. 5. Scale model of Le Corbusier's Plan Voisin proposal for Paris 1925, from Kenneth Frampton *Modern Architecture: A Critical History* 1992.

Dreams of urban order have always pervaded utopian visions of architectural and urban design [Fig. 5].[9] Purist visions strive towards technical or geometric rationality in their search for homogeneity to 'expel difference, excess, hybridity and polysemy.'[10] In these visions, space is 'absolute',[11] a 'container within which things are placed and find themselves in geometrical relationship to one another'.[12] According to many feminist philosophers and theorists, including Karen Barad, Donna Haraway, Doreen Massey and Elizabeth Grosz, this notion of space as a 'container' of social relations that equates geometry with 'social order', is not only 'embedded' within 'Western practices of spatialisation'[13] but also 'pervades much of Western epistemology'.[14] In this context, its prevalence in architectural and urban design stems from the basis of knowledge and understanding itself.

In *The Production of Space*, Henri Lefebvre claims that 'the space of architects' is 'freighted with all-too-objective meanings'.[15] However, for Lefebvre, any claims for neutrality via the objectification of space are ill founded. He argues, though it wishes to appear and be perceived

[9] See David Pinder, Visions of the City (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005)
[10] Peter Wollen, *Raiding the Icebox: Reflections on Twentieth-Century Culture* (London: Verso, 1993), p. 205.
[11] See Soja.
[12] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, p. 447.
[13] Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium.FemaleMan_Meets_OncoMouse*, p. 146. See also Karen Barad, 'Diffractions: Differences, Contingencies, and Entanglements That Matter', in Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2007), pp. 71–94; Grosz; Massey, *For Space*.
[14] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, p. 223. Similarly, Haraway argues that through this understanding, notions of 'subject and object,' '"the fallacy of misplaced concreteness"', 'bounded bodies (land, people, resources and genes)', located 'inside "absolute" dimensions of space and time', are constructed. Haraway, *Modest-Witness@Second-Millennium.FemaleMan-Meets-OncoMouse*, pp. 128–146.
[15] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 361.

as homogenous, 'it simply has homogeneity as its goal, its orientation, its "lens"'.[16] For Lefebvre, the reductive space of architects is inextricably linked to its capitalist mode of production. He argues that it focuses on the 'division of labour, the division of needs and the division of objects (things)' at the service of an economic imperative 'no matter that it appears to be neutral and objective'.[17] Feminist architect Teresa Hoskyns observes how for David Harvey, the history of 'the model for the appropriation of public space by industrial capitalism' starts with Georges-Eugène Haussmann's rational urban planning of Paris in the late nineteenth century.[18] Likewise, for Richard Sennett, in constructing a 'new wall' 'between the citizens […] as well as around the city itself', Haussmann's functional and efficient plan famously marks the beginning of urban segregation; generating an 'ecology of classes'.[19]

More recently, in his analysis of the role of the artist in public space, Pascal Gielen argues that this segregation of the 'urban multitude' into 'socially relatively homogeneous neighbourhoods of conflict free communities' remains present within contemporary urban design.[20] Similarly, many critics argue that the ordering of public space, goes hand in hand with an 'authoritarian' 'spatial hostility' that defines, regulates and limits daily practices.[21] In this context, strategies of privatisation align with historical precedents, driven by a modernist rhetoric that focuses on 'healing' the city through the removal of 'cancerous' 'blights'.[22] Here, the space of architects is far from objective, but rather deeply 'anti-democratic'.[23]

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[16] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 287.
[17] Ibid., p. 362. Lefebvre notably connects the 'absolute' dimensions of space and time with its commodification into definable and measurable 'lots'. Ibid. p. 362.
[18] Hoskyns, pp. 59–60. See David Harvey, 'The Right to the City', *New Left Review*, 53 (2008), 23–40.
[19] Richard Sennet, *The Fall of Public Man* (London: Penguin Books, 1978), p. 135.
[20] Gielen, p. 275. See also Walter Benjamin, 'Paris: Capital of the Nineteenth Century', *Perspecta*, 12 (1969), 163 <https://doi.org/10.2307/1566965>; Emma Cheatle, *Part-Architecture: The Maison de Verre, Duchamp, Domesticity and Desire in 1930s Paris* (London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017); David Harvey, 'The Right to the City', New Left Review, 53 (2008), 23–40.;Teresa Hoskyns, *The Empty Place: Democracy and Public Space* (London: Routledge, 2013); Sennet.
[21] Hannah, p. 311.
[22] Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Vintage Books ed (New York: Vintage Books, 1992); Matt Tyrnauer, Citizen Jane: Battle for the City (Dogwoolf, 2017). In *When the Cathedrals Were White Quand Les Cathédrals Etáient Blanches* Le Corbusier entitles a whole section in chapter three 'France-America' with 'Is it a Cancer?' and in a drawing later in the book likens 'the dislocation of the city' to the 'birth of cancer'. Le Corbusier, *When the Cathedrals Were White*, trans. by Francis E. Hyslop (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1974), pp. 100, 193. The relationship of hegemonic constructions of public space to sanitised visions and versions of the city will be examined further in chapter three.
[23] David Pinder, *Visions of the City* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005), p. 248.

The Modern City as Carceral Archipelago

In *The Contemporary Picturesque*, architect and artist Nils Norman explores how seemingly 'neutral' and 'objective' efficiencies of public space are regulated by street apparatus. Akin to Harvey and Sennet, Norman's starting point is the 'Haussmannisation' of Paris, in which its boulevards are presented as the 'panoptic spatial expression of control in city design'.[24] From this position, Norman interrogates how 'Contemporary street furniture and technologies of surveillance are the physical infrastructure, the outward signs of the training, regulation and correction of behaviour to be found on a new island in the "carceral Archipelago": the modern city'.[25]

In this artist's book, bollards, CCTV and planters, amongst other city infrastructure, come under scrutiny. Documented through photographs and categorised as 'Barriers', 'Architecture' and 'Soft Landscape', each item is accompanied by a narrative that reveals their role in implementing systems of regulation. Like Haussmann's boulevards, the book examines in what way these control the movement and access of city inhabitants.[26] Examples include guard-rails that block 'desire lines' and prevent unauthorised crossing points; 'perching ledges' or bum-free railings that prevent people from sitting too comfortably or lying down [Fig. 6]; 'graffiti deterrent' subway upholstery design and 'viewing gardens' that control space while raising property values.[27] At first glance, these items appear utilitarian, but on closer inspection the narrative reveals how they render the apparently 'public' spaces they occupy 'pseudo'.

The idea of 'pseudo-public spaces' has been recently articulated by *The Guardian* newspaper in a campaign to highlight the 'POP's or Privately Owned Public spaces in London.[28] The term 'pseudo-public' has its origins in philosopher Jürgen Habermas' critique of the loss of the public sphere.[29] In her study of democracy and public space, Hoskyns argues that one of the key arguments for Habermas is that in modern society 'culture-debating' society has been

[24] Nils Norman, *The Contemporary Picturesque*, ed. by Stefan Kalmar (London: Book works, 2001), p. 9. [25] Ibid.
[26] The Parisian boulevards were built deliberately wide to prevent the construction of defensive architecture in the form of barricades, see Walter Benjamin, 'Paris: Capital of the Nineteenth Century', Perspecta, 12 (1969). Similarly, *The Contemporary Picturesque* is a survey of 'Defensive Architecture'. This survey is extended on Norman's website through an 'archive' documenting defensive measures city authorities have installed worldwide. Nils Norman, 'Archives | Dismal Garden' <http://www.dismalgarden.com/archives/defensive_architecture> [accessed 13 February 2021].
[27] Norman, *The Contemporary Picturesque*.
[28] Shenker.
[29] Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1999).

replaced by the 'pseudo-public or sham private world of culture consumption'.[30] The argument of *The Guardian* is less about an overriding notion of what constitutes 'public' space, than how what appears to be publicly regulated is, in fact, privately owned and 'governed by restrictions drawn up by the landowner and usually enforced by private security companies'.[31] In this context, *The Contemporary Picturesque* explores how apparently benign structures and surfaces play a leading role in implementing the hidden agenda of developers and private backers through the securitisation and privatisation of public space in the contemporary city.

Urban *Mots D'Ordre*

In 'November 20, 1923: Postulates of Linguistics', Deleuze and Guattari argue, 'The only possible definition of language is the set of all order-words, implicit presuppositions, or speech acts current in a language at any given moment.'[32] As outlined in the introduction to this thesis and as I have discussed in 'Collective Assemblages, Embodiment and Enunciations', order-words, or rather *mots d'ordre*, 'do not merely describe or represent, they intervene in the world, functioning to organize its "social character".'[33] According to Deleuze and Guattari, this intervening has spatial implications.[34] Similarly, in 'The Power of the Performative', philosopher Dieter Mersch directly connects the performative power of language to the urban. Following philosophers J. L. Austin, John Searle and sociologist Erving Goffman, Mersch argues that language is inseparable from its medial aspect, its 'coming into the world'.[35] For Mersch, this 'mediality' is connected to practice and actions which depend on 'modality' – the modes of practice or how – defined by 'materiality' and 'temporality' – specific circumstances, which are circumstantially and contextually bound and delineated.[36] On this basis, Mersch argues: 'The city as a grid, structure or arrangement

[30] Habermas, pp. 159–66, cited in Hoskyns, p. 42.
[31] Shenker.
[32] Deleuze and Guattari, p. 79.
[33] Helen Stratford, 'Collective Assemblages, Embodiment and Enunciations', in *Recoveries and Reclamations* ed. by Judith Rugg and Daniel Hinchcliffe (Bristol: Intellect Books, 2002), pp. 107–17 (p. 108). See also Stratford, 'Ethological Mappings'.
[34] According to Deleuze 'each of us chooses or creates a territory, even just walking into a room'. Charles J Stivale, 'L'Abecedaire de Gilles Deleuze, Avec Claire Parnet', p. 23 <https://deleuze.cla.purdue.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/lectures/en/ABCMsRevised-NotesComplete051120_1.pdf> [accessed 15 February 2021].
[35] Mersch, p. 40. See also Austin; Goffman; Searle.
[36] Mersch, pp. 40–41.

that obeys the laws of exchange and economy […] "mediates" the urban as a general way of life on a global scale.'[37]

In *The Contemporary Picturesque*, street apparatus is performative in that it mediates certain modes of practice within specific material and temporal circumstances. In the context of increasing privatisation, the book highlights public spaces that appear accessible to all members of the public but are in fact designed to exclude particular actions and members of society. Through this 'spatial hostility' supposedly 'public' spaces are securitised and privatised via oversized planters, façade treatment and ornamental gardens.[38] In terms of the relationship to place as performance, *The Contemporary Picturesque* demonstrates how certain arrangements of objects are performative in that they issue *mots d'ordre* that reinforce and produce exclusionary and discriminatory ideologies of public space.

The Fragility of the Performative

Alongside architectural devices that perform measures of control, *The Contemporary Picturesque* weaves those devices that have an altogether other agenda. Lock-ons, barricades and tripods, alongside treehouses, street parties and community gardens, subvert the apparatus through which public space is performed. Here, constructions such as tree houses take on the omniscient position of the architect or developer to make precarious obstacles to 'progress' [Fig. 7]. Through their own barricades, these and other apparently 'ad-hoc' architectures challenge the authority of the street by facilitating collective appropriation. As Norman describes, they are 'built to obstruct the distribution of capital […] and to bring it to as long a standstill as possible'.[39] This prevention of the logic of capital permits an alternative activity and community to take place.

[37] Ibid., p. 45.
[38] *The Contemporary Picturesque* documents how any attempts to counter this hostility are met with even more devices that attempt to regulate all areas available for public use, including surfaces. For Norman, 'As city space becomes increasingly privatised, its surfaces become important edges and borders of communication'. Likening the application of stickers and flyers to 'frontlines in the battle for "information real estate"', he argues that in the face of such insurrection 'ever more practical and sinister surfaces' are deployed by the coatings industry, including 'anti-climb' and 'non-drying' paint alongside 'anti-sticker stucco'. Norman, *The Contemporary Picturesque*, p. 23. See also Minton.
[39] Norman, *The Contemporary Picturesque*, p. 14.

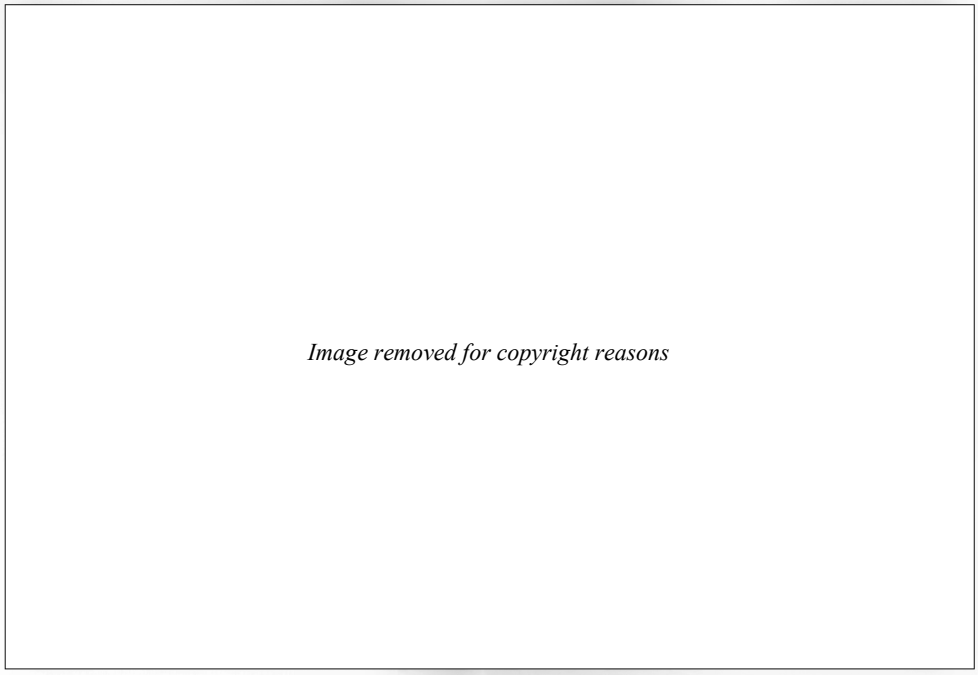


Fig. 6. 'Bum-Free Railing, City of London. Sharp metal pins designed as part of railing to prevent people from sitting on properly'. From Nils Norman *The Contemporary Picturesque* 2001.

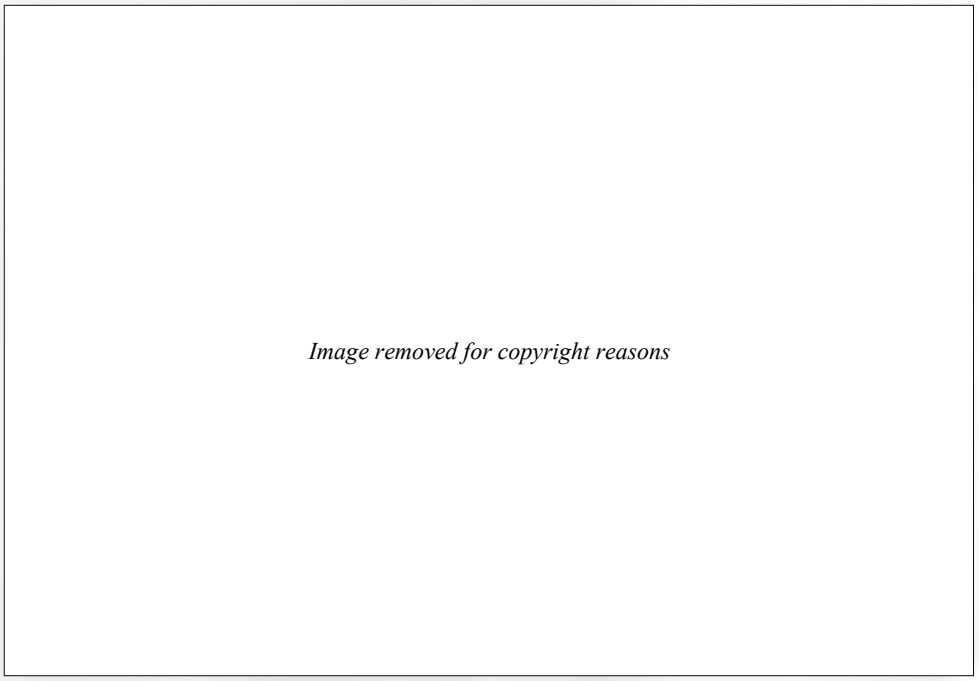


Fig. 7. Collective architectures that render the logic of capital powerless. Urban tree houses and protest constructions. From Nils Norman *The Contemporary Picturesque* 2001.

According to Mersch, 'each performance is as singular as it is unique, and is hemmed in by an inescapable frailty or failure.'[40] This inherent failure directly follows the theories of Butler who in arguing how 'gender reality is performative', places vulnerability at the centre of performativity; claiming that gender 'is real only to the extent that it is performed'.[41] In his argument, Mersch focuses on the distinction between the 'illocutionary' and the 'perlocutionary'. Following Austin, he observes how in linguistic terms illocution is an act performed through speaking, whereas perlocution is the unintended consequences of that which is said. The former addresses the intent within speech acts or *mots d'ordre*, whereas the latter addresses what Mersch terms the 'extra-linguistic effects'.[42]

For Mersch, it is within the 'perlocutionary' that the power of the performative resides. He argues that 'within the perlocution, an incalculable or "tragic" element comes "inbetween," insofar as the consequences that our actions induce allow neither complete control or recovery. No practice can be sure of its implications'.[43] In this, he highlights 'the double paradox inherent in any "theory of the performative"' – the inherent instability of the illocutionary that renders it powerless.[44] Ultimately, for Mersch in relation to the urban, 'No fixed brick architecture is flexible enough to leave the gravity of its life behind it' – in Butler's terms it's citational reference endures – yet at the same time, 'conversely, no design is open enough to account for potential and unforeseeable futures'.[45]

Through its documentation of ad-hoc and playful architectures, *The Contemporary Picturesque* offers representations of alternative structures that actively repurpose the apparatus of public space. These structures undermine the power and security processes which determine their use. For Mersch, perlocutions contain within them the possibility to 'alienate the accomplishment of linguistic meaning'.[46] The ad-hoc architectures make visible the possibilities of this alienation in their subversion of the *mots d'ordre* mediated by urban devices; making collective architectures that render the logic of capital powerless.

[40] Mersch, p. 41. To construct his argument Mersch draws on the theories of Butler and Derrida, and their developments of the performative theories of Austin and Searle. See Butler, *Excitable Speech*; Jacques Derrida, *Limited Inc* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1988).
[41] Butler, 'Performative Acts and Gender Constitution', p. 527.
[42] Mersch, p. 44. See also Austin.
[43] Mersch, p. 46.
[44] Ibid., p. 47.
[45] Ibid., p. 48.
[46] Ibid., p. 44.

Central to the arguments in *The Contemporary Picturesque* are questions of representation. A key aspect of the documentation of the devices is the *way* they are depicted in the book. The 'picturesque' is conventionally defined as an 'ideal type of landscape' that is 'beautiful, but also with some elements of wildness'.[47] In the picturesque, the landscape, and the view by which it is beheld, is constructed. *The Contemporary Picturesque* plays with this definition. Documentary photographs are deployed alongside a narrative that examines how the contemporary landscape of the city is constructed and maintained by architectures that have double meaning and use. Through this method this artist's book both represents and undermines what Norman describes as the developer's and architect's 'real world', which he argues elsewhere 'is really just an illusion'.[48]

1.2 Making Visible II – The Performative Force of the Overlooked

Calculable Elements of Knowledge – Measured Performance and the Object of Architecture

In architecture 'performance' is regularly used in relation to 'building performance', whereby key criteria are used to evaluate the efficiency of a building.[49] Drawing on performance efficiency theories, in *Theatre and Architecture* performance theorist Juliet Rufford argues how 'the term "performative" is frequently used as shorthand to describe design practices that meet the combined challenges of efficiency and effectiveness'.[50] The notion that efficiency can be evaluated and therefore buildings can be designed to accommodate specific practices and people once and for all, is exemplified by the empirical and quantifiable methods found in 'placemaking' and 'post-occupancy evaluation'.

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[47] Tate, 'Picturesque – Art Term', *Tate* <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/p/picturesque> [accessed 16 February 2021].

[48] In an interview with Christian Mayer, Norman comments 'What is real about today's sub-prime induced property crash, financial meltdown and solvency crisis? No one really knows what is happening or what will happen. It seems to me that the developer's and architect's "real world" is just an illusion'. Christian Mayer, 'Stepping into a Scene from the Movie Brazil. Interview between Nils Norman and Christian Mayer', *ZEUS*, 14, 2008, 29–32 (p. 29). Norman's work most recently focuses on play spaces inside and outside galleries and in public places alongside fictional or 'utopian' ideas that play with notions of what public space could potentially be. See Nils Norman, 'Dismal Garden' <http://www.dismalgarden.com/projects> [accessed 17 February 2021].

[49] See 'Post Occupancy Evaluation: An Essential Tool to Improve the Built Environment' <https://www.architecture.com/knowledge-and-resources/resources-landing-page/post-occupancy-evaluation> [accessed 17 February 2021]; 'BRE Group – Building a Better World Together', BRE Group <https://www.bregroup.com/> [accessed 17 February 2021].

[50] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 37. Here, Rufford refers to theories of performance theorist, media maker, and transdisciplinary researcher Jon McKenzie. See Jon McKenzie, *Perform or Else: From Discipline to Performance* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2001).

Placemaking includes research techniques that aim to uncover underlying patterns of movement and behaviour within specific environments. These include observational techniques such as 'place evaluation workshops' and 'behaviour mapping'.[51] Central to post occupancy evaluation is increased functionality, predominantly measured through quantifiable attributes such as thermal comfort, energy use, lighting, acoustic requirements, air change etc.[52] Here, the primary focus is on how quantifiable aspects that will benefit 'stakeholders' can be met through technological and functional advances. Common to placemaking and post occupancy evaluation is the measurement of frequency and typology of actions in place.

For architect Hilary Sample, terms such as post-occupancy and performance-based criteria 'should be understood beyond the purely technological', and 'cannot be separated out from the social or cultural'.[53] Post occupancy scholars themselves, alongside those developing evaluation techniques, acknowledge this need to include the social and cultural within their evaluation processes.[54] Yet, at the same time, in relying on the triangulation of these qualitative aspects with other 'performance indicators' the ultimate goal remains tied to future predictability.[55] Here, social and cultural aspects become yet more measurable criteria

[51] For examples of Behavioural Mapping techniques see See Nilda G. Cosco, Robin C. Moore, and Mohammed Z. Islam, 'Behavior Mapping: A Method for Linking Preschool Physical Activity and Outdoor Design', *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*, 42.3 (2010), 513–19 <https://doi.org/10.1249/MSS.0b013e3181cea27a>; Jan Gehl and Birgitte Svarre, How to Study Public Life (Washington: Island Press, 2013); Placemaking Chicago, 'Technique: Behavior Mapping' <http://www.placemakingchicago.com/cmsfiles/placemaking_behaviormapping.pdf> [accessed 5 May 2021]; Kimberly Powell, 'Making Sense of Place: Mapping as a Multisensory Research Method', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 16.7 (2010), 539–55 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800410372600>.

[52] RIBA, *Post Occupancy Evaluation and Building Performance Evaluation Primer* (RIBA, 2016) <https://www.architecture.com/-/media/gathercontent/post-occupancy-evaluation/additional-documents/ribapoebpeprimerpdf.pdf> [accessed 17 February 2021].

[53] Sample, p. 10.

[54] Hadjri and Crozier.

[55] Post-occupancy evaluation accounts for, the life after a building has been designed and built. While a comprehensive study of post-occupancy evaluation is beyond the focus of this thesis, in order to consider the broader context in architectural practice that frames these definitions it is necessary to be aware of the manner by which performance is conventionally defined within its parameters. Broadly sitting under four categories – climate, behaviour, resources and culture – various methods exist by which post occupancy evaluation is conducted. These include both technological and anthropological methodologies, both quantifiable and qualitative, creating what has been defined as a '"portfolio" of techniques'. Hadjri and Crozier, p. 28. Within this context, users of the building under scrutiny are targeted through questionnaire-based tools such as BOSSA, (Building Occupants Survey System Australia) and BUS (Building User Survey), primarily used in the UK, and workshops/interviews, alongside auditing techniques that comprise quantitative technical assessments such as that promoted through the Building Research Establishment's (BRE) checklists including BRE Environmental & Sustainability Standards. See 'BRE Group: Post-Occupancy Evaluation (POE)' <https://www.bre.co.uk/page.jsp?id=1793> [accessed 17 February 2021]; 'BUS Methodology' <https://busmethodology.org.uk/> [accessed 17 February 2021]. These diverse methods, oriented towards different categories, facilitate the overriding aim of the 'accumulation of information/knowledge that can be used to improve procurement of buildings to the benefit of all stakeholders involved'. Hadjri and Crozier, p. 27.

within an overriding notion of efficient performance. In this context, Sample argues that post occupancy 'has been adopted into architectural discourse as a means of reconciling the recent and all-too consuming movement towards realism'.[56]

According to Sample, 'Unlike building or design codes, post-occupancy offers calculable elements of knowledge – information or data such as natural elements from temperature to rainfall, or performance-based criteria such as specifications that can be used for evaluation and feedback'.[57] In this context, performance is presented as a means by which to measure efficiency and effectiveness. It enables a 'virtuous circle of learning' through which the gap between intended and actual use is ultimately closed.[58] Ultimately, for Sample, post-occupancy evaluation offers 'a means to consider prolonging the relationship between building and architect'.[59] A means by which the future life of a building and its prediction or anticipation can be brought within the auspices (and ultimately control) of the architect. In this context, in relation to *mots d'ordre*, 'performance' becomes a term and approach with a particular way of defining, and therefore producing, architecture, its occupants and users.

In relation to the technical rationality and functionalism underpinning these notions of performance, architectural theorist David Leatherbarrow offers a key critique. In 'Architecture's Unscripted Performance' and *Architecture Oriented Otherwise*, Leatherbarrow critiques this 'technical interpretation of performance'.[60] Like Sample, he frames this approach as recognising 'only what it can predict'.[61] In this way, he confronts

[56] Sample, p. 10.
[57] Ibid.
[58] The Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Plan of Work, defined as 'The UK model for the building, design and construction process', identifies post-occupancy as 'Stage 7' or 'In Use' and acknowledges the 'potential benefits of harnessing the project design information to assist with the successful operation and use of a building'. *Working with an Architect for Your Development* (RIBA), p. 18 <https://www.architecture.com/-/media/gathercontent/working-with-an-architect-for-your-development/additional-documents/ribaworkingwithanarchitectforyourdevelopmentpdf.pdf>. These benefits are further emphasised in the online resource from RIBA, The Post Occupancy Evaluation Primer. Here, the 'gap' between intended and actual performance is used in relation to measuring efficiency and effectiveness, with the Primer describing how evaluations after the building is occupied, including occupant use, or 'personal/organisational performance', and 'building performance' in terms of energy consumption, 'help designers to close the performance gap, that of designed energy and organisational performance and the actual measured performance of these areas'. The primer goes on to conclude how 'the more designers, clients and other members of project teams learn about how their buildings perform in use, the better their next buildings are likely to meet the complex needs of the clients and occupants – completing a virtuous circle of learning'. RIBA, p. 2.
[59] Sample, p. 157.
[60] Leatherbarrow, *Architecture Oriented Otherwise*, p. 44. See also Leatherbarrow, 'Architecture's Unscripted Performance'.
[61] Ibid., p.44.

the term to make visible the 'reductive and inadequate' 'old-style functionalist thinking' it affirms.[62]

Leatherbarrow's critique of technological and organisational performance has been quoted by many scholars, supporting his argument for 'a shift of orientation in architectural theory and practice from what a building is to what it does'.[63] Here, the 'doing' of buildings takes to task the modernist canons of timeless architecture and absolute space, through focusing on topographic processes that are contingent to the cultural and material context. However, while undoubtedly critical in its opposition to modernism, in Leatherbarrow's analysis there is little explicit reference to the political or economic contexts of the particular buildings in question. Conversely, feminist theorists have long recognised how making visible the social and cultural dimensions of the functional and organisational offers a way to critique the reductive tendencies of architectural performance. Critics such as Beatriz Colomina, Shannon Mattern and Katherine Shonfield argue that a building's technological performance is always framed within and dependent upon the social, cultural and political contexts within which it operates.[64]

The 'Quiet Voices' of Support and Maintenance

The apparent dearth of discourse around architecture's 'own making' and 'lack of critical literature on the means, relationships, and underlying ideologies in the making and representation of space', forms the focus of the work of artist and architect Céline Condorelli.[65] In the book *Support Structures*, Condorelli investigates support within art, architecture and other spatial practices. While acknowledging there is 'no lack of evidence for instances of support', she unpacks assumed 'neutralities' of functional structures within urban renewal, education and public institutions, exploring how they are inextricably linked to and supported by the social and cultural contexts in which they are located.[66]

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[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid. p. 43.
[64] See Beatriz Colomina, 'Unbreathed Air 1956', *Grey Room*, 15 (2004), 28–59; Shannon Mattern, 'Maintenance and Care', *Places Journal*, 2018 <https://doi.org/10.22269/181120>; Katherine Shonfield, 'The Use of Fiction to Reinterpret Architectural and Urban Space', in *Intersections: Architectural Histories and Critical Theories*, ed. by Iain Borden and Jane Rendell (London ; New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 296–320.
[65] *Support Structures*, ed. by Céline Condorelli, 2nd printing (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2014), p. 7.
[66] Ibid., p. 10.

In *Support Structures*, what appear to be benign or 'efficient' means of support are presented as part of a much broader complex of social, political and economic relationships. One example is a series of photographs of scaffolding in the town of Milo on the slopes of Mount Etna [Fig. 8].[67] These are accompanied by 'Exergue' a text by Condorelli that examines how in this particular geographical location scaffolding renders a building into a 'building site', making it exempt from tax, and 'a building in danger', opening possibilities to apply for financial support from the European Union.[68] Through this dialogue, scaffolding is presented as a function of economic and political contexts that both exceed and embrace the physical. In relation to *mots d'ordre*, the scaffolding is performative in that it transforms one category of 'building' into another, with immediate economic implications.

Support Structures − itself supported by a series of events and exhibitions − analyses spatial and interpersonal relations; the supporting operations conventionally considered outside of the 'work'. This representation of what is excluded from the production of architecture also forms the focus of Sample's study into *Maintenance Architecture*. For Sample, 'maintenance is one component of post-occupancy', the representation of which 'calls into question the very nature of architecture'.[69] She argues that through maintenance, post occupancy contains an alternate trajectory from 'calculable elements of knowledge',[70] offering a way to see what happens in the 'absence of the author' – the life beyond the architect.[71] Addressing the invisibility of maintenance in architecture, Sample describes how 'the imagery of maintenance' is typically presented as 'only technical' and therefore 'nothing to do with beauty'.[72]

For Sample, art practice offers a mechanism by which maintenance and ultimately architecture is 'represented back to us [architects]'.[73] A key artist she refers to is Mierle Laderman Ukeles. Starting from the late 60s, Ukeles' feminist 'maintenance art' destabilises the categories of 'art' and 'work' through direct engagement with the discourses around their

[67] The series of photographs, also titled *Support Structures*, were taken by Adam Broomberg and Oliver Chanarin. See Condorelli, pp. 33–40.
[68] Condorelli, p. 45.
[69] Sample, p. 17.
[70] Ibid., p. 10.
[71] Ibid., p. 17. Sample states how 'in architecture culture, maintenance can be understood through two concepts […] performance and post-occupancy'. Ibid., p. 10.
[72] Ibid., p. 17.
[73] Ibid.

production.[74] In *Hartford Wash: Washing, Tracks, Maintenance: Outside*, Ukeles famously and fastidiously scrubbed the pavement of the public space outside the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art [Fig. 9]. In *Transfer: The Maintenance of the Art Object*, museum vitrines are reclassified as art objects, transferring their maintenance from cleaners to museum conservator [Fig. 10]. In these performances, actions of maintenance – washing and cleaning – are displaced. Their relocation or 'transfer' from one context to another make visible their habitually hidden locations and positions within hierarchies of public institutions. Further, they expose how differential power structures are reproduced by activities that are conventionally considered routine and banal.[75] As I have argued in 'Collective Assemblages, Embodiment and Enunciations', *Hartford Wash* and also *Transfer* forced onlookers to connect with the space of the gallery and museum in a completely new mode; engaging with the 'socio-spatial and temporal assemblages which support the performances of public/private, clean/dirty, acceptable/abject activity'.[76] Simultaneously, these performances challenge the privileging of certain 'creative' practices over others, in order to question the very foundations of art practice itself.

In architecture, maintenance is primarily cast as restorative actions; certainly not part of the process of creation.[77] Yet, in the context of critical representation, maintenance has implications for rethinking public institutions and architecture as well as domestic life. According to Sample, maintenance can 'open up a new way of thinking whereby architecture is not fixed once a building is complete'.[78] For Sample, maintenance is a performative aspect of architecture that is repressed. She argues that while 'the act of maintenance may not leave a trace', maintenance, as acts performed on buildings, 'fundamentally changes the image of a

[74] Ukeles' 1969 'Manifesto for Maintenance Art', proposes dismantling discriminatory and gendered ideas around the exclusivity of art production by transforming everyday activities into 'art'. Ukeles proclaims, 'Avant-garde art, which claims utter development, is infected by strains of maintenance ideas, maintenance activities, and maintenance materials'. Mierle Laderman Ukeles, 'Maintenance Art Manifesto (1969)', in *Theories and Documents of Contemporary Art*, ed. by Kristine Stiles and Peter Selz (London, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), pp. 623–24.
[75] See Shannon Jackson, 'High Maintenance: The Sanitation Aesthetics of Mierle Laderman Ukeles', in *Social Works: Performing Art, Supporting Publics* (London: Routledge, 2010), pp. 75–103; Helen Molesworth, 'House Work and Art Work', *October*, 92 (2000), 71–97; Patricia C. Philips, 'Maintenance Activity: Creating a Climate for Change', in *But Is It Art? The Spirit of Art as Activism*, ed. by Nina Felshin (Seattle: Bay Press, 1995), pp. 165–93; *Work*, ed. by Friederike Sigler, Whitechapel : Documents of Contemporary Art (London ; Cambridge, MA: Whitechapel Gallery : The MIT Press, 2017).
[76] Stratford, 'Collective Assemblages, Embodiment and Enunciations', p. 112.
[77] See Helen Stratford, 'Unpleasant Matters', in *Material Matters: Materiality in Architectural Practice &Theory*, ed. by Katie Lloyd Thomas, 2006, pp. 209–24.
[78] Sample, p. 14.

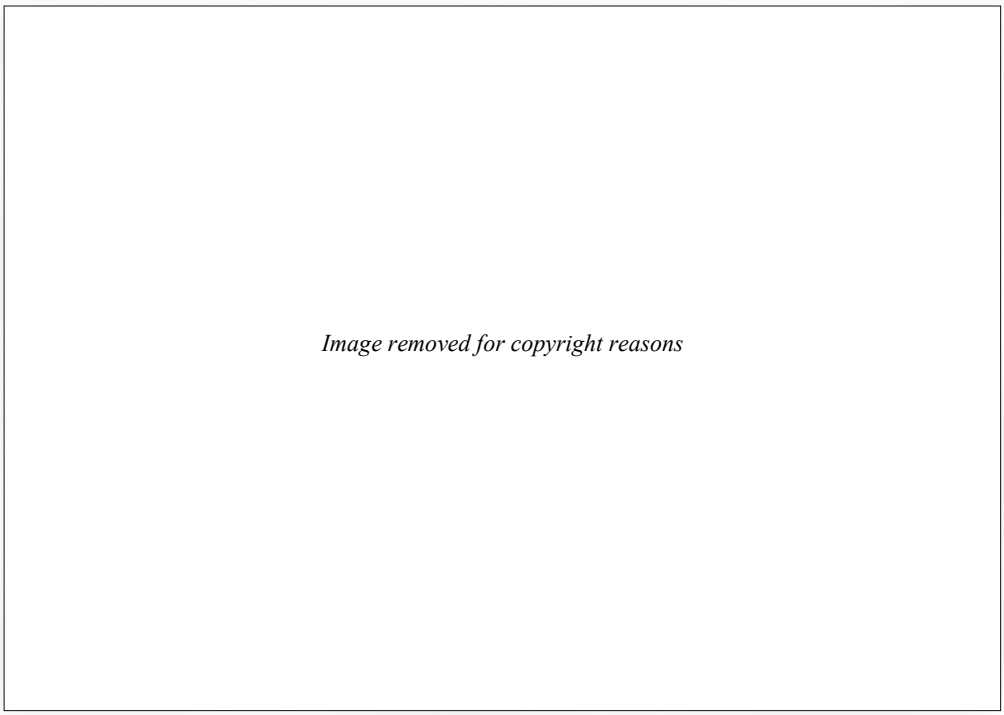


Fig. 8. *Support Structures* Adam Broomberg and Oliver Chanarin 2004.
From Celine Condoreli *Support Structures* 2014.

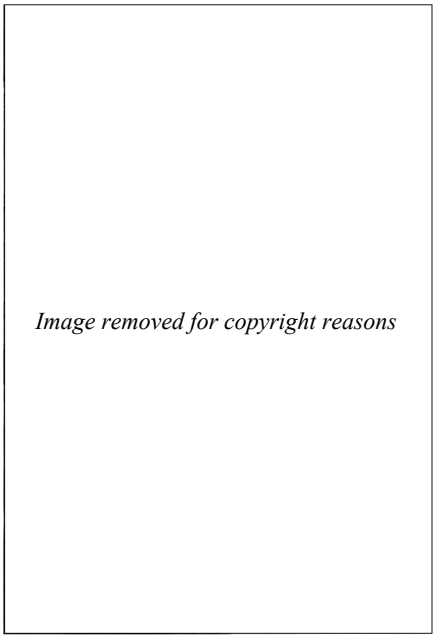


Fig. 9. *Hartford Wash: Washing, Tracks, Maintenance: Outside*, Mierle Laderman Ukeles 1973. From Hilary Sample *Maintenance Architecture* 2016.

building'.[79] As I argue in 'Unpleasant Matters', 'the long tending that goes into building, a constant remaking of it through a plethora of maintenance activities', challenges 'the assumptions of architecture'.[80] In making visible that which cannot be contained by 'calculable elements of knowledge', maintenance engenders what Grosz has described as a thinking '*in'* and '*of* architecture' 'differently';[81] a 'becoming' that challenges 'the idea of building as a fixed entity or given stable object'.[82] In this way, maintenance immediately and intimately connects the technological and the functional to the social, cultural, political and economic; making visible the performativity of these parameters.

The exclusion of messiness and immeasurability from the image of building, in order to preserve its stability, has a long history in architecture. Critics, including Jeremy Till and more recently Francesca Hughes, join Steven Groák in arguing that architecture presides over an 'orthodox framework of stability', or 'fetishisation' of precision, that treats 'errors', 'omissions', and 'failures of building performance' as 'problems to be overcome or eliminated' completely.[83] For Hughes, the 'complex legacy of relations between precision and the fear of error that underpins contemporary architecture culture', is yet 'another "unspoken obsession" of modernism'.[84] In contrast, she argues 'a practice that engages critically with precision,' must 'embrace rather than shut down the genuine indeterminacy we daily engage with'.[85] Ultimately, she asserts that error brings a 'generative potential' of 'more democratic epistemological models'.[86] Here, for Hughes, error contains an 'ability to interrupt and ambush a system from within', offering 'critical friction against our desire for control'.[87] Yet, the 'ambush' of error brings with it less dramatic and quiet partners. As argued above, the 'quiet voices' of support and maintenance undermine the image of

[79] Ibid.
[80] Stratford, 'Unpleasant Matters', p. 222.
[81] Grosz, p. 59.
[82] Ibid., p. 6.
[83] Steven Groák, *The Idea of Building: Thought and Action in the Design and Production of Buildings*, 1. ed (London: Spon, 1992), p. 6, cited in Jeremy Till, *Architecture Depends* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009), p. 83. See Francesca Hughes, *The Architecture of Error: Matter, Measure, and the Misadventures of Precision* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2014).
[84] Hughes, p. 4.
[85] Ibid., p. 247. Here, Hughes refers to the work of artists, such as Gordon Matta Clark's *Unbuilding*, in which he deconstructs and dismantles buildings himself, thereby engaging with 'manipulating' and 'revelling' in the 'problematics of matter'. Hughes, p. 141.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Ibid., p. 248.

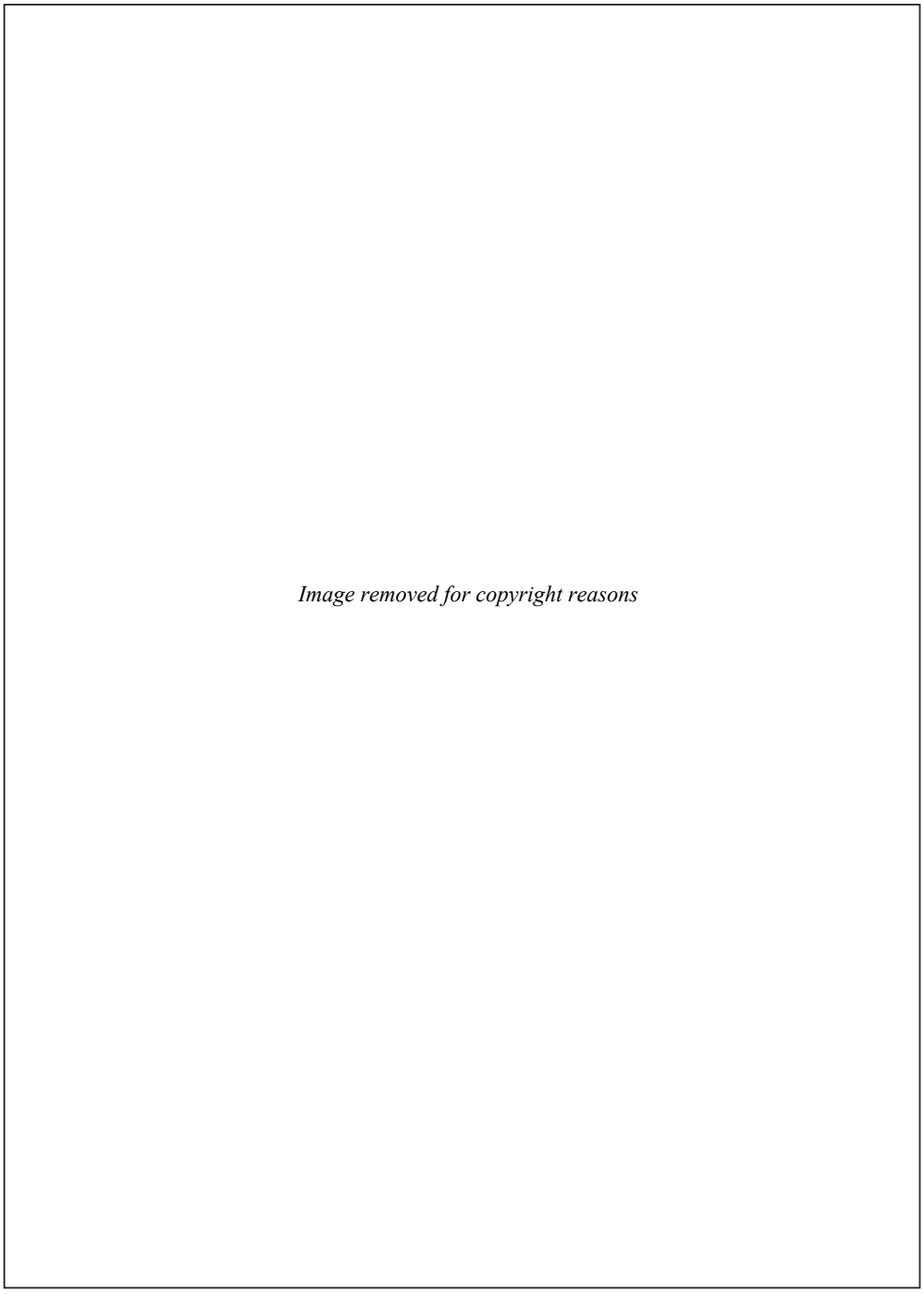


Fig. 10. *Transfer: The Maintenance of the Art Object,* Mierle Laderman Ukeles 1973. From <http://tohumagazine.com/file/ukeles-transfer-maintenance-art-object-1973-chart-smalljpg> [accessed 27 February 2021]. Courtesy the artist and Ronald Feldman Gallery, New York

architecture as singular creation.[88] In this way, like Hughes' rereading of error, they exert a performative force on the nature of architecture itself.

Re-presentation

Central to Condorelli's *Support Structures* and Ukeles' 'maintenance art', is the re-presentation of what and who are rendered invisible in architecture and art. Both use the re-expression and displacement of support and maintenance to examine in what way discourses around both construct public institutions and the bodies they locate. Here, it is not just who or what is made visible but how. With reference to the theories of Lévi-Strauss, for Condorelli, 'support is a reflexive, performative system' that 'works on the mode and the operational' to mobilise the 'syntax and grammar' and 'organisational arrangement' of the structural.[89] Consequently, the book's design and content, makes visible support as that which both holds the structure together and produces it.

A set of initial 'Directions for Use' outline support's 'functions', 'intent' and 'operation', before engagement through a 'discursive terrain' of texts, or 'modes', combined with practices, or 'entries'. In the 'modes' Condorelli asserts that 'support is not described through an external, analytical objectification, but engaged directly through the practice of supporting'.[90] In this way, the 'modes' resist offering a definition of support, which for Condorelli would 'entail a position external to the subject', while the 'entries' appear as 'a particular manifestation' and 'configuration of it'.[91] Here, the particular representational methodology of the book, 'in which the structure is made present as part of the content', is an expression of its particular questioning of support's conventional position within architectural discourse.[92]

[88] Mattern.
[89] Condorelli, p. 29.
[90] Ibid., p. 30. One example of a 'mode' is 'On Support', in which Mark Cousins argues 'A wall is not a wall, but it symbolises a wall, in that it is not in its nature to stop people going through or […] divide them', for this it depends on an 'apparatus of security' of which it is but one element. Mark Cousins, 'On Support', in *Support Structures*, ed. by Céline Condorelli, 2nd printing (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2014), pp. 67–74 (p. 70).
[91] Condorelli, p. 31.
[92] Ibid. p. 7.

In the work of Ukeles, performed actions are combined with abstracted, even objectified processes of representation, in order to make visible the categories of use by which practices, people and place are habitually organised.[93] This stems from her own situated position of motherhood; experiencing the exclusion of domestic actions from art practice. In this context, Ukeles' work adopts maintenance as art practice in order to destabilise prejudices and hierarchies around creative production in relation to specific public places. Her site-specific performances make visible how maintenance is connected to wider processes of class and gender that, in the Lefebvrian sense, cloak 'a division of labour', socially and culturally placed at the service of an economic imperative.[94]

In her study into 'Maintenance and Care', Shannon Mattern warns against a 'romanticisation of maintenance', examining how maintenance, and its partner 'care', are 'shaped by race, gender, class and other political, economic and cultural forces'.[95] Similarly, in *Social Works Supporting Publics*, performance theorist Shannon Jackson argues that performance art itself is dependent on a whole series of infrastructures of support for its implementation.[96] In deciding who gets to organise maintenance and who completes the work, in many ways Ukeles' position retains one of privilege. However, through gestures such as *Handshake Ritual* Ukeles' physically enacts a rearticulation of prejudices, in this case as a gesture of gratitude extended towards garbage collectors.[97] This ability of performed actions to highlight and resist the social construction of aesthetic and cultural values will be examined further in chapter two. For the moment, critic Helen Molesworth argues that Ukeles' work is an 'attempt to rearticulate the terms of public and private in ways that might fashion new possibilities for both spheres and the labour they entail'.[98] On this basis, in making visible the social and political aspects of

[93] Similarly, in other works Ukeles repurposes the 'value' of certain actions and objects. One example is Dressing to Go Out/Undressing to Go In, a black and white photographed account of the artist dressing her children, only to have her efforts reversed by their actions, affords this everyday maintenance action with documentary and even ritualised significance. Mierle Laderman Ukeles, 'Dressing to Go Out/Undressing to Go In (1973) Collections Database' <https://museums.fivecolleges.edu/detail.php?museum=sc&t=objects&type=ext&f=&s=&record=0&name_title=dressing%20to%20go%20out&op-earliest_year=%3E%3D&op-latest_year=%3C%3D> [accessed 5 May 2021].
[94] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 362.
[95] Mattern.
[96] See Jackson, *Performing Art, Supporting Publics*. This notion of 'infrastructural' support will be discussed further in relation to Butler in chapter four.
[97] *Handshake Ritual* was completed during Ukeles' position as self-appointed artist in residence for the NYC Sanitation department. For a longer discussion of this work in relation to the theories of Deleuze and Guattari, see Stratford, 'Collective Assemblages, Embodiment and Enunciations'.
[98] Molesworth, p. 96.

maintenance Ukeles' work undermines the places that are produced through these aspects, with implications for those people who work within them, including herself.

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the performative is fragile. Critically, as Mersch asserts, through this fragility it 'unveils a permanent transitoriness, a *transformativity*, to the extent that the "*power*" *of transformation, of* "*could-be-otherwise*" inheres in it'.[99] Ultimately, whether in architectural language or institutional locations, the works of Condorelli and Ukeles are interventions that highlight the performative instability present within the illocutionary intention of the dominant image of architecture and art. Their reuse and redeployment of specific modes of representation and action 'alienate the accomplishment of their meaning' and 'turn it into something else'.[100] Here, the means of making visible the *mots d'ordre* that determine the value and reception of 'architecture', 'support', 'art', 'work' and 'maintenance', offer a rearticulation of the terms themselves; mobilising and turning what *is* into what *does*, with social cultural, political and spatial implications.

1.3 Making Visible III – Parody, Fiction and Subversion of Set Conventions

Theory as Action

For Lefebvre the '"world of the image" […] is the enemy of imagination', in which architectural discourse 'suffers from the delusion that "objective" knowledge of "reality" can be attained by means of graphic representations'.[101] This critique of the delusion of objective knowledge achieved through representation is echoed by Sample in her critique of how the 'completion' of architecture rests on the repetition of its image.[102] In contrast, in 'Intellectuals and Power: a conversation between Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze', Deleuze comments 'representation no longer exists there is only theoretical action and practical action which serve as relays and form networks'.[103] This notion of theory as action aligns with *mots d'ordre* or language as action and implies that 'a theorising intellectual […] is no longer a

[99] Mersch, p. 41.
[100] Ibid., p. 44.
[101] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 361.
[102] Sample, pp. 14–15.
[103] Foucault and Deleuze, p. 207.

subject, a representing or representative consciousness'.[104] Rather, for Deleuze, theory is reconfigured as 'a box of tools'.[105] 'It must be useful. It must function'.[106]

In *Limits to Culture* Malcolm Miles examines the criticality of art practice via John Berger, claiming that '"works of art are like the stones of bridges" which people have crossed together because they "needed to travel in a particular direction"'.[107] In relation to the critical function of theory as 'a box of tools' rather than a claim to truth, this quote introduces questions of autonomy through which Miles examines the possibilities of 'critical distance, both *from* and *in* the conditions in which art is made'.[108] Questions of critical distance are also crucial in relation to performativity. Following Butler, Mersch observes how 'it is a quirk of the performative […] to remain at once opaque to itself and to obscure itself'.[109] In other words, like the abstract space of architects, the citational repetitions or *mot's d'ordre*, through which the 'norms' of daily life are reproduced, are often invisible to those who enact and find accordance within them.[110]

In this context, Miles examines whether is it possible to create 'alternative imaginaries which go beyond mere representation of conditions', in order to travel from them.[111] Here, he draws attention to the writings of feminist theorist Audre Lorde, for whom difference is a place from which *mot's d'ordre* become visible. Writing from personal experience of racialised discrimination within academia, for Lorde, rather than repetition, survival 'is learning how to take our differences and make them strengths. *For the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house* […] they will never enable us to bring about genuine change'.[112] Yet, if the 'master's tools' are sometimes invisible, how is it possible to become aware of the citational repetitions by which everyday lives are constructed? Is it really possible to avoid them? How might a subversive toolbox be found to subvert the discursive practices, or the stratified

[104] Deleuze, Ibid., p. 206. Foucault responds to Deleuze, stating that previously, 'The intellectual spoke the truth to those who had yet to see it, in the name of those who were forbidden to speak the truth: he was conscience, consciousness, and eloquence'. Michel Foucault, Ibid., p. 207.
[105] Deleuze, Ibid., p. 208
[106] Ibid.
[107] Miles, p. 137. Here, Miles quotes John Berger, *Permanent Red: Essays in Seeing*, New edition (London: Writers and Readers Publishing Cooperative, 1987), p. 205.
[108] Miles, p. 138.
[109] Mersch, p. 47.
[110] For Butler these 'norms' are only visible to those abject bodies which they excluded. She writes 'But what if the very categories of the human have excluded those who should be operating within its terms, who do not accept the modes of reasoning and justifying "validity claims" that have been proffered by western forms of rationalism?'. Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender* (New York ; London: Routledge, 2004), p. 22.
[111] Miles, p. 138.
[112] Lorde, p. 112.

theory, by which, according to Butler, a 'theatre of legitimacy' is 'unproblematically housed in public space'? [113]

Architectures of Tyranny – Parody as Critical Tool

The development of a visual methodology that deploys the 'master's tools' to reveal the extent of power structures in the production of particular public spaces, forms the basis of architect Theo Deutinger's *Handbook of Tyranny*. In this publication, orthographic representation techniques depict objects, organisations and infrastructures that regulate society and control freedoms.[114] Akin to those elements documented in *The Contemporary Picturesque*, 'Defensive City' and 'Walls and Fences'[115] are devoted to aspects of urban design that 'seek to disable public agency in the name of public safety' [Fig. 11].[116] In *Handbook of Tyranny* these architectural constructions sit alongside technologies employed in the slaughter of animals for food production, not to mention the varied methods of human execution in the implementation of capital punishment. Deutinger argues that in contemporary times 'for every obstacle to organizing and controlling society, there seems to be a technical solution at hand'.[117] For him, making visible 'the magnitude of technology as an instrument of power' is the first step in confronting and contesting the designed implementation of cruelty and spatial oppression.[118]

Like the work of Norman, Condorelli, Ukeles and Sample, *Handbook of Tyranny* makes visible the particular and performative organisations of people and place; the *mots d'ordre* mediated by arrangements that 'obey the laws of exchange and economy',[119] to produce, in

[113] Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, p. 85.
[114] These drawings typically take the form of computer line drawings in section and plan interspersed with isometric projection.
[115] 'Defensive City' includes skaterstop edges, spiked anti-climb brackets and anti-litter planters, while 'Walls and Fences' illustrates fifty-four types of barriers located on the borders of countries and states, concluding with a survey map indicating the geographical locations of each different type.
[116] In 2019, the Storefront for Art and Architecture exhibited 'State of Tyranny', which offered an extension of *Handbook of Tyranny*, unveiling the 'methods and tools of urban design that seek to disable public agency in the name of public safety'. Theo Deutinger, 'Projects » TD' <http://td-architects.eu/projects/show/state-of-tyranny/> [accessed 25 February 2021]; John Hill, 'State of Tyranny -', World-Architects <https://www.world-architects.com/en/architecture-news/found/state-of-tyranny> [accessed 25 February 2021].
[117] Theo Deutinger, *Handbook of Tyranny* (Zürich: Lars Müller Publishers, 2018), p. 7.
[118] Ibid.
[119] Mersch, p. 45.

this case, specific nations, territories and subjectivities.[120] Yet, in its making visible, *Handbook of Tyranny* extends these representational methodologies. Its redeployment of orthographic techniques to represent that which would normally escape such scrutiny is parodic. According to Deutinger, the choice of medium is intended to give 'the appearance of an unearthed compendium of blueprints drawn by or for a dictator of our time'.[121] Here, the appeal and discipline of clarity in diagrammatic form collides with the monstrosity of subject matter, which, for Deutinger, brings home the designed nature of the technologies of tyranny. In this context, the logic of design is stretched to an ultimate conclusion in the creation of an insanely rational 'design of oppression'.[122]

In his analysis of the critical capacity of art practice to 'travel' beyond representation, Miles focuses on artists whose work operates critically within advertising and capitalist corporations, such as 'Adbusters' and 'The Yes Men'. For Miles, through the work of these artists 'a dominant logic is stretched to a point at which the dehumanizing basis of global capitalism appears (to those who see it) as obviously irrational'.[123] He asserts that the criticality of these works resides in their 'tactic of working within a given situation to re-inflect its meaning', thereby collapsing 'the divide between production and reception'.[124] This stretching of a dominant logic within the context it operates is a parodic act that causes a 'rupture' through subversive actions that expose the irrationality of the apparently rational 'real' world.

Parody is, famously, a key aspect of the performative theories of Butler. In *Gender Trouble* Butler argues that if gender norms are performative, reiterated over time, then parodic acts that repeat these roles, such as 'the body in drag', can take on a critical role in disrupting, subverting and altering their performance.[125] In his exploration of the relationship of the performative to architecture, Mersch highlights the instability of the performative inherent to the mediated practices through which places come into being. In this sense, the fragility of the performative can be made visible through the repetition of these practices. Yet, for Butler,

[120] Deutinger argues that 'the book depicts everyday things whose purpose and meaning are often hidden for people outside of the design world'. Aimée McLaughlin, 'The Book Highlighting Modern Day Cruelties through Infographics.' <https://www.designweek.co.uk/issues/26-february-4-march-2018/handbook-tyranny-highlighting-modern-day-cruelties-infographics/> [accessed 25 February 2021].
[121] Deutinger, *Handbook of Tyranny*, p. 7.
[122] Deutinger McLaughlin.
[123] Miles, p. 142.
[124] Ibid., pp 140–141.
[125] Butler, *Gender Trouble*.

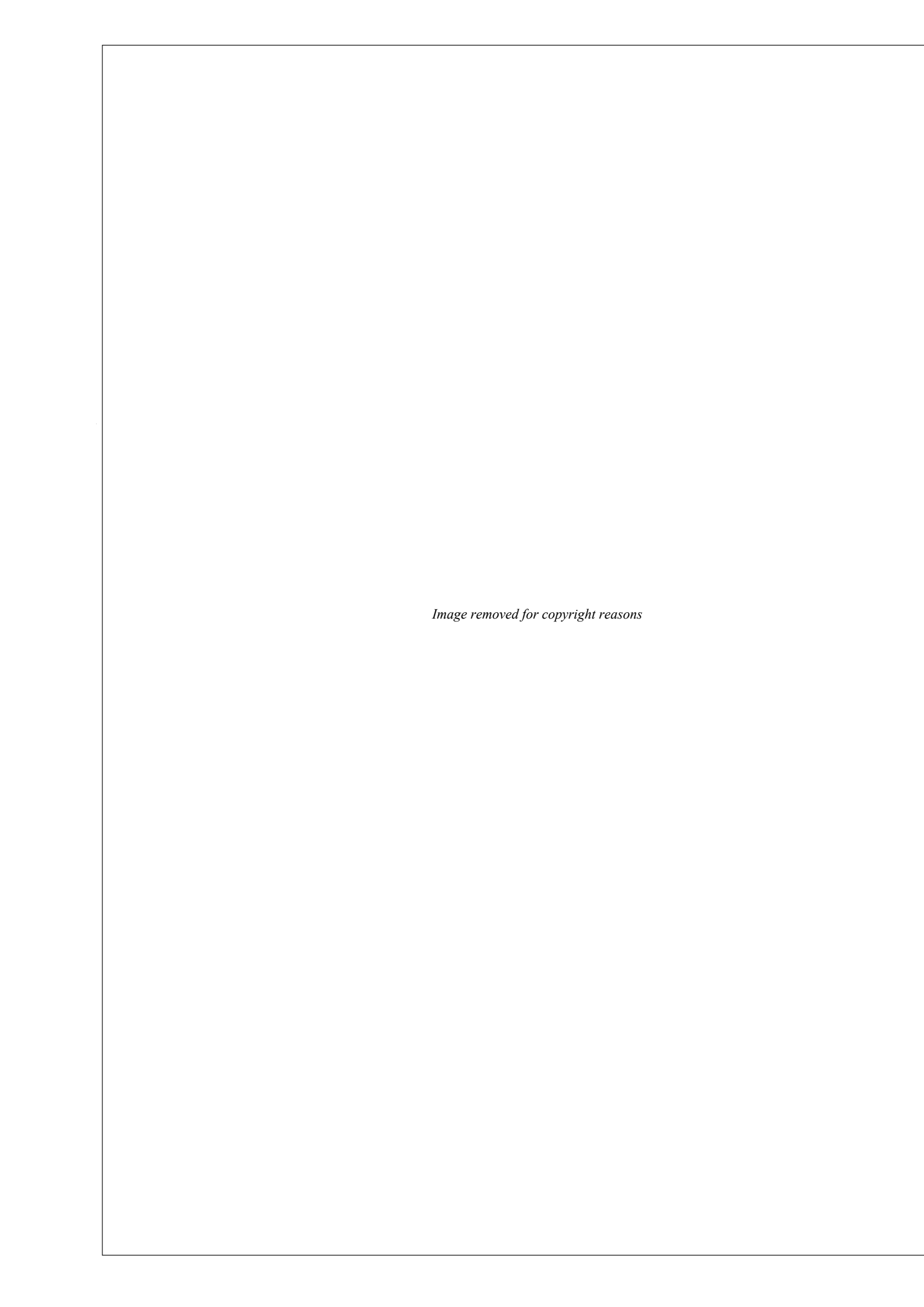

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Fig. 11. ‘Defensive City’. From Theo Deutinger *A Handbook of Tyranny* 2018.

'there is no political position purified of power' there is no option other than to perform.[126] In other words 'the task is not whether to repeat, but how to repeat or, indeed, to repeat and, through a radical proliferation of gender, to *displace* the very gender norms that enable the repetition itself'.[127] Critically, for Butler not all parody is subversive; repetition must repeat differently to the 'normal' for it to be effective; it must 'rehearse' a 'conventional formulae in non-conventional ways'.[128] Further, only 'certain kinds of parodic repetitions', are 'effectively disruptive, truly troubling', while others 'become domesticated and recirculated as instruments of cultural hegemony'.[129]

In redeploying the drawing techniques found in conventional architectural design guides, the parodic tactics of *Handbook of Tyranny* generate shock. For architecture journalist Catherine Slessor, 'even the blood red cover evokes the classic Metric Handbook, still a staple of [architectural] practice libraries.'[130] However, whilst initially shocking, in many ways the re-presentation of these devices, actually serves to reinforce the particular 'reality' they produce. For Slessor, 'the impact of its subject matter ends up being parsed into abstraction by its means of representation.'[131] In this context, while Deutinger 'would love to see the book used as evidence in a court case', the sheer accumulation of data leaves little hope for resistance.[132] Stretching the dominant logic of abstraction to an extreme locates these devices squarely within an objectified version of reality, reinforcing the power structures they represent. Yet, this ambiguity is a key part of parody. The levelling of the different instruments of cruelty and control aligns with Deutinger's claim to 'profoundly reinforce their cruelty'.[133] The shock of the 'sheer number' and 'bluntedness' is supported by the manual's presentation as a neatly consumable item; reinforcing the banality of these technologies of oppression.[134]

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[126] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, p. xxviii.
[127] Ibid., p. 202.
[128] Butler, *Excitable Speech*, p. 147. In *Undoing Gender*, Butler also gives an example in the 'queer appropriation of the term "queer"'. Butler, *Undoing Gender*, p. 223. See also Loxley.
[129] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, p. 189.
[130] Catherine Slessor, 'Cruel and Usual: "Handbook of Tyranny" by Theo Deutinger', *Architectural Review*, 2018 <https://www.architectural-review.com/essays/cruel-and-usual-handbook-of-tyranny-by-theo-deutinger> [accessed 27 February 2021].
[131] Slessor.
[132] Deutinger in McLaughlin.
[135] Deutinger, *Handbook of Tyranny*, p. 7.
[134] The more unpalatable sections, including 'Death Penalty' and parts of 'Slaughterhouse' are partially hidden from immediate view with fold out sections.

Humour as Critical Parodic Tool

Some of the drawings in *Handbook of Tyranny* deploy humour. One example is 'Green Fortress', in which various animals, including lamas and crocodiles, are incorporated into the isometric projection of 'natural' defences for a detached family home. Some may argue that humour has little place in the subject matter of a book that contains a section titled 'Death Penalty'. Conversely, organisational ethnographer Kate Kenny argues that humour has a critical role in parody. In her study of 'the performative surprise' she argues that the '"doubling" function of parody', in which we can laugh at a 'benign imitation' of the 'original', is vital in cutting down to size 'fundamental "givens" in society'.[135] Similarly, for Butler, the performance of gender brings 'pleasure' and 'giddiness' 'in the recognition of a radical contingency […] in the face of cultural configurations of causal unities that are regularly assumed to be natural and necessary'.[136] For Butler, the critical potential of parody and humour resides in this imagining of alternatives.[137] Likewise for Kenny, 'laughter enables us to "relax" around power. Laughter takes away the "fear and piety" we may have held in relation to a particular discourse; it makes an object familiar and, therefore, available for investigation'.[138]

Two projects which deploy humour as a parodic tool are *Beyond Utopia* by artist/architect collaboration Warren and Mosely and 'Slides in the Public Realm: A Feasibility Study for London' by urban design and public realm practice General Public Agency. Both projects use parody to critique the discourse of planners and authorities in the production of public space. *Beyond Utopia* revolves around the submission of a utopian architectural planning proposal for a site in London. 'Slides in the Public Realm' takes the form of a feasibility report assessing the impact of the use of slides in public space. Akin to *Handbook of Tyranny*, both adopt existing infrastructures of planning and design as a means to interrogate public policy, extending this existing infrastructure through parody and fiction.

Beyond Utopia is a publication that presents a fictional account of a conversation between architects, artists and reviewers from various official bodies including the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and the City of London Planning Authority.

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[135] Kate Kenny, 'The Performative Surprise: Parody, Documentary and Critique', *Culture and Organization*, 15.2, 221-235. (pp. 224–25).
[136] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, p. 187.
[137] Butler, *Gender Trouble*.
[138] Kenny, p. 224. Humour as methodology in participatory practice will be discussed in chapter three.

The conversation adopts the form of a screenplay that speculates on a process of auditing a utopian architectural planning proposal within current planning criteria. This 'real' conversation around a fictional proposition sits alongside other contributions including the submission of a statutory planning notice [Fig. 12].[139] This submission enacts what Warren and Mosely describe as 'a form of playful provocation, drifting in and though the procedures, systems and languages of planning, architecture and city development'.[140] In using the existing infrastructures of evaluative appraisals and planning proposals to assess that which, by its very nature, is unavailable for assessment, *Beyond Utopia* is a parodic action that works through a doubling processes which, in this case, is also public.

According to Kenny, central to parody's criticality is its doubling action by which a copy is placed beside the original, leaving both open for ridicule. For Kenny, 'In the process of imitation, the space between original and its parodic reproduction can flag up important features of the original, even as it reverses and pokes fun at them.'[141] Moreover, she argues that this 'doubling' must happen in public in order to '"turn up the volume" on aspects of the original and hold them apart for critique'.[142] In *Beyond Utopia*, the 'real' meetings and planning notices take place 'in public' in order to directly engage with the complex series of social, political and financial relationships that, according to artist and contributor Robin Wilson 'dominate the design and programming of city space'.[143] In this way, through the trope of Utopia, their parodic reproductions 'turn up the volume' on the regulations around spatial design.

'Slides in the Public Realm: A Feasibility Study for London' forms part of a catalogue for *Test Site*, a project by artist Carsten Höller, in which a series of slides were installed in the Turbine Hall of the Tate Modern art gallery. Responding to a brief from Höller and set within

[139] A statutory planning notice is a requirement for planning applications to inform local residents 'The Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2010' (Queen's Printer of Acts of Parliament) <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/2184/article/13/made> [accessed 27 February 2021].
[140] *Beyond Utopia*, ed. by Sophie Warren and Jonathan Mosley, Surface Tension Supplement, 5 (Berlin: Errant Bodies Press, 2012), p. dust jacket. See also Warren & Mosely, 'Beyond Utopia', 2012 <http://warrenandmosley.com/beyond-utopia-2012/> [accessed 27 February 2021].
[141] Kenny, pp. 221–22.
[142] Ibid., p. 230.
[143] Robin Wilson, 'A Collaborative Utopian Practice – Introduction to the Screenplay of "First Build"', in *Beyond Utopia*, ed. by Sophie Warren and Jonathan Mosley, Surface Tension Supplement, 5 (Berlin: Errant Bodies Press, 2012), pp. 14–16 (p. 14).

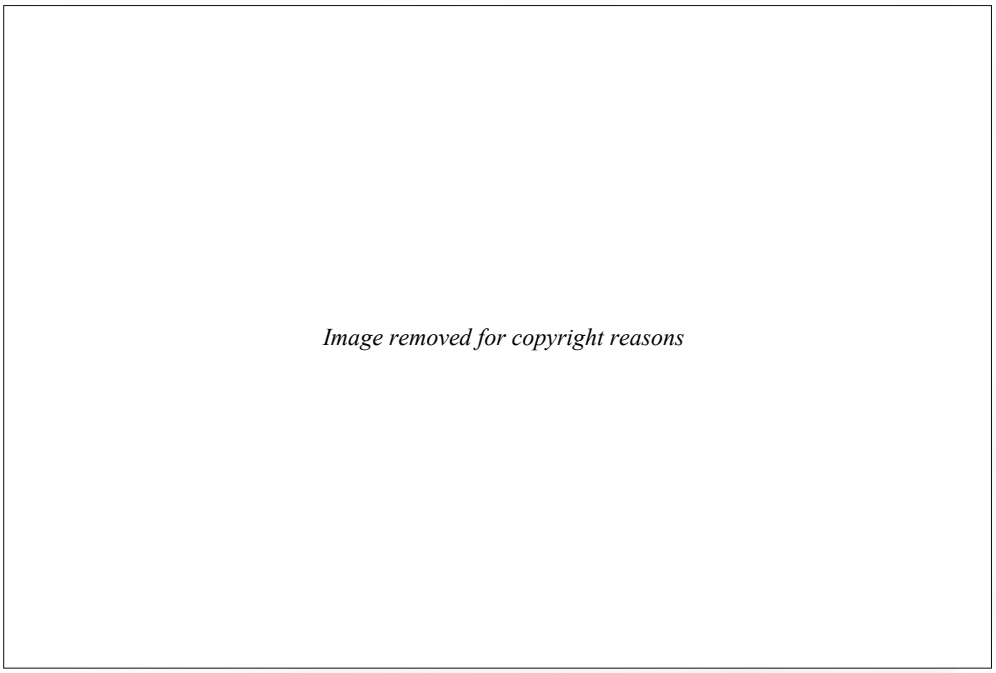


Fig. 12. *Beyond Utopia* is a screenplay that speculates on what format the processes of auditing a utopian architectural planning proposal might take. From Warren and Mosely *Beyond Utopia* 2012.

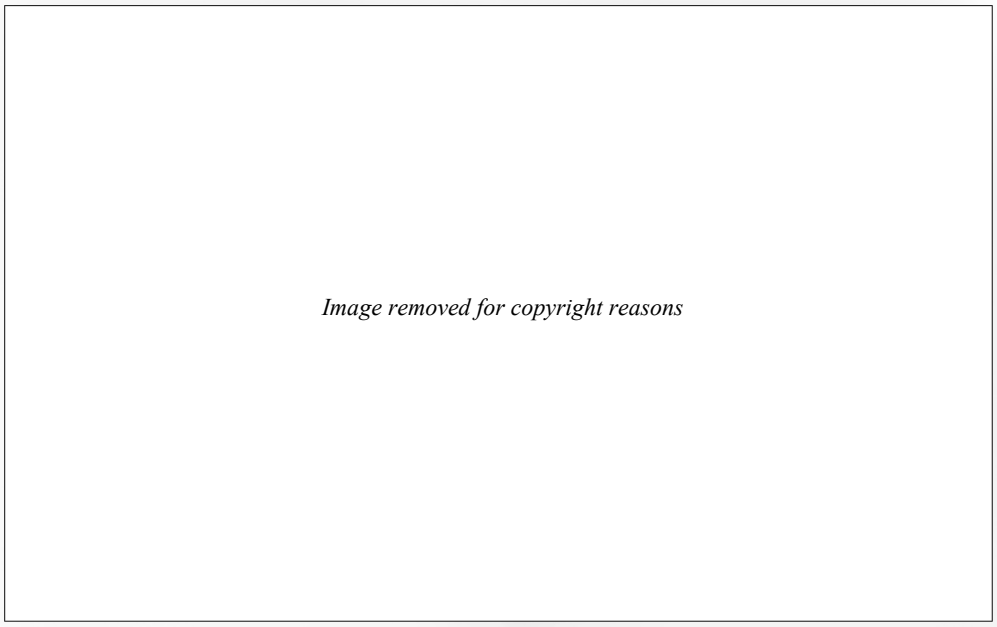


Fig. 13. 'Slides in the Public Realm: A Feasibility Study for London'.
General Public Agency 2006.

the initial stages of the regeneration programme for Stratford in east London, 'Slides in the Public Realm' was made in consultation with structural engineers Adams Kara Taylor and Wiegand, designers and manufacturers of slides. The resultant tongue-in-cheek report rigorously references policy and other legislative statutory frameworks to assess the feasibility of different types of imaginary slides. In the report, categories such as 'user offer', 'efficiency', 'general enhancement' and 'animation of the public realm', which render architectural and urban design projects 'feasible', are used to assess proposals that vertiginously span between buildings, transport hubs and commercial spaces.[144] Through evidencing ways by which the proposed slides align perfectly with 'placemaking' in their contribution to a 'marketable identity', the report both questions and ridicules these categories [Fig. 13].[145]

In parodying the language and assessment criteria by which buildings and public spaces are framed within legal, policy and regulatory contexts, these two examples make these criteria visible in a rigorous and methodological manner that is also humorous. The use of humour renders the discourse around these criteria ridiculous, opening them up for investigation. In *Beyond Utopia*, the incorporation of the unpredictable within operational frameworks that recognise, and in fact produce, 'only what they can predict',[146] offers a critique of these ways of operating and thinking. Similarly, 'Slides in the Public Realm' flags up how policy guidelines support certain ways of assessing and measuring regeneration strategies through financially motivated incentives that foster a certain safe and risk free 'offer', At the same time, in oscillating between reality and fiction both projects bring the imaginary into tension with normative development, enabling an imagining of alternatives through provoking the questions 'why not?' and 'what if?'.[147]

[144] General Public Agency with Adams Kara Taylor, 'Slides in the Public Realm: A Feasibility Study for London', in *Carsten Höller: Test Site*, ed. by Carsten Höller and others, The Unilever Series (presented at the Exhibition. Unilever Series, London: Tate Publ. [u.a.], 2006), pp. 57–88.
[145] The report examines the broader consequences of slides in the public realm, including how pleasure might be promoted within policy context, describing how 'The concept of pleasure in planning policy is rarely tested', with 'pleasant' perhaps being the only term that barely approximates 'the euphoric fun' that slides offer. It argues that linking slides to the promotion of healthy environments might offer some 'value assessment criteria' through which the 'benefits of laughter and smiling' to 'the nation's health and economy' might be reaped in the reduction of heart disease and stress levels. General Public Agency with Adams Kara Taylor, pp. 62–64.
[146] Leatherbarrow, *Architecture Oriented Otherwise*, p. 44.
[147] In her analysis of parody Kenny, like Miles, examines the work of the Yes Men. Claiming that 'In their declaration of the WTO's disbanding, the Yes Men prompt us to think, "what if?" and "why not?"'. Kenny, p. 230.

The Dependency of the Original

Parody and humour can afford a critical position, yet these ways of working also bring risks. Kenny examines how the parodic act is '*dependent* upon the original that it imitates' and in this dependency 'runs the risk of being compromised'.[148] As Butler argues, there is always the threat that the 'mobilisation of identity categories' in the parodic act will be assimilated into 'and become an instrument of the power one opposes'.[149] While fastidiously parodied, the adoption of the position of the designer, architect, masterplanner or developer that stands 'ahead or to the side' also runs the risk of the reproduction of that epistemological position itself.[150] The ambiguous nature of *The Handbook of Tyranny* makes the tyranny of design visible but also risks reinforcing it through abstraction. *Beyond Utopia* and 'Slides in the Public Realm' are disseminated in the realm of art practice, within which, as Miles argues, subversion and shock are invariably welcomed, encouraged and ultimately commodified.[151] Butler herself observes that 'subversive performances always run the risk of becoming deadening clichés […] through their repetition within commodity culture where "subversion" carries market value'.[152] Moreover, debates around the instrumentalisation of art practice as a means to foster neoliberal regeneration in the context of the 'creative city' are well known, as discussed further in chapter three of this thesis.[153]

Nevertheless, as Butler argues, 'if subversion is possible, it will be a subversion from within the terms of the law.'[154] There is a balancing act to be had between incorporation and subversion. In different ways, the work of Deutinger, Warren and Mosely and General Public Agency adopt this balancing act. They implement a position which retains the epistemological basis of the frameworks with which they, as architects and urban designers, are complicit in order to critique them. These questions around complicity in relation to the participatory methodologies are developed further in chapter three. For the moment, the discussion of these examples raises questions into how methodologies, that work with the

[148] Ibid., p. 226.
[149] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, p. xxviii.
[150] In 'Intellectuals and Power', Foucault argues that 'The intellectual's role is no longer to place himself "somewhat ahead and to the side" in order to express the stifled truth of the collectivity; rather, it is to struggle against the forms of power that transform him into its object and instrument in the sphere of "knowledge," "truth," "consciousness," and "discourse"'. Foucault and Deleuze, pp. 207–8.
[151] For Miles, art practice brings a risk that 'the shock value of banality becomes mere artifice in its mediation as high culture'. Miles, p. 167.
[152] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, pp. xxii–xxiii.
[153] See Gielen.
[154] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, p. 127.

performativity of architectural representation, might go beyond distanced critique into a propositional realm that is simultaneously materially, corporeally and politically situated?

1.4 Making Visible IV – Feminist Figurations as Situated Actions of Representation

Feminist Figurations

In Rosi Braidotti's affirmative philosophy, theory is also action. For Braidotti, 'it is not a matter of representing others, or speaking on their behalf, but rather about injecting doses of positivity (into institutional and academic practice,) so as to turn it into an instrument of production of the new.'[155] Her theories are rooted in accounting for the world from a situated position, in terms of matter, body and experience, while trying to change it in collaboration with others. In this sense, for Braidotti, theory is an active force creating the means of bringing into representation feminist figurations.

The term 'figuration' refers to an action of thinking that proposes alternative modes of subjectivity.[156] The 'nomadic subject' is Braidotti's most well-known figuration. She describes it as a 'myth, or a political fiction, that allows me to think through and move across established categories and levels of experience'.[157] For Braidotti, figurations have a critical purpose, to bring 'into representation the unthinkable'.[158] Critically, for Braidotti

> The nomadism in question here refers to the kind of critical consciousness that resists settling into socially coded modes of thought and behavior […] it is the subversion of set conventions and the consciousness-raising that defines the nomadic state, not the literal act of travelling.[159]

Feminist theorists have observed how the key difference between Butler's performativity and Braidotti's nomadic thought is that Braidotti's positioning 'does not end with one person's encounter with another'.[160] As feminist writer and curator Deborah Withers argues 'Braidotti's ethical project […] extends to animals, the environment – the vital life forces she

[155] Braidotti, 'Posthuman, All Too Human', p. 206.
[156] Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*.
[157] Braidotti, 'Writing as a Nomadic Subject', pp. 181–82.
[158] Rosi Braidotti, 'Teratologies', in *Deleuze and Feminist Theory*, ed. by Ian Buchanan and Claire Colebrook (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), pp. 156–72 (p. 171).
[159] Braidotti, 'Writing as a Nomadic Subject', p. 182.
[160] Deborah Withers, 'Transformative Thresholds: Braidotti, Butler & the Ethics of Relation'. <https://www.metamute.org/editorial/articles/transformative-thresholds-braidotti-butler-ethics-relation.#> [accessed 27 February 2021].

calls zoe – as well as the technological machinery of the 21st century'.[161] In order to think through our relationships differently, it focuses on a 'repositioning of the human […] in an interconnected, collectively conscious manner'.[162] For Braidotti, 'neo-materialism' goes beyond the 'linguistic paradigm', 'stressing instead the concrete yet complex materiality of bodies immersed in social relations of power'.[163]

Following from this chapter's focus on critical representational methodologies, in order to dismantle 'the master's house' one must first be aware of how it is made and with what tools. Both Braidotti and Butler focus on 'subversion of set conventions' and 'consciousness-raising', in order to challenge existing power relations from politicised positions within those very relations. In relation to the feminist subject, for Butler, this awareness and subversion stays within the categories of gender, whereas for Braidotti sexual difference proposes an alternative way of thinking through the feminist subject that resides within yet moves beyond existing categories and representations, to offer and produce qualitative difference.[164] As Braidotti herself argues, whereas for Butler 'difference is the limit of the discourse of embodiment', for Braidotti 'it is a negotiable, transversal, affective space'.[165]

As discussed earlier in this chapter, Lorde argues that survival is learning how to 'take differences and make them strengths'.[166] In placing critical focus on the material and social accountability of these differences, Braidotti gives further political focus to Deleuze's aforementioned reconfiguring of theory as action.[167] For Braidotti, 'the positioning that comes from our embodied and historically located subjectivities also determines the sort of political maps and conceptual diagrams we are likely to draw.'[168] On this basis, she argues that political accountability relies on an 'awareness of the limitations as well as the specificity

[161] Ibid.
[162] Ibid.
[163] Rick Dolphijn, Iris van der Tuin, and Rosi Braidotti, 'Interview with Rosi Braidotti', in *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies,* New Metaphysics, 1. ed (Ann Arbor, [Mich.]: Open Humanities Press, 2012), pp. 19–37 (p. 21). The implications of 'neo-materialism' or feminist material philosophies for approaches to conceptualising and working in and with public space will be developed in chapters three and four.
[164] Through the nomadic subject Braidotti proposes a three level rethinking of feminist subjectivity: 'differences between men and women', 'differences among women' and 'differences within each woman'. For Braidotti 'nomadic engagements' must stay with, in order to problematise, the 'stock of cumulated static images, concepts and representations of women, of female identity'. Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, pp. 158, 169. See also Helen Stratford, 'Micro-Strategies', in *Altering Practices: Feminist Politics and Poetics of Space*, ed. by Doina Petrescu (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 125–39 (p. 137).
[165] Rosi Braidotti, 'Affirming the Affirmative: On Nomadic Affectivity', *Rhizomes*, 2005 <http://www.rhizomes.net/issue11/braidotti.html> [accessed 27 February 2021].
[166] Lorde, p. 112.
[167] Braidotti, 'Teratologies', p. 171.
[168] Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, p. 123.

of one's locations'.[169] For Braidotti, this acknowledgement of the researcher's own position within research processes, is a key aspect of feminist situated critique that enables the imagination of alternative subjectivities from politically and epistemologically embodied and embedded positions.[170]

Drawing as Action

In her examination of feminist modes of architectural representation, architectural theorist Katie Lloyd Thomas describes how 'the [architectural] drawing both determines and limits the possibilities of the building, and suggests what is "proper" to the design discipline'.[171] For Lloyd Thomas, it is 'the particular use of geometry, itself the paradigm of the possibility of universal and neutral truth', that contributes 'to our blindness of the drawing's contingency'.[172] Within the context of critical representation, this thesis is situated within the ground-breaking work of feminist theorists and practitioners in unpacking and interrogating the *mots d'ordre* of architectural representation.[173] In many of such works, including that of Liquid Inc., Sarah Wigglesworth, MUF and Diller and Scofidio, alongside the writings of Lloyd Thomas, Catherine Ingraham and Jennifer Bloomer, among others, there is a reviewing of the conventions of architectural drawing – thinking and drawing 'otherwise' that aims to

[169] Braidotti, 'Teratologies', p. 171.
[170] See also Haraway, 'Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective'; Teresa Hoskyns and Helen Stratford, 'Was (Is) Taking Place a Nomadic Practice?', *Architecture and Culture*, 5.3 (2017), 407–21 <https://doi.org/10.1080/20507828.2017.1379310>.
[171] Katie Lloyd Thomas, 'Lines in Practice: Thinking Architectural Representation Through Feminist Critiques of Geometry', *Geography Research Forum*, 21 (2001), 57–76 (p. 58).
[172] Ibid. Critiquing the conventional position of architectural drawings as simply preceding its object, Lloyd Thomas draws on feminist examinations of geometry that explore 'important critiques of Cartesianism', to ask 'What might be the political implications and operations of generative geometric representation?'. Ibid.
[173] This position stems from earlier research into practices that redeploy the language of architecture to challenge and resist dominating power structures from situated positions of oppression within political regimes. In this previous research I have critically discussed the performative work of Russian and Romanian architects and student groups. In the 80s these architects and groups questioned orthodoxies in architecture around them in order to challenge political regimes and proposed alternative architectural pedagogies from very different political and cultural contexts. See Helen Stratford, Doina Petrescu, and Constantin Petcou, 'Form-Trans-Inform: The "Poetic" Resistance in Architecture', *Architectural Research Quarterly*, 12.2, 149–58 <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1359135508001036>; Stratford, 'Enclaves of Expression'.

challenge the abstract, objectified and totalising viewpoint of the architect.[174] As Lloyd Thomas argues, many enable an 'inclusion of multiple knowledges', including the everyday and the sensuous, and an ambiguity of territories as a way to 'subvert the "strong objectivity"' of conventional analytical drawings.[175]

Lloyd Thomas analyses how different modes of drawing might be seen as 'figurations'. In this, she specifically refers to Donna Haraway's figuration of the 'modest witness'.[176] According to Braidotti, the figuration of the modest witness offers 'the notion of modesty as a form of accountability, open-ended dialogue and critical thinking that aims at witnessing, not at judging'.[177] For Braidotti, the modest witness is 'not allergic to power', but 'provides an enlarged definition of scientific objectivity as a local, partial and yet valuable achievement'.[178] Lloyd Thomas analyses how the 'local and partial' makes its way into the everyday dining table of Sarah Wigglesworth and the multiple, situated, fragile and ambiguous drawings of public spaces by MUF.[179] This 'enlarged definition' is also central to the seeping and amorphous bodily construction details of Liquid Inc.[180]

Ultimately for Lloyd Thomas, the geometrical drawing is limited and can only serve to re-situate the architect in the replication of Cartesian dualism.[181] As discussed earlier in this chapter, representational methodologies that adopt the tools of objective measurement risk

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[174] See Liquid Inc., Amy Landesberg, and Lisa Quatrale, 'See Angel Touch', in *Architecture and Feminism*, ed. by Debra Coleman, Elizabeth Danze, and Carol Henderson, 1st ed (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996), pp. 60–71; Jeremy Till and Sarah Wigglesworth, 'Table Manners', in *The Everyday and Architecture*, ed. by Maggie Toy, Architectural Design Profile, 68,7/8 134 (London: Acad. Ed, 1998), pp. 31–35; *This Is What We Do: A Muf Manual*, ed. by Rosa Ainley and Katherine Shonfield (London: Ellipsis, 2001); Diller + Scofidio, 'Slow House Project, North Haven, Long Island, New York, Perspective and Plans of TV in Picture Window Apparatus', The Museum of Modern Art, 1991 <https://www.moma.org/collection/works/440> [accessed 28 February 2021]. See also *Back to the Front: Tourisms of War*, analytic drawing for the *SuitCase Studies* project by Diller + Scofido analysed by Justine Clark in 'Smudges Smears and Adventitious Marks', *Interstices: Journal of Architecture and Related Arts*, 2019, 1–8. Jennifer Bloomer, *Architecture and the Text: The (s)Crypts of Joyce and Piranesi*, Theoretical Perspectives in Architectural History and Criticism (New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 1993); Jennifer Bloomer, 'Abodes of Theory and Flesh: Tabbles of Bower', *Assemblage*, 17, 1992, 6 <https://doi.org/10.2307/3171221>; Catherine Ingraham, *Architecture and the Burdens of Linearity*, Theoretical Perspectives in Architectural History and Criticism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).
[175] Lloyd Thomas, p. 62.
[176] Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium.FemaleMan_Meets_OncoMouse*.
[177] Braidotti, 'Posthuman, All Too Human', p. 206.
[178] Ibid.
[179] Here, Lloyd Thomas also refers to MUF's mapping of official and unofficial boundaries in their 'first drawing' for improvements to Southwark Street in London *Territorial Drawing for Southwark Street*, Lloyd Thomas, p. 64.
[180] See 'see angle touch', by Liquid Incorporated (Amy Landesberg and Lisa Quatrale) a drawing project that uses the 'cornice of angels' on Louis Sullivan's Bayard building in New York to create an imaginary additional floor. Liquid Inc., Landesberg, and Quatrale.
[181] Lloyd Thomas, p. 62.

becoming regarded as a measure of objectivity themselves, with implications for the particular 'everyday' represented in Wigglesworth's drawing for example. While, as Butler also argues, any appropriative act brings with it a necessary dependence upon the original and the 'threat' of instrumentalisation, productive tactics can be found in the re- or mis-use of the *mot's d'ordre* of the architectural drawing. Like the aforementioned work of Ukeles, these feminist representational critiques, which make visible the fragility of these *mots d'ordre* through their subversion, stem from a particular situated position. This situated critique challenges hierarchies and exclusions from within professional architectural practice in order to rethink the practice of architecture itself.[182]

Errors and Smudges

Many feminist representational critiques adopt tools of 'myth-making' in order to critique the 'reality' that particular drawing techniques produce. These methods have been developed further by methodologies that focus on that which exceeds 'objective' methods of representation. Justine Clark's analysis of error and the accidental in 'Smudges Smears and Adventitious Marks', focuses on the troubling aspects of hidden process that, as discussed earlier in this chapter in relation to support and maintenance, both critique and generate alternate imaginaries and spatial knowledge in relation to the image of architecture. As in Sample's reviewing of maintenance, for Clark, smudges make visible the processes involved in the construction of the drawing. They 'intimate the fabricated nature of drawing, the substantial surface and the work of representation'.[183]

The embracing of process and error is famously a key aspect of the 'dirty drawings' of Jennifer Bloomer. For Lloyd Thomas the 'ambiguous methods of representation' of organic inks on rough paper make 'accurate dimensioning impossible, and allow the making process to be open to interpretation'.[184] Similarly, Clark's analysis of *Back to the Front: Tourisms of War* by Diller and Scofidio, focuses on a large smudge which stains the image. For Clark, the materiality of the image, both of the smudge and its pixelated reproduction, 'constitutes an

[182] In relation to the domestic actions of Ukeles, another architectural work that uses parodic reproduction is Elizabeth Diller *Bad Press: an Exercise in Dissident Housework* (1993) made with 25 generic white shirts, an iron, and spray starch. Each shirt is ironed is a particular way that deviates from the in order to critique the image of the functional through the dysfunctional. On this basis, it scrutinises ironing as one forms of domestic labour in order to free the 'postindustrial body' from an 'aesthetics of efficiency'. Diller Scofidio + Renfro, 'Bad Press' <https://dsrny.com/project/bad-press> [accessed 13 March 2021].
[183] Clark, p. 2.
[184] Lloyd Thomas, p. 68.

"indecipherable counter-image".' For Clark, 'the blur of graphite lies outside the purview of the line. Like clouds it cannot be submitted to geometric analysis, it disrupts mathematical descriptions of reality.'[185] This disruption of 'mathematical descriptions of reality'[186] through error and the inclusion of processes and practices typically excluded from the production of architecture, is also developed more recently by Hughes' aforementioned critique of precision. In this critique, Hughes argues that while error is a critical tool against precision 'any attempt to simply render error legitimate' serves to 'colonize it'.[187]

The critique of colonising processes within architectural representation is central to the fictional and process-led large-scale graphite drawings of architectural designer/researcher Thandi Loewenson. Informed by the 'spect-actor' theories of Augusto Boal's 'Theatre of the Oppressed',[188] in which the rehearsal of revolution becomes a mechanism for revolution itself, Loewenson explores 'drawing as a form of forum theatre'.[189] In *A Weird Tender*, the process of drawing forms a central part of a 'speculative tender' for Lusaka city dump, Zambia. In this work drawings are deployed to research how stories told through representations of Mailo, a fictional city, disrupt current conceptions of Lusaka.[190] In this context, drawing acts as a vehicle by which to develop a situated collaborative practice between Lusaka City Council and Chunga Waste Recycler's Association [Fig. 14]. Via a fictional encounter with a real story of a Zambian Space Program, it offers a methodology to imagine how the dump might be managed by those who currently operate it, instead of planned privatisation.[191]

Loewenson describes how 'graphite leaves traces of encounter with everything it comes into contact with'.[192] The drawings pick up and imprint traces of participants, acting as 'material witness' to the tender process.[193] Yet, beyond the literal transfer of black dust, Loewenson also refers to graphite's material histories as a mined mineral with a connection to the

[185] Clark, p. 2.
[186] Ibid.
[187] Hughes, p. 248.
[188] Augusto Boal, *Theater of the Oppressed* (London: Pluto Press, 1998).
[189] Thandi Loewenson and Rosa-Johan Uddoh, *A New Model for Rehearsal* (AA School of Architecture, 2020) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMAILR04IZY> [accessed 28 February 2021].
[190] University College London, 'Making Spaces Meaningful through Architectural Storytelling', *The Bartlett*, 2017 <https://www.ucl.ac.uk/bartlett/news/2017/dec/making-spaces-meaningful-through-architectural-storytelling> [accessed 28 February 2021].
[191] Thandi Loewenson, 'A Weird-Tender in Progress', *Critical Spatial Practice | Critical Spatial Practice*, 2019 <https://criticalspatialpractice.co.uk/a-weird-tender-in-progress-2019/> [accessed 28 February 2021].
[192] Loewenson and Uddoh.
[193] University College London.

absorption of light, radio and microwaves. For her, it is a conductor of ideas and energy with the possibility to conjure new realities. In Clark's analysis of adventitious marks, drawing is also material practice – an action that introduces different ways of looking and approaches to architecture. In this context, in the sense of Braidotti's creative, critical, affirmative philosophy, drawing becomes an active force. It is theory as practice. For Clark, 'rather than a systematic explanation', it is 'tentative, changing, murky' through which representation is not about 'projection and clarity' both of which 'elide subjectivity and the body', but rather is framed as 'tentative work' that 'implies the body'.[194]

Braidotti argues that 'myths' or 'political fictions' allow a thinking through and moving across established categories. For Braidotti, there is an implicit 'belief in the potency and relevance of the imagination, of myth-making as an element fuelling our creativity'.[195] For Loewenson, 'drawing on the real-world model of Lusaka – yesterday, today and tomorrow – infused with elements of science fiction and fantasy, Mailo is familiar and, simultaneously, modabwitsa chachilendo, amazingly strange.'[196] This creation of a mythical space has stimulated other possibilities for collaborations between city authorities and workers – envisaging alternatives to the projected privatisation of the dump.[197] Creativity, here is not the realisation of the utopic project, but the possibility to bring into representation previously 'unthinkable realities' through collaborative and materially embodied actions that exert a performative force on 'original' relations of race and class embedded in drawing practice itself.

Incorporating the Subject

In *Site-writing* Jane Rendell discusses Umberto Eco's adoption of the terms 'performer' and 'interpreter' in relation to a work of art.[198] For Rendell, Eco's notions of 'performer' and 'interpreter' acknowledge that differences in interpretative attitudes have different 'performative manifestations', 'produced as they are according to the distinctive locations of interpretation'.[199] Rendell extends this notion of interpretative attitudes into writing, analysing how, in its different performative manifestations, writing holds 'spatial potential',

[194] Clark, p. 4. See also Hélène Frichot, *Dirty Theory: Troubling Architecture* (AADR Spurbuchverlag, 2019).
[195] Braidotti, 'Writing as a Nomadic Subject', p. 182.
[196] Loewenson.
[197] Jane Rendell, *Site-Writing: The Architecture of Art Criticism* (London: I B Tauris & Co Ltd, 2010), p. 3.
[198] Through discussing Eco's essay 'The Poetics of the Open Work', Rendell argues that Eco proposes that a work of art might be 'used as well as contemplated'. Ibid.
[199] Ibid.

whereby 'different modes of writing construct architecture through the intimate and personal, through multi-sensual rather than purely visual stimulation'.[200] While an analysis of the psychoanalytical concepts that inform Rendell's position is beyond the focus of this thesis, the methodology of expanding writing as a tool by which to critique and produce new spatial knowledge is a key aspect that informs the analysis of the final project in this section.

In *The Fluid Pavement and Other Stories On Growing Old in Newnham*, urban researcher Sophie Handler uses different modes of writing and representation to examine how the urban landscape is reconfigured from the viewpoint of 'old age'.[201] This publication combines photographs, narrative and fictional propositions to explore 'a borough-wide investigation into "the problem of aging" in Newnham'.[202] Based on over a hundred documented conversations, spending six months interviewing elderly residents, it focuses on problematising preconceptions of aging processes found in policies and literature. Rather than presenting ageing as a problem to be solved, Handler asks what can we learn from this position? Further, how can proposals be generated that accept differences within aging processes as potential, rather than framing them via criteria around what is considered 'appropriate' or somehow 'better'.[203]

To interrogate these questions, *The Fluid Pavement* employs many of the tools explored earlier in this chapter, including speculative and fictional design propositions and personae. However, rather than a critique placed 'ahead and to the side' of its subject, in the publication there is an active inclusion of the author. Throughout *The Fluid Pavement,* Handler writes from the point of fictional view of an older self, set up via the trope of a conversation with a 60-year-old Sophie. For Braidotti, figurations are 'materially embodied' representations which mark different steps in 'undoing power relations in the very structures of one's subject position'.[204] In contrast to the able-bodied fictions of 'Slides in the Public Realm', by

[200] Ibid., p. 17. In this, Rendell directly references the work of Meike Bal *Louise Bourgeois' Spider the architecture of art writing* and also refers to the 'architexture' concept of literary critic Mary Anne Caws, where attention is drawn to 'the surface and texture of the text as a form of construction'. Rendell also highlights Guiliana Bruno's Atlas of Emotion; the situated writings of Katja Grillner and the texts of Jennifer Bloomer. Rendell then proceeds to 'enact' art criticism as a 'critical spatial practice', where 'the intention is not to "apply" spatial concepts to psychoanalyse certain artworks, but to put into play certain ways of working and creating inspired by psychoanalysis […] to write to sites of this critic's engagement with specific artworks'. Ibid., pp.17–18.
[201] Sophie Handler, *The Fluid Pavement and Other Stories on Growing Old in Newnham* (London: RIBA, 2006)
[202] Handler, *The Fluid Pavement and Other Stories on Growing Old in Newnham*, p. v.
[203] See Sophie Handler, 'Resistant Sitting – The Pensioner's Alternative Street Furniture Guide.', 2008.
[204] Braidotti, 'Teratologies', pp. 170–71.

embodying interpretations of the problematic nature of the urban environment through the aging body of the author's older self, the fictional interviews critique spatial knowledge of the city gained through a younger more able body.

In 'Measured Footfalls', the embodied nature of this narrative is also extended to the reader. In this chapter a series of barely changing photographs of a street in Newnham, offer a way to account for the slowing down of walking and the detail recorded through this process.[205] Through the photographs and their placement in the book, the reader becomes aware of the temporal dimension of walking from an aging perspective, slow, careful, attentive. In this way, the photographs make tangible the somatic qualities of aging bodies, initiating an embodied appreciation of these bodies and their particular ways of navigating urban space.

For Braidotti, figurations have a critical purpose, to bring 'into representation the unthinkable'.[206] The figurations of the older Sophie foster the development of alternative spatial possibilities as a situated mode of critiquing, but also constructing, urban space. At the end of *The Fluid Pavement* Handler presents '10 Spatial Propositions' that speculate on how the particular ways of navigating the urban environment embedded in the text, might be accommodated and celebrated within the everyday lives of elderly citizens. These design propositions comprise seemingly 'practical' solutions, including 'The Accommodating Low Wall' and 'A Set of Intermediate Clothes' – 'a form of indoor/outdoor wear designed for vacillating on a threshold'.[207] Yet, they also embrace the fantastical, such as 'The Fluid Pavement', a 'Venetian-style canal for pedestrians with water filled to the height of an ailing hip' [Fig. 15].[208]

For Handler, the propositions are 'the precise elaborations of speculations that take place in the story'.[209] Propositions such as 'A Last Dance in The Park' offer ways by which 'irreverent behaviour' might be combined with 'old-style conformity'.[210] Here, 'an illicit flash-mob act of unsanctioned congregation in the park after closing time' is united with the

[205] Handler, *The Fluid Pavement and Other Stories on Growing Old in Newnham*, pp. 25–39.
[206] Braidotti, 'Teratologies', p. 171.
[207] Handler, *The Fluid Pavement and Other Stories on Growing Old in Newnham*, pp. 73, 75.
[208] Ibid., p. 74.
[209] Ibid., p. 69. Critically, these propositions are written not drawn. In 'Lines in Practice', Lloyd Thomas refers to the work of novelist and playright Doris Lessing, specifically her use of prose to describe her childhood home that might also be 'read as a work of drawing'. Lloyd Thomas, p. 73.
[210] Handler, *The Fluid Pavement and Other Stories on Growing Old in Newnham*, p. 78.

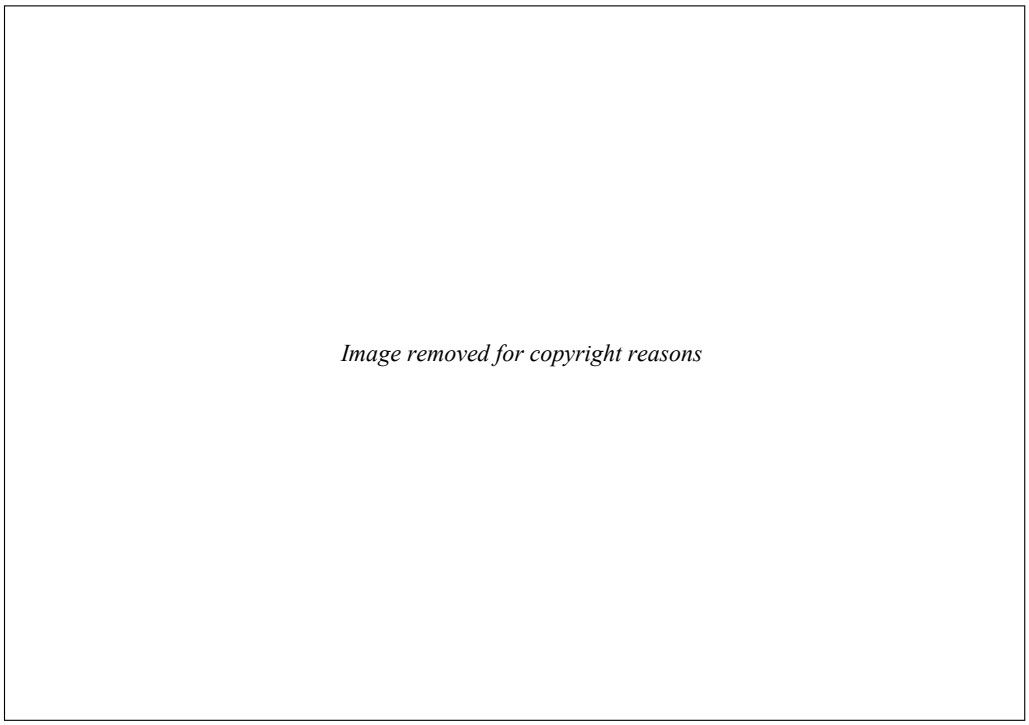
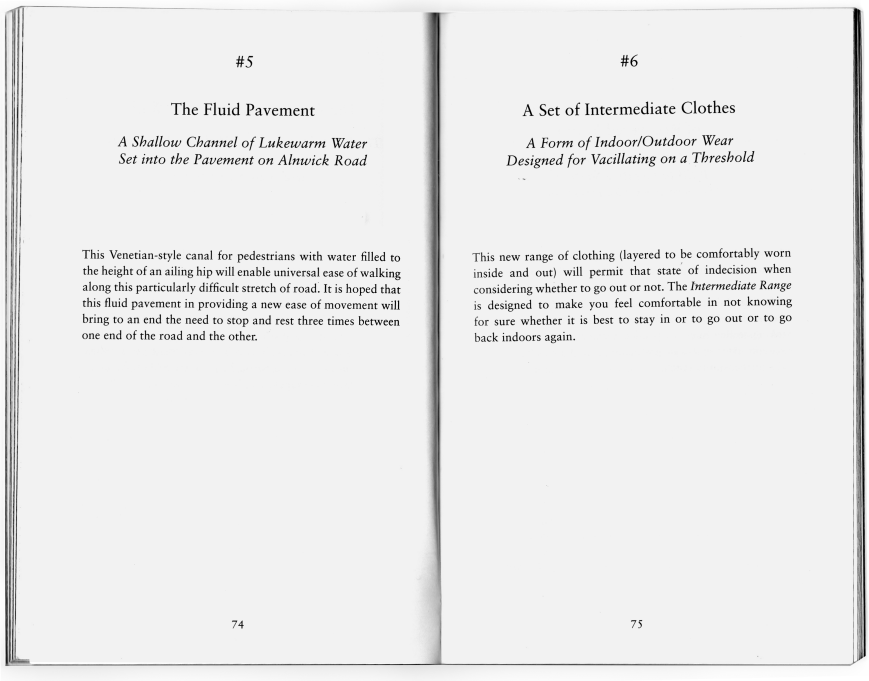


Fig. 14. In A Weird Tender drawing acts as a vehicle by which to develop a collaborative practice, from <https://criticalspatialpractice.co.uk/a-weird-tender-in-progress-2019/> [accessed 14 March 2021] Thandi Lowenson 2019



#5

The Fluid Pavement

A Shallow Channel of Lukewarm Water
Set into the Pavement on Alnwick Road

This Venetian-style canal for pedestrians with water filled to the height of an ailing hip will enable universal ease of walking along this particularly difficult stretch of road. It is hoped that this fluid pavement in providing a new ease of movement will bring to an end the need to stop and rest three times between one end of the road and the other.

74

#6

A Set of Intermediate Clothes

A Form of Indoor/Outdoor Wear
Designed for Vacillating on a Threshold

This new range of clothing (layered to be comfortably worn inside and out) will permit that state of indecision when considering whether to go out or not. The *Intermediate Range* is designed to make you feel comfortable in not knowing for sure whether it is best to stay in or to go out or to go back indoors again.

75

Fig. 15. '10 Spatial Propositions', that offer ways by which everyday lives of elderly citizens might be accommodated and celebrated #5 and #6. From Sophie Handler The Fluid Pavement 2006

'historic re-enactment of a lost tradition', thereby offering a playful way by which older people might 'lay claim to the public realm'.[211] These spatial manifestations convey the ways older bodies inhabit particular urban environments, at the same time, within them there is an implicit critique of particular standards of behaviour, making visible differentiation as a productive possibility. Moreover, as discussed earlier in this chapter, the gentle humour in the propositions act as a critical tool, addressing 'fear and piety'[212] in relation to discourse around aging in order to make visible how that particular discourse is constructed.

In relation to place as performance, Handler's propositions reveal the performative nature of conventions and norms, the *mots d'ordre* of language, spatial design and imaginaries in relation to older people. As in *A Weird Tender* of Loewenson, the propositions oscillate between reality and fiction, making visible current reality as a fiction to allow an imagining of other possibilities. In different ways, both projects shed light on how powerful norms, around race, class, vulnerability and disability, construct certain types of citizen, divested of agency in public space. At the same time, they offer speculative ways by which the city might be performed differently. In these speculations the position of the researcher, and also her collaborator or reader, is not detached, but situated and implicated. In this way, they initiate what Braidotti describes as a material and epistemologically accountable 'critical consciousness that resists settling onto socially coded modes of thought and behaviour'.[213]

For Braidotti, a critical feminist way of thinking and working is necessarily 'relational and outside-directed'.[214] The research of Loewenson and Handler offers representational methodologies that take account of and in fact hold to account both the constructed nature of the researcher and the constructed nature of public space. At the same time, they use the tools by which these representations are produced against themselves to construct 'myths' or 'political fictions' that enable a thinking through established categories in order to make way for alternate possibilities to unfold. In both, those who are overlooked become active participants in the creation of a fictional reality, fostering what Braidotti might describe as a 'negotiable, transversal affective space'.[215]

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[211] Ibid.
[212] Kenny, p. 224.
[213] Braidotti, 'Writing as a Nomadic Subject', p. 182.
[214] Braidotti, *Metamorphoses: Towards a Materialist Theory of Becoming* (Cambridge, UK ; Malden, MA:- Published by Polity Press in association with Blackwell Publishers, 2002), p. 12.
[215] Braidotti, 'Affirming the Affirmative: On Nomadic Affectivity'.

The development of participatory methodologies through collaborative actions based in fiction and performance-based actions will be developed further in chapters three and four. For the moment, in relation to representation as figurations, Loewenson and Handler's research uses materially situated representations, based in memory and narrative, to think through spatial relationships with race and age in order to focus on a 'repositioning of the human' in relation to the 'technological' – of minerals and space travel, and the 'vital' – of life itself, in an 'interconnected, collectively conscious manner'.[216] Ultimately, in expressing ways of envisaging and performing the urban otherwise, both *A Weird Tender* and *The Fluid Pavement* offer methodologies that embody a form of critical representation that points towards the practicing of a different type of public space itself.

This section has explored theories and practices that critique objectifying languages of architecture and public space; connecting the functional and neutral to social and cultural processes; transforming what *is* into what *does*. In analysing these theories and practices it has developed an approach to performativity that explores how public space is performed through *mots d'ordre* – representations, objects and actions that have social, cultural, political and economic implications. Placing theories from Lefebvre, Deleuze, Guattari and Mersch, and feminist theorists Butler, Braidotti and Haraway, in dialogue with architecture and art practices, this section has argued that this inherent performativity of public space renders it fragile. Through these analyses, it has focused on the development of methodologies which employ representation, parody and fiction to make visible the performativity of public space and the 'otherwise' that resides within it. Moreover, it examined how these methodologies, which focus on making visible overlooked and hidden people and practices, have a long history in feminist spatial practice in proposing other ways of practicing architecture. Finally, informed by the situated and politically affirmative feminist theories of Braidotti, this section argued that in order to challenge the replication of objectifying epistemological structures, this 'making visible' of the performativity of public space must originate from a situated position that recognizes and critiques the performativity of that position itself.

The next two sections will develop these methodologies further through examining their application in 'Communities under Construction', an artist residency exploring the public spaces of a privately developed new settlement in Cambridgeshire. Accounting and reflecting on this project will examine the effectiveness of a synthesis of these methodologies in

[216] Withers.

critiquing dominant power structures and hierarchies reperformed through public space in this particular situation. It will reflect on how the practice builds on methods of representation, parody and fiction, asking what can be learnt about the application of these methods in this particular context? Beyond this analysis of immediate implications, it will also look at what further questions are raised by the practice, in terms of the situated issues around performativity discussed in this section. To do this I will reflect on my own position in order to examine the spaces and epistemological positions generated through the practice. From this reflection I will begin to address what a situated feminist methodology that makes visible the performativity of public space could look like, while taking tentative steps towards proposing what types of spaces it might produce.

Section Two

Communities under Construction

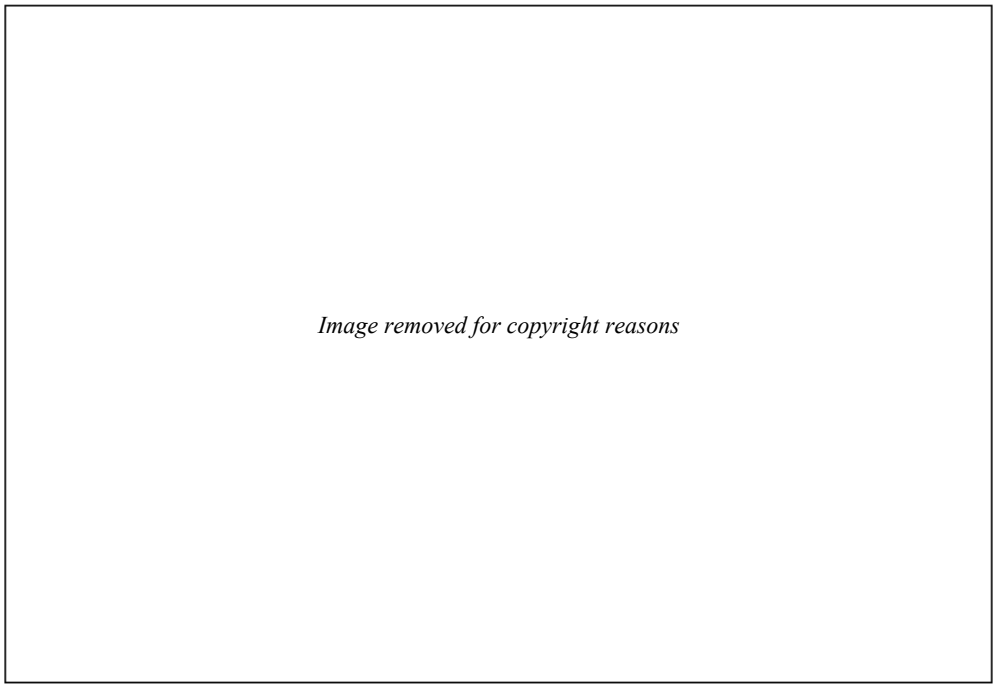


Fig. 16. Cambourne Website 2009

(10)

Although no sports, recreational, or other leisure activities take place on roadside areas laid to lawn (i.e. roundabouts, verges, central reservations, etc.), they nevertheless perform an important function within Cambourne. They provide a visual amenity for residents. Due to the absence of human activity they offer a sense of calm and order. They are a place for the driver's eyes to rest.

A unique network of green spaces directs the way that Cambourne is perceived. This network defines the spatial relationship between the discrete areas of housing. The roundabouts etc. offer visitors and prospective homebuyers their first introduction to this network, so it is imperative that they should be presentable. In order to make clear the connection with Lower Cambourne cricket pitch, and to draw in the wider associations with village greens and formal gardens, the grass on roundabouts etc. shall be cut in strictly delineated stripes. Their alignment shall be determined with reference to the first stripe (Walk 1 in Fig. A (a)). All other parallel alignments shall be correct within a lateral tolerance of 120mm therefrom.

The mowing shall be carried out in a calm and measured manner, neither hurriedly nor to the accompaniment of music (e.g. from the cab of a pick-up or other transport). The operatives shall be of respectable appearance—workwear, not casuals—and shall avoid recourse to the removal of shirts etc. The operation shall thus be performed in a manner that supports the intended reassurance and welcome that these areas are designed to provide.

Fig. 17. 'Mechanical Operations in Turf Upkeep.'
From Helen Stratford and Lawrence Bradby *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* 2009.

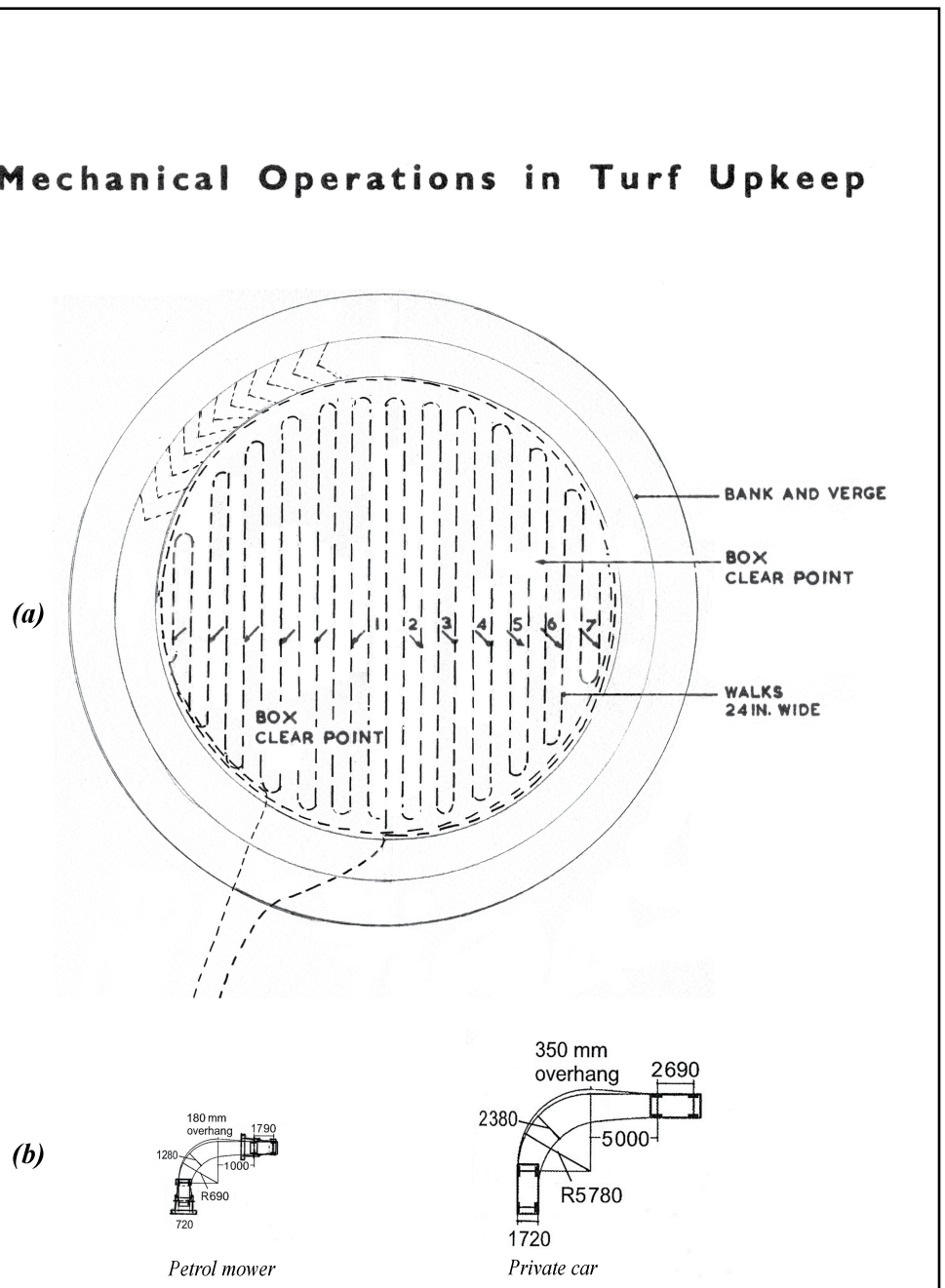


Fig. A. *(a) Typical lawn-mowing roundabout manoeuvres: Cambourne, Caxton entrance. (b) Geometric characteristics of typical vehicles turning through 90 degrees.*

Communities Under Construction – Background

From March to September 2009 I was a residency artist at Wysing Arts Centre, UK on their 'Communities under Construction' program. In this program artists were selected via competitive application to work within and in response to villages and communities surrounding the centre. I was interested to research the practices and processes that produce and maintain public spaces. Spaces that are walked through, sat in, looked at, talked about, run around, cycled past, inhabited and transformed through different activities. I set out to explore how these spaces are performed and to make those routine practices and processes visible. But further than that, I aimed to intervene in those spaces, to propose how they might be re-activated in ways that critique their existing defined use. Whether through mis- or re-use, I aimed to make temporary situations that opened the way for re-appropriation and re-invention of existing spaces.

For 'Communities under Construction' I worked in Cambourne, a new settlement nine miles west of the city of Cambridge. The masterplan for the 'new village' was produced by architects Farrells with landscape architects Randall Thorpe, with construction realised by The Cambourne Consortium, a group of developers including Bovis Homes, Bryant Homes and George Wimpey. Inaugurated in 1999, at the time of the residency Cambourne had just celebrated its tenth anniversary. Until then, my previous work had also included researching hidden or disregarded activities by which places are produced but had only focused on single spaces or buildings: the American Air Museum at the Imperial War Museum, Duxford,







Fig. 18. Cambourne's 'public' spaces. Each open space had its own designated name, use and props. Photographs Helen Stratford 2009.

Cambridge Arts Theatre and Piccadilly Gardens Manchester, through *Manchester Blind Spots* discussed in chapter two. What was different for 'Communities under Construction' was the plan to look at a whole village.

Open Spaces

And what a village! What struck me when I first drove through Cambourne – its layout to a large extent based on the primacy of the car – was the intensely 'maintained' qualities of some of the open spaces. These comprised the business park, the entrance roundabout, and the smaller 'interactive' spaces immediately adjacent to the housing. Yet whilst heavily maintained, many were empty and unused. Supporting this, I noticed and made note of the props that seemed to imply the foundations of a public, or rather social, space. There seemed to be an assumption that a bench, a bin, a fence and some perennial shrubbery constitute a social space even if the space is practically engulfed by them [Fig. 18]. Each open space in Cambourne had its own designated name, according to size, proximity and designated use. These included 'LAP's (Local Areas for Play), then 'NEAP's (Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play), LEAPs (Local Equipped Area for Play), 'SIP's (Spaces for Imaginative Play) 'Village Greens', alongside the 'Country park, the 'Entrance park', 'Eco park', 'Market Square', golf course and community allotments. All planned according to walking distances and in accordance with checklists of projected use [Figs. 19-20].

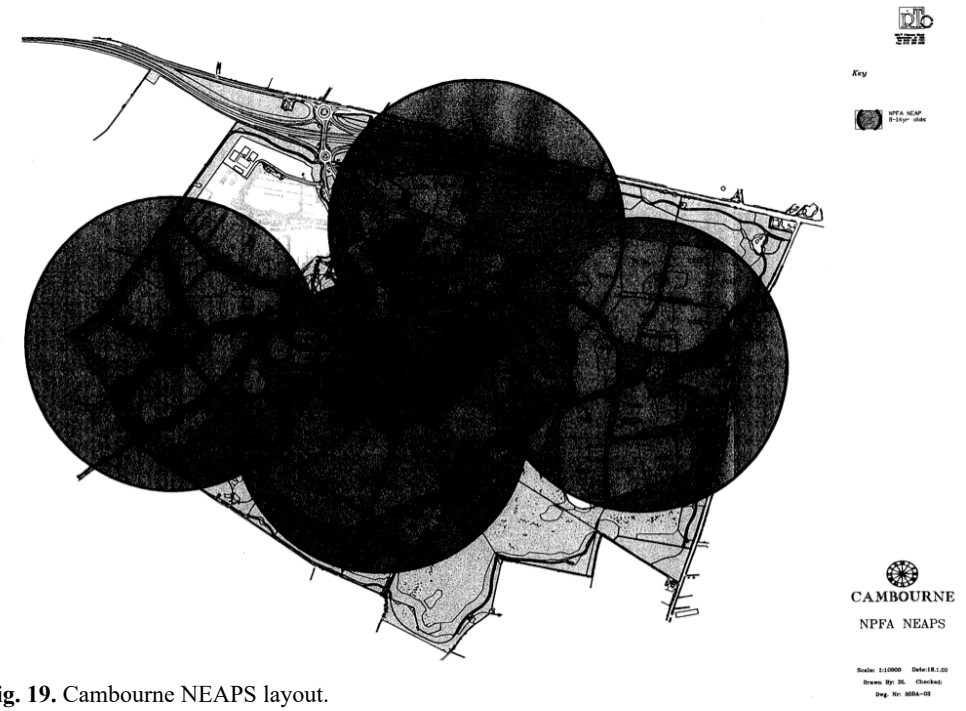


Fig. 19. Cambourne NEAPS layout.

Regular inspections

The regular check of the children's playground is intended to be quick and simple. Its primary function is to identify faults or dangers arising from vandalism. This checklist should give an indication of areas to be looked at.

Site

- ❑ Are signs present and legible
- ❑ Are road barriers present and in good condition
- ❑ Is lighting working
- ❑ Are fences secure and complete
- ❑ Are gates in working order
- ❑ Are pathways undamaged and free from obstructions
- ❑ Is the site free of litter, glass or any dangerous object

Ancillary items

- ❑ Are the seats secure and undamaged
- ❑ Are litter bins secure and undamaged
- ❑ Are they emptied
- ❑ Is the planting safe and undamaged

Surfacing

- ❑ Are safety surfaces undamaged
- ❑ Are loose-fill surfaces level, without rubbish or fouling

Equipment

All items

- ❑ Are all supports present and secure
- ❑ Is all timber work undamaged
- ❑ Are all safety barriers present
- ❑ Does the equipment work properly and without undue noise

Swings

- ❑ Are the swing chains unbroken
- ❑ Are the seats fixed securely and undamaged

Slides

- ❑ Are steps secure and undamaged
- ❑ Is the chute undamaged and clear of foreign objects

Roundabouts

- ❑ Does it revolve smoothly and noiselessly
- ❑ Is it undamaged
- ❑ Is it clear of rubbish underneath
- ❑ Does the speed restrictor work

Rocking items

- ❑ Does the item move smoothly and noiselessly
- ❑ Are all safety guards present
- ❑ Does any height restrictor work

Spring items

- ❑ Does the item move freely and noiselessly
- ❑ Are all the grips firm and secure
- ❑ Is the spring undamaged

Climbing frames

- ❑ Are the supports secure
- ❑ Are all the bars in place
- ❑ Are they securely fixed
- ❑ Are tubes end plugged

Cable slides

- ❑ Are the end supports securely fixed
- ❑ Does the runner move smoothly and quietly
- ❑ Is the seat in good condition
- ❑ Is the brake undamaged

Bridges

- ❑ Are the slats secure and not touching
- ❑ Is there a gap opening at the end which a child can slip through

Junior play

- ❑ Is the stone equitoise function in good condition
- ❑ Is the stone free of mortar and flaking

Base

- ❑ Are the seats secure and undamaged

Multi-play items

- ❑ Are all panels securely fixed
- ❑ Are all rungs, bars present
- ❑ Are there signs of corrosion, rust or fatigue, in metal where something may have been removed

Recording

- ❑ Have all faults been reported
- ❑ Has action been taken on previous faults
- ❑ Have you dated and signed a log book or summary of the inspection

Records

Inspection sheets and the work actioned as a result of them should be kept for the life of the equipment or at least fifteen years. Record when work has been carried out. Keep annual inspection records.

Wherever possible use the manufacturer's correct replacement parts or provide equivalent quality.

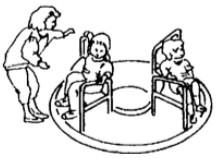


Fig. 20. Each open space in Cambourne was planned according to walking distances and in accordance with checklists of projected use. Cambourne Equipped Area for Play inspection checklist.

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, at the time of the residency Cambourne was still very much a 'show village'. In response to the official Cambourne website, findings from my initial observations and background research through the local planning department, the focus of the residency shifted towards researching how the image of Cambourne was reproduced daily. I started to build connections with residents alongside the people who maintained the open spaces through conversations about their work and everyday life.

These included the developer's maintenance team, including engineers, road workers, newt surveyors and road sweepers; alongside the light scouts and landscape maintenance teams, employed by the highways authority; planners, parish chargehands employed by the parish council [Fig. 21] and wildlife managers from the Wildlife Trust. At the same time, my research extended beyond these 'official' or 'formal' people and pratices to the 'informal' or 'unofficial', including residents, allotment holders and young people [Figs 22-24]. I walked, talked and spent typical working days with people in their space or the spaces under their management and maintenance, recording the activities that produce these spaces. Connections were made through local groups including the business park, the local youth centre and the parish council, via the consortium of developers who had a resident engineer on site and via the Arts Centre.



Fig. 21. Cambourne Parish Chargehands who maintained the open spaces of Cambourne. Whole days were spent with various workers as part of the research process. Photograph Helen Stratford 2009.

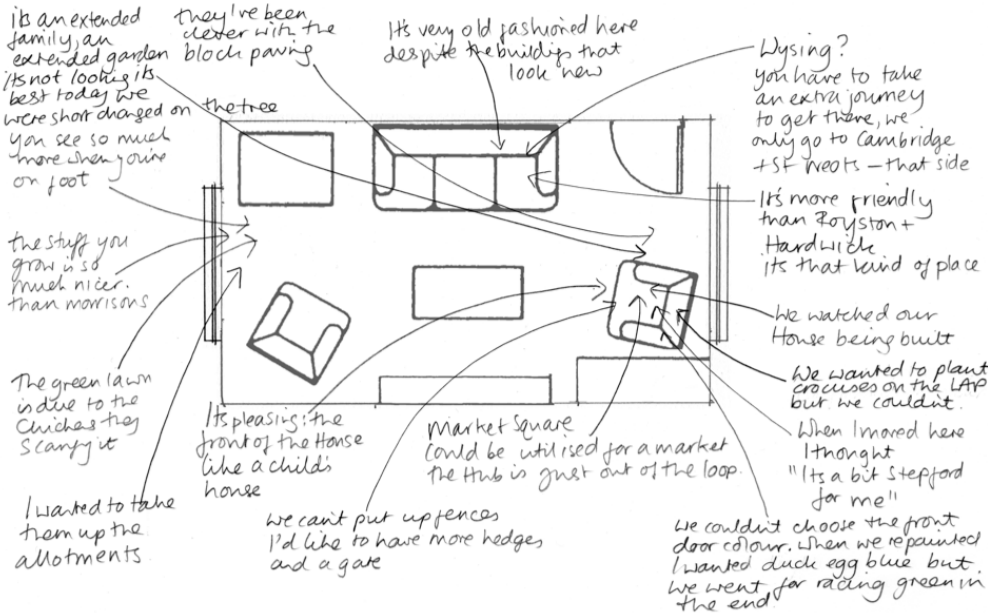


Fig. 22. Conversations were recorded on conversation maps. Cambourne resident conversation map 2009.

I collected activities through making conversation maps [Fig. 24], collecting routes and routines. Cambourne is about ten minutes by car and twenty minutes by bicycle from Wysing Arts Centre, where I stayed during the residency. Each time I visited Cambourne, I explored the ‘new village’ through the places people showed me in meetings or through walking. Whether over a whole day or a few hours, during both daytime and night time, I drew the route taken and noted the places people pointed out to me [Fig. 26].

I also collected ‘data’ in the form of required tasks including checklists, schedules and other documentation to which these tasks adhered [Fig. 25]. The majority of this research took place on foot or in vehicles, joining people in a van, car or lorry, but sometimes I visited people in their houses, community spaces or on their allotments. In fact, I was given different tours and descriptions of Cambourne at least once a week by over thirty five different people and cycled to it every week for six months. The maps I collected and produced, alongside the schedules, checklists and reports, show the routes taken but also the different individual interpretations of the settlement and its connections to other places in the area.



Fig. 23. Each person I joined offered me a different version of Cambourne. Cambourne Soul Youth Centre conversation. Photograph Helen Stratford 2009.

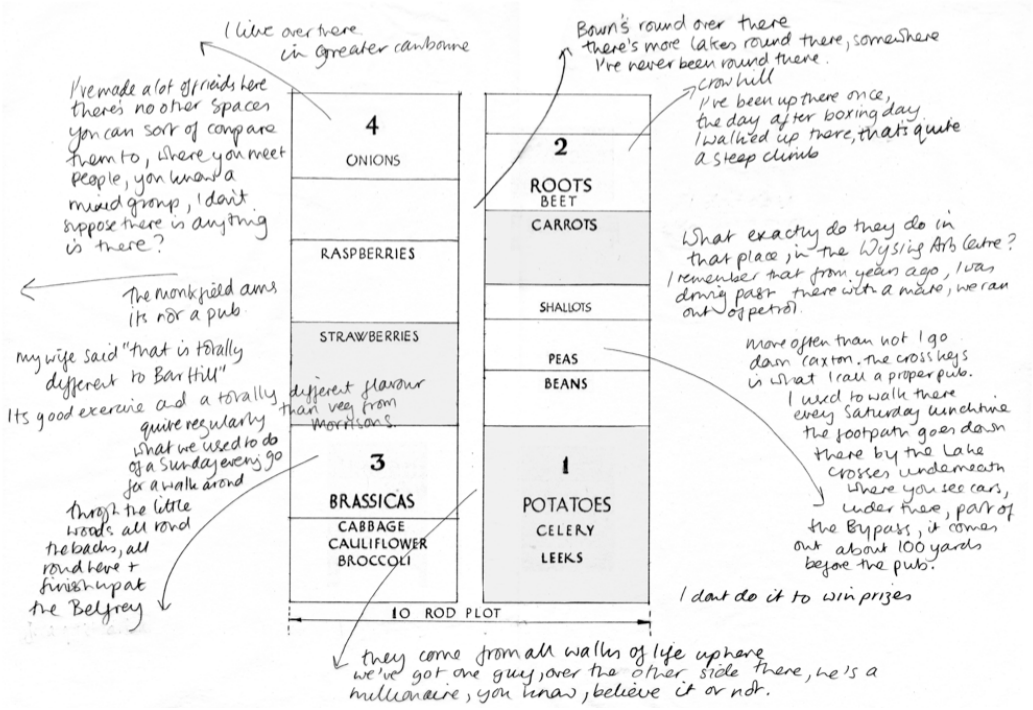
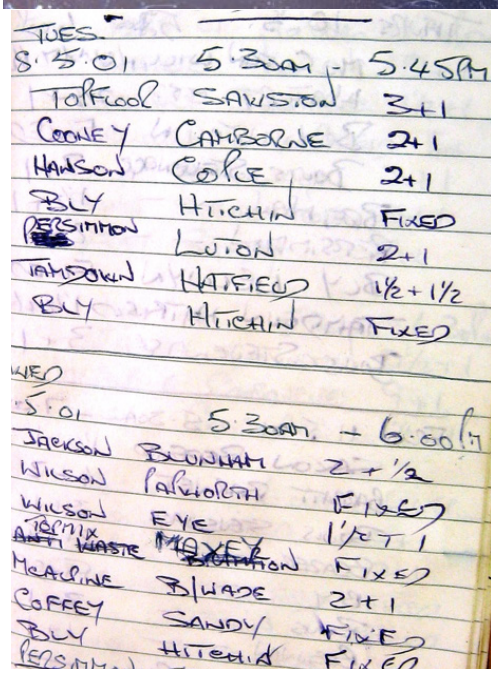


Fig. 24. Cambourne resident allotment holder conversation map 2009.







Cleaning of Cambourne Soul.

The office that is rented by CHA/Laura will either be occupied or locked and doesn't require cleaning. The office next to this is difficult to clean as it is used mainly for storage so just give a quick vacuum and dust once a month.

Weekly

Monday - the main room is occupied between 12 and 2 and in the near future possibly the morning as well.

Dust and vacuum the main room and the computer room.

Wipe all surfaces , cupboards and sink with antibacterial spray in the kitchenette and mop the floor.

Clean the toilet and hand basins. Wipe down all surfaces and the doors with antibacterial spray.

Vacuum and mop the lobby and toilets

Wednesday the main room is occupied between 11 and 1

Dust and vacuum the main room and the computer room.

Wipe all surfaces , cupboards and sink antibacterial spray in the kitchenette and mop the floor.

Clean the toilet and hand basins.

Vacuum and mop the lobby and toilets

Friday

Dust and vacuum the main room and the computer room.

Wipe all surfaces , cupboards and sink antibacterial spray in the kitchenette and mop the floor.

Clean the toilet and hand basins.

Vacuum and mop the lobby and toilets

Monthly

Dust all skirting boards and difficult areas such as behind sofas and TVs

Clean internal windows and glass panels on doors.

Thank you very much in anticipation for your work. If you have any questions please contact me on 07703342788. Please let me know when you are running low on any cleaning materials and I will supply them.

Kind regards

Fig. 25. Cambourne road sweeper van / checklist and 'Cleaning of Cambourne Soul', Youth Centre checklist. Photographs Helen Stratford 2009.



Fig. 26. Days spent with some workers included joining them in their work vehicles. Cambourne road sweeper map 2009.

Practicing Public Space – Differently

At the time of the residency, the identity of Cambourne was still evolving, many residents were still unsure if it was a village or a town. Responding to the rubric of the 'Communities under Construction' residency, rather than making things for the community, or representing it, I sought to participate in making the community itself. I planned to make discrete spatial interventions that focused on and were informed by the everyday life activities that I had collected.

Whilst spending time in Cambourne, I started to find moments of badly planned anomalous places. Some were pointed out to me by planners, workers and residents, but others I came across myself. In this heavily planned environment, my tours and walks uncovered moments of failure, anomalies where the plans did not work quite as well as had been envisaged. Spaces that did not 'perform' according to their specified function. For me, these moments of failure and mis-performance possessed hidden potential. These mistakes, where the designed rules had failed, were places of opportunity, ripe for temporary adaptive actions**.**

Hidden Amenities

In response to the apparent failures of the masterplan, I designed a series of temporary proposals entitled *Hidden Amenities* that made use of these anomalies. Some were installed in the spaces, while others remained as drawings. At the end of one road a bench had been



Fig. 27. *Hidden Amenities – Wrong Way Round Bench* 2009. Photograph Helen Stratford.



Fig. 28. *Hidden Amenities – Traffic Count Reducer* 2009. Photograph Helen Stratford.

positioned looking directly into someone's kitchen window. *Wrong Way Round Bench* [Fig. 27] is a red padded intervention that persuades the sitter to look in the correct direction to take in the view of the 'natural', rather than the 'domestic', landscape. In another street, extra traffic bollards had been installed to prevent a busy through road when the developers increased the level of housing in the development. *Traffic Count Reducer* highlights and makes use of this 'bollard island,' using red elastic to transform it into a child's game [Fig. 28].

In the context of the new development, some interventions celebrated people's ability to accomplish their desired actions rather than the planned. In *From Morrisons to the Library 2* [Fig. 29], a series of imagined posts celebrate the making of an improvised path trodden by pedestrians in lieu of a missing pavement between the library and Morrisons supermarket. Simultaneously, other *Hidden Amenities* reinstated aspects that had been lost or forgotten during construction. These included a red painted scaffold plank spanning a ditch in order to reinstate a public footpath closed off by a local land owner and *Lap with no Bench* [Fig. 30] consisting of a padded adaptation secured onto a boundary fence around a LAP to construct a temporary bench. As Cambourne was continually under construction, these anomalies were gradually being ironed out. For example, the wrong way round bench was eventually uprooted and repositioned in its 'correct' position. Yet their momentary appearance questioned the larger masterplan vision.

From Morrisons to the Library 2.



Fig. 29. *Hidden Amenities – From Morrisons to the Library 2* 2009.

LAP with no bench.



Fig. 30. *Hidden Amenities – LAP with no Bench* 2009.

To conclude *Hidden Amenities*, I wanted to do and leave interventions in Cambourne that gave people an opportunity to practice the spaces differently to how they normally used or saw them. One intervention was the 'Contested Ground' workshop which embodied the idea of the small temporary adaptations on a larger scale [Fig. 31]. The workshop was located on an underused LAP that sat between two different types of housing tenure – privately owned and social housing. Following completion of the houses, a dividing fence had recently been removed. Yet, it was unclear for whom the LAP was intended and people were reluctant to use it. The workshop was organised in collaboration with Wysing Arts Centre, South Cambridgeshire parks and regeneration team and artist Sally Todd, with whom I had worked previously. Using simple materials children and families from either side of the tenure divide were invited to make a space in which to have a picnic. Not only did the workshop give life to this previously unoccupied public space, but it also highlighted that a 'sense of community' is as much about the practices and connections between people as the public space itself, however momentary.

Another intervention is *Maintaining Cambourne* [Fig. 32], an audio walk composed of recordings of voices of people who maintain the open spaces. This was made available for hire from Cambourne Library. It makes visible the collected routes, practices and processes that produce Cambourne. Offering an intervention people could walk around with for a view under what was visible at the surface.



Fig. 31. In the‘Contested Ground’ workshop residents made structures on an underused LAP between two different housing tenure types. 'Contested Ground' workshop 2009. Photograph Helen Stratford.



Fig. 32. *Maintaining Cambourne* consisted of an audio walk composed of voices of people who maintain Cambourne's open spaces. *Maintaining Cambourne* 2009. Photograph Helen Stratford.

Mechanical Operations in Cambourne

In addition to mapping the different tours, recording the multitude of everyday activities and processes and making visible hidden amenities through different interventions, I started to draw diagrams, and this is what constitutes the artists book *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* [see appendix four for copy of *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne*].

Just before I started the residency, that winter in February, snowfall had been considerably more extensive than previous years. A planning officer with whom I walked, suggested one way to assess the relative effectiveness of social spaces would have been a snowman count. The diagram *Fig. H. Social Space Effectivity* [Fig. 33] takes a map of the LAPs and projects the median amount of snowmen that could be built on them in heavy snowfall. It also gives directions for the optimum construction technique regarding snowman assembly and the amount of people required for each step.

Like *Fig. H. Social Space Effectivity*, many diagrams in the book apply to activities that reinforce the existing projected use. An example is *Fig. C. Approved Doors and Lamp Posts* [Fig. 34] which includes choosing a front door colour from the palette set up by the masterplan reinforced by planning conditions. Similarly, *Fig. A. Mechanical Operations in Turf Upkeep* [Fig. 17] that opened this section, portrays the optimum lawn-mowing method for achieving stripes on the

Cambourne/Caxton entrance roundabout; the maintenance actions required to reinstate boundaries of cycleway edging features in *Fig. D. Housekeeping* [Fig. 35]; the choreography of marking out the ground for a Rugby Union pitch by two Parish Charge Hands is represented in *Fig. B. Pitch Marking* [Fig. 36]; while the optimum height of grass for different leisure spaces is laid out in *Table 2. Optimum Annual Mowing Maintenance Programme* [see appendix four].

At the same time, other diagrams relate to activities that re-appropriate or even misuse spaces. These include, *Fig. M. How to Choose and Lay Sods* [Fig. 37], which tells the story of how residents appropriate a LAP for their own use during an improvised firework display; *Fig. I. Projectile Trajectories*, which illustrates typical stone throwing techniques in Cambourne Business Park lake [see appendix four] and *Fig. L. Doing Donuts* [Fig. 38], which represents typical donut-producing manoeuvres in Cambourne Dental Practice car park. In this way, the diagrams draw activities that I either experienced directly: *Fig. B. Pitch Marking*; which people told me about: *Fig. M. How to Choose and Lay Sods*; speculated upon: *Fig. H. Social Space Efficacy* or which I witnessed through traces remaining after the event: *Fig. L. Doing Donuts.*

In the bookwork the instructive drawings, by myself, are complemented by textual instructions and information, based on my research and edited collaboratively with artist and poet Lawrence

(24)

Effective Social Spaces: Locational Strategies

As part of the research that underpinned The Cambourne Development Masterplan, the team from Farrells sought to understand the location, and in particular the pre-existing landscape structure. Rather than lay down a network of spine and subsidiary roads across the site and allow housing and gardens to infill the voids within this pattern, the team began by identifying areas that should remain as open space. Specialist Play Surveyors were brought in to carry out intensive field walking of the site. They identified locations where subtle changes in topography, soil and aspect made the site particularly suitable for human outdoor activity. These locations or 'Primary Greens' were earmarked for gardens/public green spaces within the eventual development pattern. In this way the landscape and its hidden human potential provided the organising principle for the subsequent placement of the town's infrastructure.

The effectiveness of this process of site-responsive layout can be seen in the spatial patterns created by gardens and green spaces. Fig. H. (a) shows how the gardens and green spaces fall into a number of sinuous bands that radiate across the settlement. This pattern is both more subtle and more powerful than familiar geometric patterns such as a grid or a dendritic pattern. It connects open spaces in a profoundly human manner. This is particularly noticeable after heavy snowfall when it may be observed that snowmen are much more likely to be built in the gardens/green spaces on Primary Greens. It will also be observed that although these Primary Greens do not line up in a clear pattern vis-à-vis the roads, each snowman is in the direct eyeline of at least two others. In this way the residents are directed into reciprocity and trustworthiness by deep and powerful forces that seem to rise up from the land itself.

Fig. 33. 'Social Space Efficacy.'
From Helen Stratford and Lawrence Bradby *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* 2009.

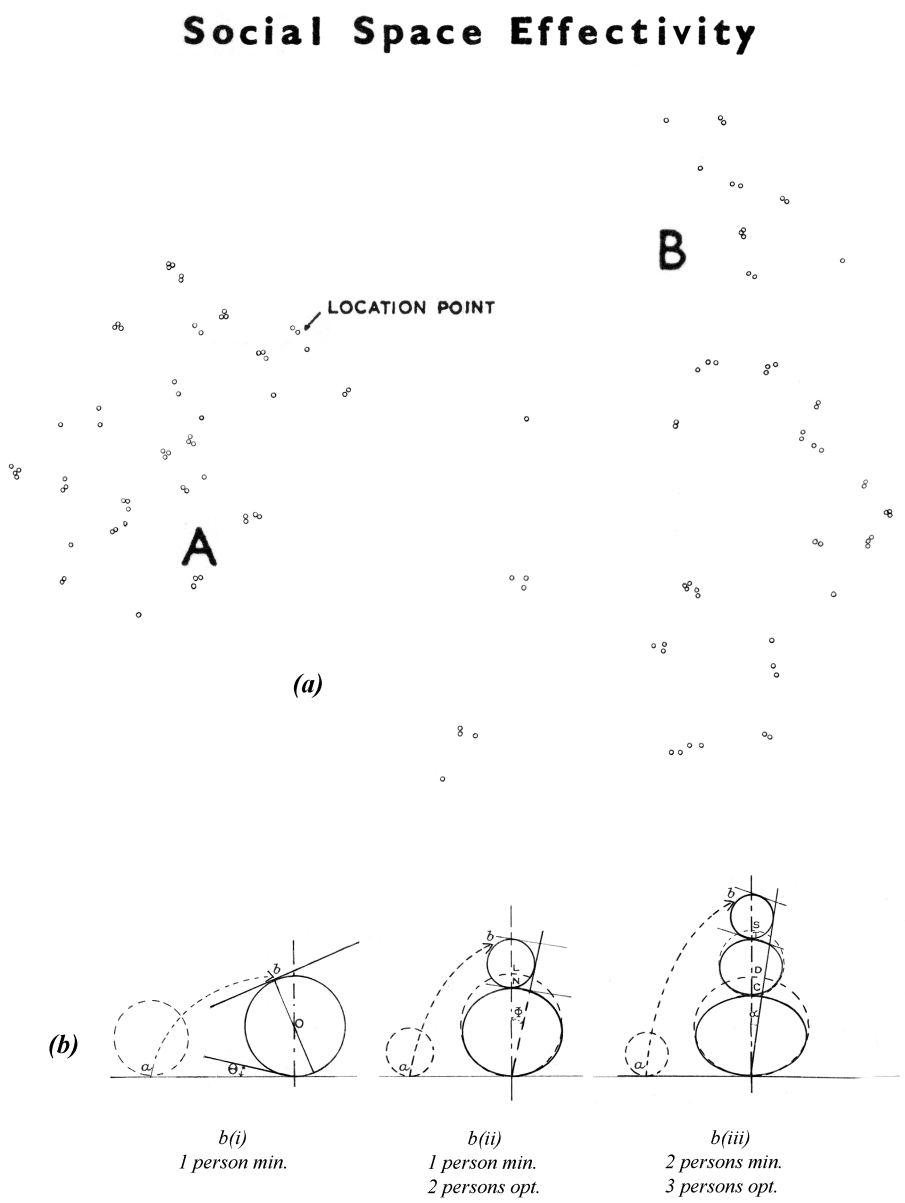


Fig. H. ***Median snowman count as an indicator of the relative effectiveness of social spaces: Lower Cambourne A and Great Cambourne B. (a) Plan. (b) Optimum construction technique.***

(14)

Target: Compliance in Implementation of Approved Colours

The local building vernacular, or Cambridgeshire Character, has developed over centuries as human craft has been applied to locally available materials. The colours which typify this living tradition have been identified as: charcoal black, terracotta, Newmarket green, Wedgwood blue, Suffolk pink, Gault pale yellow and buff sand. The approved front door palette for Cambourne evokes the tradition whilst also making a confident statement for the future (Fig. C (a)).

The exact arrangement of the approved door colours will be implemented by The Developer, in accordance with the following:

DO NOT
* use an excessive amount of one colour
* overdo variety or set up a strict rhythmic pattern of alternating colours
* allow exceptions or 'limited edition' colours for executive homes

DO
* allow the English village tradition of variety with occasional contrast
* ensure purchasers sign the Covenant agreeing not to alter doors or to replant front gardens within the first five years of owning the property

Fig. 34. 'Approved Doors and Lamp Posts.'
From *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* Helen Stratford and Lawrence Bradby 2009.

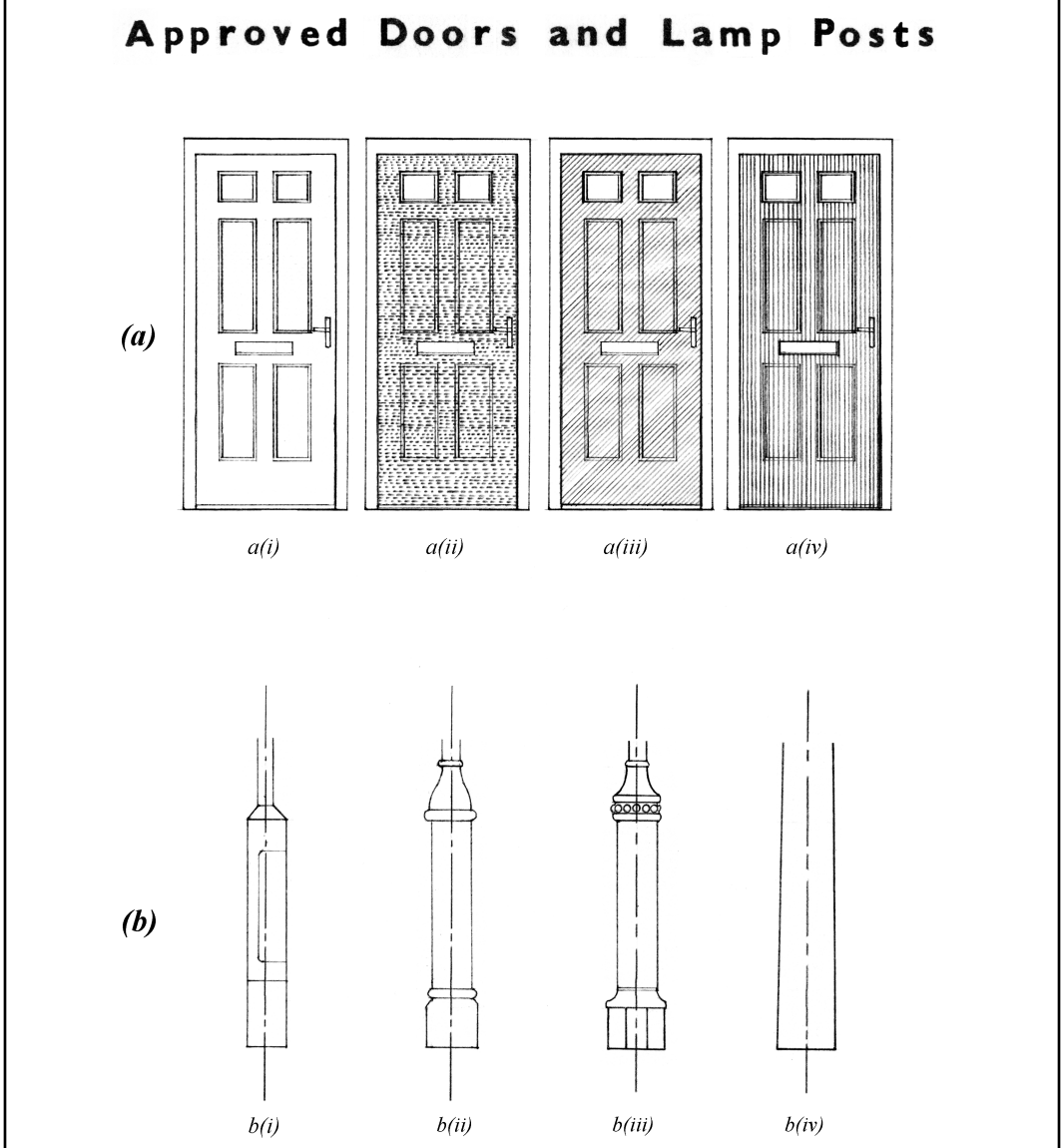


Fig. C. ***(a) Front door palette: a(i) Antique white, a(ii) Racing green, a(iii) Royal blue, a(iv) Lamp black. (b) Lamp post equipment: b(i) Functional, b(ii) Blenheim, b(iii) Chatsworth, b(iv) Hartlepool.***

(16)

To protect cycleways from deterioration due to the ingress of water and the adverse effects of weeds, The Contractor shall instruct operatives, working in pairs on either side of the cycleway, to implement effective work procedures, as follows:

Position wire brush, trowel and bucket of fine aggregate (cement-sand mix) against edge of cycleway at point where repairs will start (Fig. D (a) (i)–(a) (iii)).

Kneel beside tools facing away from direction in which work will proceed.

Remain aware of MOPs who will continue to pass through the active work area.

Edge of cycleway should be on the left for right-handed operatives and vice versa for left-handed operatives. Left- and right-handed operatives should form working pairs.

Pick up trowel with right hand and lean forward using left hand for support.

With gouging movements extract weeds from any voids between kerb upstanding and cycleway surface.

Load trowel with fine aggregate from bucket.

Twist torso anticlockwise whilst reaching right arm (with trowel) across body and forwards so that weight is over the left (supporting) hand. MOPs passing during this phase of movement may produce barking sounds/belittling comments.

Move outstretched right arm slowly back towards the body, drawing trowel along line of kerb upstanding and carefully pouring fine aggregate into voids. This brings body's weight rearwards so that at conclusion of the movement buttocks are resting on heels, torso is upright, and the wider surroundings can be seen. Do not meet gaze of MOPs using cycleway.

Remove excess fine aggregate with wire brush. Work in opposite sense to the previous motion so that body's weight is brought forward again. More dog calls to ignore.

Reverse along the path by shuffling on knees dragging bucket, and repeat process along next section.

Fig. 35. 'Housekeeping.'
From *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* Helen Stratford and Lawrence Bradby 2009.

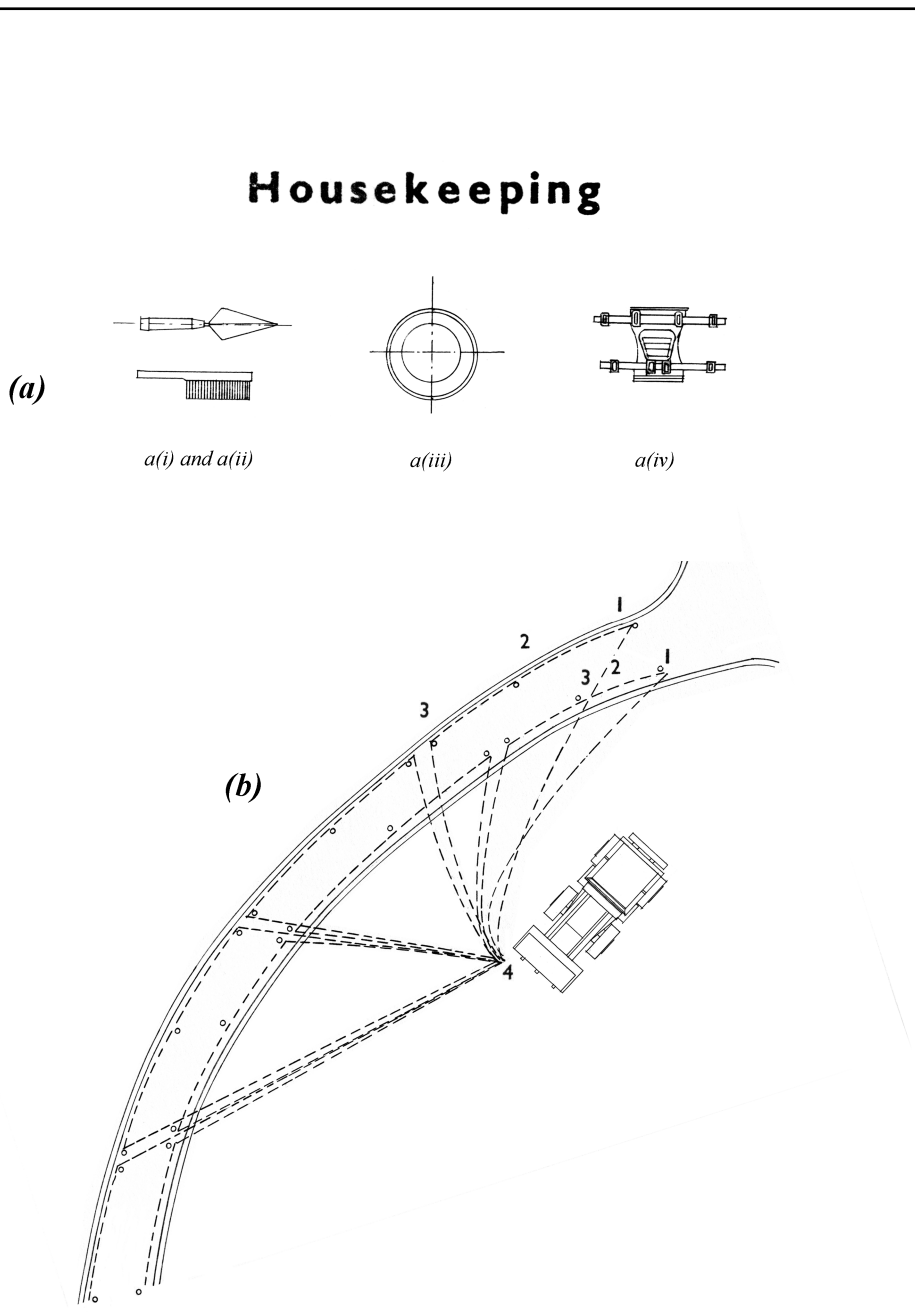
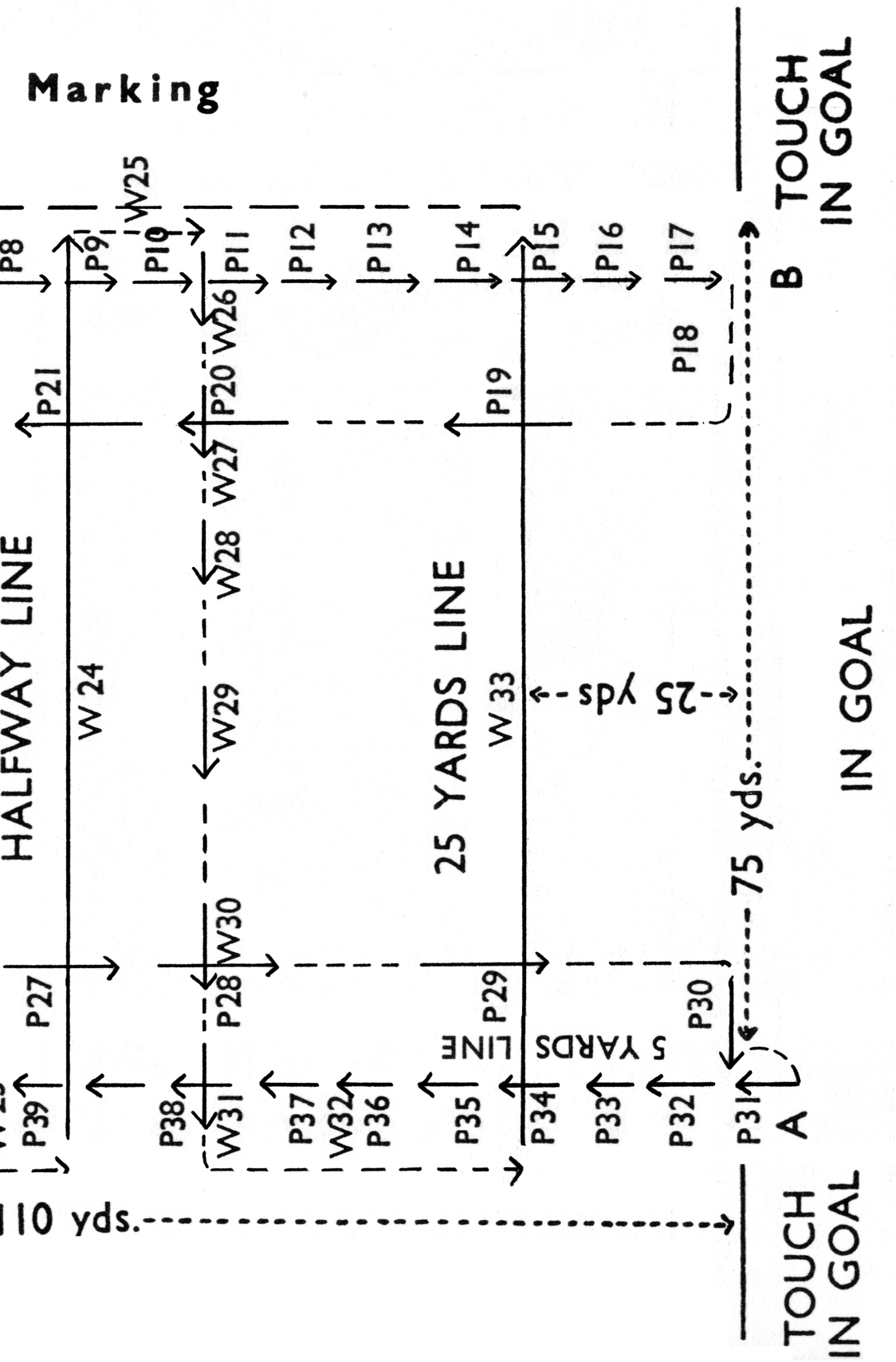


Fig. D. *(a) Necessary tools for housekeeping: a(i) Trowel, a(ii) Brush, a(iii) Black ridged bucket, a(iv) Knee pads. (b) Filling the voids at cycleway edge, Broad Street.*

Fig. B. *Diagram of Ground marked out for Rugby Un*
Charge Hand, W1-23, Groundsman. Manager's guidelines



nion Football, Cambourne Multi-use Games Area P1-43, Parish
- pedestrian 30min, fastliner 8min.

Fig. 36. *Fig. B. Pitch Marking.* From Helen Stratford and Lawrence Bradby *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* 2009.

(38)

Wear stout footwear and use a spade with a sharp edge.

Wear dark clothing that lacks distinguishing features.

The dimensions of the area to be cut should be accurate to within 30mm, so a swift and simple means of measurement is advised, for example two lengths of wood corresponding to width and length.

Choose the desired location somewhere on the public lawn (Local Area for Play) and lay out the lengths of wood to define the size of area to be cut.

Rest the shaft of the spade against the inside of your favoured leg and place your foot on the lug or tread of the blade. As the weight of your leg bears down through the spade, the turf should yield slightly.

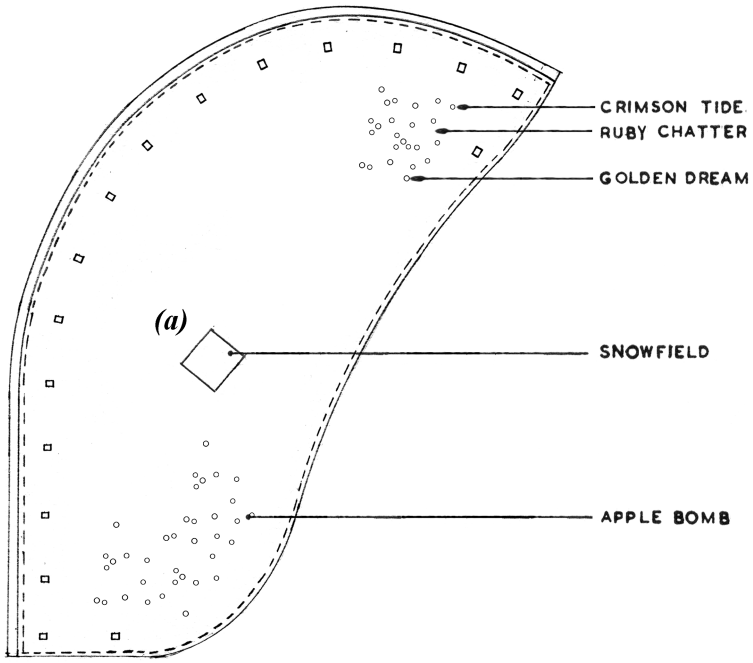
Kick down and the spade will slice neatly through the turf and compost layers. As you will be working at night, listen for the clean rasping sound to indicate the spade has reached the clinker layer.

Continue silently and without delay along the whole perimeter of the area of turf to be removed. Although others in the vicinity may not formally object or notify The Developers, they may not welcome your endeavour.

Lay the sods back across the hole early the next morning, before the other evidence — scorch marks on wooden bollards, burnt scraps of paper — has been fully examined.

Fig. 37. 'How to Choose and Lay Sods.'
From Helen Stratford and Lawrence Bradby *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* 2009.

How to Choose and Lay Sods



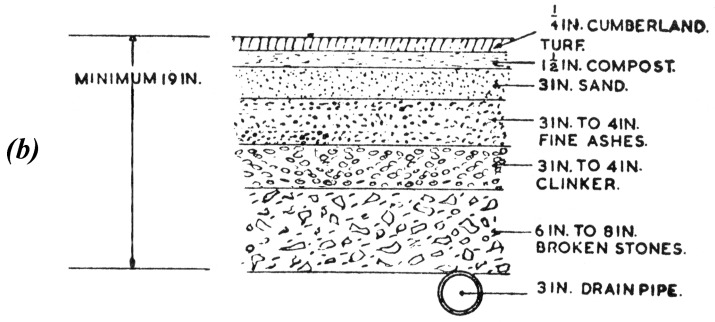


Fig. M. *(a) Typical firework placement: Woodfield Lane Lower Cambourne.*
(b) Sectional characteristics of typical sod, temporarily displaced for firework box location.

(36)

Excellent awareness of the surroundings is required to sustain momentum when performing this manoeuvre. In particular, maintaining the delicate balance between nuisance and spectacle takes quick reactions. On the one hand, the noise and violent movement of the donut should challenge the placid atmosphere of the housing all around. On the other hand, the manoeuvre should make an irresistible impression by means of confident technique and close control of the vehicle.

It should be remembered that doing donuts is transgressive rather than illegal. It is the precise location that renders the activity socially unacceptable; if performed on, for example, a motor racing track it is laudable and lucrative. High-profile petty crime and transgressive behaviour are proven to stimulate co-operative action in nascent or quiescent communities; so, if carried out correctly, donuts can perform an important service for the resident community.

DO
* arrive with menace and leave in style
* keep the engine running when stationary
* bring pre-packaged proprietary fast food to eat whilst fellow drivers perform manoeuvres
* post pics online afterwards

DO NOT
* announce any future times or locations
* perform donuts in broad daylight; darkness is preferable and twilight ideal
* offer Open Days to develop young people's donut skills
* obtain sponsorship from local firms
* request permission from the Parish Council

Fig. 38. 'Doing Donuts.'
From Helen Stratford and Lawrence Bradby *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* 2009.

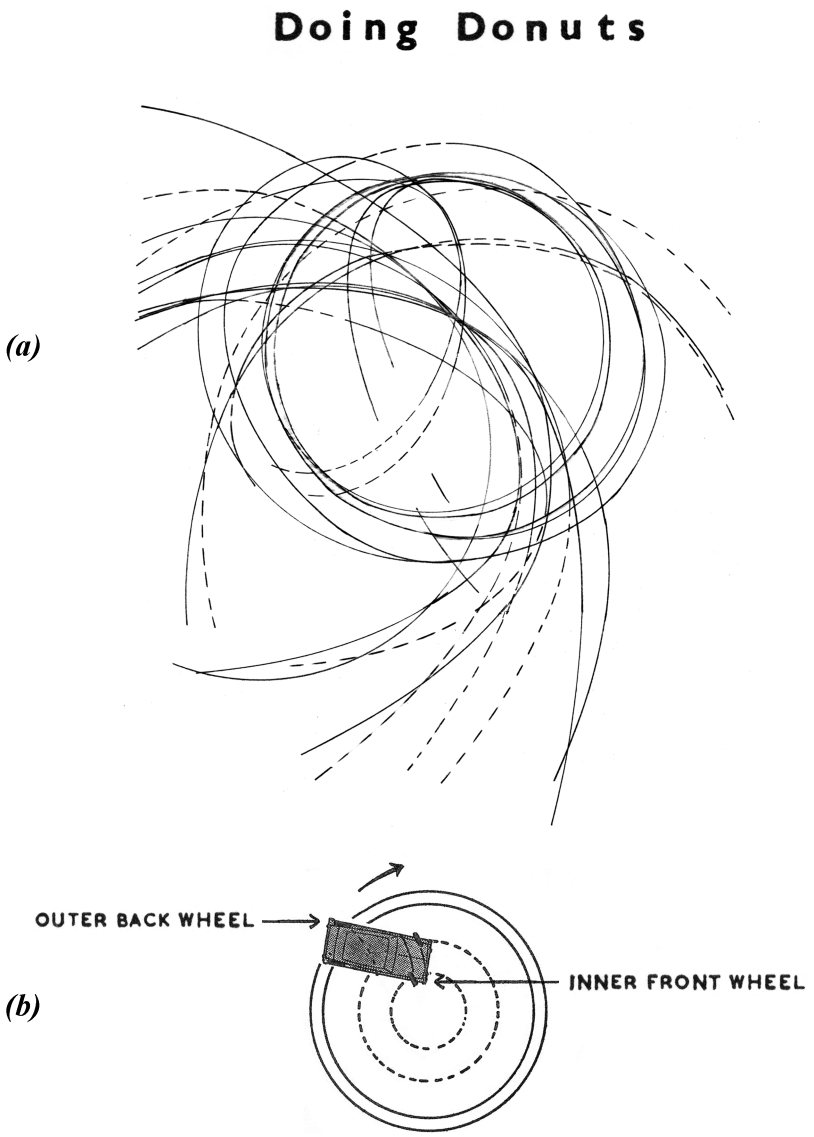


Fig. L. *(a) Typical donut-producing manoeuvres: Cambourne Dental Practice car park. (b) Geometric characteristics of typical vehicles turning through 360 degrees.*

Bradby. It is perhaps no accident that the 'typical donut-producing manoeuvres' uncannily resemble the NEAP location indicators set out by the architects in the masterplanning document [Fig. 19]. Like the diagrams, the texts reinforce the sense that everything can be clearly and efficiently defined, ensuring that village life is consistently reproduced at all levels of activity and inhabitation. *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* explores the image of Cambourne; how it is continually maintained and reproduced at all levels of construction and inhabitation. These aspects form the core critique of the other interventions including the *Hidden Amenities*, the 'Contested Ground' workshop and *Maintaining Cambourne*.

For the workers from the landscaping company, it's all about the image – the entrance roundabout and the first impression. For the Parish Chargehands, it's the technical capacities of cutting grass to ensure the 'cricket table' functions as efficiently as possible. For the Wildlife Trust, it's a balance between human inhabitation and habitat – between the people who like things neat and tidy and those who like the wild life – a balance best maintained by an excel spreadsheet, see *Table 1. Wildlife Management* [appendix four]. For the developers, it's about making the spaces fit for public use, see *Fig. D. Housekeeping*. For people on the allotments it's about growing enough vegetables to avoid visiting Morrisons, see *Fig. K. Homegrowing* [appendix four]. For the librarian it is where her building is and for the sole maintenance man on the business park it's his garden.

Towards the end of the residency I ran a stall at Cambourne Community Fête where I invited people to guess the amount of water necessary to clean the main roads in Cambourne [Fig. 39]. The answer came from spending a day in a sweeper van with Barry who at the time swept the main roads in Cambourne every Monday, Wednesday and Friday – see T*able 3. Fig. N. Friday Route* [Fig. 40]. The question operated like the diagrams, it was a way to embody the premise of the *Hidden Amenities*, the audio walk and *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne*, providing an alternate way to think about and visualise Cambourne.



Fig. 39. A stall at Cambourne Community Fête offered people the opportunity to win a copy of *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* if they guessed the correct amount of water necessary to clean the main roads in Cambourne. Photograph Helen Stratford.

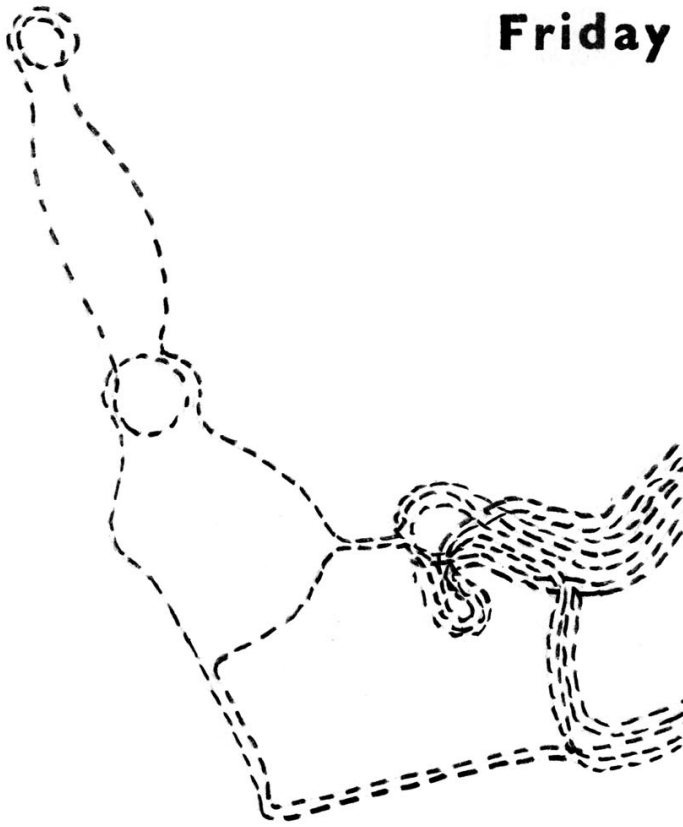


Table 3.

Day	*Hours*	*Miles*	*Gallons*	*Weather*
Monday	4.0	185	650	Moist
Wednesday	5.0	256	550	Dry
Friday	4.0	205	600	Overcast

Fig. N. ***Road sweeper diary.***

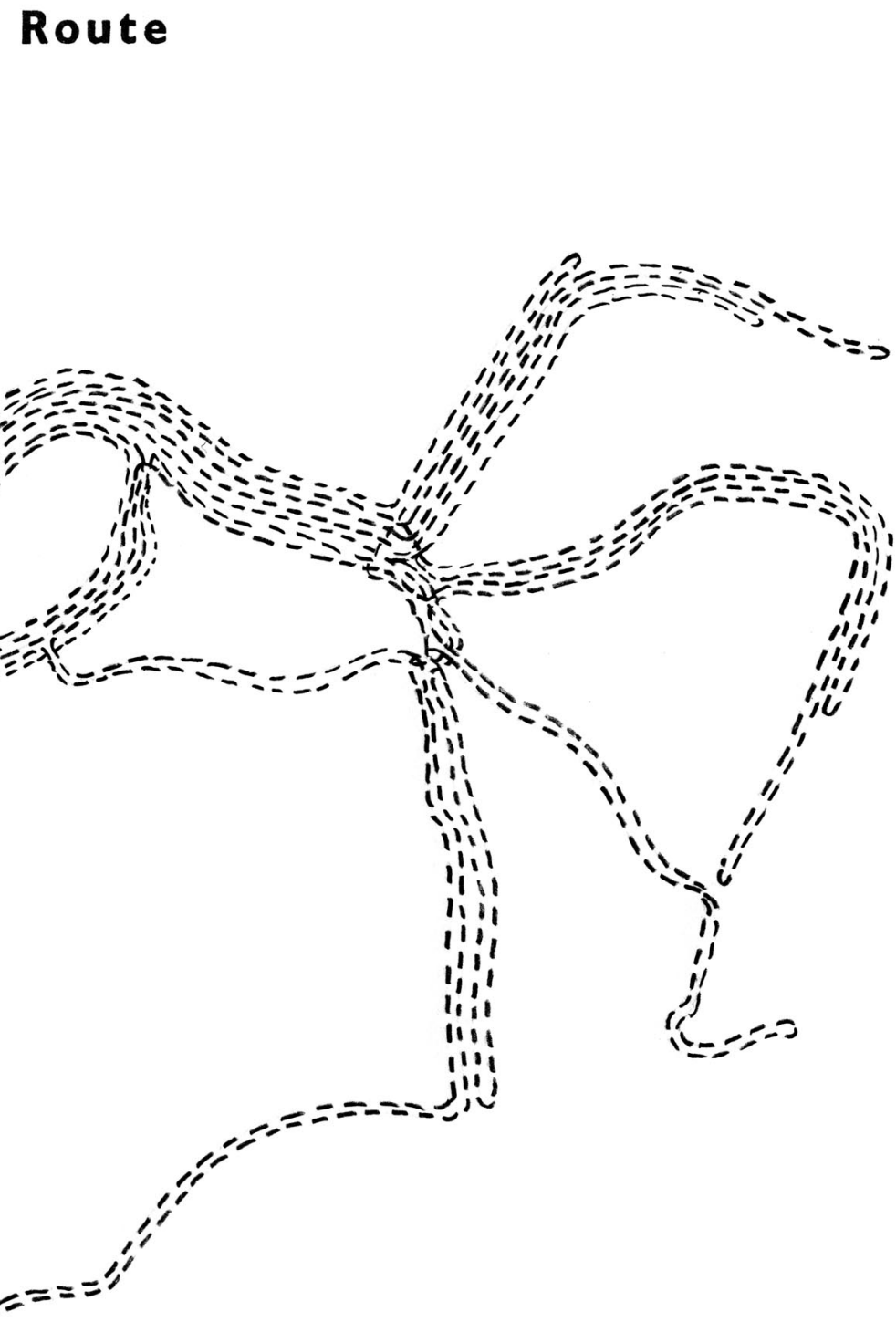


Fig. 40. *Fig. N. Friday Route.* From Helen Stratford and Lawrence Bradby *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* 2009.

Section Three – Performative Positions in Public Space

The Vision – The 'New Village'

Inaugurated in 1999 and presented as a 'village' organically grown over time, Cambourne has been designed through technocratic masterplanning processes. In this context, the 'conceived' space of architects,[217] the image of the new village, is designed and implemented through the Masterplan. In this private development 'the quintessential character of villages and market towns'[218] is expressed through hierarchy and zoning mechanisms. Different uses, including business, residential and leisure, are organized into distinct lobe shaped developments, while economic segregation is expressed through tenure. Located in-between the development zones and residential lobes, Cambourne's open spaces are publicly accessible. Yet, through a plethora of designated names, planting and props, alongside performed activities that are monitored by checklists, routines and diagrammatic procedures, they are predominantly privately maintained.

These efforts to completely plan, build and maintain a space based on idealised and generic 'chocolate box' ideals of English villages, analysed by experts, reduced to diagrams and made into a checklist, was always going to result in an idiosyncratic space. In these processes, elements of village life have been reduced to diagrammatic form, organising human beings and space through efficient notions of performance. One-minute walking distances, play strategies and village greens. Manor houses, stately homes and market squares. In this sense, rather than places that have evolved out of practices, it is more akin to a modernist idea of efficient space that, as discussed earlier in this chapter, focuses on urban order to impose a specific idea of what people should do and where.

In this context, the development accords with the notion of performance in terms of efficient means of producing quantifiable places conceived as a 'container' of 'social relations'.[219] However, rather than 'neutral' and 'functional' Cambourne is presented as the 'perfect place to unwind' after 'a hard day at the office'[Fig. 16].[220] Further, the social status and lifestyle

[217] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 361.
[218] 'Cambourne_masterplan_1995_reduced_file_size.Pdf', p. 3 <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/media/3309/cambourne_masterplan_1995_reduced_file_size.df> [accessed 2 March 2021].
[219] See Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*; Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium.FemaleMan_Meets_OncoMouse*; Massey, *For Space*; Soja.
[220] Cambourne Official Website [accessed 22 January 2009] [see appendix one]

represented by the 'new village' is performed by its public spaces. Through their manicured homogenous design and upkeep, the masterplan 'mediates' the commodified image of Cambourne, through the illusion of public space.[221] Here, the 'conservation of community', identified in the masterplan, is premised on replicating the visual form of the English linear village,[222] according to which, the new settlement is visually and socially 'integrated harmoniously into the surrounding countryside'.[223] Conversely, through its implementation, it performs and produces social, cultural and economic segregations that determine not only what and where but also who.

In direct response to Cambourne, and the distinct way it had been designed, visioned and implemented, the starting point of 'Communities Under Construction' was to undo the 'figures of completion' that this vision upheld.[224] The project began by opening up the public spaces to the processes by which they were produced, thereby researching the tools and processes by which the image of Cambourne was reproduced daily. In this way, it aimed to make visible the performative role of these spaces in implementing the particular social cultural and economic processes of the 'new village', in order to open up ways by which they might be performed otherwise.[225]

Support and Maintenance

'Communities under Construction' began by focusing on the street apparatus of Cambourne's homogeneous public spaces. Akin to the work of Norman, I focused on the contradictions inherent in the placement of props – bins, benches, shrubbery and fencing – that, together with designated names, implied public spaces, but whose non-use and private ownership indicated they were, in fact, 'pseudo' [Fig. 18].[226] I also focused on documenting the everyday activities through which these places were performed and produced. By making visible customarily hidden or 'unofficial' actions, 'Communities under Construction' examined how the repeated re-creation of the image of Cambourne was made possible through a plethora of maintenance activities. These included the removal of litter and grass

[221] Mersch, p. 45.
[222] 'Cambourne_masterplan_1995_reduced_file_size.Pdf', p. 3.
[223] Ibid.
[224] Sample, p. 15.
[225] See also 'Residencies Archive – Wysing Arts Centre' <http://www.wysingartscentre.org/archive/residencies/cuc_helen_stratford/2009> [accessed 2 March 2021].
[226] See Shenker.

growth, the reinstatement of defined public boundaries through footpath clearance and cycleway re-edging, to name a few [Fig. 35].

In contrast to the 'totalising' masterplan view of Cambourne, the reviewing of its public spaces through the 'quiet voice'[227] of these ongoing activities forces a 'local and partial' inhabitation.[228] Here, as I have discussed elsewhere, 'large-scale order and perception becomes connected to and translated into intimate and local practices'.[229] This reviewing makes visible how public spaces are remade through a whole host of repetitive daily routines. Akin to the 'citational chains' of the 'social conventions' identified by Butler, these routines become inscribed in spatial and mental structures that are constituted through these processes.[230] In this way, the documentation of the collection of props, checklists and designations, alongside actions and activities, undermined the fixed and 'show village' image of Cambourne through making visible the processes by which this image is produced [Figs 19-26].

Like the work of Condorelli and Ukeles, in making visible those who conduct the plethora of maintenance activities, 'Communities under Construction' also highlighted the social and cultural dimensions which shifted in relation to the particular people with whom I walked and talked. While the official website revolved around attracting residents who were white and middle class, it was maintained by a team of workers from outside the settlement, whose background largely clashed with this vision. In this context, while Ukeles' work explores the role maintenance actions play in the production of gendered and classed subjects in art practice and production, 'Communities under Construction' examined the role these actions play in the perception and implementation of public spaces that reproduce such subjects. Here, actions of 'unskilled' workers are revalued and represented as an inherent part of the production of public space, both revealing and critiquing the 'division of labour' and hierarchies of production that the categorisation of these actions entail.[231]

Similar to Ukeles' critique of the foundations of art practice, 'Communities Under Construction' expanded the parameters of public space to include those activities not conventionally deemed 'creative' within the production of architecture. Each person I talked

[227] Mattern.
[228] Braidotti, 'Posthuman, All Too Human', p. 206.
[229] Stratford, 'Unpleasant Matters', p. 220.
[230] Butler, *Excitable Speech*, p. 155.
[231] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 362.

and walked with possessed particular skills and knowledge in relation to a specific aspect of the production and maintenance of public space. Whether it was an expertise in grass heights for sport activities, lawn preparation or wildlife management, each practice was essential to the re-creation of the image of Cambourne and each practice was ongoing and never complete. Alongside acknowledging the skill and knowledge production inherent within these practices, the making visible of their multiplicity recasts the public spaces as performed by fluid assemblages of socially and culturally positioned practices. Consequently, it critiques the idealistic and singular vision of the public spaces through which the image of Cambourne was produced.

Errors and Omissions – Hidden Amenities and Contested Ground

Hughes' and Till's description of the lengths architects go to in efforts to overcome or eliminate errors and omissions generated during the process of architectural production and occupation, acknowledges the 'contingent' nature of architecture and the 'orthodox framework of stability'[232] architects erect to overcome this 'fear of error'.[233] But what if these problems, these anomalies were treated as opportunities? In 'Communities under Construction' the *Hidden Amenities* reveal the errors and omissions – the gaps between the 'illocutionary' intentions of the Masterplan and its 'perlocutionary' effects – interrupting its 'intentional' '*mode* of performance'[234]. Some of the proposals highlight these illocutionary intentions by 'correcting' the 'errors,' such as *Wrong Way Round Bench* [Fig. 27] while others, including *Traffic Count Reducer*, generate new possibilities for the space [Fig. 28].

Similar to the support structures of Condorelli, the *Hidden Amenities* unpack assumed 'neutralities' of seemingly functional architectural and urban structures, exploring how they are inextricably linked to and supported by the social and cultural context within in which they are located. As in 'Exergue', discussed earlier in this chapter, some *Hidden Amenities* focus on the apparently utilitarian, highlighting or making use of their failed implementation to make visible their position in performing specific cultural actions and economic processes. *Wrong Way Round Bench* makes visible the conventional and contextual understanding of what is considered 'landscape' and available for contemplation. Likewise, *Traffic Count*

[232] Till, p. 83. See also Groák.
[233] Hughes, p. 4;.
[234] Mersch, pp. 40–41.

Reducer draws attention to and makes use of a strange spatiality generated by economic targets.

Conversely, other *Hidden Amenities* celebrate everyday micro transgressions that modify the Masterplan. Aligning with the ad-hoc architectures of Norman, *From Morrison's to The Library 2* adopts photographic methodologies to highlight 'desire lines' created by pedestrians which conflict with the village's prioritisation of the car [Fig. 29]. Similarly, the makeshift reinstatement of a footpath and improvised bench for a LAP permit an alternate activity and community to take place [Fig. 30]. These create what artist Jean-Francois Prost identifies in his study of *adaptive actions* as 'a vocabulary for the expression of the collective imagination'.[235] Here, the documentation of these ad-hoc architectures exerts a performative force on the Masterplan. They highlight the normative rules of the public spaces in question, but also alienate the accomplishment of these rules, making visible their fragility.[236]

The 'Contested Ground' workshop with residents became a way to open up these processes to more people, inviting them to actively interrupt this existing 'public space' and question its current non-use [Fig. 31]. In the context of the privately developed public spaces in Cambourne, the workshop activities momentarily fostered a sense of previously non-existent collective ownership within what was, to all intents and purposes, a 'pseudo-public' and privately created space. This use of performance-based actions to highlight the performativity of public space, through active transformations will be developed further in chapter two.[237] For the moment, in Cambourne this displacement of activities questioned the existing ways this public space had so far been performed, challenging its perceived lack of use through re-appropriation, while generating a new relationship with the space.

Akin to the work of Ukeles, in the workshop shifting an assemblage of objects and activities from one place to another made present a new space that challenged existing perceptions.

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[235] Jean-Francois Prost, 'Adaptive Actions About', *Adaptive Actions* <https://adaptiveactions.net/about/> [accessed 13 March 2021]; Jean-Francois Prost, 'Adaptive Actions.' <http://aa.adaptiveactions.net/> [accessed 13 March 2021]; *Adaptive Actions*, ed. by Jean-Francois Prost (London: SPACE, 2009). See also Jean-Francois Prost, 'Adaptive Actions', *Field*, 2.1 (2008), 139–50. The 'agency' of objects and matter will be examined further in chapters three and four.

[236] In her work on aging, Sophie Handler has also designed several ad-hoc devices that build on the research made through *The Fluid Pavement*. These include *Cushioned Bollard* made in collaboration with artist Verity Jane Keef. Handler describes how *Cushioned Bollard* consists of a 'pull-on-pull-off' cushion that adds a layer of 'comfort-adding' padding to the standard Abacus© bollard which from her research Handler discovered that elderly users often used a temporary sitting spot. See Handler, 'Resistant Sitting – The Pensioner's Alternative Street Furniture Guide.'

[237] The notion of creating frameworks or 'situations' for others to actively disrupt the performance of public space through self-facilitated participatory actions and activities is also developed further in chapter three.

Nevertheless, in helping foster a 'Local Area for Play' the workshop might be regarded as uncritically 'activating' the space according to its masterplanned use. This notion of 'activation' without critical reflection is frequently adopted in the use of performativity in relation to public space. In this context, like the co-option of artworks into commercial and regeneration strategies referred to earlier in this this chapter, rather than question a particular politics of use, 'performative' actions can often reinforce it.[238] Returning to the workshop, on the one hand, whilst its 'activation' of the LAP might be regarded as reinforcing a projected use, the momentary sense of public ownership it fostered between residents disrupted the politics of what was essentially a private space. Moreover, in the particular context of Cambourne, the bright red scaffolding net disrupted the managed aesthetic of the new village. Here, these ad-hoc architectures challenged the 'fear of error' manifest through the 'Masterplan Design Guide' and associated planning conditions, bringing a messy and improvised construction into an otherwise controlled space.[239]

Parody and Fiction – Mechanical Operations in Cambourne

In 'Communities Under Construction', the documentation of everyday processes began by uncritically following conventional behavioural mapping techniques. While they bear witness to the sheer amount and endlessness of processes that re-produce the open spaces in Cambourne, these modes of representation are uncritical of these techniques. In 'Unmapping Space' urbanist Tim Reiniets argues that conventional topographic maps 'lack the means to represent the social, psychological and other non-visual features'.[240] Moreover, as discussed earlier in this chapter, these reductive modes of representation can serve to bolster the 'objective' representations they strive to critique. In contrast, the bookwork *Mechanical*

[238] These questions will be discussed further in relation to public art spaces and participatory practices in chapter three.

[239] This 'fear of error' included a five year planning condition preventing people erecting fences in their front gardens and repainting the doors of their houses in colours other than those stipulated in the 'Masterplan Design Guide'. See interview with resident recorded through a conversation mapping of a plan of their living room [Fig. 22]. The use of the colour red as disruptive device will be discussed further in chapter two. The workshop inspired groups of young people to make their own structures in other open spaces in Cambourne. These self-initiated actions were eventually halted by residents who complained of anti-social disturbances, perhaps indicating their mental incorporation and indignation towards the unfulfilled promise of the new village as a 'place to unwind'.

[240] Tim Rieniets, 'Unmapping Space – Some Thoughts on Maps and Performative Spaces', in *Performative Urbanism: Generating and Designing Urban Space*, ed. by Sophie Wolfrum and Nikolai Frhr von Brandis (presented at the Symposium Performative Urbanism, Berlin: Jovis, 2015), pp. 79–84 (p. 60). Reductive modes of representation in specific relation to maps will be examined further in chapter three.

Operations in Cambourne attempts to take on and parody the 'objective' tools of the 'space of architects' in order to take to task the 'conceived' space of the masterplan.[241]

While some of the diagrams in *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne*, such as *Fig. C. Approved Doors and Lamp Posts* [Fig. 34] are taken almost directly from the 'Masterplan Design Guide', others, including *Fig. A. Mechanical Operations in Turf Upkeep* [Fig. 17] *Housekeeping* [Fig. 35] and *Fig. B. Pitch Marking* [Fig. 36] apply efficient models of measurement and representation to everyday and unmapped actions. As in *Handbook of Tyranny*, these diagrams bring a level of scrutiny to otherwise hidden practices that maintain the image of Cambourne and its existing politics of use. However, as a further extension of this methodology, diagrams like *Fig. L. Doing Donuts* [Fig. 38] explore representations of socially subversive practices which challenge the masterplan vision by implementing actions not necessarily deemed acceptable to traditional village life.

For all the diagrams, the idea is not to give value to these practices through making them objectively quantifiable. By extending conventional orthographic drawing methods to those processes typically beyond their remit, *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* pushes the language and vision of masterplanning a 'new village' to an extreme; envisaging that *all* actions can somehow be efficiently determined and incorporated into the masterplan. On this basis, seemingly benign and unquantifiable actions, including building snowmen, are recast as a measure of the efficacy of public space. Here, as discussed earlier in this chapter, 'a dominant logic is stretched to a point' where it appears 'as obviously irrational'.[242]

This adoption of the language of the masterplanner extends into the instructional texts that accompany the diagrams, made in collaboration with artist and poet Lawrence Bradby. The use of instructions has a long history in conceptual art practice, through which illocutionary intentions of authoritative instructions are thrown into sharp relief by the incongruity of what

[241] See Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 361.
[242] Miles, p. 142.

they instruct.[243] In the case of the diagram *Fig. L. Doing Donuts* the accompanying instructions read 'DO' 'arrive with menace and leave in style' but 'DO NOT' 'request permission from the Parish Council'. Yet, while referencing instructional art, in many cases the instructions in *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* are a direct appropriation of the authoritarian voice of the masterplan document. Here, the bulleted 'DO' and 'DO NOT' instructions directly copy those in the Design Guide checklist [see appendix one].[244] In its appropriation and subversion, this parodic critique pokes fun at the authority of the checklist. As discussed earlier in this chapter, it takes away intimidation and 'piety' in relation to particular discourses, making them 'available for investigation'.[245]

At first glance, the drawings and instructions appear to offer simple guidelines in relation to the performance of public spaces in a new village on the edge of Cambridgeshire. Yet, on closer inspection, it becomes clear that they are fictional devices that adopt the personae of the master planner in order to critique it. In this way, *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* extends the premise of exploring methodologies that highlight where the checklist breaks down, thereby challenging the masterplan on its own terms.[246]

By rigorously adopting and manipulating the language of the masterplan and design guide, *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* also picks up on the ambivalence of parody.[247] Here, through representing the masterplanner as a technocratic dictator, controlling the minutia of everyday life, the diagrams confront the masterplanning process with an exaggerated double that it would undoubtedly prefer to suppress. A double which, as identified earlier in this chapter, has a long history in architecture and urban planning. Yet, beyond critiquing this omnipresent positionality, these parodic acts offer an invitation to 'imagine things as they

[243] In *Do it: the compendium* curator Hans Ulrich Obrist describes how instructional art concerns the performativity of language more in terms of the 'production of meaning than with meaning itself'. Hans Ulrich Obrist, *Do It: The Compendium* (New York, NY: Independent Curators International/D.A.P, 2013), p. 27. In 'Art by Instruction and the Pre-History of Do It' in *Do It* Bruce Altshuler, traces a history of this art practice, which includes among others the *Speculations* of Marcel Duchamp, the work of John Cage, that of the Fluxus group including Allan Kaprow and George Brecht and the work of Yoko Ono. Bruce Altshuler, 'Art by Instruction and the Pre-History of Do It', in *Do It: The Compendium*, by Hans Ulrich Obrist (New York, NY: Independent Curators International/D.A.P, 2013), pp. 29–43. Lawrence's background in art practice and literature inflected the creation of the texts. These aspects of collaboration with other artists and practitioners is developed further in chapters two and three.
[244] See example included in appendix one.
[245] Kenny, p. 224.
[246] *Mechanical Operation in Cambourne* was made in collaboration with artist Lawrence Bradby, the diagrams however were predominantly made by the author.
[247] An aspect that extends into the materiality of the book itself, whose design is based on a publicly issued British Standards Engineering booklet.

might be otherwise'.[248] In the oscillation between masterplanner as parodic dictator and the 'real' masterplanning processes, the contingency and performativity of this reality begins to be made visible.

By employing dead-pan and comic techniques to humorously critique those representations of spaces that promise to provide a life in which 'you can unwind',[249] *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* critiques the delusions that underpin the new village. Whilst, in Lloyd Thomas's terms, the drawings remain trapped within the geometric conventions of orthographic drawing, in the context of Cambourne the deviant repetition of the position of the omnipresent masterplanner enables a thinking through established categories in order to make way for alternate possibilities to unfold. Further, this deviant repetition into a set of principles to be put into operation took place 'in public'. Slipped into various architectural networking events, the book was launched through a series of subversive 'powerpoint flipchart-Pecha Kucha-performances'.[250] In this way, like the *Hidden Amenities* and the 'Contested Ground' workshop, *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* used the existing infrastructures of architecture and public space to 'turn up the volume'[251] on the contingency of the conventions through which they were performed.

This 'deviant' aspect of *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* is extended through the diagrams' semi-fictional and propositional encounters with public space. Based in fact but extended through fiction, many diagrams draw on conversations with residents and workers, but extend their narratives into exaggerated mis-performances of village life. Like *Beyond Utopia* and also *A Weird Tender*, these semi-fictional actions and stories, offer 'critical tools' with which to find 'new sites of productive tension between the "real" and the "fictional"'.[252] For example, *Fig. M. How to Choose and Lay Sods* [Fig. 37] offers a fictional representation of real methods used to install a firework display on a LAP. However, while the retelling is fictional this account of a real-life event demonstrates how, despite the masterplan's best

[248] Kenny, p. 230.
[249] Cambourne website 2009 [Fig. 16].
[250] *Mechanical Operations: Repetitive Actions as a Creative Force in New English Settlements* was presented at'Pecha Kucha' night 2013, part of the Norfolk Association of Architects – 'Architecture Festival' FANN13 at Cinema City Norwich and the Cambridge Association of Architects (the Cambridge chapter of the Royal Institute of British Architects) 'Futurama' networking event at The Guildhall Cambridge 2010.
[251] Kenny, p. 230.
[252] Warren and Mosley, p. dust jacket.

efforts to maintain a ubiquitous visual appearance, people's personal everyday actions prevail.

In this way, as in *The Fluid Pavement*, the diagrams are less about speculative proposals that radically transform an existing reality, than playing with and making visible the ways in which residents and workers already navigate Cambourne's particular semi-urban environment. In this context, actions that exceed the masterplan vision, perhaps offer a more 'realistic' vision of life within a new village built in the 21st Century. Through the subversive actions of *Fig. M. How to Choose and Lay Sods* and *Fig. L. Doing Donuts*, residents are presented as having power rather than needing empowerment. Here, like the *Hidden Amenities*, *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* offers a catalogue of uses which makes visible the problem but also the potential of Cambourne; the 'what if?' and the 'why not?' [253] brought about through practicing differently.

The Positionality of the Researcher – Rethinking Site Through Doing and Further Questions

'Place-as-performance' deploys critical representational methodologies that make visible hidden people, practices and processes to critically interrogate the performative processes involved in envisaging and producing public spaces. So far, this reflective section has examined how these methodologies were used to research and critique the recently developed open spaces of Cambourne. It has analysed how actions and representations using parody and fiction made visible errors, omissions and deviant misperformances, in order to critique the prejudices, hierarchies and 'undemocratic' spatialities reperformed through these contexts. Here 'place-as-performance' makes visible the performativity of public space by connecting apparently functional aspects to the social and cultural processes they reinforce and produce. As discussed earlier in this chapter, parody and fiction are tactics that have a long history in feminism; offering alternate visions of subjectivity through critiquing objective accounts of 'reality'. In *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* the distanced objectivity of the masterplanner is interrogated and critiqued through adopting these humorous and playful yet deeply critical methodologies. However, analysing these tactics from a feminist situated position raises questions around the equally objectifying position of the researcher-architect.

[253] Kenny, p. 230.

In ‘Communities Under Construction’, the presence of the researcher started from what might be considered a more distanced positionality to investigate and make visible what has been defined by Doina Petrescu as the application of ‘stealth architecture’ in the production of public space. In this context, ‘stealth architecture’ indicates an architecture which deploys implicitly ‘architecture-related’ tools and processes rather than explicit ‘ends’ and buildings.[254] ‘Communities Under Construction’ began by employing conventional observational methods to form the basis of a retelling of Cambourne; a making visible of overlooked practices through which its public spaces were performed. Yet, in the processes of gathering and recording these tools and processes, a shift occurred in my position as ‘researcher’.

Starting from what might be considered a conventional architectural research position – adopting observational and mapping techniques to observe and catalogue activities and routines – a focus on a critique of this position emerged. It became apparent that this method of recording was simply supporting the objective position embedded within the discourse of the masterplan.[255] The attempt to map all the maintenance activities specific to Cambourne brought to light the impossibility of this task, highlighting an inexorable paradox of the logic of efficiency. At a talk towards the end of the residency I was asked what my exit strategy was; how could I leave this task when it was endless? In many ways, by pushing this logic towards an extreme conclusion, *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* was one such ‘exit strategy’. The impossible task proposed in the book, of somehow mapping and controlling all aspects of village life, makes visible the local and partial nature of objective representation. It expresses how in this methodology there is no exit; the desire to fit everything into a constrained model becomes all-inclusive and engulfing. Albeit unknowingly at first, the act of adopting, embracing and enacting an ‘outsider’ position, conventionally attributed to the participant-observer or in this case ‘masterplanner’, eventually offered a way to critique that very position itself.

In *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne*, the subversion of the distanced voice of remote observation of ‘place-as-performance’ (conceived or ‘know that’, offered an appropriate

[254] Petrescu, ‘How to Make a Community as Well as the Space for It’.

[255] Questions around the objectivity of the ‘participant-observer’ have formed the basis of lengthy reflections in ethnography. See *Advances in Visual Methodology*, ed. by Sarah Pink (London: Sage, 2012); *Ethnography and the City: Readings on Doing Urban Fieldwork*, ed. by Richard E. Ocejo, Metropolis and Modern Life (New York: Routledge, 2013). These questions will be examined further in relation to participatory practices in chapter three.

method to critique those objectified accounts of 'placemaking', through which the measured and manicured environment, distinctive to this 'new village' had come into being. The adoption of the fictional personae of the disembodied and omniscient masterplanner evolved as a direct response to the particular spatial and material properties of the site. Further, like the feminist representational practices discussed earlier in this chapter, the exaggeration of the 'outsider' masterplanner was a critique of my position as architect and researcher. For Braidotti, 'feminist figurations' 'mark different steps in 'undoing power relations in the very structure of one's subject position'.[256] In many ways, *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* actively includes and critiques the position of the architect-researcher. Yet, the adoption of that position risks remaining within that epistemological position it sets out to critique.

For Butler, we are always located within particular power relations and the question is not whether to repeat but how. The adoption of the position of 'outsider' placed me 'ahead and to the side' of those stories I wished to communicate.[257] While conversations with people directly influenced the bookwork and participants who inspired and informed it were given a copy, they were not involved in the way these stories were represented. In fact, the representation of these conversations deliberately exaggerated this process of removal. This offered a different and critical view of Cambourne than that achieved through conventional mapping techniques. Yet, beyond this articulation, in many ways this positioning reflects, rather than critiques, the disembodied performativity of the researcher.[258] Whilst critical of what Hughes regards as 'colonising' methods of representation, its rendering of process and error as 'legitimate' through those methods risks privileging that objective representational methodology itself.[259] Furthermore, the acceptance and enjoyment of *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* by one participant, the masterplanner himself, Sir Terry Farrell, was perhaps unwitting evidence of parodic methodologies being subsumed by the very power structures they set out to oppose.

A question that remains from this reflection is how to go beyond existing epistemological frameworks of observation and representation, even if the research practice is critical of those frameworks? Rendell's 'site writing' is key in this regard, in focusing on 'performative

[256] Braidotti, 'Teratologies', pp. 170–71.
[257] Foucault and Deleuze, p. 207.
[258] Ethnographic questions regarding 'insider' versus 'outsider' positionalities will be examined further in chapter three.
[259] Hughes, p. 248.

manifestations' of reader and writer through the spatial potential of text.[260] In Rendell's work there is a rethinking of site through writing. Conversely, in 'Communities under Construction' there is rethinking of site through doing. The reperforming of the particular place of Cambourne made visible the performativity of public space but also the performativity of the researcher. This particular positionality and criticality could only be discovered through practice, pointing towards an embodied and situated entanglement with people and place.

For Braidotti, in contrast to Butler, difference is not the limit of our relationships with other people and places but holds the potential for quantitatively different ways of thinking and being. Clark's analysis of the smudge and the drawing processes of Loewenson and Handler, discussed earlier in this chapter, point towards a doing and practicing differently. Similarly, this reflection on the practiced spaces of 'Communities under Construction', which includes questioning my own situated position within them, starts to focus on the process of the making of the smudge itself; of encounters with error and embracing failure through doing. In response to these observations and questions, the next chapter examines theories and practices working between theatre, architecture and performance in order propose a methodology that develops an entanglement of thinking and doing, action and practice, body and gesture. It examines in what way performance-based actions might be used to develop an embodied and situated research methodology that makes tangible, as well as visible, the performativity of public space.

[260] Rendell, *Site-Writing: The Architecture of Art Criticism*, p. 3.

Chapter Two

Performing-place

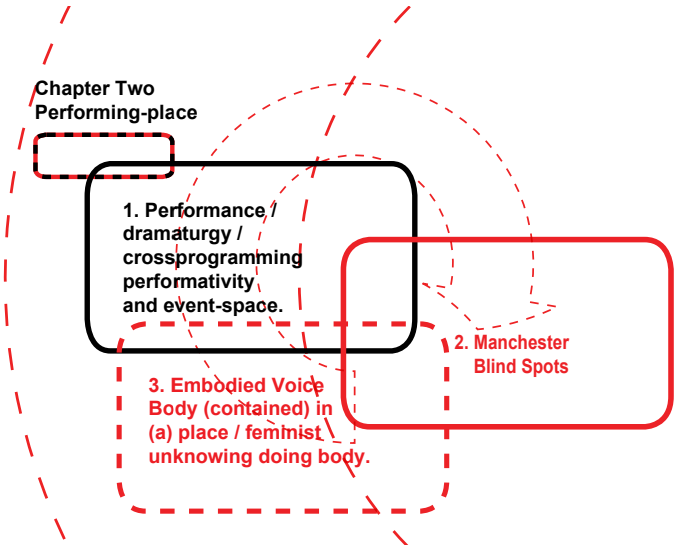


Fig. 41. Performing-place, structure diagram.

Practice Prelude

Manchester Blind Spots

Later, I take hold of the video camera and point it towards the figure in red. She is starting to prepare to sit down. People are hurrying to and fro, faces intent on some other destination, but this person is about to do the opposite. She is about to sit down, even recline, right in the middle of a busy public walkway. I look at the scene unfolding in front of me and I realise I am shaking. In these last few moments I have suddenly become acutely aware of the physical, social and emotional structures operating in the public space around me and the pressure they exert is overwhelming. This public space is highly controlled by a mixture of legislation, security presence and the actions of its 'users'. The design of the space, the way it is occupied and its imminent 'mis-use' is affecting me – physically. Shaking with a mixture of excitement and fear I wonder, what will people do? How will people react?

Introduction

This chapter investigates research in which the researcher is directly connected and active within the public space she is researching. In contrast to, but as a development of, the previous chapter's observational and distanced positionality, it analyses how simple and direct actions, using the body and gesture might become the focus of the research practice. Architecture's relationship to performance, predominantly and historically focuses on places to house (a) performance, representations of performance or the use of performance as a metaphor to describe place.[1] The primary focus of this chapter is on exploring differences between performance and performativity**,** in order to extend and challenge conventional notions of performance in relation to architecture and public space. Rather than a performance to be experienced, it examines how performance-based actions might offer methods by which to develop open-ended iterative research methods, through which the researcher occupies a position of 'embodied outsider' in dialogue with the place.

An analysis of performance-based theories and practices located at the intersection of performance studies, theatre and architecture opens this chapter. This 'reflection on practice through theory' is followed by a reflection on the practice *Blind Spots Manchester*, providing an account of practice research that explores the relations between movement in/use of public space and the generation of spatial knowledge through direct action. The chapter then concludes by reflecting on what is at stake in theories of performance and performativity in architecture through the tacit and embodied knowledge gained through this practice research. Here, the order of the sections remains the same as chapter one, with 'reflection on theory through practice' located after the practice account or 'reflection on practice through practice' [Fig.41]. However, the final 'reflection on theory through practice' develops a more critical relationship to the first section in order to examine how the practice research develops the theories and practices it analyses. Furthermore, the 'reflection on practice through practice' takes the form of an autoethnographic account, thereby resonating more closely with the embodied nature of practice research.

[1] See M. Christine Boyer, *The City of Collective Memory: Its Historical Imagery and Architectural Entertainments*, Fifth printing (Cambridge, Mass. London: MIT Press, 2001); Sophie Wolfrum, 'Performative Urbanism: Generating and Designing Urban Space', in *Performative Urbanism: Generating and Designing Urban Space*, ed. by Sophie Wolfrum and Nikolai Frhr von Brandis (presented at the Symposium Performative Urbanism, Berlin: Jovis, 2015), pp. 11–16.

From Performance to Performativity

In architecture, the terms performance and performativity have become familiar. Nevertheless, in professional architectural practice and mainstream theory they are still frequently conflated with the creation of performance or performance spaces and the construction of 'dynamic' spaces that often also literally perform. In contrast, in performance and theatre studies the relationship of performance to place, and the role of the audience in this relationship, has been extensively explored.[2] The first section of this chapter reflects on performed work and choreographed participatory events of artists and groups, in order to explore intersections that evidence, expand and challenge this relationship. It does this primarily through the theories and analyses of performance studies theorists Cathy Turner, Juliet Rufford and Dorita Hannah, whose writings focus particularly on connections between theatre, performance and architecture. In this way, this chapter does not aim to offer a comprehensive history of the relationship between performance and performativity, resolve tensions or claim precise definitions. Rather, it explores theories and practices that focus on their relationship to architecture in order to probe potentially productive distinctions and differences as well as crossovers and connections.

While Turner focuses on the merits of architectural performances that offer depictions and experiences of utopian, dystopian or rather heterotopian worlds, including that of theatre company Brit Gof and Cliff McLucas,[3] Rufford begins with a focus on architectural tectonics that 'evoke' certain ways places are performed.[4] Starting from an analysis of how these positions continue to frame architecture as a place by or in which to experience performances of bodies and space, this section goes on to examine how Rufford's discussion of 'crossprogramming'[5] and Turner's notion of 'expanded dramaturgy'[6] extend and challenge these positions. In this section, the work of theatre/performance artists and groups, including architect/artist Alex Schweder and architects Diller and Scofidio, along with

[2] See for example Erika Fischer-Lichte, *The Transformative Power of Performance: A New Aesthetics* (New York: Routledge, 2008); Helen Freshwater, *Theatre & Audience,* Theatre& (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, UK ; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009); Liz Tomlin, *Political Dramaturgies and Theatre Spectatorship: Provocations for Change*, Methuen Drama Engage (London ; New York: Methuen/Drama, 2019); Victor Turner and Richard Schechner, *The Anthropology of Performance*, Performance Studies Series, 4, Nachdr. (New York, NY: PAJ Publ, 1995).
[3] Cathy Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture: Theatre, Utopia and the Built Environment*, New Dramaturgies (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire ; New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).
[4] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*.
[5] Ibid.
[6] Cathy Turner, 'Mis-Guidance and Spatial Planning: Dramaturgies of Public Space', *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 20.2 (2010), 149–61 <https://doi.org/10.1080/10486801003682351>.

psychogeographic groups including the Situationist International and Wrights and Sites, are analysed alongside the politicised work of feminist performance artists in order to investigate how interactions between bodies and architecture might be used to research and challenge classed, gendered and racialised power structures in public space. Finally, building on this performative potential of performance, this section concludes by examining Hannah's focus on 'event space',[7] in order to propose that performance might be reframed as an open-ended and iterative critical research methodology that makes visible the inherent performativity of architecture itself.

Manchester Blind Spots

This theoretical and practical reflection is followed by a reflection on practice via a situated account of the performance research and lecture *Manchester Blind Spots*, made in collaboration with performance artist Diana Wesser in Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester. This section is written from first-hand personal experience. It combines what Robin Nelson describes as 'know what',[8] an autoethnographic critically reflexive mode, and 'know how',[9] deeply embedded in praxis, in order to explore how the particular spatial knowledge gained through performance-based actions is articulated through experiential, sensorial and corporeal affects.

Performative Actions in Public Space

The last section of this chapter, provides a critical reflection on the theories of performance and performativity as introduced in section one through knowledge gained from the practice research. In this reflection on theory through practice, the concepts of 'crossprogramming', 'expanded dramaturgy', and 'event-space' form a frame of reference that is interpreted and expanded through the practice. This reflection is supported by a dialogue between feminist theories around acculturated practice and embodiment in Judith Butler and Rosi Braidotti, alongside performance theorists Susan Melrose and Carrie Noland. The feminist lens offers ways to interpret the practice research as 'doing-knowing'[10] through an unknowing or 'doing-body'.[11] Here, the body and its gestures become a site of action, of utterings and

[7] Hannah.
[8] Nelson, p. 44.
[9] Ibid., p. 41.
[10] Ibid., p. 40.
[11] Noland, p. 195.

enunciations that gather knowledge about public space directly from actions undertaken within it. In this research process, qualitative data collection is reflected upon and extended through performing-place; offering a tacit critique of efficient and well-functioning notions of performance that, as discussed in chapter one, reinterpret public space as fixed and enduring stages upon and within which performances take place.

This section argues that actions in place can make visible how public spaces are products of power relations that are embodied. Further, that the processes of making visible these prescribed networks contain possibilities to challenge them. Beyond making visible and challenging, this section, and the chapter as a whole, argues that this way of researching, located between theatre, performance and architecture, points towards a different way of researching and conceptualising public space as a politicised, situated, ambiguous and shifting entity. It expands on how the 'know that' (outsider knowledge), discussed in chapter one, might be informed and critiqued by 'know how' (tacit/embodied knowledge), in order to examine how practiced and performed actions might go beyond existing epistemological frameworks in architecture. In contrast to conventional methods for acquiring spatial knowledge, it thereby argues that research is made through iterative and embodied processes that are site responsive, dialogic and open-ended – modified by and evolving out of the experience of the research itself.

Section One – From Performance to Performativity

1.1 Performance as Architectural Research

The idea of architecture and the 'city as a stage' has a long history in architectural thinking.[12] In *Performative Urbanism*, Sophie Wolfrum observes how architecture as a force '"to heighten the drama of living"' has been recognized and reflected upon by numerous sociologists, urbanists and writers.[13] As Wolfrum comments, there exists 'an analogy between the city and the theatre in the sense of a metaphor'.[14] However, she goes on to identify a more nuanced exploration of architecture's relationship to performance. Framed by research in performance and theatre studies, she analyses an approach that focuses on the performative potential of architecture in the creation of 'new realities'.[15]

To elucidate her point, Wolfrum uses the German language distinction between '"*Performance, Performanz and Performativität*"'.[16] With *Performance* (performance) referring to the staging of a theatre play or performance art and *Performanz* (performance meaning enacting, which, as discussed in chapter one, is developed through speech acts or *mots d'ordre*. Crucially for Wolfrum, *Performativität* (performativity) 'refers to the transformative power of an act'.[17] It foregrounds a relationship of performance to architecture and urbanism, which goes beyond the metaphoric or the observational, to encompass places and processes that are at any one point in time, unpredictable, ambivalent, situated, in terms of perception, and transformative.[18] For Wolfrum, the performative potential of architecture rests in this active engagement rather than passive spectatorship, 'only when it is used […] does architecture enfold urban significance'.[19] On this basis, she

[12] Wolfrum, 'Performative Urbanism: Generating and Designing Urban Space', p. 14. See also Read and Feuerstein.
[13] Edmund N. Bacon, *Design of Cities*, Rev. ed; Reprint (London: Thames and Hodson, 1982), p. 19, quoted in Wolfrum, 'Performative Urbanism: Generating and Designing Urban Space', p. 14. Here, Wolfrum also refers to quotes from the writings of Lewis Mumford and W.G. Sebald.
[14] Wolfrum, 'Performative Urbanism: Generating and Designing Urban Space', p. 14.
[15] With reference to J. L. Austin, Wolfrum argues that 'Performative […] refers to a situation in which a new reality is created,' and describes how in architecture 'while experiencing architecture the reality of space is created within the situation.' Ibid. pp. 13–15.
[16] Sophie Wolfrum, 'Peformativity – State of Affairs', in *Performative Urbanism: Generating and Designing Urban Space*, ed. by Sophie Wolfrum and Nikolai Frhr von Brandis (presented at the Symposium Performative Urbanism, Berlin: Jovis, 2015), pp. 27–30 (p. 27).
[17] Ibid.
[18] Ibid., p. 29.
[19] Wolfrum, 'Performative Urbanism: Generating and Designing Urban Space', p. 14.

claims that architecture has a 'unique performative character' that 'emphasizes the component of spatial experience, perception and behaviour'.[20]

As Wolfrum and others have observed, in theatre and performance studies, this transformative potential of performativity has been conceptualised at length.[21] However, its connection to architecture and urbanism is a fairly recent phenomenon. Notable authors, from theatre and performance, who focus on this interconnection between architecture, theatre, performance and performativity are artist and researcher Cathy Turner, artist, curator, educator and researcher-writer Juliet Rufford,[22] and theatre scholar and design practitioner Dorita Hannah. These three authors focus specifically on the connections between theatre, performance and architecture to offer a re-reading of architecture through performance.

In *Dramaturgy and Architecture: Theatre, Utopia and the Built Environment*, Turner examines the notion of dramaturgy in the production of alternative realities. Focusing on 'the production of space *in the theatre event*',[23] she proposes 'porous dramaturgies' which take the form of open-ended events that generate a 'disruption of the built environment'.[24] In *Theatre and Architecture* Rufford analyses 'how theatre *and* architecture as disciplines and inter-disciplines act on another',[25] reframing the ongoing life of architecture as a 'species of performer'.[26] Finally, in *Event-Space: Theatre Architecture and the Historical Avant-Garde* Hannah focuses on the '*becoming-performance of architecture and becoming-architecture of performance*', within the specific site of theatre architecture itself.[27] This section examines these three approaches in more detail in relation to practices located between theatre, performance and architecture, in order to examine what possibilities they offer for performative actions that specifically research public space.

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[20] Ibid., p. 15.
[21] See for example Fischer-Lichte; Shannon Jackson, *Professing Performance Theatre in the Academy from Philology to Performativity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004); *Performativity and Performance*, ed. by Andrew Parker, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, and English Institute, Essays from the English Institute (New York: Routledge, 1995); Richard Schechner, *Between Theater and Anthropology*, Nachdr. (Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2000); Turner and Schechner.
22 Also writing with performance studies scholar Andrew Filmer. See for example *Performing Architectures: Projects, Practices, Pedagogies*, ed. by Andrew Filmer and Juliet Rufford, Methuen Drama Engage (London: Methuen Drama, 2018).
[23] Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture*, p. 2.
[24] Ibid., p. 153.
[25] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 14.
[26] Ibid., p. 11.
[27] Hannah, p. 11.

1.2 On Stage I – Dramaturgy and Architecture

Dramaturgy is the compositional aspect of a performance through which its entire context, spatial, material, temporal, aural, linguistic, conceptual, socio-political, ideological and aesthetic is assessed and approached.[28] Through an analysis of dramaturgy via the 'lens of architecture', in *Dramaturgy and Architecture*, Turner examines how dramaturgy offers a way of conceptualising and expanding the spatiality of performance.[29] Informed by Henri Lefebvre's concept of 'possible-impossible'[30] experiments, Michel Foucault's theories of 'Heterotopias'[31] and Bernard Tschumi's 'event spaces',[32] Turner explores how spatiality in postdramatic performance offers a way to produce 'experimental utopias'.[33] In this context, dramaturgy 'does not merely relate to, occupy or comment on architecture, but is examined as a form of involvement in architecture, conceptual or experimental or both'.[34] In revisiting dramaturgy through architecture and vice versa, Turner sees potential in dramaturgy's evocation of 'dynamic, lived "potential" spaces', that are 'provisional, but with intentions towards the real'.[35] Moreover, she proposes that theatre offers freedom from the paradox of trying to create change or rather utopia in the present, proposing instead a way to prise open a space for potential utopia.

In Turner's analysis, the primary focus is on the dramaturgy of the artistic performance or play. She focuses on a lineage of theatre groups and practitioners that experiment with dramaturgy in terms of the relationships they create between participants, performers and site. These include the work of the Bauhaus and theatre makers/producers Cliff McLucas/Brith Gof, alongside the Situationist International and more contemporary works by artists Wrights and Sites. While a detailed exploration of all the case studies explored by Turner is beyond the scope of this thesis and while Turner does not focus specifically on the notion of performativity herself, her reflections are useful in examining what is at stake in the architecture of public space when it is described as 'performative'. Further, an examination of

[28] Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture*, pp. 3–4.
[29] Ibid., p. 2.
[30] Henri Lefebvre, *Henri Lefebvre: Key Writings*, ed. by Stuart Elden, Elizabeth Lebas, and Eleonore Kofman, Athlone Contemporary European Thinkers (New York: Continuum, 2003), p. 186.
[31] Michel Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias', trans. by Jay Miskowie, *Architecture/ Mouvement/ Continuité*, 1984.
[32] For a brief history of the term 'event-space' in relation to the work of Bernard Tschumi, see Khan and Hannah.
[33] Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture*, p. 6.
[34] Ibid., p. 19.
[35] Ibid., p. 23.

the possibilities and limitations that she highlights, alongside her focus on the construction of alternative realities, helps identify the potential of performative architectures as transformative acts based in performance.

Performing Utopias

Many of the examples Turner draws on focus on performances that present a particular message of utopia. She points to an 'organised whole' to be understood or 'experienced' by an audience, demonstrated by the work of the Bauhaus whereby a 'dramaturgical interest in the relation of the unit to the whole' is present.[36] Turner suggests that Walter Gropius and Oskar Schlemmer's understanding of 'theatre as "an orchestral unit" or "complex" is compatible with a *Gestalt* understanding […] in which every element is experienced in relation to the total composition' and 'whose quality is dependent on being perceived as a totality'.[37]

Turner refers to theatre maker and theorist Melissa Trimingham's accounts of Bauhaus events such as 'Metal Party'. She comments how for Trimingham, 'the radiant metals of spaces and costumes dissolved "the defining boundaries of the building into new "Gestalten," […] in an immersive experience consisting of "the flux of physical space and social exchange"'.[38] This abstraction, in which the human body becomes the site of experimentation of the spaces and forms of theatre, is according to Turner, also explored in works such as the Bauhaus dance *Stäbetanz* or Pole Dance [Fig. 42]. Here, abstract and stripped back explorations of body and light subsume the body into an orchestrated and geometric totality.[39]

As discussed in chapter one of this thesis, at stake in this approach to spatiality and architecture in relation to performance is the assumption of a contained or rather perfect or even timeless 'unity' in the architectural work.[40] Here, the work – in this case the theatre

[36] Ibid., p. 116.
[37] Ibid., p. 117.
[38] Melissa Trimingham, *The Theatre of the Bauhaus: The Modern and Postmodern Stage of Oskar Schlemmer* (New York: Routledge, 2012), p. 57, quoted in Turner pp.117-118.
[39] Frank Whitford in his discussion of Triadic Ballet by Schlemmer also argues that 'through stylised costume and movement' the ballet emphasised 'the relationship between one human figure and another, and the space around them'. Frank Whitford, *Bauhaus*, World of Art (London: Thames and Hudson, 1984), p. 86.
[40] As Till claims in *Architecture Depends*, 'Gropius's chosen weapon in the war on chaos is beauty'. Till, *Architecture Depends*, p. 53. Till then proceeds to quote Gropius' argument that the 'desire' of the architect is to 'create unity.' Walter Gropius, *Apollo in the Democracy: The Cultural Obligation of the Architect* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), p. 18, cited in Till, *Architecture Depends*, p. 53.

event – seeks to contain the contingent and constantly shifting nature of everyday life; making it subservient to a wider formalistic unity and visually dynamic aesthetic. In these works, and indeed this way of viewing architecture, the body is orchestrated into a homogenous geometric totality achieved by architectural form. Turner herself acknowledges the limitations of this totalising *Gestalt* to curtail interaction, reflection and transformation, and proceeds to redress this by referring to theatre groups and artists such as the site-specific dramaturgy of experimental performance company Brith Gof and visual theorist Cliff McLucas.

Performing Heterotopias

Contra to the minimalism of the Bauhaus, with its emphasis on 'producing new, yet simplified and strong *Gestalten*',[41] Turner focuses on 'heterotopia' in the work of Brith Gof and McLucas. Specifically, she examines how McLucas's 'placeevent' explores 'performance architectures' that 'suggest a movable, transient, negotiated relationship between scene and manifestation'.[42] The work of Brith Gof and McLucas, is informed by the theories of Tschumi and focuses on what Turner identifies as the construction of Foucauldian heterotopias through 'counter sites'[43] that, in Tschumi's terms, challenge and exploit the 'disjunctions' between form and function.[44]

According to Turner, the 'counter sites' created in the work of Brith Gof and McLucas are linked to Tschumi's ideas of the 'utopian function's' capacity 'to contest, invert and alienate in order to allow for a new social space to emerge'.[45] She proposes that the temporal and performative aspects of architecture in their work are approached through Tschumi's definition of architecture as dependent upon 'events that "happen" in it'.[46] In this context, 'architecture is about activating space through the movement of bodies'[47] and Turner highlights Tschumi's call to architects to intensify 'the rich collision of events and spaces'.[48]

[41] Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture*, p. 132.
[42] Ibid., p. 176.
[43] Foucault, 'Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias', p. 3.
[44] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 207.
[45] Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture*, p. 171.
[46] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 139.
[47] Khan and Hannah, p. 53. Identified as a specific 'mode of thinking that allow [architects] to bring things together that others cannot'. Khan and Hannah, p. 56.
[48] Tschumi, p. 259, quoted in Turner p. 171.

In the collision between the expected and the performed, Brith Gof and McLucas create what Turner claims are 'heterotopias', focusing on the tension between the human body and the object of architecture in the practice of place through human memory.[49]

Brith Gof's works were often located outside the conventional theatre space. For example, in *Tri Bywyd* or *The House Project* interlocking scaffolding structures were built around the trees and ruins of Esgair Fraith, a farm site in rural wales [Fig. 43]. *Gododdin* is sited in a disused car factory and *Hearn* in an old iron foundry.[50] Regarding the design of *Tri Bywyd*, Turner observes links with Constant Niewenheys' precursors of *New Babylon*, in which residents adapt the city in a constant creative and dynamic flux.[51] She also links it to Tschumi's *folies* for Parc de la Villette in Paris, in which the *folies*' abstract forms and absent programmes famously offer an open platform to be invented by their users.[52] Furthermore, according to Turner, the sites' historic grounds exert additional influence. These historic references 'compromise' the 'simple and clean architectural spaces', of the aforementioned international architectural references, problematising 'the "one size fits all" architectural ideal'.[53] These works deploy the apparatus of the site in order to create layers of architectural and historic references, that act in dialogue with each other to create a contextual setting in which the performance takes place.[54]

Through their dramaturgy of different spaces and times, these works are categorised by Turner as both architectural and archaeological.[55] Indeed, she identifies how professional theatre maker, academic and founder member of Brith Gof, Mike Pearson, claims they are 'dramaturgy as stratigraphy', involving a 'congruence of "architecture," "archaeology" and "dramaturgy"'.[56] In invoking archaeological references, for Pearson 'performativity'[57]

[49] Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture*, p. 182.
[50] 'Pearson, Mike / Brith Gof' <https://www.routledgeperformancearchive.com/browse/practitioners/pearson-mike-brith-gof> [accessed 8 March 2021].
[51] Constant and Jean-Clarence Lambert, *Constant: New Babylon: Art et Utopie: Textes Situationnistes*, Cercle d'art Contemporain (Paris: Cercle d'art, 1997).
[52] Bernard Tschumi, *Cinegram Folie, le Parc de la Villette: Paris 19. arrondissement* (Sevenoaks: Butterworth Architecture, 1987).
[53] Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture*, p. 180.
[54] Ibid., p. 186
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid., p. 179.
[57] Turner argues that in deploying the term stratigraphy Pearson refers to archaeology, which he also studied, implying 'both the performativity of the reinterpretation of the past and the presence of trace, place and memory within the performances'. Ibid.

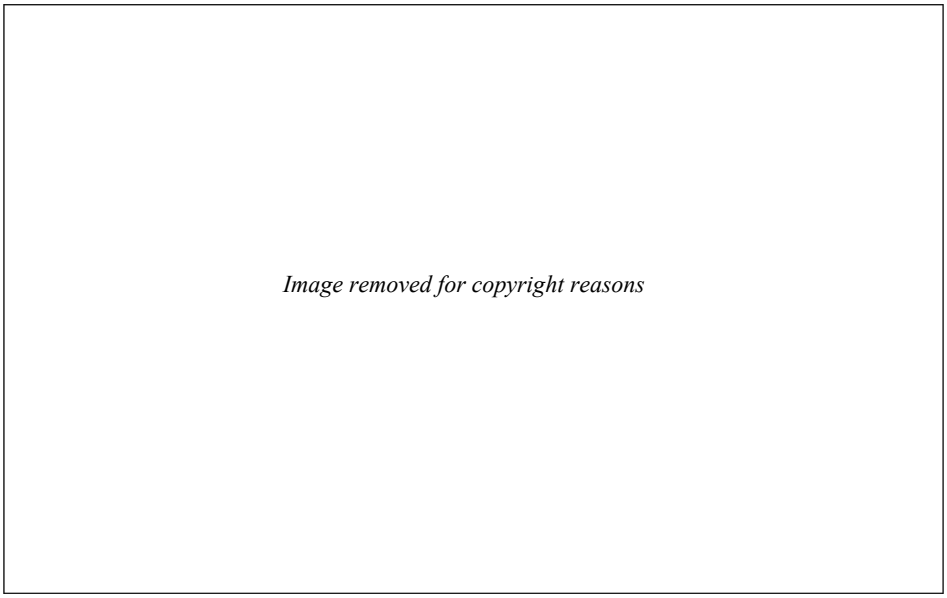


Fig. 42. Manda von Kreibig performing the Stäbetanz Bauhaus c.1928, <https://www.kunst-archive.net/en/wvz/t_lux_feininger/collection?openedId=Bauhaus-Archiv+%2F+Museum+f%C3%BCr+Gestaltung> [accessed 12 March 2021]. Photograph by Theodore Lucas (Lux) Feininger.

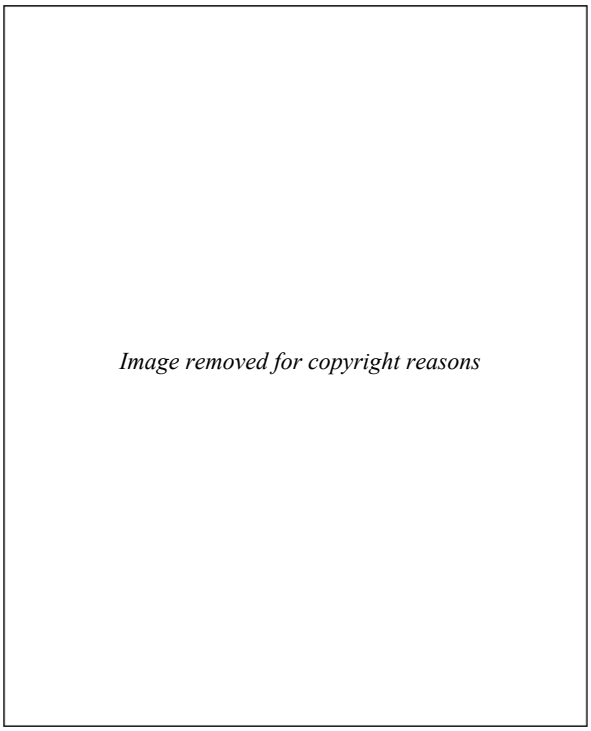


Fig. 43. Brith Gof/McLucas T*ri-Bywyd* 1995, <https://mshanks.com/2012/02/27/prehistory-and-performance-an-experiment-in-site-specifics/> [accessed 8 March 2021].

becomes an active way by which the past might be reinterpreted and remade through 'human memory and ascription of meaning' alongside more 'tangible heritage'.[58] Yet, Turner argues how 'the direction of travel is rather different' for the architectural approach of McLucas.[59] According to Turner, in Mclucas' approach, Pearson's 'stratigraphy' becomes translated into a physical environment in which 'living bodies are both part of the construction and resistant to it'.[60] Ultimately, for Turner, the greater emphasis on the 'tangible' aspects of architecture versus the 'intangible' performativity of archaeology, results in performances which create a heightened theatrical experience of the human body in tension with the architectural form.[61]

This focus on a literally mutating and 'performing' architecture is taken further in works by theatre company Station House Opera. Performances such as *Dedesnn nn rrrrrr* [Fig. 44] and *Piranesi* experiment with performers assembling and disassembling building blocks to construct and deconstruct settings during the performance. From a different perspective, but still reliant on the formal manipulation of bodies and place, works such as *Limelight* and *Ultramundane* explore how shifts in perceived normality can be made through the construction of gravity-defying stage sets. Here performers may be speaking and acting quite normally, but appear upside down.[62] *Hollow*, a contemporary work by architect and artist Jenny Hall, opens up this dynamic form of architecture to wider collaborators, whereby the audience themselves become builders, playing with the creation of space from magnetic cardboard boxes in art centres and gallery settings [Fig. 45].[63] Whether through juxtapositions of form or through actual manipulation by the actors or the participants, in all these cases, architecture is translated into a performance that in turn represents a dynamic space.[64]

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[58] Ibid., p. 182
[59] Ibid., p. 182
[60] Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture*, p. 178. Indeed, for Turner 'the architectural approach emphasises the physical environment, tending to decentralise and treat performers as moving sculptures, choreographic, symbolic and formal'. Further she argues that 'these were not spaces to be comfortable in and they made demands on bodies that bodies also resisted'. Ibid., pp. 182-183.
[61] Ibid., p. 182.
[62] See 'Station House Opera' <http://www.stationhouseopera.com/> [accessed 8 March 2021]; Nicholas Till, 'The Uses of Gravity: The Everyday Sublime in the Work of Station House Opera', Architectural Design, 68.7–8 (1998), 12–15.
[63] See Jenny Hall, 'HOLLOW', *HOLLOW* <http://www.hollow.info> [accessed 23 February 2021].
[64] In relation to the work of Brith Gof, landscape director and producer Angus Farquar highlights this tension, through which the architecture 'performs,' when as Turner observes he describes Mclucas's work on *The Second Coming* as setting up an 'insane fairground atmosphere'. Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture*, p. 187.

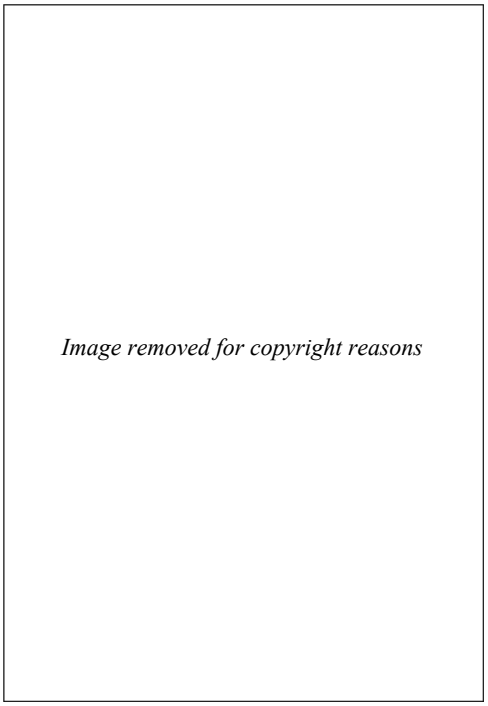


Fig. 44. Performers assemble / disassemble building blocks to construct and deconstruct settings. Station House Opera *Dedesnn nn rrrrrr.* Der Frauenkirche, Theater der Welt, Dresden, 1996, <https://www.stationhouseopera.com/project/6042/> [accessed 8 March 2021].

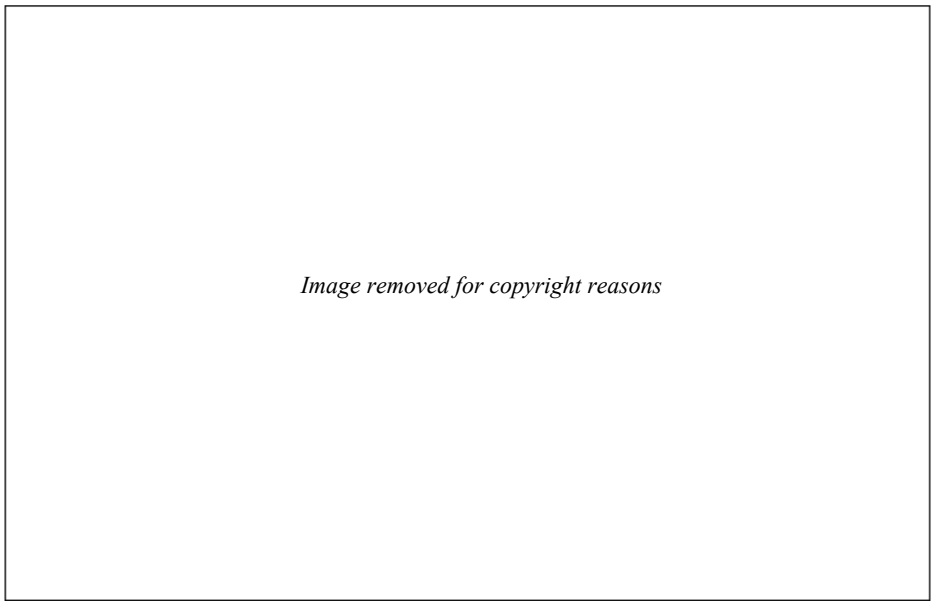


Fig. 45. Jenny Hall *Hollow* 2016, <http://www.hollow.info> [accessed 23 February 2021]. Photograph by Keith Morris.

This rendering of architecture into a dynamic space to be observed aligns with Turner's separation of theatre dramaturgy from everyday life [65] and correspondingly 'architecture and artwork as distinct entities'.[66] While Turner acknowledges that 'we regard it as separate only as a matter of expediency, with the knowledge that it will always have a connection to the "bigger picture"',[67] this separation is problematic. It indicates that architecture as a 'distinct entity' can at some point be separated from its relations to the world; its means of production. Turner's own project is, in fact, deeply aware of these problematics, but sees political or rather tactical potential in the creation of 'possible-impossibles' that are grounded in lived experience but which are made possible through this separation.[68] Nevertheless, this separation can also prioritise formal spatial relations over the social, even leading to the assumption that architecture offers an apolitical spatial framework for action, rather than also being produced by it as such. Ultimately, Turner focuses on 'an exploration of theatre as an art of building', bringing with it an examination of the act of architecture as a distinct art form that in some cases literally performs.[69]

Performing Architectures

In relation to the distinction between performance and performativity introduced at the beginning of this chapter, the examples described in this section explore the potentials and limitations of staging of 'new realities', in terms of their performative possibilities as transformative spaces. In this context, performativity is more aligned to the performance of architecture as an art form, whereby performativity is conflated with performance. Quoting art historian Dorothea von Hantelmann's claims that the 'notion of performativity has nothing to do with the art form of performance', scenographic theorist Rachael Hann echoes this critique of performativity. Hann proposes that all artworks, not only performance, enact some form of performative utterance.[70] While a detailed study of scenography is beyond the scope

[65] Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture*, p. 3.
[66] Ibid., p. 6.
[67] Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture*, pp. 3–6.
[68] Ibid., p. 14-18.
[69] Ibid., p.1.
[70] Dorothea von Hantelmann, *How to do things with art.*, ed. by Karen Marta (Zürich: JRP Ringier, 2010), p.18, cited in Hann, p. 30. For Hann the scenographic, as an act of staging, becomes a way out of this performative impasse – proposing that 'place orientation' is a more useful term in the staging of alternative realities realities. Hann.

of this thesis, Hann and von Hantelmann's reflections are useful to counter notions of performativity projected onto contemporary public spaces which consist of literally moving and staged architectures.

However, von Hantelmann's recent essay, 'What is the New Ritual Space for the 21st Century?' seems to situate itself exactly within this flattening out of performativity. Hantlemann argues that the architectural possibilities of literally moving spaces is an essential aspect in the creation of a new 'institutional model' that 'produces interpersonal ties or moments of connectivity while still retaining a contemporary, individualized, and flexible sensitivity'.[71] Yet, rather than offer an alternative position, art critic Clare Bishop argues that von Hantelmann simply 'emphasizes adaptability as if it were a goal in its own right'.[72]

Von Hantelmann's essay was published to accompany the pre-opening programme of the Shed, a new cultural centre, by architects Diller Scofidio + Renfro, in Hudson Yards, Manhattan, New York City [Fig. 46]. In Bishop's searing critique of 'the seventeen thousand square feet of high-tech retractable pavilion', she argues that the building's focus on adaptability as a promise of social change, is simply another 'curated cultural art venue'.[73] While for von Hantelmann, the Shed offers an example of a 'transformative typology',[74] for Bishop it is simply a performance that reinstates social norms of art spaces, including privatisation and exclusivity.[75] In this context, through its enactment of existing social relations, The Shed is undoubtedly performative but, in contrast to von Hantleman's declaration, fails to embrace the transformative and critical potential found in Wolfrum's and feminist notions of performativity discussed earlier in this thesis.

In a similar way, the particular works explored so far in *Dramaturgy and Architecture* demonstrate ways in which theatre may become more experiential and more interactive. They

[71] Dorothea von Hantelmann, 'What is the New Ritual Space for the 21st Century?' <https://theshed.org/program/series/2-a-prelude-to-the-shed/new-ritual-space-21st-century> [accessed 22 February 2021].

[72] Claire Bishop, 'Palace in Plunderland', *Artforum International*, 57.1 (2018) <https://www.artforum.com/print/201807/palace-in-plunderland-76327> [accessed 6 March 2021].

[73] Ibid.

[74] von Hantelmann, 'What Is the New Ritual Space for the 21st Century?'.

[75] Claire Bishop, Palace in Plunderland https://www.artforum.com/print/201807/palace-in-plunderland-76327

are even modified by an audience regarded as an active participant in the role of 'witness' to an evolving process.[76] However, in relation to Wolfrum's definition, while they acknowledge the *Performanz* potential of theatre, they are closer to *Performance*. In this context, architecture becomes an artwork whose goal is to represent alternate realities or 'heterotopias', that comment on aspects of place and their relationship to the human body. In their stretching of the place of theatre, these alternate realities undoubtedly have transformative potential. For Pearson, the work of Brith Gof creates 'a forum for examining, challenging and transgressing the relationships, rites and rituals of everyday life […] in which meaning is generated relentlessly'.[77] Yet, ultimately the creation of this 'forum' relies on conventional and formal understandings and distinctions between place, site and even architecture itself.

This translation of performativity into formal qualities finds an extreme example in The Shed. While the building's dynamic physical form appears to be transformative, it cloaks a reinforcement of existing power relations. From the perspective of architectural form, Turner herself observes that her focus is on theatre rather than architecture and she identifies a gap in her approach, 'If one were to approach this from the perspective of architecture, this might invite further investigation of the use of the ways in which architecture can be said to perform its "narratives of use".'[78] This aspect is taken further through the work of Rufford who focuses on tectonics and choreographed spaces to explore how 'theatre *and* architecture as disciplines and inter-disciplines act on one another in ways that might prove critically and artistically generative'.[79]

1.3 On Stage II – Theatre and Architecture

Reviewing the work of French theatre director Jacques Copeau (1879-20), Juliet Rufford describes how for Copeau, 'architecture does not simply contain drama but *produces* it by co-creating its meanings, conventions and aesthetics'.[80] Going further than staged events,

[76] In Brith Gof's theatre performances McLucas refers to the audience as 'witness'. Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture, p. 176.*
[77] Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks, *Theatre/Archaeology* (London ; New York: Routledge, 2001).
[78] Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture*, p. 6.
[79] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 14.
[80] Ibid., p.2.

Rufford's analysis of theatre and architecture extends to audience behaviour and social experience, examining 'how the features of architectural space [seating, layout and light] work to establish a certain social code', or 'the model of "correct" behaviour'.[81]

Referring to Stewart Brand's book *How Buildings Learn: What Happens After They're Built*, she likens the ongoing life of buildings and architecture to the ever-changing space of performance.[82] Her claim that 'architecture is itself a species of performer' [83] expands Marcia Feuerstein and Gray Read's earlier examination into buildings as 'actions in the world'.[84] With a specific focus on architectural tectonics and performativity, Rufford asserts that her analysis is 'less about the history of theatre architecture than how theatre and architecture each unmask and renegotiate defining features of the other'.[85]

Tectonics – The Performance of Architecture

Regarded in many ways as the performance of architecture itself, Rufford explores how through architectural tectonics, representation, or 'the expressive potential of structure and constructional technique',[856] takes on a wider definition than simply imitation. Quoting architectural critic and historian Kenneth Frampton, Rufford describes how tectonics proposes a situation in which 'building is ontological rather than representational in character'.[87] While a detailed account of Frampton's well-cited critique of scenography versus architecture would lead too far, the following brief analysis of Rufford's arguments in relation to tectonics highlights why a particular focus on enduring expression through material form brings with it certain problematics when constructing a critical and transformative notion of performativity.[88]

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[81] Ibid., pp. 5-6.
[82] Stewart Brand, *How Buildings Learn: What Happens after They're Built*, Rev. pbk. ed (London: Phoenix, 1997).
[83] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 11.
[84] Read and Feuerstein, p. 2.
[85] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 14.
[86] Ibid., p. 17.
[87] Kenneth Frampton, 'Rappel à l'ordre: The Case for the Tectonic', *Architectural Design*, 60.3–4 (1990), 20–32 (p. 23) cited in Rufford, p. 17.
[88] Rufford herself takes to task Frampton's claims by arguing how 'representational architecture might work as a cultural critique'. For her, works such as Dorita Hannah's design for a production of *Henry 8: A Sexual Sermon*, in which visual registers including scuff marks and imperfections make visible 'the wear and tear of human inhabitation, offer the potential to show social 'patterns of inhabitation'. Ibid., pp. 18-19.

In her analysis, Rufford discusses the notion of mimesis as a foil to imitation as found in the writings of architectural historians Louise Pelletier, Dalibor Vesely and Hilde Heynen. Each offers different ways by which architecture might 'awaken perception'.[89] Through character theory or creating spatial stories; through expressing and interrogating 'human thought, action and experience',[90] or through staging 'an alternate reality'.[91] For each scholar, the focus is on architecture or place as material register, tracing or framing, where the placement or position of the human body determines a particular viewpoint, or the material qualities of a space evoke a particular emotion. Here, the measure of architecture is its ability to create a defined place, where place is in many ways cast as an enduring setting that conveys particular emotions and experience and in which particular identities and realities are embedded.

In 'On Theatre' Rufford explores tectonics further by way of speculation on 'what it might mean to produce theatre by way of architecture'.[92] In this, she aims to propose means by which theatre, through focusing on form and materiality, might create, in Frampton's words, a 'poetics of construction'.[93] To begin, Rufford describes the manifestation of tectonics within buildings such as Joseph Paxton's Crystal Palace. For Rufford, the 'performance of British industrial and technological ingenuity', is manifest in the design of the exhibition hall itself, describing how 'its co-ordination of structural, representational and contextual elements', is 'honest'.[94] Yet, the use of the term 'honest' is problematic. In a similar way to Lefebvre's 'space of architects', whereby, as discussed in chapter one, architectural design takes on a 'moral discourse', the notion of 'honesty' in architecture frequently situates materiality and form within an uncritical moral register and hierarchy.[95]

Rufford's resort to metaphor and symbolic reference to describe Paxton's edifice, eventually presents a passive observation rather than an active experience in relation to the socially produced nature of the space. Similarly, in her concluding example, *Stifter's Dinge* by composer and director Heiner Goebbels, material objects stand in for human performers.

[89] Ibid., p. 23.
[90] Ibid., p. 25.
[91] Ibid., p. 28.
[92] Ibid., p. 67.
[93] Frampton, p. 21.
[94] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 69.
[95] Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 361. The role of materiality in the production of space and communication of meaning will be examined in chapter four.

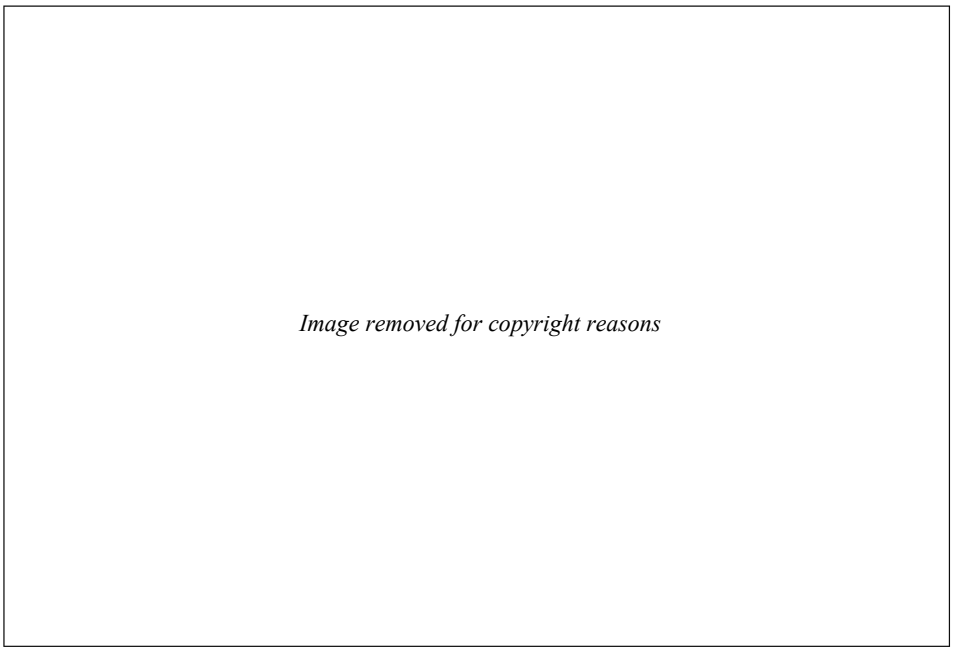


Fig. 46. The ‘high-tech retractable pavilion’ of The Shed, New York. Diller Scofidio + Renfro 2019, <https://www.archdaily.com/914639/the-shed-a-center-for-the-arts-diller-scofidio-plus-renfro> [accessed 17 March 2021]. Photograph by Iwan Baan.

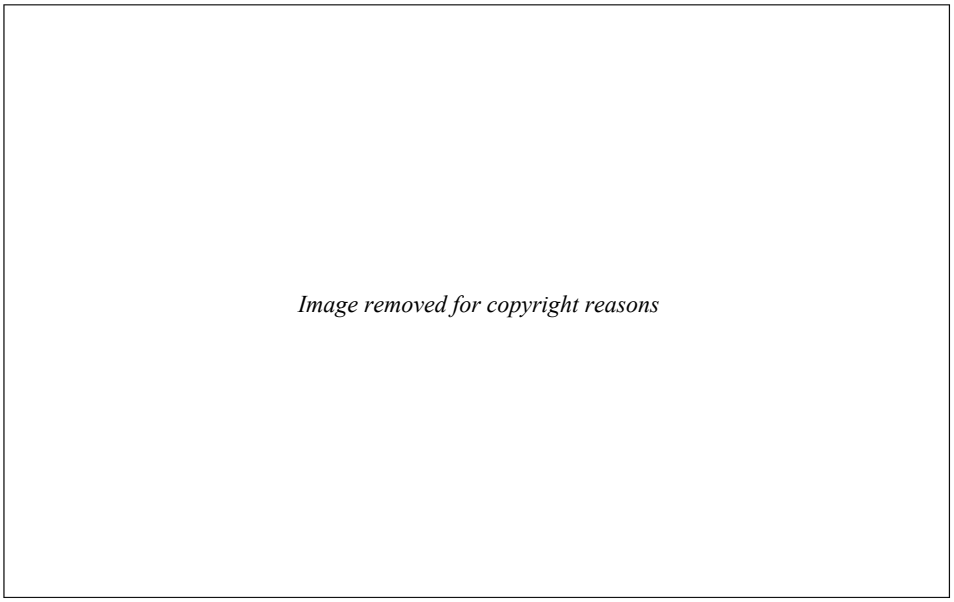


Fig. 47. A moving and juddering architecture that resonates with its surroundings. Heiner Goebbels *Stfters Dinge* 2012, < https://www.artangel.org.uk/project/stifters-dinge/> [accessed 21 March2021]. Photograph by Mario del Curto.

Described by Goebbels himself as a 'performative installation',[96] *Stifter's Dinge* consists of five grand pianos played through mechanical automata, assembled in front of an audience set within an underground concrete chamber [Fig. 47]. For Rufford, through this work architecture is read as 'organising principle, material presence and compositional practice'.[97] An – albeit moving and juddering – object that resonates with its surroundings. However, while referenced and overlaid with social and cultural contexts, this focus on form and materiality, presents architecture as a means of articulating practiced place through languages of design. In this way, it reverberates with Turner's explorations of a heightened theatrical experience through architectural form.

Crossprogramming

In contrast to staged depictions of utopia, dynamism or tectonics, Rufford's focus on performativity challenges the idea that architectural form and materiality can imbue specific and even universal actions, emotions or perceptions. In her examination of 'crossprogramming' she draws attention to Tschumi's infamous claim that 'architecture is as much about the events that take place inside buildings as it is about the buildings themselves' [Fig. 48].[98] Tschumi's criticism is levelled at a history of architecture which had discovered that 'neither supertechnology, expressionist functionalism, nor neo-Corbusianism could solve society's ills'.[99] Additionally, the realisation that 'architecture was not ideologically neutral,'[100] had according to Tschumi, reached a general 'loss of innocence'[101] resorting to 'surface readings' or surface making.[102] Against this positioning of architecture as 'passive object of contemplation', Tschumi argues for a '*place* that confronts spaces and actions'.[103]

Rufford highlights how for Tschumi 'the disjunction between building types and programmes' – the way alternative uses can be brought into a building's planned function

[96] Andrew Clements, 'Goebbels: Stifters Dinge – Review', *The Guardian*, 2012 <http://www.theguardian.com/music/2012/may/24/goebbels-stifters-dinge-cd-review> [accessed 6 March 2021].
[97] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 86.
[98] Bernard Tschumi, *Event-Cities: Praxis* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1994), p. 13, quoted in Rufford p. 32. As referenced earlier in relation to the work of Brith Gof, in 'Spaces and Events', Tschumi argues that 'architecture – its social relevance and formal invention – cannot be dissociated from the events that "happen" in it'. Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 139.
[99] Ibid., p. 141.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid., p. 140.
[103] Ibid., p. 141.

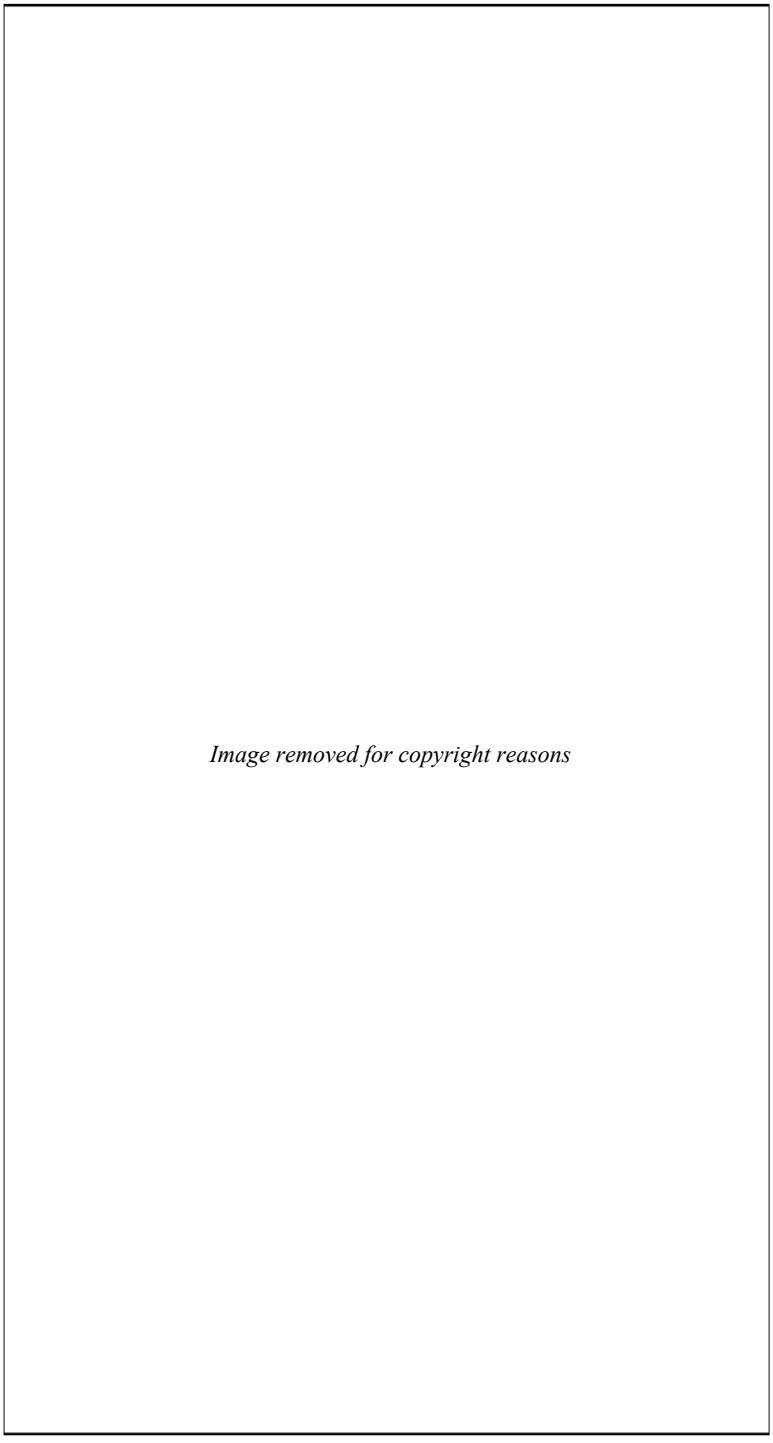


Fig. 48. For Bernard Tschumi, crossprogramming is a way to subvert social norms at the level of architecture by overlaying a particular spatial con iguration with an oppositional program. Bernard Tschumi 'Part 4: The Block' from *The Manhattan Transcripts* 1976-1981. From *Architecture and Disjunction* 1996.

through cross- trans- or disprogramming – 'destabilises normative practices' of designing building and living.[104] Here, playing with architectural concepts becomes a conceptual tool to undermine (conventional) architectural practice itself. Ultimately, for Tschumi, these disjunctions challenge the conventional methods and visions of architects and planners, exposing and questioning the parameters of place while exploring 'new codes of *assemblage*'.[105]

Through crossprogramming Rufford compares the work of Tschumi to gender theory by relating its 'questioning of appearances, categories and customary practices', to performativity and crossdressing.[106] She compares Judith Butler's focus on drag or crossdressing, as a way to subvert social norms at the level of the body, to Tschumi's crossprogramming as a way to subvert social norms at the level of architecture. On this basis, for Rufford, crossprogramming becomes 'a way to resist certain "normalising" cultural and architectural pressures that can start to determine the way users think and behave in space'.[107]

In her focus on architectures that 'substantially alter our experience of space',[108] Rufford goes on to examine the work of architect and artist Alex Schweder, which he himself defines as 'Performance Architecture'.[109] One example is *Stability* completed in collaboration with artist Ward Shelley [Fig. 49]. In this work everyday routines are highlighted via feats of gravity performed by the two artists within a suspended timber structure, the orientation of which depends on the position and weight of its occupants. Physical precarity is a recurring theme in Schweder's work, whereby, according to Rufford, its design 'responds to human body and interaction, where the everyday rituals of people living in, working in or passing through a space are used to generate the architecture'.[110]

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[104] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 34. In *Architecture and Disjunction* Tschumi claims 'crossprogramming' is the use of 'a given spatial configuration for a program not intended for it', 'transprogramming' is the combination of two different programs, 'regardless of their incompatibilities', in the same building with their spatial configurations, whereas 'disprogramming' is the combination of different programs altogether, so that they 'contaminate' each other. Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 205.
[105] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 149.
[106] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 34. As also discussed in chapter one of this thesis, Rufford suggests that, for Butler, performativity is rooted in processes of repetition and in this case 'performance describes the particular manifestations of this process'. Ibid., p. 36.
[107] Ibid., p. 37.
[108] Ibid., p. 38.
[109] See Schweder.
[110] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 39. Also see works such as *In Orbit, ReActor, Your Turn, The Newcomers and My Turn* Schweder.

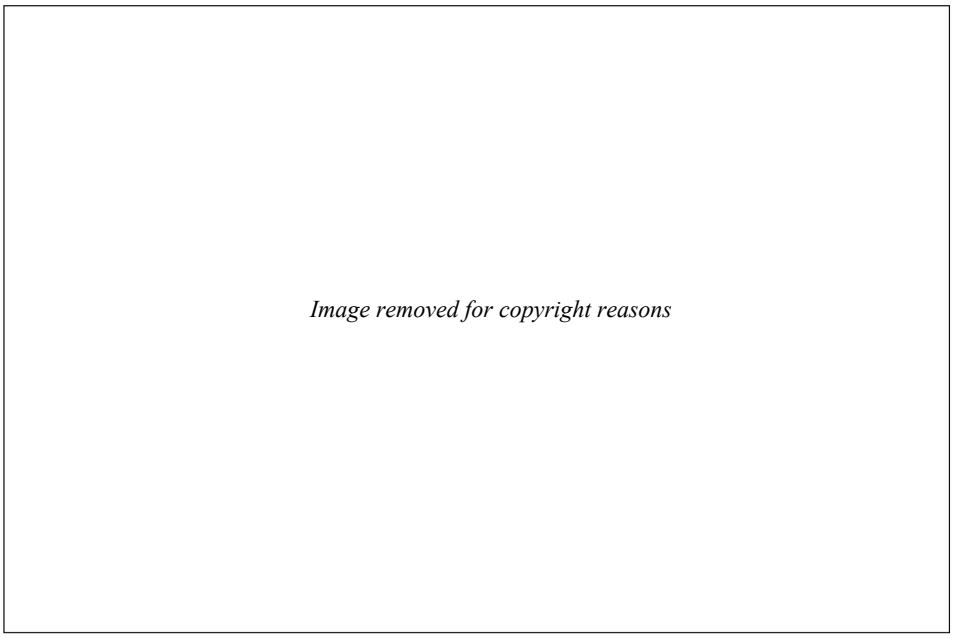


Fig. 49. Alex Schweder's 'extreme caricatures of buildings.' Alex Schweder and Ward Shelley *Stability* 2009, <http://www.alexschweder.com/> [accessed 11 March 2021].

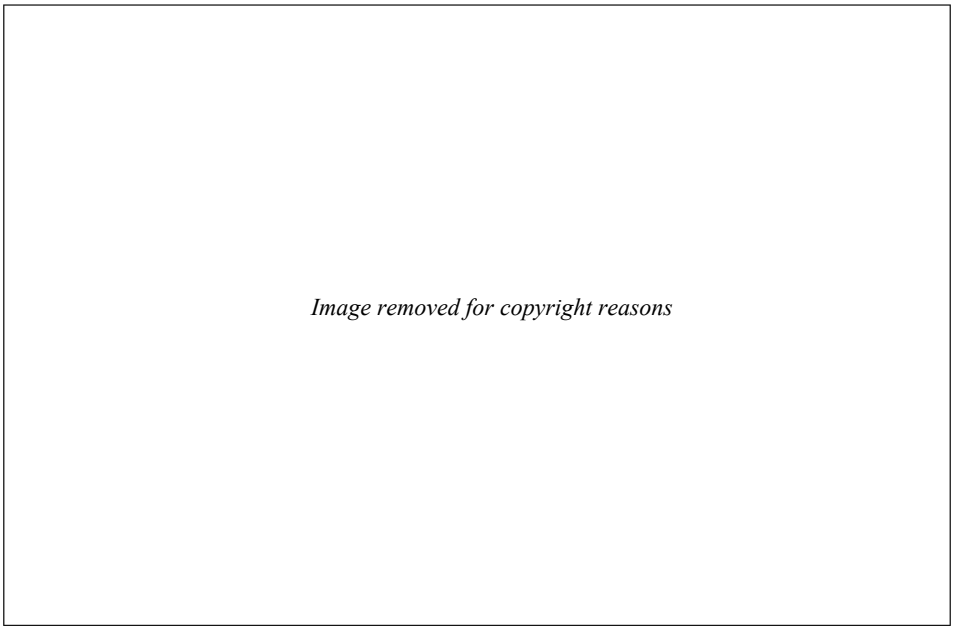


Fig. 50. In *Practise Architecture* phrases on the architecture of the public gallery encourage users to act differently. Alex Schweder *Practise Architecture* 2013, <http://www.alexschweder.com/> [accessed 11 March 2021]. Photograph by Ana Escobar.

Comparable to the 'dynamic' spaces discussed in the previous section, these works also bear similarities with the early works of Diller and Scofidio, including *The Bridge*, *withDrawing Room*, *A Delay in Glass* and *Automarionette* in which 'empathetic viewers' are 'made aware' of their body and the inertia of its parts'.[111] Schweder himself claims his work explores the ways in which 'extreme caricatures of buildings' can 'take things that are more subtle and make them large enough for people to see'.[112] His practice has also been aligned with works that focus on the literally moving or dynamic forms of architecture found in the practices of Archigram, Ant Farm, Superstudio, Coop Himmelb(l)au and Haus-Rucker-Co.[113]

As Rufford observes, in this type of performance architecture, the architect takes on a role akin to an artist in performance and live art.[114] In particular, those performances which include aspects of endurance and duration, in which the physical aspects of the body, its gravity, and capacity to endure time, pain and mental and physical challenges, including solitude and exhaustion, become the focus of the work. This notion of the architect as performance artist is also found in the writings of curator Pedro Gadanho, who also coined the term 'performance architecture' in 2007.[115]

Critically, Gadanho is keen to emphasise the political focus of the work. For Gadanho, architecture's '*performative* dimension must also contribute to a critical role […] architecture's capacity to produce commentary regarding the ongoing transformations of culture and society'.[116] This focus also finds alliance in *Marching On*, a recent collaborative work by architectural designer Bryony Roberts and architect Mabel O. Wilson. Part of 'Performa 17', the New York biennial dedicated to performance art, *Marching On* offers a

[110] Gavin Hogben, 'Ritual: Recent Architectural Installations by Diller and Scofidio', *Architectural Review*, 185 (1989), 54–57 (p. 54).
[112] Agnieszka Gratza, 'The Evolution of "Performance Architecture" Open House | Frieze', *Frieze*, 6 September 2013 <https://www.frieze.com/article/open-house> [accessed 11 March 2021].
[113] Ibid.
[114] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 39.
[115] See Gadanho, 'Architecture as Performance'; Gadanho, 'Architecture as Performance | Shrapnel Contemporary'.
[116] In relation to this aspect, Gadanho refers to *Body Transit*, by Didier Fiuza Faustino. For Gadanho, this project, whereby the architect himself is pictured inside a construction made for the transportation of bodies across national borders, 'not only embodies an undeniable performative dimension, but it addresses also the political and social mobility of illegal immigrants in Europe'. Gadanho argues that 'in the good tradition of performance art, it is the architect's body itself that is represented inside Faustino's ergonomic and embryonic architecture. Only then does the critical message acquire an accomplished meaning'. Gadanho, 'Architecture as Performance | Shrapnel Contemporary'.

meeting of performance, protest and public space through a celebration of the political legacy of African-American marching bands.[117]

Since the 1960s, there has been a long and extensive history of this field of politicised performance art in feminist art practice, sometimes referred to as women's art, women's body art and identity art.[118] While an extensive survey of this work is beyond the scope of this thesis, in the context of this PhD's feminist practice it is important to recognise the ground-breaking work of artists such as Marina Abromović, Carole Scheeman and Yoko Ono, whose many works include respectively *Rhythm O*, *Interior Scroll* and *Cut Piece*, to name a few. These all explore the limits of the female body in order to expose both vulnerability and endurance in relation to prejudices; questioning the position of the gendered body in society. Similarly, crossdressing and drag, also referred to in relation to parody in chapter one of this thesis, has been adopted by many feminist performance artists, including Cindy Sherman in her *Complete Untitled Film Stills*.

At the same time, this questioning and testing of the boundaries of the gendered body, has been explored by feminist artists to confront intersections of racial and gendered prejudices through the work of Adrian Piper, Mona Hatoum and more recently Sonia Boyce [119] and Jade Monsterrat.[120] From a different direction, performance artists have also been problematising notions of the able body, including the work of Jo Spence [121] and Katherine Araniello.[122] In

[117] Mimi Zeiger, 'Architecture Embraces Performance Art (Again)', *Architect*, 12 March 2018 <https://www.architectmagazine.com/design/architecture-embraces-performance-art-again_o> [accessed 13 March 2021]. Performa was founded in 2004 by performance art historian, author, critic and curator RoseLee Goldberg. Whilst director of the Royal College of Art Gallery London, Goldberg also collaborated with Tschumi on many occasions including curating the exhibition 'A Space: A Thousand Words' held at the Royal College of Art in 1975. See also Elena Crippa and Tom Vandeputte, 'Space as Praxis', *Log*, 21, 2011, 33–37.
[118] See *Art and Feminism*, ed. by Peggy Phelan and Helena Reckitt, Themes and Movements (London ; New York, NY: Phaidon, 2001); Clare Qualmann and Amy Sharrocks, 'Walking Women: A Study Room Guide on Women Using Walking in Their Practice' (Live Art Development Agency, 2017) <https://www.thisisliveart.co.uk/resources/walking-women-2017/> [accessed 11 March 2021]; Lois Weaver and Eleanor Roberts, 'Are We There Yet? A Study Room Guide on Live Art and Feminism' (Live Art Development Agency, 2015) <https://www.thisisliveart.co.uk/resources/are-we-there-yet-2015/> [accessed 11 March 2021].
[119] Tate, 'Sonia Boyce OBE Born 1962', *Tate* <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/sonia-boyce-obe-794> [accessed 16 March 2021].
[120] Jade Montserrat, 'Jademontserratdotcom', *Jademontserratdotcom* <https://jademontserrat.com/> [accessed 16 March 2021].
[121] Tate, 'Jo Spence 1934–1992', *Tate* <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artists/jo-spence-18272> [accessed 16 March 2021].
[122] Live Art Development Agency, 'LADA Screens: Katherine Araniello', *Thisistomorrow* <http://thisistomorrow.info/articles/lada-screens-katherine-araniello> [accessed 16 March 2021]. See also Live Art Development Agency, 'Disability and New Artistic Models', LADA Live Art Development Agency, 2010 <https://www.thisisliveart.co.uk/resources/disability-and-new-artistic-models-2010/> [accessed 16 March *2021].*

relation to architecture, this focus on the body as the site of exploration of prejudices is also found in contemporary performance art by Mitchell Squire, whose recent performances use body-centred imagery and actions to explore racialised conceptions of the male black body.[123]

The aforementioned examples of performance art actions are predominantly located within a gallery context. As a development of these works, with particular relevance to this thesis's focus on feminist practice in public space, other feminist performance-based actions interrogate aspects of gender in both domestic and public spaces outside the gallery setting. Valie Export's *Touch Cinema* [Fig. 51] and Adrian Piper's works such as *Catalysis* and *Mythic Being Series* [Fig. 52][124], alongside the work of Mierle Laderman Ukeles discussed earlier in this thesis, examine intersections of sexuality, gender, race and class in public space.

More recently, Lucy Gunnings' work *Climbing Around My Room* [Fig. 53],[125] in which a woman in a red dress scales the heights of a domestic setting, has been extended into public space by Dani Abulhawa, who explores intersections of class, gender and sexuality through performance and play in the public built environment [Fig. 70].[126] Another significant recent work is Kubra Khademi's *Armour* [Fig. 54]. In this eight-minute performance Khademi wore sexualised body armour and walked through the streets of Kabul in her home country of Afghanistan. Aiming to highlight her own experience of everyday sexual harassment in public space, *Armour* provoked immediate fury, leading to death threats and exile in France.[127]

Central to these works, in relation to performance and performativity in public space, is their open-ended criticality, which embraces and invites the unexpected and unknown while being

[123] See Huda Tayob, 'Archiving Forgetting Architecture' (GSA Gtraduate School of Architecture, University of Johannesburgh, 2019); 'Forgetting Architecture on Vimeo' <https://vimeo.com/352911959> [accessed 16 March 2021]; 'Mitchell Squire at White Cube London - Artmap.Com' <https://artmap.com/whitecube/exhibition/mitchell-squire-2012> [accessed 16 March 2021].
[124] Phelan and Reckitt.
[125] Lucy Gunning and Rosalind Horne, *Lucy Gunning* (London : Manchester: Matt's Gallery ; Distributed by Cornerhouse, 2007).
[126] See Dani Abulhawa, 'D A N I', *D A N I* <https://www.daniabulhawa.com> [accessed 16 March 2021]; Dani Abulhawa, 'Are You Known to Us?' (University of Plymouth, 2015) <https://pearl.plymouth.ac.uk/handle/10026.1/3427> [accessed 16 March 2021].
[127] Links to documentation of Khademi's work can be found in Qualmann and Sharrocks.

politically grounded within situated and embodied resistances of gendered and sexual norms. This locates them within a transformative performativity that simultaneously challenges and researches boundaries of the 'house rules' of public space, through both choreographed and improvised actions. This meeting of the choreographed and the improvised in provocative actions finds alliance with feminist protest performance that, for performance studies theorist Rebecca Schneider, contains the possibility to 'wield the master's tools against the master's house to force a second look at the terms and terrain of that sexualisation'.[128] In her study of embodied female protest, theatre historian Maggie Gale examines actions in women's protest. For Gale, actions ranging from the visible and spectacular, as found in the Suffragettes and Pussy Riot, to small gestures by Margaretta D'Arcy, all make use of theatricality and modes of 'dressing up' or 'dressing down' as a means to create a critical dialogue with public space.[129]

These examples highlight how improvisational and intrinsically embodied ways of working offer methodologies that embrace the tacit and the emergent, creating what Robin Nelson describes as a 'dialogue with the situation'.[130] Here, 'know how'[131] modes of working with the body in public space allow for moments of disjunction that make way for outcomes that embrace uncertainty. These emergent outcomes, situate these performance-based actions in a different place to many of the theatre and performance examples discussed so far. Their deeply politicised situatedness creates interactions that, like Braidotti's figurations discussed in chapter one, both challenge and generate possibilities not only for women, but people of colour and those subject to bodily prejudices of all kinds, to take and make place in public.

In relation to this critique, in much of Schweder's 'performance architecture' work, while there is an interaction with 'the public' through observation and conversation, there is little change to the work or it's predestined outcome.[132] Indeed, as Rufford comments 'some [of

[128] Rebecca Schneider, *The Explicit Body in Performance* (London ; New York: Routledge, 1997), p. 105.
[129] Maggie B. Gale, 'Resolute Presence, Fugitive Moments, and the Body in Women's Protest Performance', *Contemporary Theatre Review*, 25.3 (2015), 313–26 <https://doi.org/10.1080/10486801.2015.1049819>.
[130] Nelson, p. 42. In this, Nelson references tacit 'knowledge in action' found in Donald Schön's notion of the reflective practitioner. See Schön.
[131] Ibid.
[132] An example is *Newcomers*, a constructing and deconstructing 'nomadic' pavilion that over ten days during Performa 17 migrated across 28 Liberty, a commercial public space and the site of the Occupy protests in Lower Manhattan in 2011. While, Mimi Zeiger argues that, in the context of the refugee crisis in 2016/17, *Newcomers* raises questions about homelessness and migration, this aspect appears more incidental than intentional, further there is little direct interaction with people other than the collaborating artists involved. Zeiger.

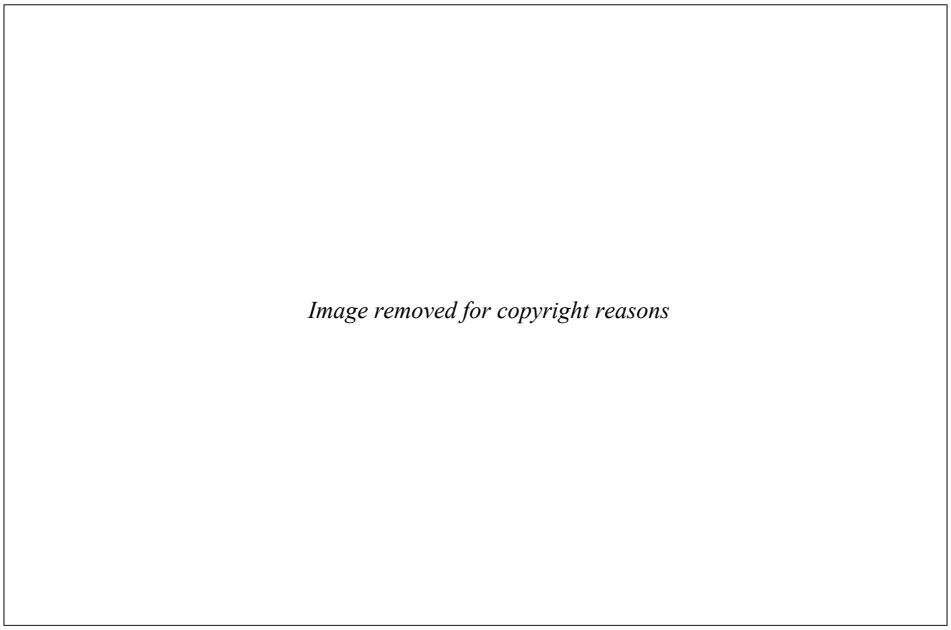


Fig. 51. Valie Export with Peter Weibel *Touch Cinema* Vienna 1968. From *Art and Feminism*, ed. by Peggy Phelan and Helena Reckitt, 2001.

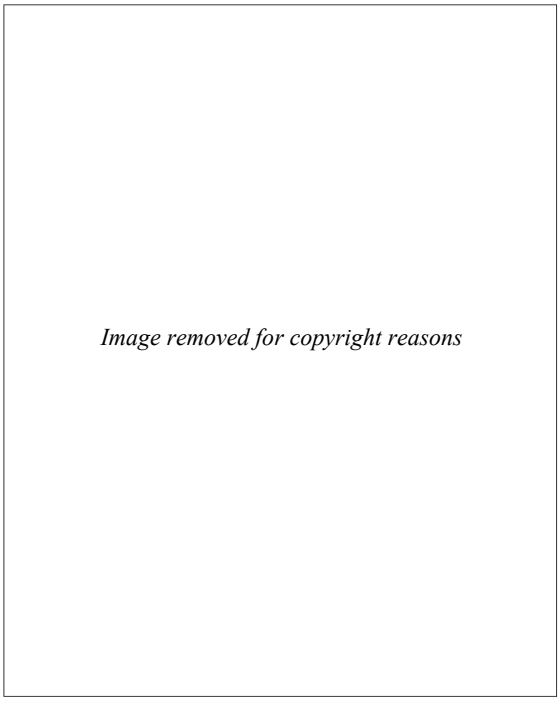


Fig. 52. Adrian Piper *Catalysis III* New York 1970-1. From *Art and Feminism*, ed. by Peggy Phelan and Helena Reckitt, 2001.

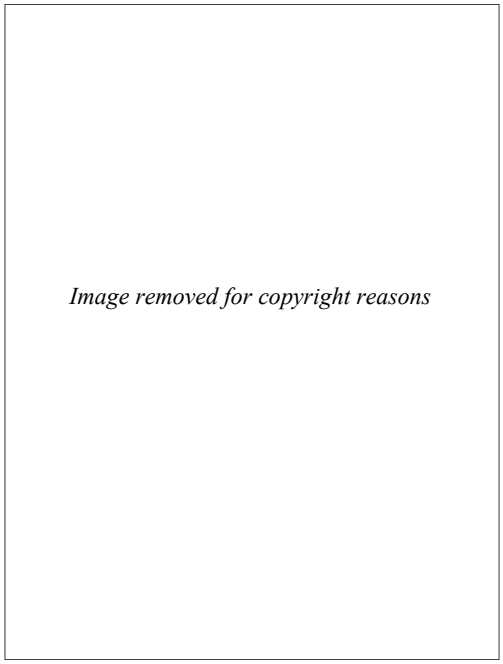


Fig. 53. Lucy Gunning *Climbing Around My Room* 1993. From Lucy Gunning and Rosalind Horne, *Lucy Gunning* 2007.

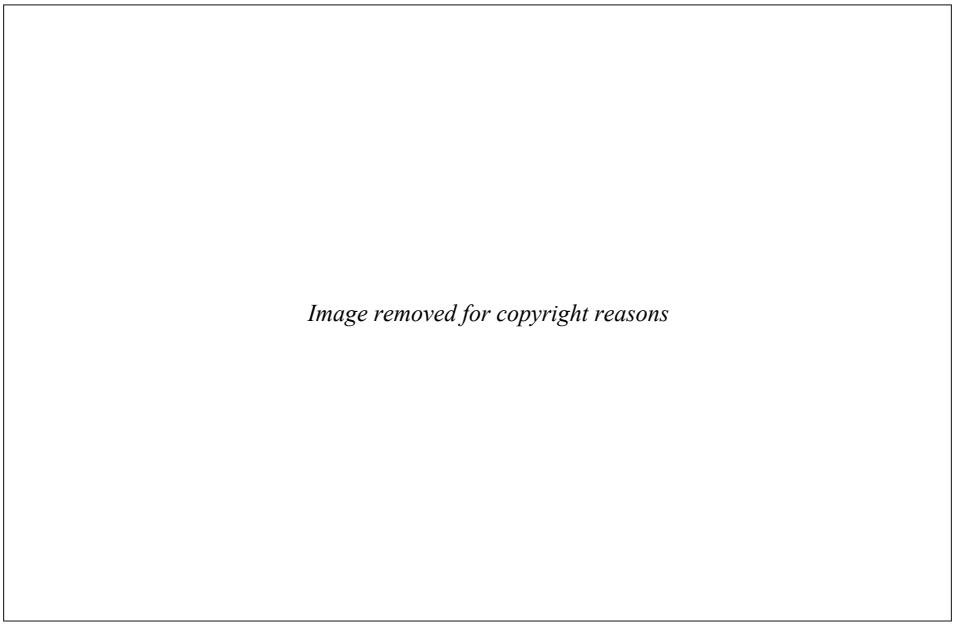


Fig. 54. Kubra Khademi *Armour* Kabul 2015, <https://www.thisisliveart.co.uk/resources/walkingwomen-2017/> [accessed 11 March 2021]

these projects] are too tightly 'scripted' to allow for full and genuinely democratic user participation'.[133] Further, unlike the deeply politicised work of the aforementioned performance art and protest performance, any political intentions in relation to a situated critique of the role and position of the architect in relation to public space remain undeveloped.

In contrast, Rufford highlights *Practise Architecture*, one of the more subtle works of Schweder, hosted at the *Performing Architecture* events at Tate Britain in 2013 [Fig. 50]. Here, she observes how playful instructions, devised by Schweder in collaboration with artist Lamis Bayer, invite gallery visitors to 'change spaces and structures by enacting them differently'.[134] Actions, including 'Turn, notice the grandeur', encourage visitors to pay attention to the space by quietly practicing it otherwise, thereby starting to exert a performative transformation on the particular hierarchies mediated by the public gallery.[135]

It is this aspect of performance architecture which, as Rufford comments, 'merge event-space, sociality and play with a politics of architecture and performance',[136] that align with feminist notions of performativity. Here, rather than its built form, architecture is defined by activities taking place in spatial relation to it. Moreover, in this work bodies take part in research processes, not as subjects to be observed but as active agents; expanding the possibilities for the way places are understood. Not through a tightly choreographed performance then does performativity, in the sense of a transformative act, become possible, but rather where this choreograph breaks down.

This section has examined how actions that embrace failure, improvisation or offer simple site responsive instructions, contain the potential to highlight existing power relations.

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[133] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 40.
[134] Ibid.
[135] Another theatre company that focuses on magnifying everyday practices and gestures through performance is Rimini Protokoll. Director Stefan Kaegi describes their work as 'creating experiences that go beyond hierarchical theatre structures' and a 'temporary architecture that deconstructs behaviouristic architectures'. Stefan Kaegi, Rimini Protokoll [email interview]., 2012. One example is *Ciudadas Paralelas* or *Parallel Cities*. reproduced in multiple urban sites in international cities, including Buenos Aries, Berlin and Copenhagen. In this work the audience, whether bused in a group, as in 'the factory', in pairs as in 'the library' or alone, as in 'the hotel', are invited to experience these spaces as a performance. For performance theorist Patrick Primavesi Ciudadas Paralelas creates 'Heterotopias' – counter spaces that make strange the familiar to highlight the 'performance of all "real" users. Patrick Primavesi, 'Participate in (the) Public: Audio Moves as Urban Performances (Part II)', in *Performative Urbanism: Generating and Designing Urban Space*, ed. by Sophie Wolfrum and Nikolai Frhr von Brandis (Berlin: Jovis, 2015), pp. 153–62 (p. 153). Yet, from the author's own personal experience these repeated gestures often respond to predictable almost stereotypical notions of spaces; ultimately making choreographed performances that rather highlight the ubiquity of place.
[136] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 40.

Further, the embodied actions highlighted by the feminist performance and protest examples, contain the potential to generate alternative subjectivities that work at the level of the mind and the body in terms of conceptual shifts and practical actions. In relation to actions in public space which have the potential to be performative, the final part of this section examines the dialogical and critical potential of performance-based practices for rethinking public space and architecture itself, through Turner and Hannah's studies of 'porous/expanded dramaturgy' and 'event-space'.

1.4 Off Stage

Porous, Expanded and Architectural Dramaturgies

In her examination of 'porous' and 'expanded' dramaturgies Turner redresses the translation of performativity into formal qualities of architecture discussed earlier in this chapter. For Turner, the 'constructed situations' and psychogeography of the architect/artist group Situationist International (SI) are the main vehicle by which to examine these ideas. Psychogeography was defined in 1955 by founder member Guy Debord as 'the study of the specific effects and affects of the altered or détourned urban geographies or environments, consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behaviours of individual participants'.[137] Interest in the SI and their particular way of exploring the built environment remains as active as ever.[138] While there is not space here to give a full history of the movement, this section examines in what way constructed situations offer further ways of rethinking performance-based actions in terms of critical practices that are evolving and open-ended.

Curator France Stracey argues that constructed situations are a way of performatively repeating the fiction of the image-based commodified exchange system, that Debord regards as 'The Society of the Spectacle', in order to create a doubling of the situations that the

[137] Guy Debord, 'Introduction to a Critique of Urban Geography, Les Lèvres Nues #6', trans. by Ken Knabb, *Situationist International Online*, 1955 <https://www.cddc.vt.edu/sionline/presitu/geography.html> [accessed 17 March 2021]. See also *Guy Debord and the Situationist International : Texts and Documents*, ed. by Tom McDonough (Cambridge, Mass & London: MIT Press, 2002).

[138] Contemporary studies include Simon Ford, *The Situationist International: A User's Guide* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 2005); Pinder, *Visions of the City; Walking Inside Out: Contemporary British Psychogeography*, ed. by Tina Richardson, Place, Memory, Affect (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield International, Ltd, 2015); Simon Sadler, *The Situationist City*, 3. print (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001); Frances Stracey, *Constructed Situations: A New History of the Situationist International*, Marxism and Culture (London: Pluto Press, 2014).

'spectacle' already constructs [Fig. 55].[139] Yet, beyond this doubling, for Turner, the constructed situation, in the form of détournement and dérive, opens the way to the possibility of 'other ways of being' even if they are not fully realized in the present.[140] This potential of constructed situations is also highlighted by Stracey who examines how the SI claimed that the constructed situation was

> a means to liberate "inexhaustible energies trapped in a petrified daily life", which, with the advent of unitary urbanism, was sought through the replacement of "present city planning (that geology of lies) … by a technique for defending the permanently threatened conditions of freedom," enabling individuals to "begin freely constructing their own history".[141]

This political potential of psychogeography is echoed by feminist psychogeographer Morag Rose who, in 'Confessions on an Anarcho-Flaneuse', argues that 'Debord's spectacle is still pervasive today'.[142] For Rose, the history of the SI brings with it criticisms of misogyny and neo-colonialism expressed by the exclusivity of both the SI and ongoing privileging of the white male walker in psychogeography (historically conceptualised as the *Flâneur*).[143] However, in a 'call for a more explicitly feminist psychogeography', Rose's work with the 'Loiterer's Resistance Movement' (LRM) offers a less glamourous and loaded counterpart to the *Flâneur*.[144] For Rose, there is potential in reclaiming the practices of détournement and dérive in situated practice which, like the feminist performance and protest actions discussed in the previous section, focus on an embodied relationship to public space.

For Rose 'temporarily rewriting the city, revealing its multiplicities and complicating the power relationships implicit in conventional cartography', not only asserts how 'objectively knowing the city is an impossibility',[145] but also has the potential to emphasise the embodied and gendered nature of experience, thereby '(re)creating' the city with 'multitudinous new

[139] Stracey, pp. 4–8.
[140] Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture*, p. 165. Quoting Lefebvre, she suggests 'Détournement is not yet creation. It prepares the way for it'. Henri Lefebvre, *Toward an Architecture of Enjoyment*, ed. by Łukasz Stanek (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2014), p. 97, cited in Turner, p. 158.
[141] Stracey, p. 10.
[142] Morag Rose, 'Confessions of an Anarcho-Flaneuse, or Psychogeography the Mancunian Way', in *Walking Inside Out: Contemporary British Psychogeography*, ed. by Tina Richardson, Place, Memory, Affect (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield International, Ltd, 2015), pp. 147–62 (p. 161).
[143] Ibid., p. 158.
[144] Ibid.
[145] Ibid., p. 156.

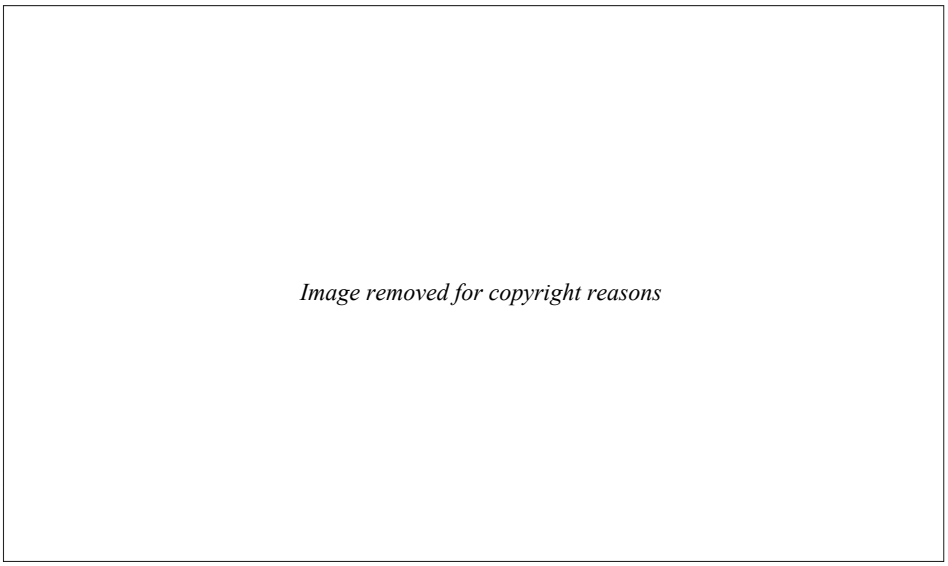


Fig. 55. The 'constructed situations' of the Situationist International opened the way to the possibility of 'other ways of being.' 'Never Work!' Graffiti, rue de Seine, Paris 1953. Photograph from *Internationale Situationniste* 8 (January 1963) From David Pinder *Visions of the City* 2005.

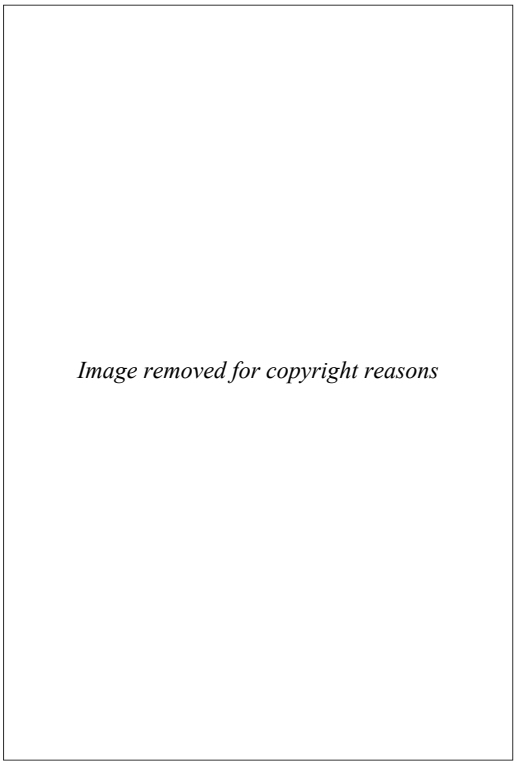


Fig. 56. The Loiterer's Resistance Movement CCTV Bingo card 2012. From *Walking Inside Out* ed. by Tina Richardson 2015.

stories' that 'disrupt' the hegemony and 'monotony of capitalism'.[146] Moreover, in relation to the 'small voices' of maintenance discussed in chapter one alongside D'Arcy's focus on 'small gestures', Rose's writing, and her dérives with the LRM, highlight how small, sometimes ludic, acts of walking are equally significant for those who are conventionally excluded from public space as the outlandish [Fig. 56].[147]

Rose's reframing of psychogeography, in terms of relational and 'emergent possibilities',[148] is echoed in Turner's reframing of constructed situations as 'porous dramaturgy'[149] that creates a dramaturgical/architectural 'enclave'[150] within the built environment. Porous here is 'the sense that it is incomplete without the audience member's contribution and opens out onto a critique or disruption of the built environment'.[151] In this context, Stracey argues that the constructed situation was 'envisaged as a 'lived', embodied, dynamic event, the outcome of which (its success or failure) was not knowable in advance of its particular manifestations'.[152] In these situations, the 'audience' become active participants, aligning with Rose's (re)creation of the city through multitudinous and situated 'new stories'; echoing the critique of the neutrality of the term 'user' within architectural theory and practice.[153]

In 'Mis-Guidance and Spatial Planning: Dramaturgies of Public Space', Turner similarly defines 'expanded dramaturgy' as encompassing 'processual and open-ended structures'. Here, an evolving context modified by participants admits 'the aleatory, entropic and chaotic, examining the potential for multiple narratives, frames and forms of textuality, and including the non-hierarchical consideration of both subjects and objects'.[154] Further, participants embrace a wider variety of actors than simply human bodies and actions, and rather than a

[146] Ibid., p. 161.
[147] Rose describes how she established the LRM after being frustrated by 'the limited impact of shouting'. Ibid., p. 147. This political potential of walking also forms the focus of the 'walking women' events and associated documentation, of which Rose's work forms a key part. Qualmann and Sharrocks.
[148] Morag Rose, p. 152.
[149] Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture*, p. 145.
[150] Ibid., p. 155
[151] Ibid., p. 153.
[152] Stracey, p. 9.
[153] Architectural and urban historians Kenny Cupers and Jonathan Hill, among others, have argued against the neutral construction of the 'user' in order to critique the equally neutral and hegemonic space of its occupation. See *Use Matters: An Alternative History of Architecture*, ed. by Kenny Cupers (London ; New York: Routledge, 2013); *Occupying Architecture: Between the Architect and the User*, ed. by Jonathan Hill (London ; New York: Routledge, 1998).
[154] Turner, 'Mis-Guidance and Spatial Planning', p. 150.

finished work or 'performance', dramaturgy is conceived as an ongoing dynamic process, 'always emerging in relation to its context'.[155]

Turner suggests expanded dramaturgy as a term that produces an exchange between people and places. She defines it as 'an understanding of architecture that includes time-based, narrative and lived elements within it'.[156] This opens up ways of thinking about her own work with Wrights and Sights. In particular, the project *Possible Forests*, a series of maps produced via reconnaissance drifts through Haldon Forest, near Exeter. Here, experts from fields of geography, architecture, psychology, choreography, scenography, organisational development, sculpture and virtual worlds were invited to join the artists in an open dialogue. In this context, the project engaged in setting up situations through which conversations between 'artist', 'expert' and 'site' took place in an open-ended way that enabled multiple interpretations and projective possibilities than those perhaps already considered.[157]

Consequently, Turner shifts her attention to 'architectural dramaturgies' – making architecture that offers open-ended possibilities in terms of mis-use and reappropriation. For Turner, 'architectural dramaturgies' are an architectural practice, which is consciously '"makeshift", with an emphasis on staging new forms of interaction with public space within temporarily established new settings scattered throughout the city'.[158] This aspect relates to Nils Norman's documentation of ad-hoc architectures which, as discussed in chapter one of this thesis, contain the potential to prevent the actions and logic of capital. However, these temporary settings also bring with them connotations of commercial 'pop ups' which performance and communications theorist Shana MacDonald argues often inhabit underused environments to 'illustrate their potential value' or 'offer a time-limited retail experience'.[159]

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[155] Ibid., p. 151. Here, Turner focuses on interconnections between 'materials, words, bodies, sounds, spaces, times, concepts, audiences, socio-political contexts, subjects, objects, ideologies' and 'aesthetics'. Ibid. This aspect will be developed further in relation to the non-human and materiality in chapters three and four.
[156] Ibid., p. 152.
[157] Ibid., p. 157. *Possible Forests* was a development of Wrights and Sites 'mis-guides' which adopt the form of alternative guidebook or tour, creating what Turner describes as 'framing devices and provocations for walking a landscape, often in a city, in a way that breaks with habitual use'. Ibid., p. 155. See also Wrights & Sites, 'Wrights & Sites: A Mis-Guide To Anywhere' <http://www.mis-guide.com/ws/archive/mganywhere.html> [accessed 18 March 2021].
[158] Turner, 'Mis-Guidance and Spatial Planning', p. 160.
[159] Shana MacDonald, 'Pop-Up Art and the Aesthetics of Assembly', *Canadian Theatre Review*, 176 (2008), 75–79 (p. 75).

In relation to a critique of these associations, Turner specifically examines the misappropriation of *Die Insel* (*The Island*) a piece by German artist Cristian Hasucha, curated by Wrights and Sights for their 'Mis-Guided' season of Belluard & Bollwerk International Festival in Friborg. *The Island* consists of a circular grassed construction, located in a busy city square and raised off the ground by scaffold structures to create a private meeting area with a 360-degree view of the cityscape below. Turner describes how, at some point during the festival it is misappropriated by a group of young people. For Turner, the potential of the piece's questioning of the possibilities of public space and a measure of the project's success in 'stimulating the public towards a creative reappropriation of this fragment of the city' exists in this unplanned misappropriation.[160] She observes how it challenges the team of arts administrators with their particular notion of planned appropriation determined by a series of free but nevertheless bookable timeslots. In this context, these direct actions disrupt what political sociologist Sharon Zukin suggests are 'manicured, programmed, and entrepreneurial public spaces', which invariably promote what she famously identifies as 'pacification by cappuccino'.[161]

The potential of assemblies of bodies to reappropriate hegemonic public space finds alignment with the protest movements identified earlier in this section, with their increasing global prevalence. Turner herself identifies how the temporary misappropriation of *The Island* points towards ways of thinking that has ramifications beyond the particular space at hand. In this observation, she refers to architect George Dodd's critique of architects' 'need to prescriptively define the limits of architecture as a discipline and profession'.[162] For Turner, 'rather than thinking of performance largely in terms of its action, and architecture as immutable spaces', dramaturgy provokes a thinking 'in terms of interacting, unfolding and to some degree unpredictable space-time compositions'.[163] Ultimately, as a development of the theories of performativity discussed in chapter one, porous and expanded dramaturgies point towards a rethinking and an enabling of the experience of the performativity of public space through action.

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[160] Turner, 'Mis-Guidance and Spatial Planning', p. 159.
[161] Sharon Zukin, 'Reimagining Civil Society Conflict and Control in the City's Public Spaces', in *Public Space: Between Reimagination and Occupation*, ed. by Svetlana Khristova and Mariusz Czepczyński, Design and the Built Environment, First Edition (London ; New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2018), pp. 17–30 (p. 20). See also Sharon Zukin, *The Cultures of Cities* (Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1995).
[162] George Dodds, 'Editorial', *Journal of Architectural Education*, 61.4 (2008), 3–3 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1531-314X.2008.00180.x>.
[163] Turner, 'Mis-Guidance and Spatial Planning', p. 161.

Event-Space – Making Architecture Tremble

Hannah's publication *Event-Space* 'aims to establish a general theory of spatial performativity through the specificity of performance space: insisting that the built environment housing the event itself is an event'.[164] Of the three authors explored in this section, Hannah focuses on the 'troubling' nature and notion of performativity in relation to redefining architecture in greatest detail. For Hannah, performativity is manifest in the concept of *Event-Space* and its potential to 'render the built environment and its inhabitants, complex, active and dynamic'.[165] Like Turner and Rufford, Hannah regards 'theatre architecture [as] the vehicle for such an exploration'. While this is 'theorized principally through concepts and practices of Europe's avant-garde',[166] her research also focuses on some wider implications for reconceptualising architecture itself.

Referencing the theories of Austin, Derrida and Grosz alongside the writings and practice of Tschumi, among others, Hannah translates the performative in language into spatial terms whereby, as discussed in chapter one, locations, like certain utterances, or *mots d'orde*, can take on effective and affective roles. For Hannah, this focus on 'architecture as an active field rather than the autonomous object reveals its performative forces and their effect on bodies, the imagination and history'.[167] Here, 'buildings are no longer perceived as works of architecture but as spatial action itself … as spacing!'[168]

For Hannah, the focus is on the experiential rather than the tectonic, and she claims that 'as much a social construction as a physical one, space is a performative medium, and therefore an inherently active entity, which acts on, and is activated by, its occupants who need not be physically present within it'.[169] Here, architecture is 'an orchestrated set of systems, forces and complex socio-political and embodied relationships and experiences', and Hannah focuses on '"reading" the buildings themselves as performative spatial texts'.[170] Whilst the focus in *Event-Space* is on theatre or rather performance spaces, Hannah draws attention to

[164] Hannah, p. xvi.
[165] Ibid., p. 328.
[166] Ibid., p. xvi.
[167] Ibid., p. 315.
[168] Ibid., xvi.
[169] Ibid.
[170] Ibid., pp. xvii, xx

links between these cultural spaces and the wider aspects of increasing securitisation and control of architecture and public space.[171]

According to Hannah, the paradigm of 'the event' provides a critical methodology by which this control can be undermined, pointing towards performance spaces that provide a public and 'open forum for experimentation and sharing of ideas within a constantly evolving built environment'.[172] Here, Hannah focuses specifically on the Teatro Oficina by the architect Lina Bo Bardi and Centro Cultural de Sao Paulo (CCSP) designed by Eurico Prado Lopes and Luiz Benedito de Castro Telles. For her, these spaces offer a 'loose fit' through a variety of spaces connected to local public spaces and available for use by all members of the community.[173] In highlighting the social connections by which these performance spaces are themselves performed, Hannah argues that they offer a 'deliberately open and robust environment', thereby critiquing physically dynamic, yet securitised, controlled and exclusive 'public' spaces, such as those cultural spaces represented by The Shed.[174]

In *Event-Space*, 'rather than advocate purely transient, fragile and porous forms of architecture,' the focus is on 'acknowledging an inherent performativity' of architecture itself, in order to 'render the built environment, and its inhabitants, complex, active and dynamic'.[175] Like Turner's porous and expanded dramaturgy, these notions move the discussion away from performance and theatre as representations of utopia/heterotopia and architectural tectonics towards the experiential. For Hannah, this shift is essential in order to 'reconvene built space as both embodied experience and evolving time-based event'.[176]

Central to Hannah's thought, is that these 'constantly evolving' spaces are not performative in the sense that they literally perform through movement. Instead, they make architecture

[171] Hannah describes how the 'current age of liquescence' has not translated into a 'porous' architecture, but instead, motivated by 'catastrophes, wreaked by nature and humanity', as much as by commodification, increasingly focuses on 'authoritarian spatial control, foreclosing on ease of access and expression while asserting architecture as the art of constructing and reinforcing boundaries'. Hannah, pp. 311–12.
[172] Ibid., p. 329.
[173] Ibid., p. 324.
[174] Ibid., p. 329. Like Bishop, Hannah also refers to the Fun Palace by Cedric Price and Joan Littlewood, describing how the vision for it contains an 'interior intricacy and social accessibility' which for her, is lacking in The Shed. Ibid.
[175] Ibid., p. 328.
[176] Ibid., xx.

'tremble'[177] by translating it into an 'active field rather than the autonomous object', thereby revealing its 'performative forces and their effects on bodies, the imagination and history'.[178] Ultimately, in *Event-Space* the communal assembly, typical of performance is extended into architecture, thereby creating a performative space that makes visible the constraints and limitations of both. Importantly, *Event-Space* expands the possibilities of contemporary performance space while undermining more generally held and traditional conventions of architecture.

1.5 Conclusions – Performative Possibilities for Open-Ended Research Processes

Turner, Rufford and Hannah examine connections and overlaps between theatre, performance and architecture. In order to reframe and rethink performativity in architecture from a performance-based perspective, this section has analysed what is at stake for architecture in the writings of all three. In each, the focus is on the analysis of the construction of specific places and practices, exploring the implications these have for the creation of performance space. In her analysis of architecture and dramaturgy Turner moves from theatre to architecture through the concept of dramaturgy, eventually exploring 'porous' and 'expanded' dramaturgies that focuses on how 'settings do things with people too'.[179] Starting from the theatre space as place event, Turner moves towards 'architectural dramaturgies' and 'constructed situations' which, here read through the feminist lens of Rose, become an active site of resistance, questioning power relations through troubling, broadening out or making 'elusive' the boundaries of architecture.[180]

[177] Ibid., p. 309. Here, Hannah refers to the arguments of architectural critic Mark Wigley who claims that 'by faithfully repeating its operations […] in a way that exposes […] concealed points of weakness' a building can be made to 'tremble'. Mark Wigley, *The Architecture of Deconstruction: Derrida's Haunt*, 1. MIT press paperb. ed (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1995), p. 42, cited in Hannah p. 321.
[178] Ibid., p. 316. For Hannah these performative understandings of architecture bring 'a vibratory rhythm back into the stone', thereby undermining 'architecture's conventional role throughout history'. Ibid., p. 328.
[179] In 'Mis-Guidance and Spatial Planning', Turner's focus on the Dutch political scientist Maarten A. Hajer's use of 'dramaturgy' examines the notion of performance within the production of architecture itself in relation to spatial policy making. Turner highlights how Hajer focuses on how '"scenes and acts interrelate to produce a particular staging of policy involvement"', acknowledging that "'settings do things with people too'". Maarten A. Hajer, 'Setting the Stage: A Dramaturgy of Policy Deliberation', *Administration & Society*, 36.6 (2005), 624–47 (p. 628) <https://doi.org/10.1177/0095399704270586>, quoted in Turner, p. 154.
[180] In 'Mis-Guidance and Spatial Planning', Turner draws attention to the 'essential elusiveness' of architecture's descriptive disciplinary boundaries, identified by architect George Dodds, who comments how an acknowledgement of this 'essential elusiveness' 'offers many hope for its future actions and the body politic of which it is part'. Dodds.

In *Theatre and Architecture*, Rufford moves from architecture to theatre, not only focusing on tectonics but also on crossprogramming and performance architecture. In this, Rufford acknowledges the performative potential of conceptual and practical actions 'that resist certain "normalising" cultural and architectural pressures'.[181] In this section this performative potential is taken further through the work of feminist performance artist and protest performance into situated and embodied reperformances of public space. Finally, Hannah's focus on *Event-Space* brings performance and architecture together in a space to examine the potentialities of both. Through the notion of '*event-space*' Hannah expands the possibilities of performance space with implications for performativity as a critical tool to undermine wider conventions of architecture and public space itself.

All three approaches help construct the potential of performative architectures as a transformative performance-based methodology that resists and challenges entrenched ways of thinking about architecture. Central to this analysis is the notion that performance-based actions might offer open-ended research processes that operate at the level of direct and bodily action, but that through situated performativity, or *Performativität,* [182] offer wider implications for the conception of architecture and public space. Rather than creating an experience to be consumed, they point towards improvisational, embodied and politicised methodologies by which to develop spatial knowledge.

It is this focus that forms the basis of the following case study, *Manchester Blind Spots*. Made in collaboration with performance artist Diana Wesser in 2008, *Manchester Blind Spots* used performance-based actions to research the 'spatial etiquette' of Manchester Piccadilly Gardens, a regenerated public space in the centre of the city. The account of this case study is followed by a reflection on theory through the practice of *Manchester Blind Spots*. In order to develop the notion of feminist performative architectures as transformative performance-based methodology arrived at in section one of this chapter, this reflection will examine how the actions in *Manchester Blind Spots* simultaneously researched, critiqued and resisted the neoliberal and gendered power relations of this particular public space.

[181] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 37.
[182] Wolfrum, 'Peformativity – State of Affairs', p. 27.

So as to examine the politicised processes and spaces generated through this way of working, it will examine in what way performance-based actions make visible the performativity of this particular public space to both the researcher and ‘users’ of the Gardens. Finally, it will reflect on the type of knowledge foregrounded by the practice in order to examine in what way these tacit and embodied methods uncover aspects of public space otherwise inaccessible to those that prioritise ‘normative’ and objectifying models of analysis and knowledge production.

Section Two

Manchester Blind Spots

Manchester Blind Spots was based on site research at Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester. The work combined performance and architecture, practice and theory, intervention and lecture to explore the city as a stage for everyday performances that construct reality. Made in collaboration with artist Diana Wesser as urban (col)laboratory for 'Get Lost' festival in 2008, organised by the Loiterers Resistance Movement, the research and performance lecture formed the basis for a lecture-video of the same name [see appendix one].[183] This section focuses on actions during the on-site research and performance lecture. Self-initiated and selected via open call with a proposal to research public space through performance-based actions, the project had no formal set up in terms of a residency or requirements. Instead, our two bodies moving through the space were only recognisable as belonging together through our red jackets.

The following section starts with background information about Piccadilly Gardens before moving into an auto-ethnographic account of the on-site research. Placing excerpts of the lecture-video alongside images and stills of the performance-based actions and personal

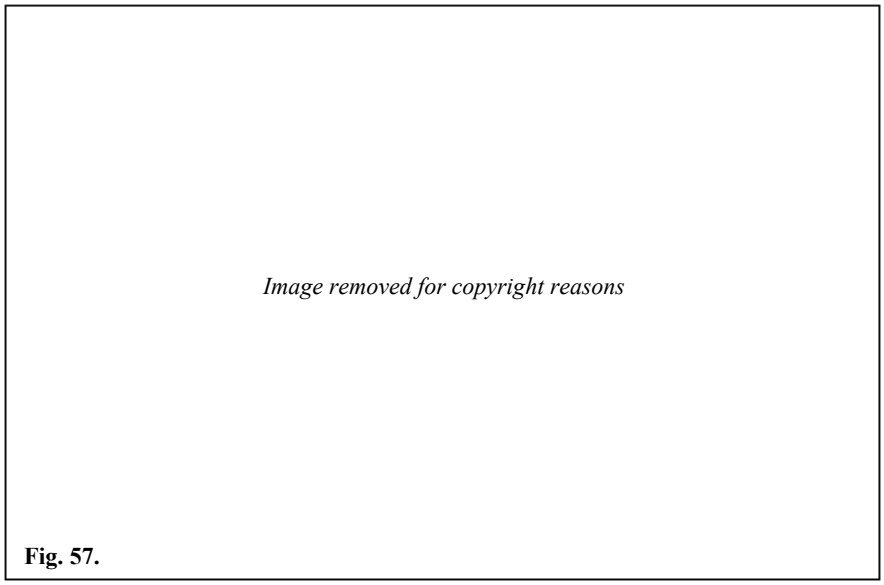


Fig. 57.

reflections, this section explores the personal experience of the practice research. It investigates how this first-hand immediate experience and autobiographical narrative connects to the wider cultural, political, and social meanings and understandings of the Gardens.

This account is a reflection on practice through practice. In contrast to the practice account in chapter one, in this section I write from my position of the researcher rather than about it. Differentiated in italics, these reflections explore the particular spatial knowledge gained through the research and how this is experienced through experiential, sensorial and corporeal affects. In this way, it speaks about being there; about the place of the performative research in Piccadilly Gardens, exploring the locations I, in collaboration with Diana and in gestural and verbal dialogue with others in the Gardens, take up through different modes of acting.

Prelude

'Director:

Manchester City Council By-laws: No skateboarding, skating, cycling or riding on wheels etc. Penalty £500.

Manchester City Council NOTICE Section 161 (3) Of The Highways Act 1980. If a person plays Football or any other game on the highway (carriageway, footway or highway green) to the annoyance of a user of the highway, he or she is guilty of an offence liable to a fine not exceeding £200 (current fine under level one of the standard scale, within the Act)'.[184]


Passengers must not pass this point
Manchester City Council
NOTICE
Section 161 (3) Of The Highways Act 1980
If a person plays Football or any other game on the highway (carriageway, footway or highway green) to the annoyance of a user of the highway, he or she is guilty of an offence liable to a fine not exceeding £200 (current fine under level one of the standard scale, within the Act).

Fig. 58.


Public use of the fountain is at individual's own risk. Do not drink the fountain water.

Fig. 59.

Piccadilly Gardens is located in 'the heart of Manchester', at the intersection of bus, tram, and train connections in close proximity to the main high street. After a 4-year renovation period, Piccadilly Gardens was re-opened in 2002 with a new design that replaced, what was viewed as, a 'hostile' and 'unsafe' environment. An open space in the centre of city, the site has various historical origins including clay pits and the Manchester Infirmary and Mental Hospital. The hospital was demolished in the early 1900s with the area transformed into a Victorian sunken garden occupying the former basement and hosting various statues including monuments to Queen Victoria, the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel and James Watt.[185] By the late 1990s, the area around the Gardens was deemed to be 'suffering from a lack of investment'. The sunken Victorian Gardens were described as 'cut off' from the rest of the city by traffic infrastructure with a 'neglected atmosphere' and a focus for 'anti-social behaviour'.[186]

Following the 1996 bombing by the IRA, public space in Manchester City Centre was seen as in 'dire need of recovery'.[187] The bomb damage was viewed as 'an opportunity for a new and exciting design', prompting the launch of an international design competition for a city centre masterplan, of which the renovation of Piccadilly Gardens was a key focus.[188] In 2000 An impressive lineup of national and international practitioners were selected to create the Gardens, including London based landscape architects EADW and architects Allies and Morrison, international architect Tadao Ando and artist

Peter Fink. The private sector offered a major source of funding, with office buildings forming a key part of the financial incentive advocating that an 'enhanced public realm would be built to a quality that would substantially upgrade the area and stimulate wider regeneration activity'.[189] One of the largest open spaces in the city centre, the renovated Gardens were opened in time for Manchester's hosting of the Commonwealth Games.[190]

Piccadilly Gardens is contained by a boundary of traffic circulation and surrounded by restaurants cafés and office blocks. It has been described as creating a sense of place through 'boasting' 'useable grassy areas interspersed with water fountains, and bounded by cafes, bars and restaurants'.[191] The design has been shortlisted for and won numerous awards including the Prime Minister's Better Public Building Award, Civic Trust Award, Public's Favourite Regeneration Project, RIBA award and the Landscape Institute National Awards.[192]

Evidencing how 'high quality design affects our lives every day', The extract from a 'case study' report on the Gardens by the Commission for the Built Environment (CABE), reads:

> The restrained simplicity of the overall scheme is undoubtedly one of its triumphs. The discipline of the geometry […] materials and plant choices lend a cool, minimal and sophisticated touch […] Tadao Ando's pavilion also lends a touch of the serenity of contemporary Japanese architecture to the scene.[193]

On Stage

When we arrive at the Gardens, on what is to be our first of 5 days on-site research, we notice that the space is well populated and busy with a range of spaces, activities and people. From these initial observations – making notes, taking photographs and filming – we conclude that Piccadilly Gardens appears to operate as a successful and popular public space. Yet, on closer inspection we also observe how the gardens appear somewhat neglected and visibly in need of maintenance. The apparently lifeless planters and noticeably out of service water features seem to conflict with the architectural vision. We also start to notice other elements beyond the spatial form that affect the acceptable use of this particular public space.

From the plethora of signs present in the Gardens we observe how legislative controls are set in place in relation to permitted activities. Some indicate that certain activities, such as 'skateboarding, skating, cycling or riding on wheels', are forbidden, while others define how they should be enacted, including football which is permitted only if executed not 'to the annoyance of others'. Further signs define separations between pedestrians and vehicular traffic. In response, we make actions that accord with them. Standing in the Gardens, apparently directing the endless flow of pedestrians, we register how the architectural design, in combination with the legislative signs and public notices, appears to reinforce these clearly defined zones of use.


AMADA
What'll

Fig. 60.


POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICER
POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICER

Fig. 61.

We observe how restaurants, cafés and office blocks reinforce the boundary of traffic circulation, while a curved concrete wall separates pedestrians from tram and bus routes. Pedestrian routes follow three directions set out by lines in the paving, while other changes in surface materials define seating areas including lawns and benches. Office buildings surrounding the Gardens offer the possibility for workers to look down on the Gardens, its activities and people below, while users of the Gardens themselves appear content to occupy this public place in the manner for which it has been designed. Despite the somewhat neglected nature of the facilities, everything looks calm, friendly and well-behaved. People of diverse nationalities, age and gender are sitting on the benches, picnicking, playing football on the grass and using a central walkway to move across the space.

From research in the nearby public library and online we learn that each area of the Gardens has been designed for a specific function and given a specific name:

'The Fountain'
'The Boulevard'
'The Horticultural Garden'
'The Central Lawn'
'The Bosque'
'The Garden Pavilions'
'The City Bench'

and we learn that the central walkway is called 'The Catwalk'.

Off Stage I
Performing Otherwise – The Catwalk



Fig. 62.

'Are you a journalist?'

'Are you working?'

'Do you need work?'

'Will you be my girlfriend?'

'Do you suck dick?'.[194]

I am standing on a place, which I now know is called 'The Catwalk'. I have a series of questions to ask people. I want to know where they are coming from, where they are going, what are they doing here and why. I approach people with notebook and pen in hand. A few people seem to want to stop and talk. I receive the following responses:

'It's nice'

'It's quick'

'We're enjoying the sunshine'

'Just wandering'

'Chilling out'.

But I also get these:

'Sorry I can't stop'

'Sorry love I'm late for work'

'No thank you'

'No thank you'

'Not today thanks'.[195]

The design of the catwalk seems to meet its designers' intent well – a bridge with steel balustrades that spans the Gardens; acting as a crossing point for rapid access from the city centre to the bus and tram interchange. At one end of the catwalk I see two men in red fleece jackets surveying my actions. I approach them and start to ask a few questions. In close proximity I notice they have mobile security radio wires in their ears and letters on the backs of their jackets that read 'Warden'. They seem rather confused by my questions and one of the two wardens asks me if I have a license to ask them. When I respond that I haven't, the message gets a little sterner, 'Do you have a license



Fig. 63.

to ask questions? You should have. My boss is coming over soon. You should watch yourself'. I feel a little shaken at how rapidly the street warden's friendly demeanour changes into a stern even threatening tone. I wonder if I should have been aware of the need for such a license and then I ask myself whether one actually even exists.

I move away from the red-jacketed wardens. A fire alarm has caused workers from the nearby office blocks to evacuate their workspaces and the Gardens are filling up with office workers, police and fire-

fighters. Many men and women in suits are mustering at the designated evacuation points alongside people in yellow, orange and blue tabards. Neither police nor fire-fighters but mixing with both, these tabarded people are community police, office monitors and other authoritative appointed members of society, including the street wardens, with a security mandate. The alarm has brought them together and made visible an otherwise almost imperceptible security presence, hitherto more subtly active. The office workers' suits clash with the clothes of the garden dwellers revealing the vertical hierarchy of the space. Its peaceful nature and occupation now seems a little disrupted. The heightened security presence, made visible through the fire alarm, seems to indicate that at any moment chaos might threaten to overtake this public space, rupturing its calm and measured use.

The next day I restart my questions on the catwalk. I approach a man who is hanging around at the railings. I think 'great! someone to answer my questions', but instead he asks me a series of questions: 'Will you be my girlfriend?' 'Do you suck dick?'. Suddenly aware of my gendered location within this space, for a brief moment I am lost for words. I feel naïve and unnerved as I suddenly notice other men hanging around at the other edges of the catwalk. I wonder how many of these men might be thinking the same thing. As with the wardens, asking simple questions has elicited a response for which I wasn't at all prepared. This response, combined with the previous encounters, has shifted the nature of the Gardens from one of a well-behaved public space to somewhat intimidating. It feels as if the space is simply a façade, with 'unacceptable' behaviour just about deferred

through the high security presence; a means of control, which at any moment is undermined by softly spoken suggestive questions.

Later, I take hold of the video camera and point it towards Diana. She is starting to prepare to sit down. She is opening a couple of spreads of today's edition of Manchester Evening News and is about to sit on them, right in the middle of the busy public catwalk. I am shaking. In these last few moments I have suddenly become acutely aware of the physical, social and emotional structures operating in the public space around me and the pressure they exert is overwhelming. The design of the space, the way it is occupied and its imminent 'mis-use' is affecting me – physically. Shaking with a mixture of excitement and fear I wonder, what will people do? How will people react?

At first it seems my fears and anxieties are ill-founded – there appears to be no reaction at all or rather a reaction which attempts to avoid acknowledging this direct action through denying it's visibility – we are simply ignored. People look away in the opposite direction. Yet, suddenly I am surprised as a different event unfolds in front of me. Instead of being ignored, asked for a sexual service or instructed to move on, the action of sitting on the catwalk has prompted a young woman to join and sit down too. It seems as if the action of sitting in this place, designed for transit, patrolled by security and almost imperceptibly reappropriated as a pick up point, has opened up the possibility for others to take place differently. The young woman's actions indicate a desire and possibility for collective playfulness in this place, opening it up to other possibilities.



Fig. 64.



Fig. 65.

Off Stage II
Knowing Differently – The Fountain

'Public use of the fountain is at individual's own risk.

Do not drink the fountain water'

'DANGER Paving slippery when wet'

'DANGER Beware of level change'.[196]

In the middle of Piccadilly Gardens is an elliptical shaped fountain with a slightly tilted black anthracite surface. The fountain's jets, which combine 6-foot water spouts with 'feature lighting', are not working. We become aware of their spacing – approximately a small child's leap apart – through the actions of children jumping between the metal gratings covering the jet outlets. The signs around the fountain speak of a specific and predominantly passive use – focusing on potential hazards and avoidance of risk. But the actions of the children have transformed the out of use 'water feature' into a game.

I watch through the video camera, as Diana joins the children on the out of use fountain. Her actions mirror theirs – running and jumping between the circular steel gratings to avoid stepping on the black smooth surface. From their actions I read that the children welcome the new participant, permitting her to play with them. Moreover, with the new participant comes a transformation in the game. Instead of simply 'avoiding the cracks', the game evolves into a competition based around who can jump to the next grating first. These improvised movements, created in dialogue between the children, Diana and the out of use fountain, invent a new choreography for the space.



Fig. 66.

To end our week of research in the frame of the Get Lost! festival, we invite others to join us in a performative lecture around the Gardens. I read out a prepared lecture that combines critical and feminist theories around notions of public(s) and public space, with the historical, legislative and design information, our observations of Piccadilly Gardens and the responses we have gained from our research. At the same time, Diana repeats actions tried earlier in the week, including sitting on the catwalk, hanging over balustrades and walking on benches. This time, sitting on the catwalk (slightly further into the path of pedestrians) provokes a demonstration of passionate disapproval from an elderly man, while walking on benches prompts questions, a conversation and then to our surprise (and delight) a playful dance that evolves out of this particular encounter.

To conclude, we invite our 'audience' to join us to participate in the child's game on the fountain. Yet, in contrast to the children, as a group of adults we are awkward in the space, we don't have the 'correct' shoes, we have mixed physical abilities, we stumble and feel self-conscious. We have to invent different moves that accommodate our particular bodies. Moreover, we have also become performers in this public place. We are being filmed and our actions are transforming the defunct fountain into a stage for onlookers to watch from the concrete benches around its perimeter. We are not sure what will happen. Will the street wardens move us on? Will other garden users join in? In the meantime, the children move freely between us.



Fig. 67.



Fig. 68.

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All photographs copyright urban (col)laboratory: Helen Stratford and Diana Wesser, unless otherwise stated.

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Fig. 66. 'The Fountain' game. Still from Manchester Blind Spots lecture video. Video documentation by Lee Johnson.
Fig. 67. Left: sitting on 'The Catwalk' during the lecture performance. Still from Manchester Blind Spots lecture video. Centre and right: walking on the benches in 'The Bosque' during the lecture performance prompted an improvised dance between Diana and a garden user. Photograph by Guy Jones and still from Manchester Blind Spots lecture video. Video documentation by Lee Johnson.
Fig. 68. 'The Fountain' game during the lecture performance. Still from Manchester Blind Spots lecture video. Video documentation by Lee Johnson.

Notes

[183] The lecture video has been screened at 'TRIP' (Territories Reimagined: International Perspectives) Manchester Metropolitan University 2008; 'Mirror/Lens, Women and Film', Murray Edwards College, Cambridge 2010; 'CUBEOpen', Manchester Cube Gallery 2010; 'Wysing Arts Contemporary', Wysing Arts Centre 2010; 'Playing With Space', Firstsite Gallery Colchester 2012; 'FANN13', Festival of Architecture Norwich & Norfolk 2013 and 'Loitering with Intent - The Art and Politics of Walking in Manchester and Beyond', The People's History Museum, Manchester 2016.

[184] Extract from lecture video. See Helen Stratford and Diana Wesser, '"Urban (Col)Laboratory" Manchester: Blind Spots (Piccadilly Gardens) on Vimeo' <https://vimeo.com/8611770> [accessed 27 May 2021].

[185] 'The Manchester Royal Infirmary and Lunatic Asylum' <https://manchesterhistory.net/manchester/gone/infirmary.html> [accessed 6 April 2021].

[186] CABE, '[ARCHIVED CONTENT] Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester | Case Studies | CABE' <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110118143746/http://www.cabe.org.uk/case-studies/piccadilly-gardens> [accessed 6 April 2021].

[187] 'Piccadilly Gardens, Piccadilly, Manchester | Creating a Sense of Place' <http://www.creatingasenseofplace.com/place/198/piccadilly-gardens> [accessed 6 April 2021].

[188] 'Piccadilly Gardens, Piccadilly, Manchester | Creating a Sense of Place'.

[189] Ibid.

[190] Ibid.

[191] Ibid.

[192] 'Manchester Piccadilly Station Redevelopment | Civic Trust Awards' <https://www.civictrustawards.org.uk/benet/schemes/manchester-piccadilly-station-redevelopment> [accessed 6 April 2021]; 'Piccadilly Gardens', Wikipedia, 2021 <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Piccadilly_Gardens&oldid=1001672870> [accessed 6 April 2021].

[193] CABE '[ARCHIVED CONTENT] Piccadilly Gardens, Manchester | Case Studies | CABE'.

[194] Extract from lecture video. See Stratford and Wesser, '"Urban (Col)Laboratory" Manchester: Blind Spots (Piccadilly Gardens) on Vimeo'.

[195] Ibid.

[196] Ibid.

Section Three – Performative Actions in Public Space

> The grid on which the oaks are arrayed forms an organising principle across the Gardens. Evident in the alignment of the sandstone paving around the square, it takes its alignment from the existing orientation of the statue of Queen Victoria – itself a legacy of the former Esplanade here. The grid extends a single surface across the disparate, irregularly shaped paved zones of the Gardens – what Peter Walker describes as "seriality – a repeating pattern which visually dominate[s] the non-repetitive elements of its environment." Viewed from above, the grid achieves this. But at eye level it fragments, seeming less meaningful in smaller paved zones, particularly where they are visually separate from larger expanses.[197]
>
> 'From Public Garden to Corporate Plaza:
> Piccadilly Gardens and the New Civic Landscape'.
> Rowland Byass

3.1. On Stage – Architecture as Director: Making Visible the Programming of Public Space

The starting point for *Manchester Blind Spots* was to observe a public place, and by extrapolation the city, as a theatre stage. From the outset, a clear space or square with distinct boundaries was sought to research 'Who is director? What is the stage? and Who are the audience?'.[198] Starting from observational strategies, we, as urban (col)laboratory, investigated how the architectural elements appeared to reinforce the designed or legislatively approved formal and informal actions that took place in Piccadilly Gardens.[199] We approached the Gardens by observing how people occupied specific zones of movement in the correct manner for which they had been designed [Fig. 60]. We also observed how, in the context of this neoliberal space, the geometry of the design had a specific role in defining

[197] Rowland Byass, 'From Public Garden to Corporate Plaza: Piccadilly Gardens and the New Civic Landscape', *Journal of Landscape Architecture*, 5.1 (2010), 72–83 (p. 74) <https://doi.org/10.1080/18626033.2010.9723432>.
[198] 'Metropolis Laboratory 2010 - Metropolis' <https://www.metropolis.dk/metropolis-laboratory-2010/> [accessed 8 March 2021]; Helen Stratford and Diana Wesser, 'Urbancollaboratory.Pdf' (Metropolis Festival, 2010), p. 20 <https://www.metropolis.dk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/urbancollaboratory.pdf>.
[199] Urban (col)laboratory is the name of a collaboration between myself and performance artist Diana Wesser between 2005 and 2012. Coming from different cultural and disciplinary backgrounds, UK and Germany; architecture and performance, we met in 2004 and began an ongoing conversation around a shared fascination with the rhythms and routines by which people negotiate, define and produce everyday urban spaces. *Manchester Blind Spots* was the first project we completed together. It provided an opportunity to test and explore this shared interest, located at the overlap between performance and architecture.

retail, leisure and office zones, managed through designated seating areas, pedestrian routes, water and planting features and grassed areas for specific types of leisure activities.

Some of the performance-based actions that we played with highlighted these apparently direct connections between design and use; the architectural directions designed to organize people and place. In one of them Diana stood parallel to the endless passage of people, arms outstretched like traffic police, appearing to direct the flows of pedestrians channelled by the architectural form of the Garden pavilion designed by architect Tadao Ando [Fig. 61]. In his appraisal of the design of the Gardens, landscape architect Rowland Byass describes this space as a 'giant funnel, designed to gather pedestrian traffic from the central Gardens and disgorge it towards the transport facilities'.[200] In highlighting this behaviour, Diana's simple actions translated or rather re-presented the architectural design of the Gardens as a 'theatre stage' where, as Rufford argues, 'the features of architectural space work to establish a certain social code', or orchestrate 'the model of "correct" behaviour'.[201]

These actions used the interrelationship of the human body with architecture to make visible how architectural form expresses an intentionality.[202] They offered a means of articulating how the performance of Piccadilly Gardens was directly connected to its formal and rational design. Moreover, the dramaturgy of these actions echoes the notion of geometric space as an extension of the human body, examined in the first section of this chapter.[203] In this context, the body is subsumed into the orchestration of a geometric totality, a vision of which is acutely expressed in the aerial view of the Gardens [Fig. 59]. Indeed, for Byass, in the Gardens a geometric palette, comprising 'the grid' and 'straight and curved lines and shapes', acts as an overriding 'organising principle'.[204]

Through these initial observations and actions, we discovered that the formal design of the Gardens certainly appeared to exert an influence on its use. While implemented to dynamically 'draw the eye in continuous movement through the space'[205] the geometric organisation actually served to reinforce a neoliberal politics of use. In this context, as in the

[200] Byass, p. 73.
[201] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, pp. 5–6.
[202] Ibid., pp. 21-28.
[203] Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture*.
[204] Byass, p. 73.
[205] Ibid.

critique of 'performative' spaces discussed earlier in this chapter, this representation of movement through geometric form was anything but dynamic, rather clearly defined through form and designated function. This influence extended to the distinct language accorded by the designers to each zone of movement, including 'The Fountain', 'The Central Lawn' and 'The Catwalk', the intentionality of which we already guessed before we even discovered its name. Further, we registered the vertical hierarchy of the surrounding offices. Made even more visible when its suit-clad inhabitants were compelled by the fire alarm to spill out into the Gardens. In response, our research examined how the 'correct behaviour' of the Gardens was not simply due to form and designated names alone. Research methodologies, grounded in qualitative methods of collection of historical data and observation, on-site interviews, questionnaires and embodied experience, highlighted how the performative statements, or *mots d'ordre* 'mediated' by the architectural form, were in fact reinforced by layers of legislatively designated use, prescribed by a high security presence and signs distributed throughout the Gardens [Figs 57 & 58].

Our initial actions used the body as a performative device to highlight the specific way the Gardens were performed. They researched how the architectural form combined with repeated practices to 'mediate' Butler's 'theatre of legitimacy'.[206] In this context, Butler's connection of public space with theatre aligns with Wolfrum's definition of the performative character of architecture in its ability to enact a 'new reality'.[207] Yet, as discussed earlier, Butler's performativity and Wolfrum's *Performativität* also contain within them transformative potential. Beyond these initial actions, we went on to investigate how practical embodied actions might be used not only to make visible how the Gardens were performed but also to critique these performances; making visible the performativity of the space itself through challenging this particular 'theatre'.

[206] Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, p. 85.
[207] Wolfrum, 'Performative Urbanism: Generating and Designing Urban Space', p. 13.

3.2 Off Stage I – Performing Otherwise

Crossprogramming

While some of the actions in *Manchester Blind Spots* reinforced the connection between use and architectural form, making visible what Rufford might describe as a 'tectonic' and 'coherent set of connections between site and performance', others contrasted with them.[208] These second set of actions moved beyond simply making visible, into disruptive actions or what Diana and I have described elsewhere as 'productive disruptions'[209] that challenged the perceived boundaries and parameters of Piccadilly Gardens, some of which, for us, proved 'uncomfortable to cross'.[210] In this, they took part in interrogating the habitual way the Gardens were performed in order to make visible and challenge the overriding neoliberal structures that, from our initial research, appeared to join forces with the architectural design to determine its use.

These contrasting actions, made by Diana, included walking on benches and hanging over balustrade railings [Fig. 62]. They repurposed the street furniture of the Gardens to implement what Rufford might describe as crossprogramming – using alternative actions to challenge the existing programming of the place.[211] Through this mis-use or re-programming, these actions made visible what Tschumi famously identifies as 'the architectural paradox',[212] the gap between 'space and event',[213] between 'the static notions of form and function' and 'the movement of bodies'.[214] For Tschumi, this 'inevitable disjunction of space and programme means that architecture is constantly unstable, constantly on the verge of change'.[215] Following this logic, these actions opened up the parameters of the architectural

[208] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 77.
[209] Helen Stratford, 'Performing with Buildings: A Review of the Work of Diana Wesser 2007', *Journal of Media Practice*, 8.3 (2007), 379–85 (p. 380) <https://doi.org/10.1386/jmpr.8.3.379_4>. See also Helen Stratford and Diana Wesser, 'Choreographing Knowledge', in *Constructing Knowledge — Das Wissen Der Architektur,* ed. by Susanne Schindler, Axel Sowa, and Ariane Wilson (presented at the Constructing Knowledge — Das Wissen der Architektur, RWTH Aachen University: RWTH Aachen University, 2009), pp. 76–79 (p. 78). 'Productive Disruptions' or *Produktive Störungen*, was also the title of a lecture made by Diana Wesser at Technologies of Place symposium, co-organised by Helen Stratford and Judith Geisler at Academie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart 2005.
[210] Stratford and Wesser, 'Urbancollaboratory.Pdf', p. 21.
[211] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 37.
[212] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 27.
[213] Ibid., p. 139.
[214] Tschumi, *Event-Cities*, p. 13.
[215] Ibid., p. 19. Here, for Tschumi architecture is not about stability, solidity or foundation but rather contains an 'inherent confrontation of space and use'. Ibid.

functions, in order to make possible a thinking and acting otherwise in the space. They offered 'a way to resist certain "normalizing" cultural and architectural pressures' that, as we observed in Piccadilly Gardens, 'can start to determine the way users think and behave in space'.[216]

Like the work of theatre groups, Brith Gof and Station House Opera, discussed in section one of this chapter, these actions offered a heightened experience of the human body through durational performance in tension with the architecture. Akin to the work of the 'performance architecture' of Schweder, they created 'extreme caricatures' or enlarged versions of reality.[217] Here, they generated what might be described as 'heterotypic' 'counter spaces'; making strange the familiar to highlight the 'performance of all "real" users'.[218] However, whilst challenging the architectural programming, to some extent, these choreographed actions of mis-use, were also easily ignored.

Referring to Schneider's work on gesture, performance studies scholar Lucia Ruprecht argues that 'gesture's acting otherwise can only ever be accomplished by the ways in which gestures […] play out relationally across time and space and between historically and locally situated human beings'.[219] In this respect, 'acting otherwise' is always dependent on time and context. All gestures are affected by the response of others, with some being curtailed and restratified at the expense of others. In her discussion of feminist psychogeographic tactics, Rose talks about 'the limited impact of shouting'.[220] Similarly, geographer Steve Pile has discussed how 'quiet' acts of resistance can be more 'resistant to categorization and definition' than the overt.[221] Here, the blatant and overt gestures of mis-use, accompanied by actions of filming, were perhaps more readily categorised as 'a performance' that challenged the programming of the Gardens in a way that was more easily absorbed and appropriated into 'acceptable' forms of cultural entertainment.

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[216] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*, p. 37.
[217] Gratza.
[218] Patrick Primavesi, 'Participate in (the) Public: Audio Moves as Urban Performances (Part II)', in *Performative Urbanism:Generating and Designing Urban Space*, ed. by Sophie Wolfrum and Nikolai Frhr von Brandis (Berlin: Jovis, 2015), pp. 153–62 (p. 153).
[219] Lucia Ruprecht, 'Introduction: Towards an Ethics of Gesture', *Performance Philosophy*, 3.1 (2017), 4–22 (p. 18) <https://doi.org/10.21476/PP.2017.31167>.
[220] Morag Rose, p. 147.
[221] Steve Pile, 'Introduction: Opposition, Political Identities and Spaces of Resistance', in *Geographies of Resistance*, ed. by Michael Keith and Steve Pile (London ; New York: Routledge, 1997), pp. 1–32 (p. 29).

In ‘When Gesture Becomes Event’, Butler argues that the gesture is the moment before the ‘consequential action’,[222] thereby offering the possibility of citation. As discussed in chapter one, for Butler the strength of any ‘deviant’ mis-performances comes from the difference they exert on that re-citation.[223] In *Manchester Blind Spots* the gesture of siting on the raised walkway of the catwalk was displaced from a location in which it was deemed socially, culturally and economically ‘acceptable’ to a place where it was not [Fig. 64]. Critically, the displacement of this gesture, from the bars and cafes in ‘The Pavilion’, the benches in ‘The Bosque’ or surrounding ‘The Fountain’, was at odds with the official ‘codes’ implicit within the neoliberal structures of the Gardens. In the context of ‘The Catwalk’, the action of sitting defied its ‘legitimacy’ in the consumption of purchased refreshments or designated leisure activity, prompting passionate reactions from passers-by. Somewhere between street performance and begging, the subtle action of sitting engendered ambiguous meaning that was more successful in making visible and troubling the layers of neoliberal infrastructure, than the more spectacular ways by which the benches and railings had been repurposed.[224]

As discussed in section one of this chapter, the use of displaced everyday gestures in acts of performance and protest in public space is nothing new. Performance groups such as LIGNA use choreographed actions that focus on how subtle shifts in everyday gestures can be used to highlight the ‘house rules’ of public space.[225] LIGNA’s collective participatory performances such as *Radio Ballet* [Fig. 69] explore how a ‘little turn of the outstretched hand’ can transform a ‘gesture of greeting’ into a ‘gesture of begging’ with implications for both participants and public space.[226] In feminist performances the ambiguity and subversion of meaning through deviant misperformance is a key tactic that troubles gendered identities reproduced in public space. In addition, the use of sitting in acts of civil disobedience is also well known.[227]

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[222] Judith Butler, ‘When Gesture Becomes Event’, in *Inter Views in Performance Philosophy: Crossings and Conversations,* ed. by Anna Street, Julien Alliot, and Magnolia Pauker, Performance Philosophy (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2017), pp. 171–91 (p. 181) <https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-349-95192-5_15>.
[223] See Butler, *Excitable Speech*; Butler, *Undoing Gender*.
[224] Sections of this page appear in forthcoming Helen Stratford, ‘Theatres of Legitimacy’, in *Six Years (RE)-Activist. Six Cities Sixty Projects*. (University of Sheffield, 2021).
[225] See LIGNA, ‘Ligna: Radio Ballet’, *Ligna* <http://ligna.blogspot.com/2009/12/radio-ballet.html> [accessed 22 March 2021].
[226] Primavesi, ‘Participate in (the) Public: Audio Moves as Urban Performances (Part I)’, p. 55.
[227] Recent examples can be found in the actions of climate activists Extinction Rebellion. See Peter Stubley, ‘Extinction Rebellion Activists Block Roads across UK with Solo Climate Change Protests’, *The Independent*, 2021 <https://www.independent.co.uk/climate-change/news/extinction-rebellion-roadblock-protest-arrest-b1840789.html> [accessed 9 May 2021].

In *Manchester Blind Spots* the performativity of the act of sitting, in terms of a transformative gesture, is located *in-between* these registers of performance and protest. While in LIGNA's *Radio Ballet* large number of participants performing in unison enable subversive and unpermitted gestures to go unchallenged, for one woman sitting on her own in the middle of a public thoroughfare the meaning is not so clear, even if she is being filmed by another. In this context, the use of red jackets becomes a means of highlighting the performativity of this position. The red jackets were everyday clothes with a colour that singled them out, enabling our actions to be 'exited' from their surroundings in order to draw attention to the 'ordinary' gestures of sitting.[228] As in the feminist performance actions discussed earlier in this chapter, in their location somewhere between costume and non-costume [Fig. 70], the red jackets make use of theatricality and 'dressing up', to make visible what Hann and others have described as the 'extra daily' in the 'daily'.[229] In this making visible, these performative devices create a critical dialogue around the daily reproduction of the particular performances that produce the power relations of this supposedly 'public' space.

These actions can be seen as what performance theorist Susan Melrose regards as 'triggers' with a primary objective to 'trigger a particular sort of action in a spectator, where that action, and its outcome, is fundamental to the workings of the event'.[230] Melrose draws attention to the 'practitioner-specific modes of knowledge and models of intelligibility' that come from spending extended periods of time doing specific processes in combination with observing the actions of others.[231] Here, her theories draw parallels with immersive ethnographic methodologies, including 'deep hanging out' in which researchers immerse themselves within particular environments and communities in order to gain knowledge through experiential means.[232] However, for Melrose, it is not just about observing others but

[228] Feminist artist Dani Abdawla has described how in her performance practice her particular use of costume enabled her to be 'constantly exited from the rhythms of the public built environment'. Abulhawa, 'Are You Known to Us?', p. 219.
[229] Hann makes the distinction between performance as 'daily' and theatre as 'extra-daily'. Hann, p. 11. In this, she follows the theories of Hans-Thies Lehman's 'expanded notion of theatre as a theatricalization of social life'. Ibid., p. 10 See also Lehmann.
[230] Susan Melrose, 'Professor S F Melrose – M Ès L, Dip d'EA (Universite de Paris III) Doctorat (Sorbonne Nlle)' <https://www.sfmelrose.org.uk/> [accessed 22 March 2021].
[231] Ibid. See also Susan Melrose, 'Expert-Intuitive and Deliberative Processes: Struggles in (the Wording of) Creative Decision-Making in "Dance"', in *Contemporary Choreography: A Critical Reader*, ed. by Jo Butterworth and Liesbeth Wildschut, Second edition (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY: Routledge, 2017), pp. 23–37.
[232] Geertz. This methodology is discussed in detail in chapter 3.

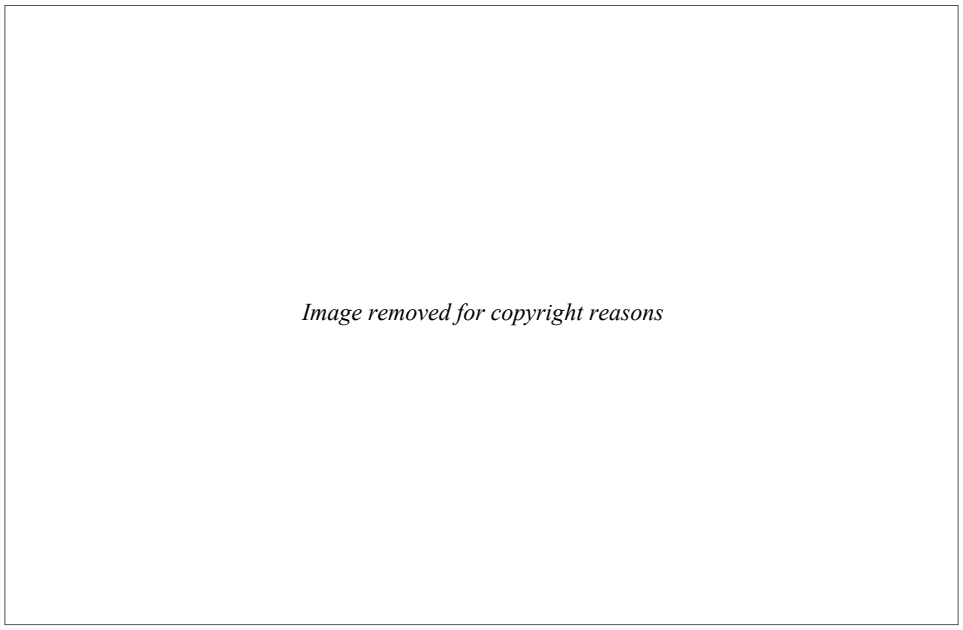


Fig. 69. LIGNA use choreographed actions that focus on how subtle shifts in everyday gestures can highlight the 'house rules' of public space. LIGNA *Radio Ballet* Leipzig Augustusplatz 2006. From *Performative Urbanism* ed. by Sophie Wolfrum and Nikolai Frhr. v. Brandis 2015. Photograph Nicolas Reichelt.

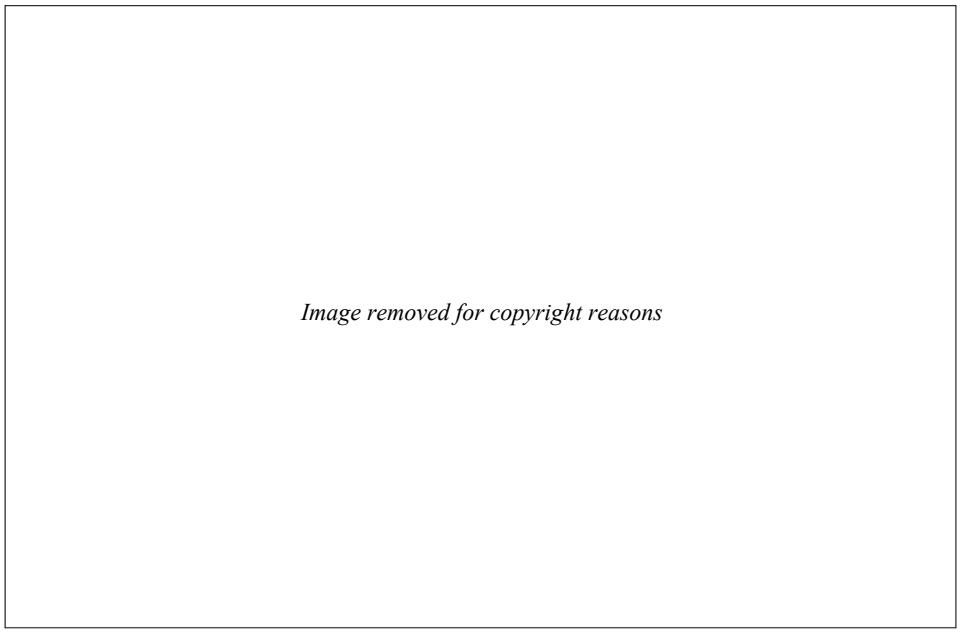


Fig. 70. Dani Abulhawa explores intersections of class, gender and sexuality in performance and play in the public built environment. Dani Abulhawa Unknowable Sheffield 2014, <https://www.daniabulhawa.com/unknowable> [accessed 16 March 2021].

knowing how to intervene, or use the body to produce 'triggers'.[233] By immersing ourselves in the Gardens we became aware of which actions in which locations might highlight and trouble the social conventions that were tacitly performed through the interrelationship of repeated actions with architectural form. This awareness was also informed by our backgrounds in architecture and performance. In this way, actions such as sitting on the catwalk provoked reactions in others, triggering and making provocations that responded to the particular conditions of the Gardens; entering into a dialogue with the space and challenging its neoliberal structures through affecting the users we encountered through the practice.

Accidental Crossprogramming as Embodied Practice

While some disruptive actions in Piccadilly Gardens were perhaps more deliberately obstructive, the disruptive nature of others were discovered only through doing. We discovered that somewhat benign actions – asking questions, standing still in a particular location instead of walking – revealed that the seemingly well-behaved public space cloaked alternate expressions of power and desire. Yet, only by making mistakes; only through failure were these actions successful in making visible and tangible that which was unavailable to observation, to knowledge gained via consulting the policies and legislative aspects of the Gardens and from understanding the aesthetic and formal elements of its architecture.

The simple action of asking questions prompted unexpected responses from the wardens and the men on the catwalk, who informed us our actions were not permitted without a license [Fig. 63] or read unintended connotations into our gestures. Responses that revealed projected and gendered ideas about us and our subjectivities within this public place. For Butler, performativity is 'not only speech, but the demands of bodily action, gesture movement […] that creates an exposure to possible violence'.[234] In this case, simply standing in the 'wrong' place 'triggered' violent and verbally aggressive responses. Yet, these moments of frictional

[233] The 'research-practitioner' in this case, might be better understood then as using what Melrose would describe as 'expert or professional intuition'. Here, 'decision-making, is neither "other-than-rational", nor "merely technical", nor predominantly empirical'. Susan Melrose, '"The Body" in Question: Expert Performance-Making in the University and the Problem of Spectatorship' (presented at the seminar paper presented at Middlesex University School of Computing, Middlesex University: Susan Melrose, 2006), p. 16 <https://www.sfmelrose.org.uk/Melroseseminar6April.pdf>. The work of Susan Melrose was highlighted to me by choreographer, director, and 'neo-African performance architect' S. Ama Wray who has developed a particular form of embodied improvisation Embodiology. Embodiology is briefly discussed later in this chapter.
[234] Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, p. 75.

encounter also provided us with growing material about the Gardens that could only be acquired through this tacit and embodied practice.

In her writings on agency and embodiment, Carrie Noland explores how bodies 'offer valuable information […] that we can draw on to develop new ways of moving through and inhabiting space'.[235] For Noland, Butler's theories and Elizabeth Grosz's early writings, treat the body as a 'surface of inscriptions', which 'forecloses the possibility of exploring alternative, non-text based vocabularies and concepts for approaching the body's own experience of itself'.[236] As discussed in chapter one, through subversion and parody Butler arrives at the conditions where the performativity of the subject can resist the formation of specific subjectivities. More recently, her publication *Notes Towards a Theory of Assembly* focuses on bodily performativity; how 'legitimate' modes of gender are corporeally registered and enacted at the level of individual and collective action.[237] According to Butler, 'the body is less an entity than a living set of relations' which 'cannot be fully dissociated from the infrastructural and environmental conditions of its living and acting'. Nevertheless, for Butler, acting 'is always conditioned acting'.[238]

In contrast, Noland, with her focus on kinaesthesia or bodily motility, challenges the notion of these 'compositional'[239] or knowing procedures by describing a different process of *unknowing* or rather discovering *through* the body. For Noland, 'experience of the body may be "discursively conditioned", but through repeated opportunities to perform, discourses, and with them the subjects they constitute, are in turn kinaesthetically conditioned'.[240] She argues

> it is the doing-body, not the speaking body, that senses most urgently the dissonance, the lack of adequation, between a cultural meaning and the embodiment of that meaning, between what the subject is supposed to be signifying and how she feels. And this sensation of dissonance is a product not of repetition in language but of *repetition in practice*.[241]

[235] Noland, p. 11.
[236] Ibid.
[237] Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, pp. 31–32.
[238] Ibid., p. 64.
[239] Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*.
[240] Noland, p. 195.
[241] Ibid.

In relation to the 'doing-body', hanging around and asking questions was a materially embodied gesture that in the context of the Gardens held specific connotations which only became visible once the gesture was adopted. In contrast to our aforementioned disruptive actions, this gesture was neither a resistive act nor an action with agency, instead it was an unknowing and improvised gesture that unwittingly positioned this body (my body) in a place whereby the 'dissonance' became tangible. Through this gesture, I discovered how certain aspects of the architectural design of the Gardens supported gendered ways of viewing others. Counter to Tschumi's confrontation and even liberation of space from use,[242] the desire to solidify and stratify people and place, 'as a means to stabilize, to institutionalize, to [re] establish permanence',[243] becomes corporeally tangible when opposition to a particular gesture is experienced. This practiced experience exposes how any 'disjunctions' are contingent upon intersections of embodied identities with the built environment, which in this case gravitated around gender.[244]

Crucially, the culturally inferred yet deeply experiential sense of dissonance, produced by the gesture of hanging around in a particular place, provided new knowledge about this space unavailable through observation or conventional forms of architectural research. This new knowledge of the Gardens was gained from hanging around in the wrong place through an unknowing 'doing-body'. The improvised nature of these actions, in which learning takes place through doing, has been examined by architect and educator Beth Weinstein. She argues that 'thinking in movement' and 'thought in the act' are 'underacknowledged, valuable ways of knowing and creating space'.[245] These ways of 'thinking through the body'

[242] Echoed in Foucault's famous claim that 'After all, the architect has no power over me', Michel Foucault, 'Space, Knowledge and Power', in *Foucault Live: Interviews*, 1961-1984, ed. by Sylvère Lotringer, trans. by Lysa Hochroth and John Johnston, Semiotext(e) Double Agents Series (South Pasadena, CA: Semiotexte(e), 1996), pp. 335–47 (p. 341).
[243] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 19.
[244] Moreover, the symbolic force of architectural form is central to this citational relationship. This is highlighted by the recent demolition in November 2020 of Tadao Ando's concrete Garden pavilion in relation to a perceived breakdown of order in Piccadilly Gardens. This evidences how, over time, specific actions and characteristics become attributed to a particular place through symbolic connections to its physical manifestation. See Paul Britton, 'The Piccadilly Gardens "Berlin Wall" Is Gone Forever - Manchester Evening News', 23 November 2020 <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/greater-manchester-news/piccadilly-gardens-wall-gone-forever-19327968> [accessed 13 March 2021]; Cajsa Carlson, 'Demolition of Tadao Ando-Designed Wall in Manchester Begins', *Dezeen*, 18 November 2020 <https://www.dezeen.com/2020/11/18/demolition-tadao-ando-wall-manchester/> [accessed 13 March 2021]. This connection to materiality will be developed further in chapter four of this thesis.
[245] Beth Weinstein, 'Bringing Performance into Architectural Pedagogy', in *Performing Architectures: Projects, Practices, Pedagogies*, ed. by Andrew Filmer and Juliet Rufford, Methuen Drama Engage (London: Methuen Drama, 2018), pp. 187–204 (p. 190).

sit in a different place to architecture as performance art or performing architecture, which, as discussed in section one, can focus on making 'extreme caricatures of buildings'.[246] Instead, by embracing 'improvisation as a positive, desirable practice', and 'bodies as sites for learning', these methodologies contain greater potential for a situated engagement that generates spatial knowledge out of the place itself.[247]

In her critique of Butler's notion of performativity, Noland argues that embodiment is the 'process whereby collective behaviours and beliefs, acquired through acculturation, are rendered individual and "lived" at the level of the body'.[248] She describes 'how we feel in the process of enacting our discursively constructed gender behaviours – how we feel when citing gestures and conveying their pre-established meanings – has an impact on the ways we perform gestures and the new meanings they acquire'.[249] As discussed in chapter one, for Braidotti, 'materially embodied' representations contain the potential to mark different steps in 'undoing power relations in the very structure of one's subject position'.[250] In this way, as Noland asserts, and as feminist Moira Gatens has also argued, through gestural, embodied and situated re-citing, bodies can 'utter',[251] developing 'new ways of moving through and inhabiting space'.[252]

In the context of the knowledge gained through the embodied experience of the catwalk, the action of sitting on the ground in a red jacket took on added meaning. It became a materially embodied and situated performative practice through which to examine and act against the

[246] Gratza.
[247] Weinstein, p. 190. In relation to embodied actions, aspects of Weinstein's approach is also adopted in the collaborative work of the Viral Institute of Performance Architecture (VIPA), a collaboration between Schweder with architect and performance practitioner Aliki Kylika and architect and performer Kyveli Anastasiadi. VIPA claims to investigate 'ways that architecture can be expressed, made, perceived, taught and thought through, using the human body as its principal tool and focus'. Aliki Kylika and Kyveli Anastasiadi, 'Viral Institute of Performance Architecture', *Performance Research*, 21.6 (2016), 87–93 (p. 88) <https://doi.org/10.1080/13528165.2016.1251113>.
[248] Noland, p. 9.
[249] Ibid., p. 195.
[250] Braidotti, 'Teratologies', p. 171.
[251] In 'Through a Spinozist Lens: Ethology, Difference, Power', following Deleuze and Guattari, Gatens identifies the notion of *mots d'ordre* as 'an utterance that should be seen as an attempt to pass of the virtual as actual'. Moira Gatens, 'Through a Spinozist Lens: Ethology, Difference, Power', in *Deleuze: A Critical Reader*, by Paul Patton, Blackwell Critical Readers (Oxford ; Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell, 1996), p. 183. For Gatens 'to think differently is, by definition, to exist differently: one's power of thinking is inseparable from one's power of being and vice versa'. Ibid., p. 168. On this basis, she argues that the body contains the potential to express other 'possible becomings' or 'pass-words' which 'rupture the habitual organisation of a body's powers and capacities and express new powers of affecting and being affected'. Ibid., p. 183. For a further discussion of this argument see also Stratford, 'Collective Assemblages, Embodiment and Enunciations'.
[252] Noland, p. 11.

gendered processes and power differentials enacted through this space. Here, whilst the red jacket did not contain the overtly sexualised connotations of Export's *Touch Cinema* or Khademi's *Armor*, like Gunning's *Climbing Around My Room* and Dani Abulhawa's *Unknown*, it nevertheless brought with it a gendered reading that singled out a woman acting differently on the male dominated catwalk.

Moroever, these bodily utterances were not predetermined – they evolved through knowledge that directly encountered Braidotti's multilayered understanding of embodiment as 'a point of overlap between the physical, the symbolic, and the material social conditions'.[253] In this situated placemaking the interconnection of place, practice and performativity generated a spatialised figuration of which both our bodies, subject positions and social identities were an essential part. In this context, we were implicated in our actions, producing a particular place through our collective and embodied practice. Not only did this place bring to light perceptions of women within this public space – reflected in further aggressive reactions from a passing elderly man [Fig. 67] – but it also enabled a space for us to act together, thereby opening up a space for another woman to feel safe in joining [Fig 65].[254]

3.3 Collective Performing

Porous and Expanding Architectural Dramaturgies

In *Manchester Blind Spots*, we were never sure if we might be ignored, challenged, insulted and questioned or if, in fact, our actions might open up ways for others to use the space differently. While sitting on the male-dominated architect-named catwalk provoked aggression and exasperation on one day, on another it gave a young woman permission to join. With each new iteration our research process emerged as a means to open the way towards a research practice that develops out of a dialogue with the site and its 'users'. These accidental, unplanned and improvised actions explored relationships and exchanges between people and place, where both actions and place inform each other in an open-ended way. Akin to what Turner might describe as a 'porous dramaturgy', they are also similar to the 'constructed situations' of the Situationist International. They offer improvised, accidental,

[253] Rosi Braidotti, 'Toward a New Nomadism', in *Deleuze and the Theater of Philosophy*, ed. by Constantin V. Boundas and Dorothea Olkowski (London: Routledge), pp. 159–86 (p. 161).
[254] Sections of this page and parts of these arguments in relation to the theories of Noland and Weinstein appear in forthcoming Stratford, 'Theatres of Legitimacy'.

unknowing and experimental disruptive critiques of the hegemonic neoliberal structures of the built environment, the 'outcomes' of which are purposefully 'not knowable in advance'.[255]

However, contrary to Rose's identification of the exclusive and male dominated wanderings of the Situationist International,[256] our actions were deeply situated and responded to the gendered encounters we experienced through our practice. In this way, a tacit and ongoing embodied knowledge emerged through dynamic processes which, like Turner's notion of mis-appropriation and 'expanded dramaturgy', were 'emerging in relation to its context'.[257] This emerging context included accounting for and challenging the power locations embodied in our own and others subject positions through the performed locations we adopted through the practice research.

In the Gardens, frequently the biggest confusions lead to the most productive outcomes. In a wider sense, these ways of working – with difference, confusion and failure – were also present in our working processes. Diana's background from Germany, working in performance, and my background from the UK, working in architecture, interpreted and inflected the methods and knowledge gained through our practice in a dialogue with each other. In this context, the gaps we found in Piccadilly Gardens were also discovered in our own backgrounds and ways of generating knowledge, both cultural and disciplinary. This demanded new research tools that worked productively within these intersections and differences, extending our awareness of the places from which we work and what our working methods might be.[258]

While publicised as a public performance lecture, the final day of the five-day research offered a momentary opening into our ongoing research process from which new encounters emerged. Rather than repeated responses, our recurring gestures during the performance lecture elicited different reactions. In this situation, our embodied utterings continued to embrace serendipitous encounters and emergent possibilities, offering a glimpse into this

[255] Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture*, p. 153; Stracey, p. 9.
[256] Morag Rose, p. 158.
[257] Turner, 'Mis-Guidance and Spatial Planning', p. 151.
[258] This discussion forms part of a collaborative chapter: Helen Stratford and Diana Wesser, 'The Spaces between Us', forthcoming in *»Odyssee: Heimat«*, ed. by Natalie Driemeyer and Jan Deck, Postcolonial Studies, 46, 1., Aufl (Bielefeld: transcript, 2025). These notions around iterative collaborative research methodologies will be developed further in chapter three of this thesis.

ongoing process and indicating that our research process was not, and may never be, finished. A key aspect of this is that we were neither creating a performance nor performing. While situated in public, our actions were not rehearsed or designed for a specific audience. Instead, they were practical exercises in testing and uncovering the boundaries of (the) place through performing or rather practicing them differently. Here, in contrast to some of the performance practices explored in section one of this chapter, these processes were not 'completed' by the audience in the sense of a finite or finished piece, but continued to evolve and expand through others actions and re-actions.

This notion of evolving performance is also present in the work of theatre makers such as Augosto Boal. For Boal, working in Rio de Janeiro through the 'Theatre of the Oppressed', the improvised nature of 'invisible theatre' performance in public space becomes a motivational tactic by which participants might rehearse ways to resist situations of oppression.[259] In Boal's work, the audience are cast as 'spectactors' and through observing and/or participating in the work are invited to 'see their own actions in an alternate story of "reality"'.[260] Yet, in our situation, our responses to the neoliberal and gendered structures of this public space, were neither pre-rehearsed or re-enacted scenarios, nor were these power structures immediately visible. Both response and power structures were researched and made tangible through the practice.

The development of this tacit knowledge not only responded to the experiential aspects generated by the actions but also, as per Turner, incorporated and researched the existing 'dramaturgical elements' of the Gardens.[261] It was impossible to divide the actions from their spatial context, but at the same time our actions researched how this context was an evolving process in order to question the nature of the public space of Piccadilly Gardens itself. In this way, *Manchester Blind Spots* revealed both the stratified practices and architecture of the Gardens as *mots d'ordre* while embracing alternate practices that made visible the space as a series of evolving and ongoing relations, thereby alienating their accomplishment.[262] This expanded, porous and open-ended dramaturgy was activated through embodied

[259] See Boal.
[260] Read, p. 4. See also Boal.
[261] In 'Mis-Guidance and Spatial Planning: Dramaturgies of Public Space', in relation to Wrights and Sites work *Possible Forests*, Turner argues that 'the discussions not only responded to the sensory, imaginative and intellectual stimuli offered by the forest, but also examined the existing dramaturgical elements of that space'. Turner, 'Mis-Guidance and Spatial Planning', p. 156.
[262] Mersch.

crossprogramming in the form of situated actions of misappropriation and misuse, but also through accidental and improvised 'doing' bodies.

The child's game on the fountain was an existing improvised action by which children were already reperforming the Gardens differently to either their habitual or intended use. Their game opened up an improvised space in-between design and use that picked up on the opportunity of the dysfunctional water feature to repurpose it as a space for play [Fig. 66]. Here, the danger signs surrounding the fountain became redundant and the vision for this space became irrelevant. In many ways the child's game was a ready-made 'constructed situation', a 'subversive enclave',[263] whose playful actions challenged the commodified structures of the garden by repurposing and therefore problematising its distinct zones of movement. The ludic use of play as a critical action was a key element of the repertoire of the Situationist International and more recently has been explored by theorists including artist and designer Mary Flanagan.[264] While a full discussion of the critical use of play is not within the scope of this thesis, in this particular context, the improvisational nature of the game offered a critical commentary on the neoliberal and rational approaches that underpinned the design and performance of this public space.

In her performance practice 'embodiology', S. Ama Wray draws on the work of Melrose to explore how improvisation is a key part of performance-based actions in public space that comprise 'inner sensing', 'balance', 'play', 'decision making' and 'collaborative competition'.[265] The last stage of *Manchester Blind Spots* developed an embodied and improvised dialogue with the child's game. This provided a socio-spatial critique of the structures of legitimacy that extended beyond our own actions to those of others, both found and generated through the research practice itself. Akin to Turner's description of the misappropriation of *The Island*, the misappropriation of the fountain by adults and children created a 'makeshift' setting – an architectural dramaturgy that focused on 'staging new

[263] Turner, *Dramaturgy and Architecture*, p. 146.
[264] See Quentin Stevens, *The Ludic City: Exploring the Potential of Public Spaces* (London ; New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2007); Mary Flanagan, *Critical Play: Radical Game Design* (Cambridge, Mass. London: MIT Press, 2013).
[265] S. Ama Wray, 'Embodiology: A Hybrid Neo-African Improvisation-as-Performance Practice Distinguished by Dynamic Rhythm', in *The Oxford Handbook of Improvisation in Dance*, by S. Ama Wray, ed. by Vida L. Midgelow (Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 762–84 (p. 763) <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199396986.013.36>. According to Wray, Embodiology is 'both a training methodology and a theoretical framework that makes inherent improvisation discernible to the nonpractitioner'. Ibid., p. 72.

forms of interaction with public space'.[266] These both 'troubled' and made 'elusive' the boundaries of this particular architecture.[267]

In inviting others to take part in the game, like the use of the red jackets, the focus was on finding or making visible the 'extra daily' in the 'daily' [Fig.68]. The reluctance to maintain the fountain by the authorities had itself already changed the vision of the Gardens. This aspect was amplified in the childrens' game and our invitation built on the performative force of their improvised actions. Learning from the 'extra daily' imagination of participants is present in the live-art and socially engaged practice of artist Lottie Child. Child's 'street training' invites the creation of a series of actions by which others, including children, might reclaim public spaces, empowering those who might otherwise be divested of action and agency.[268] In this context, in contrast to the official narrative of the public space of Piccadilly Gardens, in which the visions and rhetoric of the architects, planners and city authorities combined with increasing private ownership to prescribe a particular means of access, the fountain game both recognised and generated a self-organised space.

Since *Manchester Blind Spots*, the rise of play spaces within neoliberal public spaces has become a customary sight, highlighting the accommodation and commodification of play as a further means of control.[269] In relation to the self-organised space of the fountain game, this fragile space highlighted a collective action that momentarily stepped outside those neoliberal structures of control through reappropriation.[270] The game, was at once performed and produced by different bodies together: by the audience, whether joining in or observing; by us as artists, adapting our actions according to other participants and by the space itself. Together, researchers, audience and the architecture of the Gardens generated the specificity of this particular place, creating a 'situation' that supported and invited a particular way of performing.[271] Clearly, our experience of it as adults was completely different to that of

[266] Turner, 'Mis-Guidance and Spatial Planning', p. 149.
[267] Ibid., p. 149.
[268] See Lottie Child, 'Lottie Child', *Lottie Child* <https://lottiechild.wordpress.com/> [accessed 23 March 2021]; Lottie Child, 'Lottie Child Street Training', Lottie Child <https://lottiechild.wordpress.com/> [accessed 23 March 2021].
[269] See for example table tennis in Westfield Shopping centre London 'Westfield Stratford City', *Ping England <https://www.pingengland.co.uk/tables/westfield-stratford-city/> [accessed 23 March 2021].*
[270] In its focus on how 'a plural form of performativity' enables bodies to 'appear' in public, collective appropriation forms the basis of Butler's *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, highlighting its critical use in forms of protest. Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, p. 8. This aspect of reappropriation and public appearance of particular bodies will be examined further in chapter four.
[271] The participatory potential of performance-based actions will be developed further in chapter three.

children. Yet, in performing the space differently than its designated use, in copying the child's game, this 'repetition in practice'[272] was 'becoming'.[273] In the fountain game a change of focus occurred; from the physically constructed and economically determined, to the construction, or the performance, of relations between people, place and practice as a collective and interdependent architecture. Here, public space becomes an arena for an ongoing collective performance.[274]

Making Public Space Tremble

Through our practice in *Manchester Blind Spots*, we discovered how the increasing securitisation and control of this public space,[275] was not due to any inherent architectural stability of form. It was instead maintained by layers of practiced place, constellations of space and event; acculturated layers expressed through the 'doing-body', that at any moment might breakdown. Our embodied situated actions supported a different use beyond the expected. In this, they build on some of the work I completed with the feminist collective 'taking place', whose work between 2000 and 2005 focused on appropriating institutional spaces within and around several architecture schools and arts institutions.[276] In 'Taking Place and Altering IT', Teresa Hoskyns and Doina Petrescu argue that 'taking place' used actions to literally take and reshape place, 'taking place differently' by producing 'another quality of physical public space through intervening in the power relations expressed through space'. [277]

Critically, in *Manchester Blind Spots* our actions changed and were changed by the social, cultural and material elements with which they interacted, creating new relations that, in their very performativity, questioned the fixity of place. In so doing, we generated a position that

[272] Noland, p. 195.
[273] For Noland 'human kinesis— its anatomical, neurological, and sensory components' contains 'a potential for becoming'. Ibid., p. 101.
[274] Sections of this page and discussion on collective performance also appear in forthcoming Helen Stratford, 'Collective Performing', in *Movement for Public Speech*, ed. by Polonca Lovšin (Ljubljana: Museum and galleries of City of Ljubljana, 2021).
[275] Identified by Hannah earlier this chapter, Hannah, p. 312.
[276] In taking place's work appropriative actions often displace the hidden, personal and private into the public realm of the institution to critique both. My performances in this context include *Diffident Voices* and *Washing Up* at the University of North London at taking place 2 in 2001. See 'Takingplace.Org.Uk'; Hoskyns and Stratford.
[277] Teresa Hoskyns and Doina Petrescu, 'Taking Place and Altering IT', in *Altering Practices: Feminist Politics and Poetics of Space*, ed. by Doina Petrescu (London: Routledge, 2007), pp. 15–38 (pp. 25–26). See also Katarina Bonnevier and Myket's reprogramming of place through salons and gatherings of all kinds. MYCKET, 'MYCKET - Www.Mycket.Org' <https://mycket.org/MYCKET> [accessed 25 March 2021].

questions, or even 'tremble[s]', fixed and permanent notions of architecture in relation to the formal design of the Gardens.[278] What is foregrounded in these methodologies are gaps in the 'blind spots' produced by daily repeated actions. These gaps between 'space' and 'event',[279] between 'performance' and 'architecture',[280] and between 'perlocution' and 'illocution'[281] are embodied locations between intention and action that themselves generate new spaces. In *Manchester Blind Spots*, these appropriative actions point towards the creation of performative architectures: momentary practiced manifestations of situated actions made in collaboration with others that actively rearticulate public space, in order to reconfigure it as performative.

In terms of generating a practice methodology that actively critiques the performative construction of neoliberal 'public' space, I refer to Jen Harvie's work on 'performative materialism'.[282] In her study of 'Agency and Complicity' Harvie redresses what she identifies as 'a tendency in theatre and performance studies to practice analytic strategies that focus either on performative practices or material conditions'.[283] Harvie's combination of performative and materialist readings are useful in their alignment with feminist situated methodologies, which offer both critique of existing conditions and a way to think and act otherwise.[284] Here, she argues for a recognition of the combined presence of 'social critique and hegemonic complicity'.[285] For Harvie, subjectivities are produced by material conditions yet, at the same time performative practices contain the possibility to generate a critique of this production while acknowledging complicity within it.[286] Ultimately, for Harvie, performative practices can offer a way to explore 'repressive' conditions alongside

[278] Hannah, p. 321.
[279] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 139.Tschumi
[280] Hannah discuses a formulation of the 'third term' of Elizabeth Groz, proposing event-space as the 'third-space' created between the *'becoming-performance of architecture and the becoming-architecture of performance'*. Hannah p. 11.
[281] See Mersch, p. 46. Discussed in chapter one.
[282] Harvie, *Theatre and the City*, p. 72.
[283] Jen Harvie, 'Agency and Complicity in "A Special Civic Room" : London's Tate Modern Turbine Hall', in *Performance and the City*, ed. by Kim Solga, S. Orr, and D. J. Hopkins, 2009 edition (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), p. 205.
[284] Harvie argues how her methodology is to 'hybridise cultural materialist and performative analytic strategies and use them to think across theatre and performance practices together'. In this, she references Butler as a theoretical underpinning, notably *Bodies That Matter*, in 'exploring how performative practice and material experience are necessarily connected'. Harvie, *Theatre and the City*, pp. 68–70.
[285] Harvie, 'Agency and Complicity in "A Special Civic Room" : London's Tate Modern Turbine Hall', p. 213.
[286] As Harvie writes 'We are not only an objectified part of the landscape, we are also subjects who see it'. Harvie, 'Agency and Complicity in "A Special Civic Room" : London's Tate Modern Turbine Hall', p. 215.

bringing with them 'liberating' potential.[287] She argues that they can 'help us see, for example, the conditions of economic inequality […] but also the social possibilities of communication, understanding and change within and despite those conditions'.[288]

The implicated and complicit position of the artist and researcher will be examined further in chapter three. For the moment, *Manchester Blind Spots* started from the premise of exploring how 'productive disruptions in established physical relationships and adjacencies' can 'make visible the built environment as stage, performer and director in order to ask how places are performed'.[289] Through the practice research, actions and interrelationships were developed in order to critique the prejudices, hierarchies and hegemonic spatialities reperformed through this neoliberal context; facilitating the rethinking of it by its users, including us as researchers. As we have discussed elsewhere, this change of focus creates the conditions by which places might 'speak across their prescribed functions',[290] or rather, as Butler and Foucault might describe, the 'discursive formations' of public space, composed according to specific rules and laws.[291]

A key finding throughout the practice was an awareness that these discursive formations are embodied. Here, the addition of feminist theories, into reflections on performative practices offers a critical lens. Quoting David Leatherbarrow, Hannah argues how *all* buildings and places need to be thought in terms of performative acts by asking 'not what a building *is* but what it *does'*.[292] A feminist approach to this 'knowing through doing'[293] challenges and extends the performance theories outlined earlier in this chapter. It brings a situated positionality into theories whose focus on decoupling form from function can fail to take adequate account of gendered, racialized and classed identities expressed through the

[287] Harvie, *Theatre and the City*, p. 68.
[288] Ibid., p. 78.
[289] Stratford and Wesser, 'Choreographing Knowledge', p. 78; Stratford and Wesser, 'Urbancollaboratory.Pdf', p. 18.
[290] Stratford and Wesser, 'Choreographing Knowledge', p. 77.
[291] Noland, p. 182. See also Michel Foucault, *Archaeology of Knowledge*, Routledge Classics (London ; New York: Routledge, 2002).
[292] Hannah, p. 1.
[293] Here, 'knowing through doing' is a combination of Noland's 'doing-body' and 'learning through doing' identified by Nelson as a key part of tacit 'know-how' knowledge, gained in practice. Nelson, p. 41.

acculturation of spatial practices over time.[294] The responses to some of our actions revealed entrenched ways of conceptualising how Piccadilly Gardens was used and what our position within this public place should be. Simultaneously, these positions shifted according to who we encountered, where and when. In this context, public spaces are never merely 'objects', but fluid and negotiated relationships between people, place and practice, which combine to produce particular subjectivities.[295]

3.4 Conclusions and Further Questions

Embodied Utterances and 'Know How' as Practice Methodology

Against a backdrop of theories and practices situated between theatre, performance and architecture, this chapter has examined how *Manchester Blind Spots* used performance-based and embodied ways of interacting with and intervening in Piccadilly Gardens to investigate and present the performativity of this particular public space. In *Manchester Blind Spots*, the conventional position of the more 'distanced' observational researcher (exploring legislation, history and behaviour) is combined with the position of the ethnographic researcher (conducting informal interviews, questionnaires and 'deep hanging out'[296] in order to become immersed within the 'community of practice'[297] that constitutes the Gardens) and the position of the researcher-practitioner (using performance-based methods that actively provoke, interact with, challenge and create dialogues with the place and its users). Returning to the transformative notion of performativity introduced at the start of this chapter, this methodology is itself performative. Through 'performing-place' it learns from the Gardens while critiquing the performativity of this public space through doing.

This chapter argued that through embracing what might be described as a position of 'embodied outsider', this methodology uncovers aspects of place otherwise inaccessible to more conventional or 'normative' conceptualisation methodologies. Our visceral encounters

[294] Such as the 'paradox' of architecture claimed by Tschumi, see Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*.
[295] Building on this fluid notion of public space, Doina Petrescu argues how 'Public space should be, then, described in terms of its evolving relations, as a space in permanent mobility, not only physical but also social and political'. Petrescu, 'How to Make a Community as Well as the Space for It'. This aspect of public space as relational practice was referenced in the lecture performance Manchester Blind Spots and will be discussed in greater detail in chapter three.
[296] Geertz.
[297] Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography*, p. 105. The link of this way of researching to ethnographic methodologies will be examined further in chapter three of this thesis.

with how this place was constructed generated different knowledge than that identified through the methods of historical research or qualitative ethnographic observation alone. Simultaneously, in its displacement of everyday and low key gestures, that challenged the existing way it was performed, this methodology both researched and made visible the performativity of Piccadilly Gardens. Through the active use of the body, a personal and intimate spatial knowledge was made possible by which to research how neoliberal and gendered power relations operated kinaesthetically. In enacting performance-based actions that fundamentally challenged these neoliberal power structures, this methodology pointed towards ways the body, and correspondingly the Gardens, might perform otherwise.

In *Manchester Blind Spots*, rather than arrive with predetermined knowledge or methodology, both were developed through dialogic and relational practice research that was emergent. Critically, this practice embraced failure, incorporating moments of unexpected interactions with passers-by, through which our research developed in new directions. Through this intrinsically embodied and situated methodology, our practice created what Nelson regards as a 'dialogue with the situation'.[298] This 'know-how' methodology, deploys the body as a 'trigger'[299] to make the 'tacit' 'explicit'.[300] While these 'triggers' affected and elicited responses from participants and passers-by, they were not about triggering other's experiences in terms of creating a performance. Rather, our focus was on ways in which actions enabled us as researchers to know the place differently; to learn from the space by understanding what it *does*, socially, culturally and spatially.

Ultimately, while the research methodology embodied a relational approach with the Gardens, the fountain game pointed towards ways by which participants might take a more active role in experiencing these processes. This prompts the question whether setting up situations that enable others to engage in embodied actions might also enable the performativity of public space to be experienced more readily by those people beyond the researcher herself? The next chapter focuses on this participatory aspect through analysing an

[298] Nelson, p. 42.
[299] Melrose, 'Professor S F Melrose – M Ès L, Dip d'EA (Universite de Paris III) Doctorat (Sorbonne Nlle)'.
[300] Nelson, p. 20.

artist residency that took place in a city in the midst of regeneration processes, in order to examine what types of performative architectures might enable the dissemination of these methodologies within and around the public spaces of this particular context. Additionally, it interrogates the 'embodied outsider' position of the researcher; unpacking what is at stake for the construction of situated yet critical participatory processes, in order to ask what types of public space might these processes themselves create and who or what might be considered 'active' participants within these processes?

Chapter Three

Performative-places

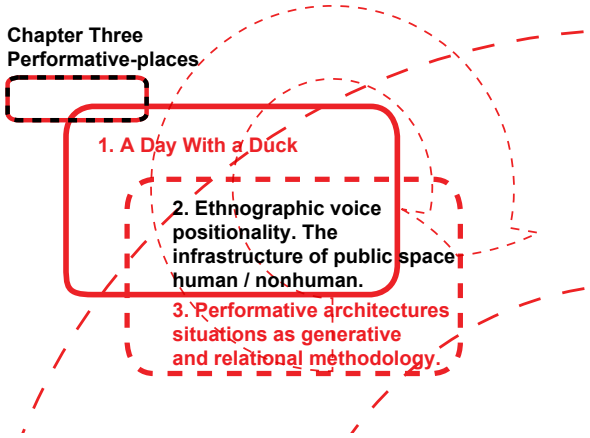


Fig. 71. Performative-places, structure diagram.

Practice Prelude

'In the Marketplace'

excerpt from
The Day of the Duck

IN THE MARKET PLACE

VOICES

Town Ranger, Second Rambler, Muscovy Duck, Man Shopping, Woman Shopping, Machine Voice, First Rambler

TIME

Tuesday morning

TOWN RANGER: Welcome to the Heritage Zone sir.

SECOND RAMBLER: ...

TOWN RANGER: Welcome sir. This is the Heritage Zone.

SECOND RAMBLER: Oh, me?

TOWN RANGER: I hope you enjoy your visit.

SECOND RAMBLER: I'm not… not really a visit, I'm just going through the –

TOWN RANGER: Animals are not permitted, sir.

SECOND RAMBLER: What animals? That? That's not mine.

TOWN RANGER: It is following you, sir.

SECOND RAMBLER: How's it following me? I'm behind it!

TOWN RANGER: You are moving in tandem.

SECOND RAMBLER: Well, I've always found that story intriguing, about the duck that makes the journey every day, no, every market day –

TOWN RANGER: Yes sir, the Historic Creel Market does take place

(91)

Fig. 72. 'In the Market-Place.' From Helen Stratford and Lawrence Bradby *A Day with A Duck* 2018.

today. You can visit the market over here.

SECOND RAMBLER: – so when we saw this one pit-patting along, I thought 'Great, let's follow'.

TOWN RANGER: By 'we' you mean yourself and the animal, sir?

SECOND RAMBLER: I just said, we're not together.

TOWN RANGER: Control tells me that you accompanied the animal from Riverside, up Forehill, into the Market Place. You both registered the brass pavement inlay indicating the Heritage Zone and you continued regardless.

SECOND RAMBLER: Yeah, that was funny. It went along and stepped on each of those brass bumps. Maybe they feel nice underfoot.

TOWN RANGER: And I have observed the small encouraging noises you make to it.

SECOND RAMBLER: Did I?

TOWN RANGER: The point of the Zone is to return the town to what it should be. And loose animals are not appropriate.

SECOND RAMBLER: OK...?

TOWN RANGER: I have to log your liaison with the animal.

SECOND RAMBLER: OK. Good. You do that. I'm going to carry on with my day… meeting someone... and... normal stuff.

TOWN RANGER: I'm afraid that your actions constitute an infringement of the zonal planning regulations and so must be logged as such.

SECOND RAMBLER: Oh come on!

MUSCOVY DUCK: We question your Cartesian notion of space as an abstract entity that can be ordered in every detail.

SECOND RAMBLER: *(To Muscovy Duck)* No we don't. We're not a we.

TOWN RANGER: Sir, that is absurd.

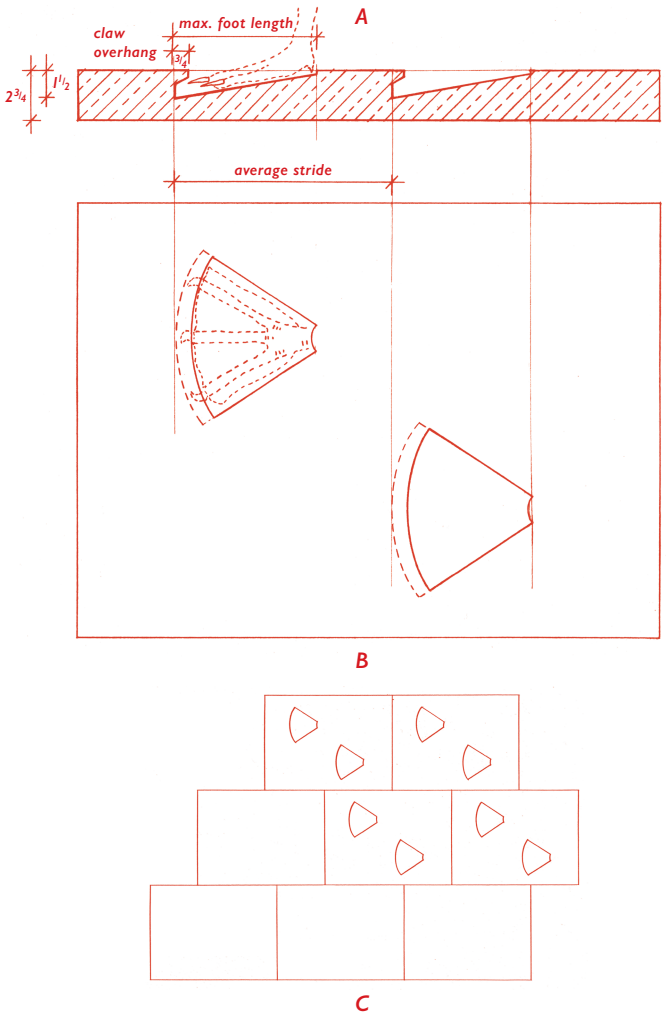
MUSCOVY DUCK: We are not absurd. Neither are we intrinsically sad, although some assume our bright appearance and slow deliberate movement are clownish. We are simply different from you.

TOWN RANGER: Sir, it is absurd to allow the animal any say in the matter.

SECOND RAMBLER: Will you let up about me and it. I'm not allowing it anything. Neither are you. It's wild. It's doing what it's doing.

———

Plate S. *Duck Deterrent*
Hard Landscaping Features



A. Duck deterrent flag (section); B. Single flag (plan);
C. Optimal layout (longitudinal stretcher bond).

TOWN RANGER: That is your assessment and I just need you to put that on record.

SECOND RAMBLER: What record?

MUSCOVY DUCK: We can no longer do what we do. The existing otherness-in-connection along the riverbank has been broken by the violent desire to order every aspect of the built environment.

MAN SHOPPING: *(To Town Ranger)* Spot on, young fella. Keep a close eye on them. A very close eye.

WOMAN SHOPPING: When they start coming out with that kind of language.

MAN SHOPPING: Time was, you could sit on the riverbank of an evening with a glass of wine. Now it's a pit.

TOWN RANGER: Thank you sir. I will feed that back to my manager. Now I just need to take down some details from this gentleman.

WOMAN SHOPPING: That kind of smart-arse language, it shows they're getting cocky.

TOWN RANGER: *(To Second Rambler)* Sir, please look directly into the blue circle on the screen and respond to each question. It's OK sir, I'll keep hold of the device.

WOMAN SHOPPING: They should all be shot.

MAN SHOPPING: I don't think we quite… It is a scandal though. The council, it just doesn't...

MACHINE VOICE: Hi. Welcome to the BID infringement logging system. When the circle turns pale, please state your full name.

SECOND RAMBLER: I'm just just walking, just walking away.

WOMAN SHOPPING: We think they should all be shot.

MACHINE VOICE: I'm sorry, I didn't catch that. Please say your name again.

TOWN RANGER: A failure to register a Heritage Zone infringement is not a criminal offence, but –

MAN SHOPPING: *(To Town Ranger)* Elvis told us all about it. People invite them to make these secret little nests in gardens.

TOWN RANGER: *(To Second Rambler)* – it will mean you receive a time-limited ban from the Heritage Zone, from the sponsoring BID and from all participating businesses.

WOMAN SHOPPING: We should be protected from that sort of intrusion. It's our space.

SECOND RAMBLER: *(To Town Ranger)* What bid?

TOWN RANGER: Business Improvement District sir. I have logged your ban and it takes effect immediately.

MAN SHOPPING: But 'oh no', you can't touch them. There's far too much protection. Well we want our city back.

WOMAN SHOPPING: Even in the countryside they don't belong. They're an invading species.

MAN SHOPPING: We want our city back.

WOMAN SHOPPING: Our city! Feed THAT back to your manager.

MAN SHOPPING: *(To Second Rambler)* Listen bud, you and this duck've done something and you need to make it right.

SECOND RAMBLER: Let, let go. Let go! Get off my –

MAN SHOPPING: You can't just walk off.

TOWN RANGER: *(To Man Shopping)* Thank you sir. I've logged this gentleman's actions. Your assistance won't be necessary.

FIRST RAMBLER: *(Stepping out of a pub. To Second Rambler)* What kept you? Oh! That duck bothering you again?

SECOND RAMBLER: Hiya. Yeah, I got a bit held up by, err –

FIRST RAMBLER: Hey look down there. What are those Hoo-Rays in a flap about? Scuffed their deck shoes or something?

SECOND RAMBLER: They're not Hoo-Rays.

FIRST RAMBLER: Let's go and watch.

SECOND RAMBLER: They're, well, I sort of know them. The fellah, he's alright. Does a lot for the Millennium Gardens.

FIRST RAMBLER: Now he's using foul and abusive language and pointing at us. The Strange Ranger is trying to calm them down with some leaflets and a creepy smile. Does his tabard really say 'HERE TO HELP'? Fucksake!

SECOND RAMBLER: I need to keep my distance.

FIRST RAMBLER: Flippin' 'eck. Look at that street cleaners' van. Bombing up the hill. Everyone's getting stuck in.

SECOND RAMBLER: Hang on, where's the duck?

———

Introduction

This chapter examines the creation of participatory 'situations' through which others – including both humans and non-humans – might participate differently: differently to how a familiar public space might be practiced but also differently to how participatory, consultancy and evaluative practices have conventionally developed within architectural practice. Similar to the previous two chapters of this thesis, the practice explores a playfully critical approach to researching public space through visual and performance-based methods. However, rather than focusing on reframing existing actions as performance ('place-as-performance') or using performance-based actions to research and critique public space ('performing-place'), it focuses on the creation of situations ('performative-places') by which participants themselves might engage in an embodied way with contradictions and contingencies of public space. Through this focus, it seeks to examine how public space as a performative assemblage of social, material, cultural, legal and economic forces, introduced in the previous chapters, might be extended into a collaborative and participatory practice research methodology. It analyses whether these processes might enable the performativity of public space to be experienced more readily by those bodies and species that extend beyond the researcher herself, thereby generating a wider criticality towards regeneration processes that underpin the production of public space.

As an expression of how this research methodology is developed through practice, the 'reflection on practice through practice' section opens this chapter [Fig. 71]. This account of the project *A Day with A Duck* is then followed by a section that combines 'reflection on theory through practice' with 'reflection on practice through theory'. Led by issues and encounters raised by the practice, this format starts to question both the linear thesis narrative and the separation of theoretical research from practice; reflecting how in practice, method and methodology, practice and theory are intrinsically interconnected and developed in tandem. Starting from this practice context, the chapter examines what is at stake for both public space and participatory practice in these ways of researching; arguing that the creation of these participatory situations are performative architectures that themselves generate a different type of public space.

A Day with a Duck

A Day with a Duck was a 6-month self-initiated artist residency that gravitated around a small patch of council managed ground by the River Great Ouse in the city of Ely, Cambridgeshire.

In recent years this 'public space' had become contested due to the occupation by a rare population of Muscovy ducks, making human access problematic. A worker in Ely myself, I observed how the presence of these 'wild animals' immediately challenged the particular boundaries of this space. Their interruption of everyday behaviour through actions considered antisocial and anarchic – stopping the traffic, eating people's sandwiches and public defecation – threw into sharp relief the anthropocentric focus by which cities are conventionally performed and envisaged. A day spent following a duck, marked the beginning of the residency, including a gallery presentation in the nearby Babylon Gallery and a series of participatory events across the city.

At time of the residency, Ely was undergoing consultation on a previously stalled masterplan process.[1] In its organisation of pre-arranged set of questions delivered via workshops and post-it note sessions with invited members of the local community, this consultation process, in which I took part as both local resident and architect, echoed conventional architectural processes. Further, the masterplan's top-down vision for the city primarily gravitated around economic ranking, with clearly delineated divisions, hierarchies and categories of place. *A Day with a Duck* explored how methods from socially engaged and live art practices might build on the anarchic presence of the ducks in order to set up participatory situations that offered different ways of engaging than those of the masterplan consultation process. This participatory aspect evolved as the project developed, thereby extending the practice research beyond the previous two case studies. In this context, participatory situations developed research questions that responded to the relationship between the masterplan as regulatory or governmental top-down process, the ducks as anarchy, nature and chaos, and the degree to which city residents, workers and tourists reproduced or challenged the particular visions of the city that these positions reinforced.

Situations – Relational Processes of Public Space

The second section of this chapter starts by examining what is at stake in *A Day with a Duck* for the conventional preconceptions of public space which framed this particular space and the masterplan for the city. It examines how the absurd presence of a 'messy' 'animal' brings into sharp relief not only preconceptions of order and cleanliness but also connections of

[1] 'Possible Legal Flaws Led To Masterplan Being Suspended', *Ely Standard*, 21 May 2008 <https://www.elystandard.co.uk/news/possible-legal-flaws-led-to-masterplan-being-suspended-7756928> [accessed 9 May 2021].

these preconceptions to neoliberal ideals based on economic prosperity. Tracing how these prejudices are manifest within the wider histories of the production of public space, including the contemporary 'creative city',[2] this section explores in what way the practice research examines how they are also reproduced at the level of everyday actions. Aligning this practice research to practitioners that attempt to counter exclusionary ways of visioning public space, including the work of artist/architect Can Altay, this section argues that ideas around unwanted actions, matter and inhabitations are all too easily extended towards certain people(s) and publics. In this way, through reflecting on the ducks' presence in relation to the position of a working river within the masterplanning vision for the city of Ely, it examines how the practice research troubles the boundaries between the rural and the urban, the domestic and the wild and the human and the non-human.

This troubling of boundaries is developed further through examining in what way Doreen Massey's feminist materialist critiques of public space, Rosi Braidotti and Donna Haraway's affirmative and relational philosophies of nature/culture and Karen Barad's posthumanist notions of performativity and diffraction are extended through the practice. Through these feminist theories, the interventions in *A Day with a Duck* and the setting within which they operate are re-examined as performative assemblages, encompassing a range of human and non-human voices that point towards wider ecological implications. Proceeding from this basis, this section highlights that it is through active embodied engagement, between the researcher, the interventions and the existing social, material and cultural infrastructures, that participants, of all kinds, generate spaces which question the conventional ways public spaces are visioned and performed.

Negotiated Realities – Participatory Processes of Public Space

Going beyond the critique of this particular public space, the second half of this section examines questions that this way of practicing opens up in relation to broader issues around participation in art and architectural practice. These include questions around the performativity of the researcher herself, alongside the role participants might play and who they might be. Here, insights from the practice research, highlighted through the positioning of the researcher-practitioner within a broader network of power relations, are used to explore and extend theories around critically reflective and iterative research methodologies found in

[2] Gielen.

architecture, art and academic research practice. These include the practice and theories of architects Doina Petrescu and Markus Miessen, the reflexive ethnographic and practice-as-research methodologies of Sarah Pink and Robin Nelson and the participatory art and architecture practices, of Polonca Lovšin and Amro Yaghi. Through analysing the practice research in the context of these theories and practices, this section explores the implications of the research-practitioner's performative role within these ways of working. It specifically examines in what way methods, which embrace social provocation, improvisation and humour, alongside ethnographic, multi-modal and emergent reflexive research methodologies, hold the possibility to create relational spaces in which the researcher-practitioner operates as 'facilitator'; constructing 'negotiated realities' in which she is reflexive, complicit and implicated.

This section concludes by highlighting how these methodologies might not only offer ways to challenge hierarchical and patriarchal structures of knowledge, which underpin undemocratic processes in the production of public space, but also anthropocentric ideologies with wider ecological implications. Here, this section and the chapter as a whole asks how might practice research not only make visible competing interests and adjacencies within public space, but also construct situations that enable others to generate understandings of these interests and adjacencies, thereby taking an active part in informing the methods by which they are explored? Further, how might research methodologies navigate this fluid terrain? What are the ethics of working with iterative open-ended methodologies? Does this taking part in such an iterative process imply a democratic exchange? An exemplar public space perhaps? Perhaps it can only claim to set up the participatory conditions for democratic exchange by bringing to light the very nature of frictions and contestations? Further, what happens to conventional definitions of 'researcher' and 'researched' through incorporating the non-human? And finally, what sorts of public spaces are created through these ways of practicing?

Section One

A Day with A Duck



Fig. 73. *A Day with a Duck* 2012. Photograph Damian Gillie.

A Day with A Duck

Background

A Day with a Duck was a 6-month residency, creating work with members of different publics including artists from live art and visual-art practices. It included a public gallery presentation, participatory events in public space and an artist's book, an extract of which opened this chapter. The project was funded by an Arts Council England Grants for the Arts small projects grant and supported by the City of Ely. The majority of the project took place between 2012 and 2013, with the artist's book *The Day of the Duck* completed in 2018.[3] The project was self-initiated in dialogue with Babylon Gallery, Ely, a not for profit public gallery, run by ADeC (Arts Development in East Cambridgeshire), now Babylon Arts, an arts development charity.

Performing Ely

At the time of the project the City of Ely was, and to a large extent remains today, a rapidly expanding urban development on the edge of rural Fenland. In her review of *A Day with a Duck*, independent curator Hilary Gresty comments how Ely had become a desirable place in which to live and commute from and was 'deemed by a recent estate agent's survey to offer the best quality of life in rural Britain'.[4] Prior to and during the project I was living and working locally having spent four years in the city, working for local architects Mole, whose offices overlooked the river Great Ouse. This position as a 'worker' afforded me a particular view of the city. Witness to its customs and quirks, I observed at first hand its rich demographic mixture, which reflected the overriding presence of Ely

Cathedral and the independent school, King's Ely, in combination with migrant workers from the surrounding vast agricultural fields.

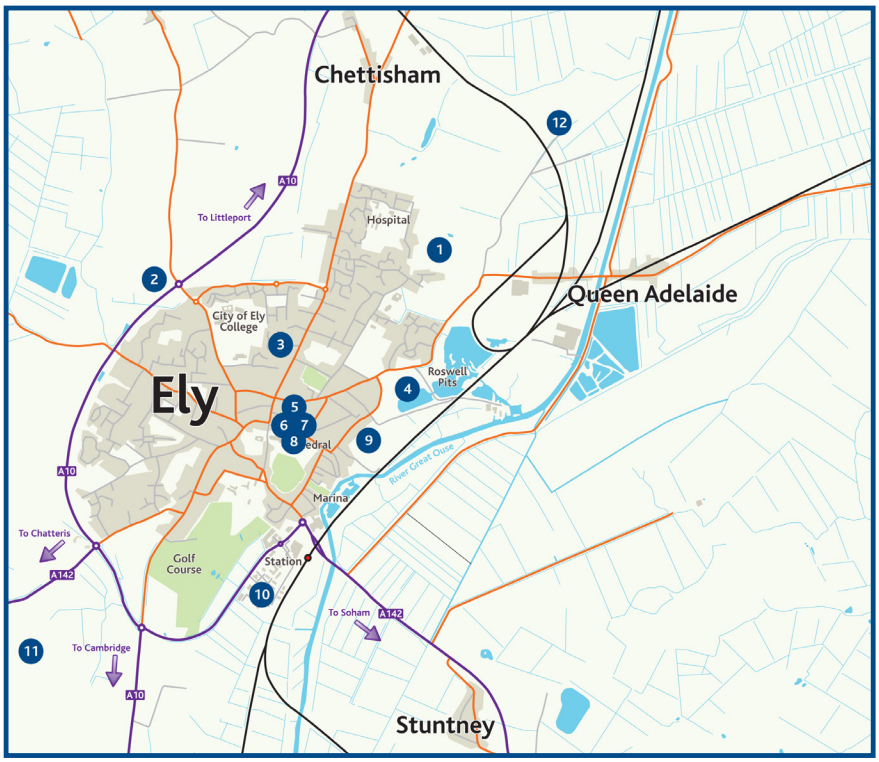
Working in Ely every day and visiting it at weekends, I personally observed how the city was usually performed through the sort of events illustrated in Figures 74 and 75: town crier competitions and Ely eel days alongside morris dancing events.[5] Moreover, in my role as architect, I was aware that the city had been undergoing a masterplanning process, with associated public consultations. Gresty describes how Ely had become 'beset by 21C planning dilemmas. It has grown exponentially over the past two decades [...] However, the infrastructure has not kept pace and the expanses of faceless new, largely expensive housing have led to an increasingly socially, culturally and economically divided population'.[6]

Approved in 2010 and still current at the time of writing, the Ely Masterplan, placed Ely at a 'crossroads'. The opening statement reads 'Do we continue to let ad-hoc development take place without full consideration of the community's needs or the City's heritage, or do we draw together a long-term vision to set the agenda for Ely's future?'.[7] In reality, this meant that the future vision of the city focused on generic spatial categories, including 'Leisure Village' and 'Country Park'. [Fig. 76] which prioritised 'growth pressures' to rank it in terms of economic benchmarks against other cities. Spelled out in typical masterplan language, the overall vision places its focus on Ely as 'one of England's classic cathedral cities'. With 'an architectural heritage of truly international significance', 'exceptional rail links', 'high quality of life' and a 'delightful riverside setting'.[8]





Figs. 74 & 75. How the city of Ely is conventionally performed: Town Crier Competition, Ely and Ely Eel Day 2012. Photographs Helen Stratford.



1 North Ely Phase 1
The first phase of a planned urban extension providing 500 homes in accordance with the current Core Strategy recommendations.

2 Leisure Village
Development of a new, enhanced district leisure facility to replace the existing sporting facilities at Paradise.

3 Pedestrian and Cycling Improvements Comprehensive programme of improvements to pedestrian and cycle links within Ely.

4 Country Park Phase 1
Balancing recreational and biodiversity uses of this unique landscape area, as well as helping to bring the countryside into the City.

5 City Centre Pedestrianisation and Car Park Management
Linked strategies to enhance the quality of experience for city centre users.

6 Market Expansion
Additional activities and markets on the Market Place and upgrade of the environmental appearance of Market Place.

7 City Centre Shopping
Investigate potential for the intensification of small retail shops within the lanes and alleyways between High Street and Market Street.

8 Cathedral Precincts
Sensitive environmental improvements to Steeple Row and Three Cups Walk to enhance the immediate setting of the Cathedral.

9 Willow Walk Riverside Quarter Redevelopment of Lisle Lane industrial area and Cresswells Lane Sewage Treatment Works for residential and mixed uses.

10 Angel Drove Business Park Development of a new business park adjoining the existing Cambridgeshire Business Park for light industrial/high-tech uses.

11 Lancaster Way The first phase of a major expansion of Lancaster Way Business Park for a range of business uses.

12 Sewage Treatment Plant on new site replaces existing facilities and increases capacity.

Fig. 76. The future vision of Ely Masterplan focuses on generic spatial categories, including 'Leisure Village' and 'Country Park,' which prioritise 'growth pressures' to rank the city in terms of economic benchmarks. Phased Implementation of the Ely Masterplan. 'Ely Masterplan A Framework for the Future Development of the City of Ely' (East Cambridgeshire District Council, 2010), pp. 10-11 <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/FINAL%20Ely%20Masterplan.pdf> [accessed 26 March 2021].



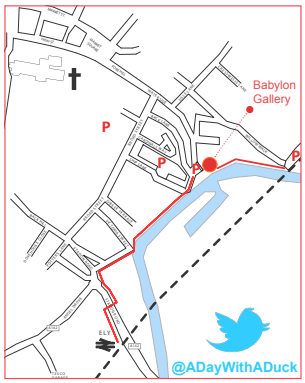
A Day With A Duck

City of Ely Riverside, 17 June 2012, 8am - 8pm

Ely has a long and unique relationship with its feathered denizens, On Sunday 17th June 2012, join artist Helen Stratford, as she spends a day on Ely's Riverside with one of the city's infamous residents: a Muscovy duck.

Find Helen, ask her what she's doing and why, ask her about ducks, about Ely and share your views about how public space is performed. You can find Helen on Ely Riverside from 8am until 8pm: exact location to be determined by the path of the duck.

A Day With A Duck is part of LOVE Architecture Festival 2012 and a residency by Helen Stratford involving a series of public events in Ely and the Babylon Gallery, 1. Sept. - 7. Oct. 2012
www.adec.org.uk/babylon-gallery



LOTTERY FUNDED

ADEC funded

www.helenstratford.co.uk

Photograph by Nick Cheek

lovearchitecture festival 2012

15–24 June 2012

Fig. 77. A specially designed postcard and leaflet invited people to join the duck survey. *A Day with a Duck* postcard 2012 (top front, below back). Photograph Nick Cheek.

A Gentle Touch of Anarchy

It was the 'riverside setting' and questions around what constituted its 'delightfulness' that became the central focus of *A Day with a Duck*. For the project I focussed on a small patch of public ground by the River Great Ouse which in recent years had become contested due to the occupation by a rare population of Muscovy ducks, making human access problematic. Muscovy ducks are large non-native waterfowl with distinctive black, white and grey colourings offset by bright red wattles or caruncles around the eyes and beak. At the time only two feral populations of the ducks existed in the UK, yet this rarity didn't stop them from becoming the target of disgruntled residents. As Gresty observes, 'Anyone who knows the city will know that this is disputed territory […] Ely's wildfowl are either loved or hated. For many the birds bring innocent pleasure and a gentle touch of anarchy, slowing the traffic, producing prodigious numbers of chicks and messing where there should be no mess. Others see them as nothing more than a misplaced nuisance'.[9] For me, with the masterplan process as background, the ducks' irreverent disruption of daily routines offered a vehicle by which to talk to people and raise questions about these routines and the future of the city. A day spent following a duck, marked the official beginning of the residency, gallery presentation and series of live art events in the nearby Babylon Gallery and in the city.

The Day with the Duck

On the 17th June 2012 from 8am to 8pm, I tracked the path of a randomly selected Muscovy duck [Figs 73, 78 & 79]. Wearing a red jacket, jeans



Fig. 78. The day spent following the duck was a vehicle to ask people questions about the ducks and the future of Ely. Muscovy duck survey *A Day with a Duck* 2012. Photograph Helen Stratford.



Fig. 79. Wearing a red jacket, jeans and red and black shoes, I set up camp in the duck territory. Muscovy duck survey *A Day with a Duck* 2012. Photograph Nick Cheek

and red and black shoes, accompanied by other props colour co-ordinated to the ducks, including a black bag with the day's sustenance, a flask of tea and a specially purchased red camping chair, I officiously jotted down its movements in a 'red and black' notebook. Simultaneously, I invited people to give me comments about Ely and the ducks. The one-day action/ performance was publicised in the local press media and online, but beyond this my incongruous presence, a human dressed in red, sitting in a red chair in an area normally inhabited only by ducks, with an accompanying photographer, attracted the attention of passers-by. Some asked what was I doing? opening up an instant dialogue, while others looked on in quizzical amusement. I approached those who lingered and asked them a series of questions about the ducks and the future of Ely. These included 'What do you think Ely should look like in the future? Do you know anything about the masterplanning process? What do you think about the Muscovy ducks? and Do you think there is any relationship between future plans and the ducks…?'

The day proved very successful in terms of publicising the longer term activity. Photographs and comments from the day were eventually incorporated into the gallery show and the day was tracked on social media. However, central to the day was the gathering of material that fed into the project's development. This was supported by emailed questionnaires, informal interviews and attending locally advertised public events, including community dance competitions and mayoral inaugurations, both prior to and after the day. Through these actions and consequential discussions, I explored how this particular patch of ground figured in the

broader urban and rural landscape of Ely; discovering an abundance of stories and opinions around the duck's origins, proliferation and tales of efforts to cull their population.

Crucially, from the very start, the day with the duck solicited strong responses, exposing me to the weight of feeling towards the duck territory. Further, it brought to light certain prejudices regarding the occupation of this particular public space, the river's place in Ely and wider notions of the city. On setting up camp I started to give out leaflets to nearby passers-by, including a couple of women who emerged from a Georgian house on the banks of the riverside. They instantly threw the leaflet back at me with the retort 'we'd like to shoot them. There was a time when you could sit on there with a glass of wine, now it's a pit' [Fig. 79]. Their visceral response momentarily disturbed the previously calm, even jovial, atmosphere. As the day continued I discovered others were equally vociferous in their loathing directed towards the large 'dragon-like' waterfowl, going so far to state that 'they are incomers,' 'they are not locals' [Fig. 78].[10]

In contrast, many adored the ducks. For some, they were part of their daily or weekly routine to and from work, while feeding them was a joyful activity cherished from childhood. Others even went as far as awarding the ducks 'city resident' status, noting that 'they've always been here'. These conflicting comments supported my growing observations that the ducks and the territory they occupied represented contested ground between the urban and the rural; the domestic and the wild, including attitudes towards nature and ecology. Moreover, many comments supported the masterplan's somewhat conservative responses to what a city should be – looking to

typical economic and leisure criteria to meet external demands, rather than towards what was, I discovered, historically a messy and working river.

Spending Time

After the first day I went on to spend time with people whose daily lives interacted with the duck territory. Spending between one to two hours, sometimes longer, asking questions and recording activities. These people included David, the local Muscovy duck expert who counted the ducks every week [Fig. 80]; council workers Spencer and Paul who maintained the cities open spaces; Liz, chair of the Local Campaign for the Protection of Rural Ely; Lew, a retired amateur boxer who walked along the riverside to convalesce; canal boat owners Claire and Clive, who moored up at the duck territory [Fig. 81] and Simon, a street cleaner from the council-hired company who cleaned up after the ducks every three days.

The endless stories and opinions about the origins of the ducks included contributions from Pam, a local historian who suggested the duck population originated with the council-installed riverside footpath; indicating a symbiotic relationship with human visitors who brought with them a secure food source. This was disputed by George, owner of Peacock's award winning tearooms, with his knowledge that the ducks had escaped from a small holding in Lavender Green adjacent to the river. In each story, the ducks seemed to represent a particular view of the city and its population, including prejudicial tales of how the current duck population was in decline due to their delicacy as a food source for non-native human visitors or 'Eastern European' migrant workers.

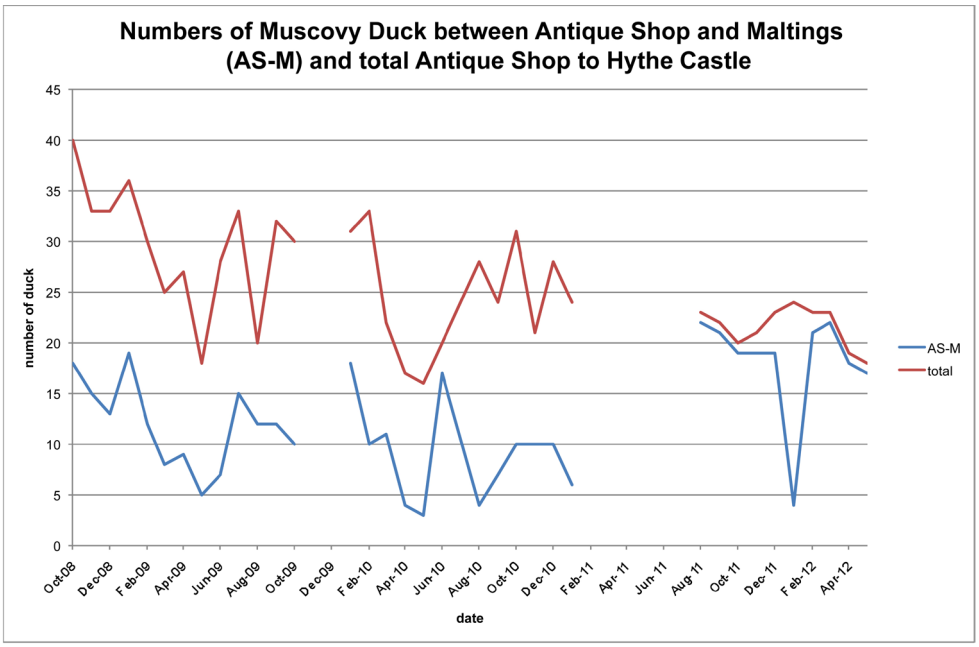


Fig. 80. Graph by the local Muscovy duck expert who counted the ducks every week. Numbers of Muscovy Duck between Antique Shop and maltings (AS-M) and total Antique Shop to Hythe Castle. David Ewbank.



Fig. 81. Canal boat owners Claire and Clive, who moored up at the duck territory. Photograph Helen Stratford.

The comments and knowledge I collected during these meetings further widened the discussion towards people's expectations of what and how the city should be or become; reflecting on its situation at the edge of rural Fenland. In fact, in some cases, people addressed their opinions about the ducks directly to the development plans for the wider city. Pitting Ely's history as a rural backwater against the masterplan's future vision, Ted, a local artist, stated 'the ducks are part of the city, so let's keep it small and in scale with the ducks'. At the same time, on learning about the two women's violent response to my leaflet, Shirley, a local resident, told me that her late husband, a renowned eel catcher, once stated that 'If you live in the countryside you have to expect a bit of shit'.[11]

Initially, I planned to extend these meetings to other more 'formal', communities of city dwellers/visitors/workers, including members of the Cathedral: flower arrangers/chorister tailors, and King's Ely school. Yet, after the one-day action, the focus of the project shifted towards people whose lives directly encountered the river in an exploration of its contested position in the regeneration plans for the city. This also followed a political approach to work with overlooked or more informal communities rather than established and somewhat privileged organisations, who always took centre stage of the city's public facing representation.

Ultimately, this benefited the project immensely in terms of its focus. In addition to the people mentioned above, I walked, volunteered, talked and took boat trips with boatyard owners, volunteer gardeners, ice-cream vendors, historic boat tour guides, duck fanciers, local artists, ramblers,

tea room and antique shop owners. People were accessed via links with the gallery (volunteer and resident groups) but also by approaching them directly by email or in person (the mayor, council workers, boatyard and local shop owners and ice cream vendors) from which other links and key people to talk to were made and suggested. Introducing myself as artist or architect depending on the context, people were told about the project and responded in different ways.

For many, the river itself had become an overlooked space in the city, with one resident telling me you could live in Ely all year round and not visit the river. So why didn't I simply focus on the Cathedral? This neglected position of the river in relation to the cathedral was echoed by others, despite the fact that it had in fact played a key part in its construction, with stone being shipped in on barges from Northampton.[12] It was also recognised by the masterplan, acknowledging a 'disjointed' relationship with the city centre and proposing 'sensitive redevelopment' to address the 'weak' cycling and walking links. In the masterplan the riverside is reclassified as part of the 'growth strategy' for the city, with proposed development of bars, cafés, restaurants, small scale retail uses and even the ubiquitous visitors centre [Fig. 82]. Here, the masterplan's notion of 'reconnection' simply turns the focus towards the river as a USP (Unique Selling Point) for the city, with the emphasis placed on its economic potential as leisure and tourist attraction.

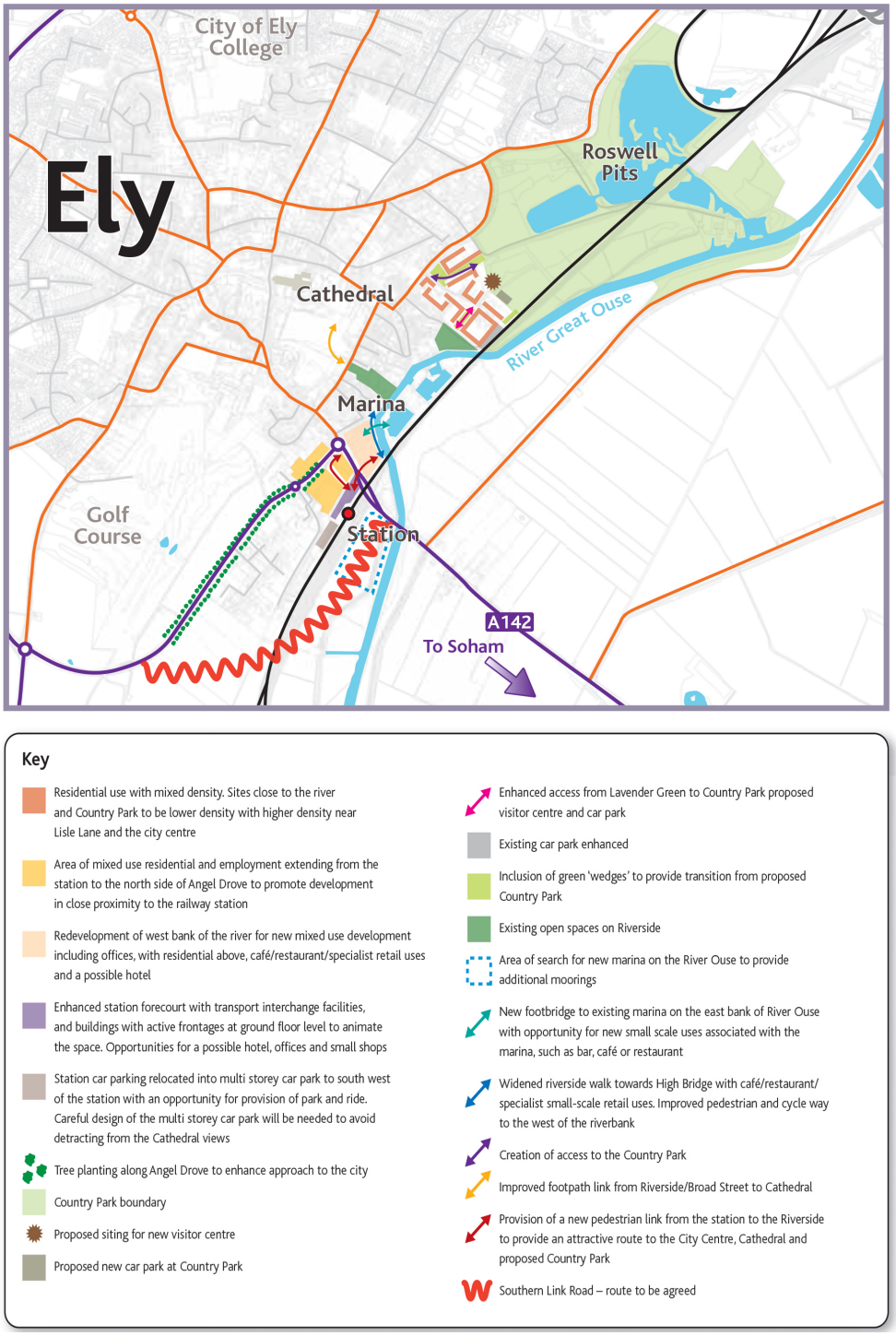


Fig. 82. In the Ely Masterplan the riverside is reclassified as part of the 'growth strategy' for the city,with proposed development of bars, cafés, restaurants, small scale retail uses and even the ubiquitous visitors centre. 'Ely Masterplan A Framework for the Future Development of the City of Ely' (East Cambridgeshire District Council, 2010), pp. 10-11 <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/FINAL%20Ely%20Masterplan.pdf> [accessed 26 March 2021].

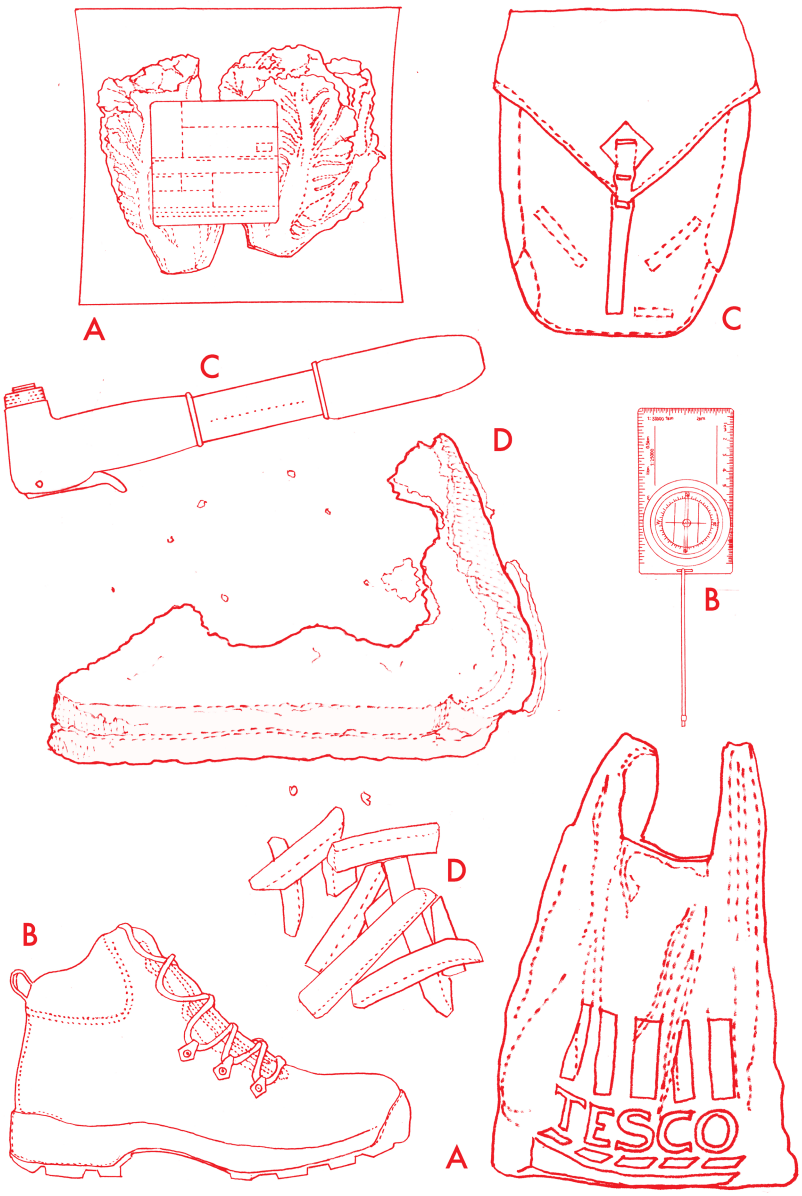
Overlooked Activities and Routines

In combination with meeting and interviewing people, I also recorded the overlooked activities and routines that produce the spaces along the riverside in which they walked and/or worked. Alongside the duck expert doing his weekly bird count and duck poo cleaners, there were volunteers removing weeds in the public gardens, dog walkers and office workers, ramblers, elderly people sitting on benches, routes of migrant workers and temporary homes of rough sleepers. Rhythms were distilled and presented as a series of tables and diagrams that reference both the language of ornithological observation and the diagrammatic abstraction of masterplans.

During the duck survey, later corroborated in meetings and interviews, I discovered there was one duck who trekked it into the city centre and back every day. In the print *Migration Paths Accompanying Items* [Fig. 83] I mapped the path of said duck and placed it alongside the routes of other selected city denizens with their accompanying items. These include Hereward's Way walk by Ely Rambler's Association, with whom I registered and walked; my own route into the city by bicycle following cycle route No. 11. and the path of migrant workers from the vegetable packaging plant outside the city. The workers used the cycle route to walk to the local supermarket to buy supplies from a store who stocked plastic wrapped varieties of the vegetables they were picking in the fields.

In contrast to their hierarchical reception in daily life, the drawings' flat and observational language creates an equivalence to the routes of

MIGRATION PATHS
ACCOMPANYING ITEMS



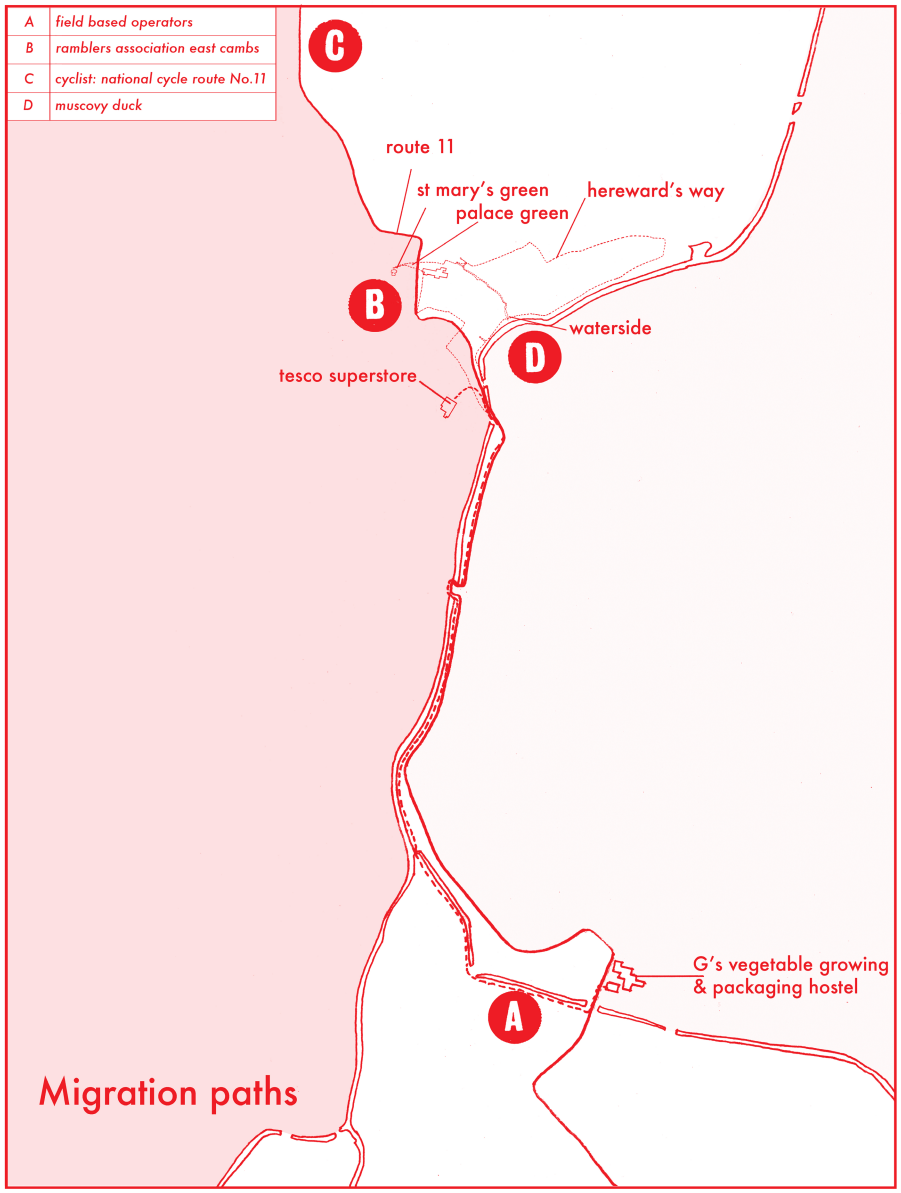
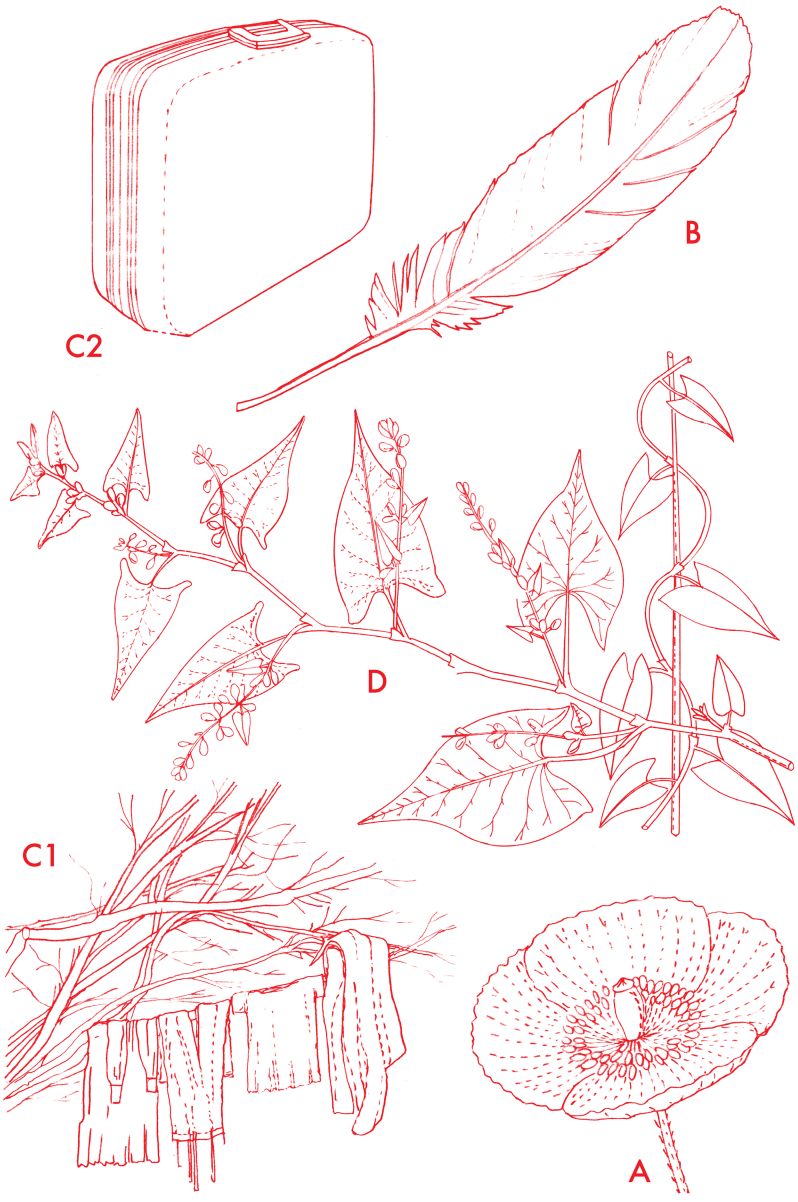


Fig. 83. *Migration Paths Accompanying Items* 2012.

WEED REMOVAL/IDENTIFICATION OF ANOMALOUS MATERIALS



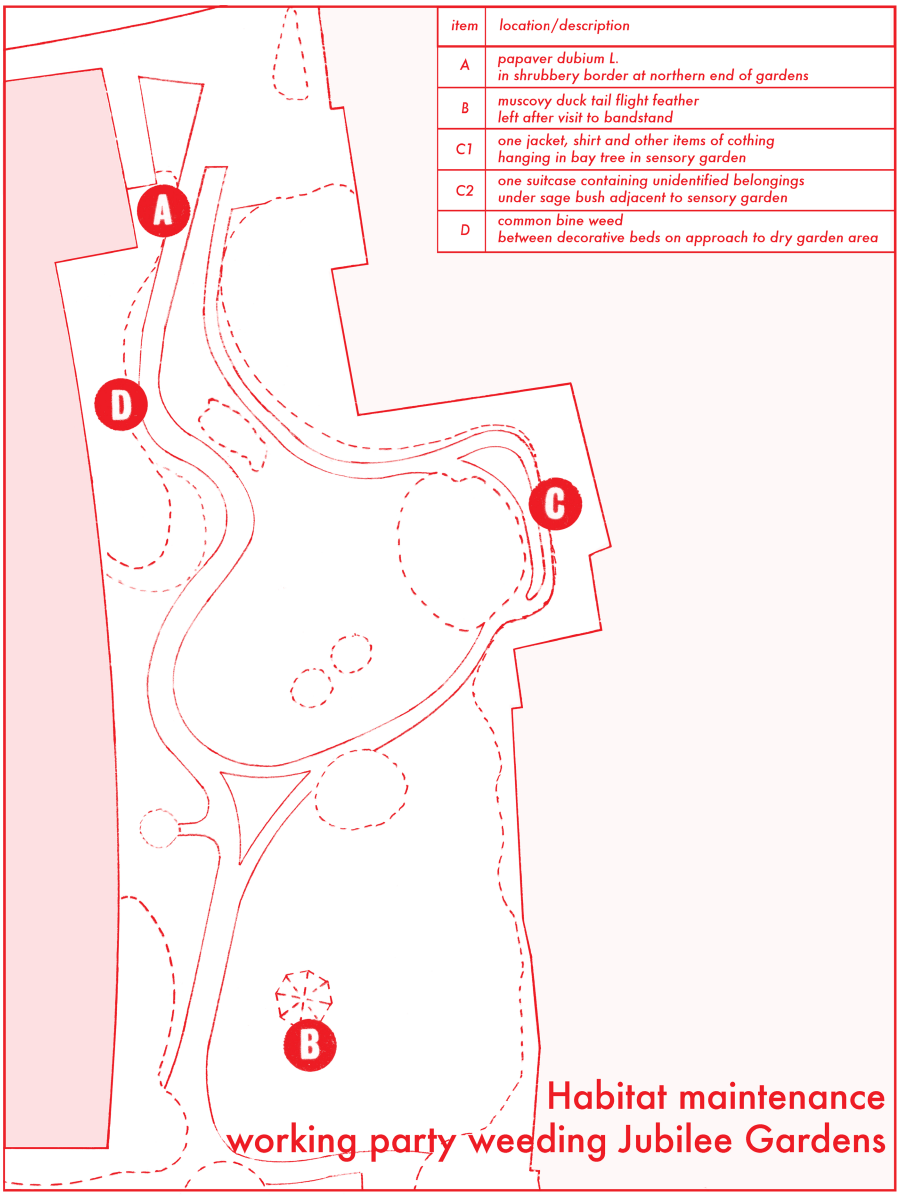
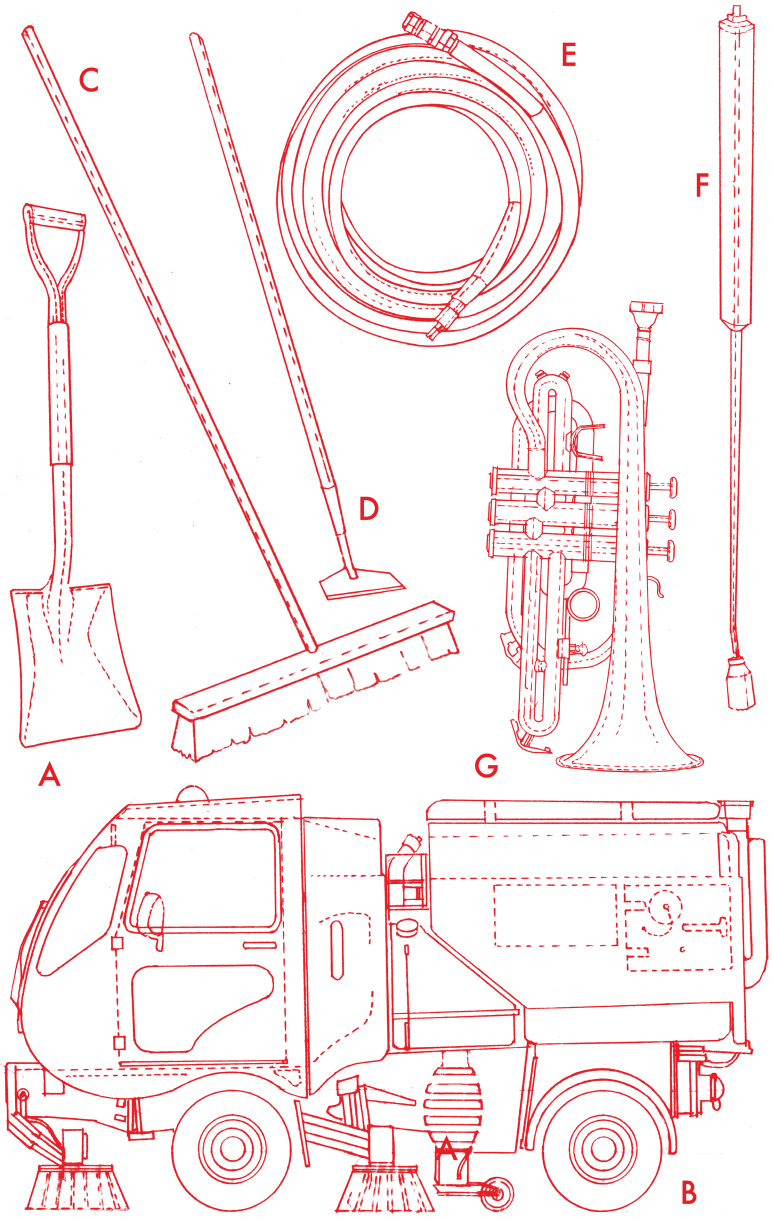


Fig. 84. *Weed Removal/Identification of Anomalous Materials* 2012.

CLEANING AND GLEANING ACCOMPANYING EQUIPMENT



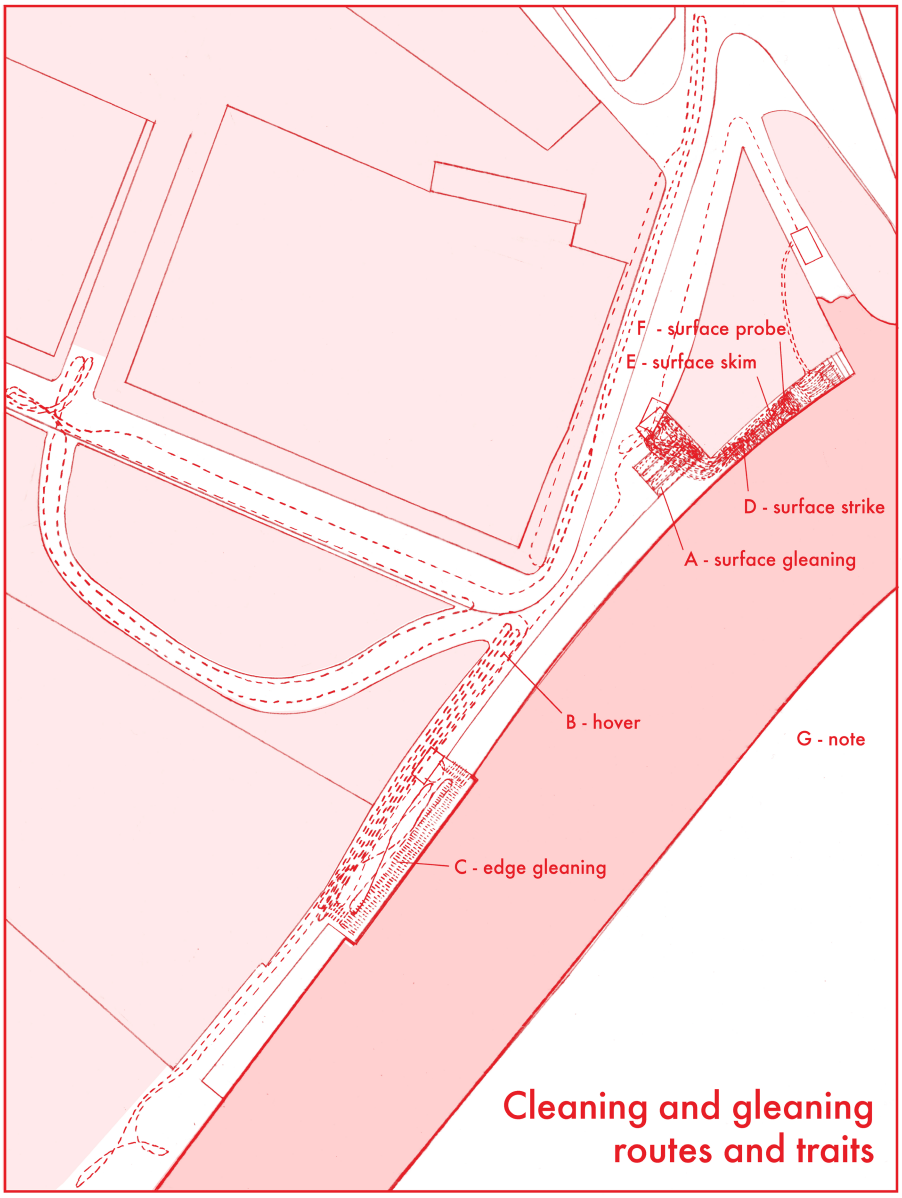
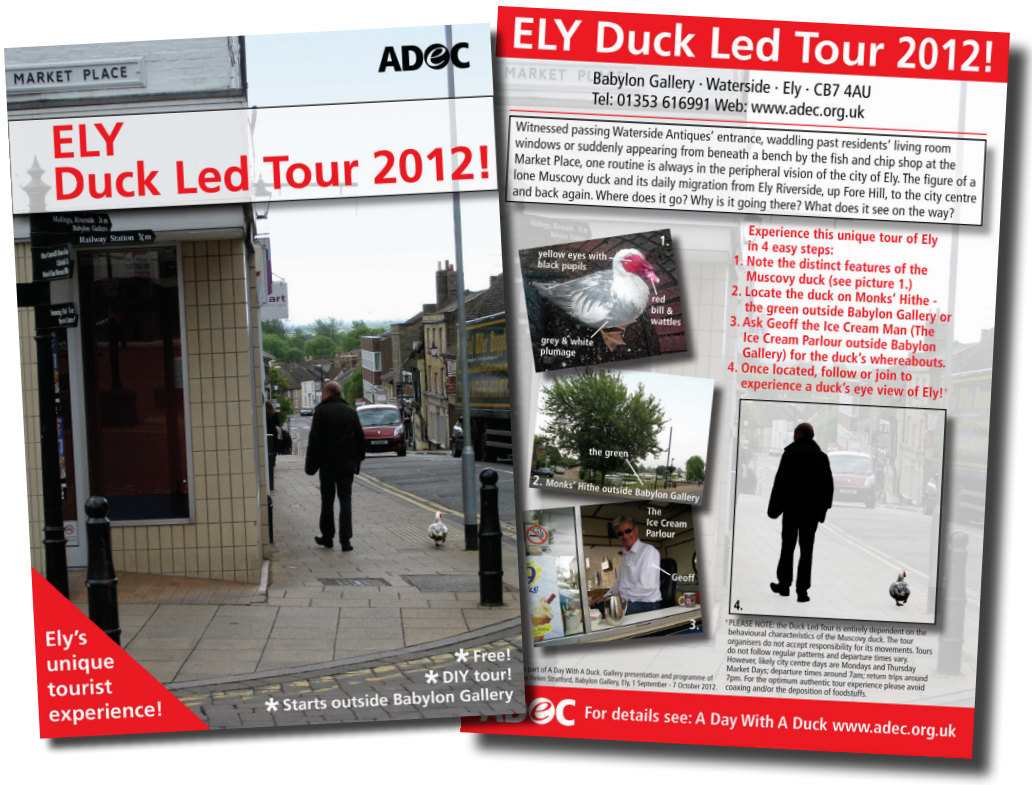


Fig. 85. *Cleaning and Gleaning Accompanying Equipment* 2012.

all denizens. This aspect is taken further into the print *Weed Removal / Identification of Anomalous Materials* [Fig. 84] in which anomalous objects found in the regular volunteer-led clean-up of the public Jubilee Gardens adjoining the river are mapped and listed. These include duck feathers, common garden weeds and invasive plants, but also clothing and a suitcase belonging to a rough sleeper who had set up camp in the sensory garden. These personal items were discovered whilst working with the working party in the gardens and formed the basis of a discussion among the group regarding whether the authorities should be alerted to the presence of the rough sleeper or not. Finally, *Cleaning and Gleaning Accompanying Equipment* [Fig. 85] focuses specifically on the routines of a council cleaning operative, cleaning up the riverside walk at three-day intervals. Alongside the cleaning equipment associated with the messy job of removing duck defecation, the cleaner's weekly rehearsal's in the local brass band are incorporated in the depiction of a cornet, recognising personal routines that play a part in the performance of public space.

Duck Led Tour

During the residency other works offered a more direct critique of the regeneration plans for the city. From talking to Ely's Tourism, Town Centre and Events Manager about the annual tourism highlights, I uncovered plans to 'educate' people against feeding the ducks, even within the council allocated feeding area of which the duck territory formed a key part. As I understood, these efforts would 'protect' the public and clean up the riverside; removing those unwanted species, that snatched sandwiches out of the hands of infants, and whose mess detracted from the riverside's





Figs. 86 & 87. The DIY *Ely Duck Led Tour* was stealthy deposited at tourist information sites across the city. *Ely Duck Led Tour* 2012. Photograph Helen Stratford.

'delightful' status. In parallel, I also heard about a discontinued booklet from an Ely tour guide entitled *The Ducks of Ely Visitors Guide*, depicting ducks in different characters offering information on tourist sites across the city.[13] I picked up on the oversight of this opportunity to stealthily re-instate a duck-led tourist guide, *Ely Duck Led Tour* into the Tourist Office Program; depositing it at tourist information sites across the city [Figs. 86 & 87].

This fictional and parodic self–directed tour, which also enlisted the help of a local ice-cream vendor to track the whereabouts of the duck, picked up on the inversion of categories that the ducks achieved daily by being in places they shouldn't. This aspect was echoed by one resident who stated that the ducks 'should be safely [re]located in the countryside'. Counter to the 'Ely eel' and the cathedral, both of which jostled for attention at the top of the hierarchy of public art commissions and tourist sites, the *Duck Led Tour* took what was considered by some to be the lowest importance in the city and raised it to the level of city mascot.

Live Duck Shoot!

During the residency, other collaborative live art events opened up further points of discussion around the way public spaces are produced, performed and invested by different and often competing interests. The format of these events evolved out of the ongoing research, through the active discussions with people, but also through contacts and links made through the project. Like *Duck Led Tour*, each one built on what the ducks' presence challenged in the city's public spaces through adapting its existing infrastructure. This included Ely's official Town Crier – an active



START OF PROCLAMATION

Citizens of Ely and visitors to our city.
We believe that humans and Muscovy Ducks can peacefully co-exist.

We, who are gathered here today, assert that humans and Muscovy Ducks have in fact co-existed successfully for decades.

We, the people of Ely and the people in Ely, consider that the current activities of our own species significantly alter the physical and ecological environment of the city and we admire species adaptable enough to inhabit the chance spaces that our actions create.

We, the people who maintain an emotional, economic or domestic connection to Ely applaud the Muscovy Duck as a naturalised introduced species, that intimately adapts to only a few particular places, and we are grateful that Ely is one of these rare chosen habitats.

We, the people who maintain a recreational, ornithological or rural connection to Ely, propose that the city should not be seen as separate from the countryside; but an urban space taken under the wing of the rural; epitomised by the widely recognised city resident status of the Muscovy Duck.

We, the people gathered here today, will now demonstrate our support for the aforementioned points.

[Begin quacking, or hissing joyfully]

END OF PROCLAMATION

Fig. 88. The *Muscovy Duck Proclamation* was read by Ely's official town crier Avril Hayter-Smith who opened a day of live events along the river. *Muscovy Duck Proclamation* 2012. Photograph Julian Hughes.



Fig. 89. 'PLEASE FILM THE DUCKS' replica sign installed by the riverside for *Live Duck Shoot!* 2012. Photograph Julian Hughes.

participant in the performance of public space. Avril Hayter-Smith's reading of *The Muscovy Duck Proclamation* [Fig. 88] – a declaration championing the right of the ducks' place in the city, written with Lawrence Bradby – opened a day of live events along the river. The day included contributions from other artists. These included *One Minute Birdwatching* by Holly Rumble, in which people were invited to gather and shout the names of the birds they could see in one minute. *Ring This Bell* by artist family Townley and Bradby, invited people to ring a boatyard bell installed in Jubilee Gardens bandstand, in order to orchestrate random announcements of fundamentally dull activities, such as 'about to eat an apple'.

Alongside facilitating and curating the day, which included hiring the bandstand and pursuading the local boatyard owner to loan his bell, I joined Ely members of the amateur film group 'Cambridge super 8' to make a collaborative event entitled *Live Duck Shoot!* In this event, a sign, which took the format of a recently installed duck-feeding fine notice, was installed by the river. This fake sign picked up on the council's apparent confusion regarding the presence of the duck feeding area in the city, which was manifest in a plethora of contradictory signs along the river. Some signs indicated where to feed the ducks, while another indicated that such an act on land would entail a 'maximum penalty of £2500'. This latter sign was met with public frenzy, furore and incredulity in local and national press after a tweet issued during the pseudo duck survey pointed out its existence.[14] The replica sign, installed without permission directly under the fine notice, read 'PLEASE FILM THE DUCKS' [Fig. 89].



Fig. 90. During *Live Duck Shoot!* over 40 participants filmed the ducks on super 8 cameras. *Live Duck Shoot!* 2012. Photograph Julian Hughes.



Fig. 91. The film from Live Duck Shoot! was shown in the gallery and on a history tour boat during 'Love Architecture' festival 2013. Liberty Belle Micro Cinema 2013. Photograph Nick Cheek.

Working with Cambridge super 8 group members, Chris Mizsak and Ronan Quilty, passers-by were handed a camera, loaned by the group, and invited to 'shoot the ducks' [Fig. 90]. Playing with the language of the fine notice, *Live Duck Shoot!* referenced the growing aggressiveness towards the ducks. It resonated with rumours of past cullings, during which residents were asked to notify the council of people harbouring ducklings in gardens, and alleged non-protection of the ducks under the 1981 Wildlife and Countryside Act due to their non-native and potentially 'invasive' status.[15] It built on and critiqued the conservative nature of the city which seemed to gain in intensity during the project. This was manifest in the UKIP (UK Independence Party) banners on the marina, seemingly supported by the Union Jack colour themed flower basket displays in the city, marking the Diamond Jubilee year, and witnessed first-hand in some discussions around who or what was acceptable practice in the city.

Like the pseudo duck survey, while *Live Duck Shoot!* was advertised in the project publicity, the sheer presence of people filming the ducks proved an attraction for others to join the 'shoot'. The use of super 8 cameras was also reminiscent of old home movies, the subject of which is invariably family activities, such as feeding ducks. In this way, it was a curated action that responded to and critiqued public space on different levels, but it was also humorous and fun – inviting people to 'take back control' of the duck territory and to value and record for posterity this much maligned species of city denizen! Yet, for some, the shooting connotations were too much, with two people running to the riverside, alarmed that members of the public might actually be taking part in another culling.

The collaborative film made with over forty participants was shown at a closing event in the gallery to an eager and captivated audience. The audience not only included the film's makers but also other interested parties who had been following the project and arrived to contribute their local knowledge. These included a couple of elderly women who whisperingly identified themselves as duck-harbouring residents. The film was also shown during *Liberty Belle Micro Cinema* [Fig. 91] an event I curated on the local tourist history boat 'Liberty Belle' the following year as part of the national LOVE Architecture festival.

The Gallery as Active Public Space

The six-week exhibition and film event in the gallery displayed public outcomes of the residency. The show included a slide show documentation of the pseudo duck survey and collected comments, alongside framed prints of the ornithological mappings of routines and *Portmanteau Ely*. It also included a commission by Ely resident and artist Lyndall Phelps in the form of the *Ely Red Data Book*, playing on the threat of extinction of the Ely ducks, and an A-frame signboard interactive installation entitled *Taking Liberties* made with local artist and canal boat resident Lucy Francis. With the help of 'Liberty Belle' history boat owner/ tour guide Martin, *Taking Liberties* invited people to add a story about Ely and the ducks on a postcard pinned to the A-frame. The collection of stories were planned for inclusion in the boat's guided tours, which I discovered, like many of the stories about the ducks, slightly shifted according to the audience.

Alongside these works, a central table presented a growing collection of found and generated material on the ducks and the regeneration plans for Ely, as well as recordings of the live art events as they progressed. The table included a copy of an old duck feeding sign, given to me by the award winning tea room owner; old photographs of Ely shop fronts with dead wildfowl hung outside and photographs of Punt Guns, a traditional method of shooting ducks on the canals around Ely, loaned from Ely Museum; a BBC recording of 'The Ugly Duckling' bought in the antiques shop next door; newspaper clippings collected during the project [Fig. 92]; Muscovy duck word searches/collage material created by gallery staff; sound recordings from the *Muscovy Duck Proclamation* and *One Minute Bird Watching* events and the weekly Muscovy duck count graphs compiled by the local Muscovy duck expert.

A film made by an Ely based filmmaker, including interviews and footage of the itinerant duck waddling to the market square with artist in pursuit, was also added during the show. In this way, like the wider project, the table' s contents and the show evolved and created a space for discussions around the future of the ducks and the city [Fig. 93]. This generated a circular loop – coming out of and going back into discussion and events – to raise pertinent questions about the city. Notes from the comments book reflect this loop, demonstrating the project's capacity to open up questions. 'Good to see the city from a refreshing new perspective', 'Interesting juxtaposition of nature and human urbanism', 'Delightful humorous project with creative purpose & provoking ideas about future of Ely', 'It makes you question about what to retain and what to destroy in Ely in the future'.



Fig. 92. The muscovy ducks' disputed occupation of public space became the subject of local and national press coverage. Press cuttings collected during A Day with a Duck. Photograph Helen Stratford.



Fig. 93. The table in the gallery provided a space for a growing collection of found and generated material. *A Day with a Duck* gallery installation 2012. Photograph Helen Stratford.

The Day of the Duck

The questioning of the performance of public space; exploring how it is articulated and shaped by a minutiae of daily habits that express specific perceptions of the contemporary English city, is taken further into the *The Day of the Duck.* Inspired by my conversations and encounters with people and wildlife in Ely and written in collaboration with Lawrence Bradby, this artist's book picks up on the absurd qualities of the presence of the ducks and pushes it further – deploying fictional methods by which to investigate spatial perceptions of Englishness from the perspective of a Muscovy duck. Adopting what we playfully termed a 'duck noir' genre, it follows the path of a genderless duck, the last of its species in an unnamed Fenland town, whose goal is to discover the whereabouts of its 'missing brethren'. On its quest the Muscovy duck engages in dialogue with city residents and navigates its way through their complex territorial conflicts in order to solve the mystery. A summary of the book describes how 'in the course of its meetings this "duck-tective" is insulted, befriended, gassed, bagged, and rescued by an animal liberation cell, until finally, armed with some hard-won discoveries, the duck decides to confront the city with the awful truth'.[16]

The book deploys fictional dialogues, diagrams of everyday behaviour and public space management alongside feminist theories to delve into city territories,'naturecultures' and contrasts between the urban and the wild. While recognisably Ely to those who know the city, its form and content take aspects that developed out of the project's site-specific actions into a conceptual project that considers issues around generic public spaces. In

the context of the mounting awareness and concentration on borders and territories generated by the UK's political climate between 2012 and 2018, the book's summary claims that it makes evident the prejudices latent in public spaces through exploring what it might be to be considered an unwelcome non-human migratory visitor in a contemporary English city [see appendix four].

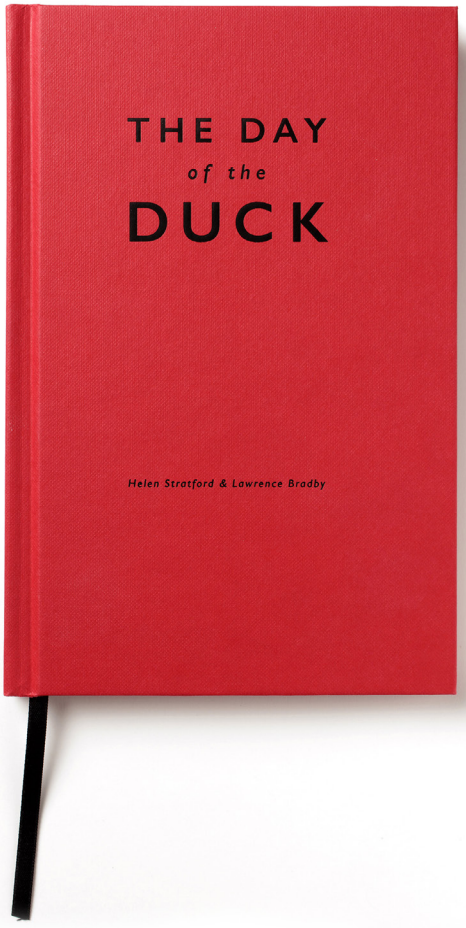


Fig. 94. *The Day of the Duck* book cover 2018.

Notes

[3] Published by Marmalade: publishers of visual theory

[4] Hilary Gresty, 'Helen Stratford: A Day with a Duck', A-n The Artists Information Company <https://www.a-n.co.uk/reviews/helen-stratford-a-day-with-a-duck/> [accessed 26 March 2021].

[5] I took part in Ely Eel Day parade at the beginning of the project in 2012

[6] Gresty.

[7] East Cambridgeshire District Council, 'Ely Masterplan A Framework for the Future Development of the City of Ely' (East Cambridgeshire District Council, 2010), p. 2 <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/FINAL%20Ely%20Masterplan.pdf> [accessed 26 March 2021].

[8] Ibid., p. 4.

[9] Gresty.

[10] Ely residents [Interview] 2012

[11] Ibid.

[12] Conversation with people during the pseudo duck survey and with Pam Blakeman and also Mike Rouse local historians.

[13] 'Guided Tour through Muscovy Ducks', Ely Standard, 2007 <https://www.elystandard.co.uk/news/guided-tour-through-muscovy-ducks-7734742> [accessed 26 March 2021].

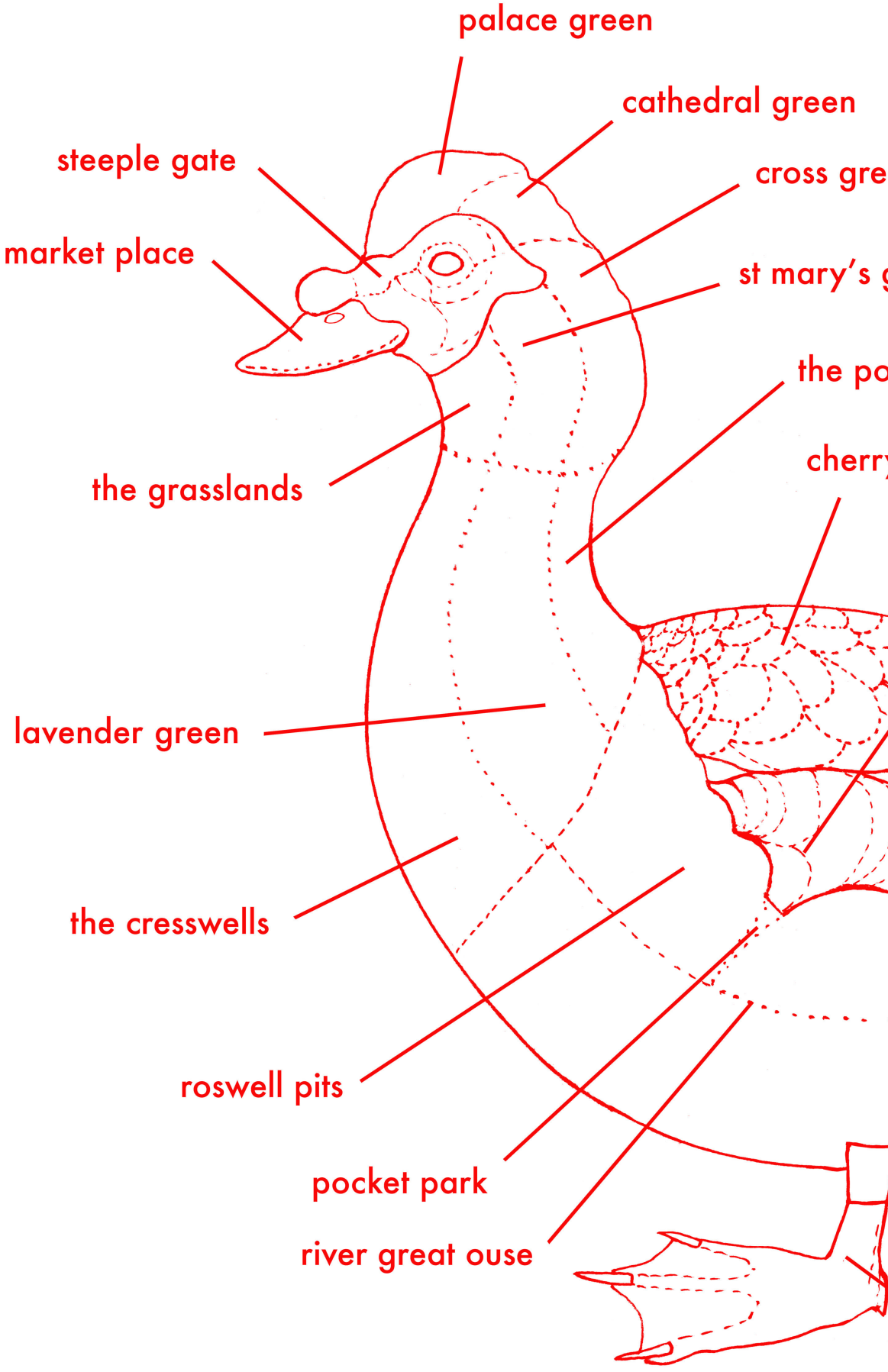
[14] 'Duck Feeding £2,500 Fine Threat for Ely Residents', BBC News, 29 June 2012, section Cambridgeshire <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-cambridgeshire-18645082> [accessed 26 March 2021].

[15] Information regarding the muscovy ducks' alleged non-protected and 'non-native' status came via the muscovy duck expert and research by Lyndall Phelps for *Ely Red Data Book.*

[16] 'The Day of the Duck', Alice Lee <https://www.parallelpoint.net/shop/the-day-of-the-duck> [accessed 4 April 2021].

Section Two

Relational and Participatory
Processes of Public Space


palace green
cathedral green
steeple gate
cross gre
market place
st mary's
the po
the grasslands
cherry
lavender green
the cresswells
roswell pits
pocket park
river great ouse

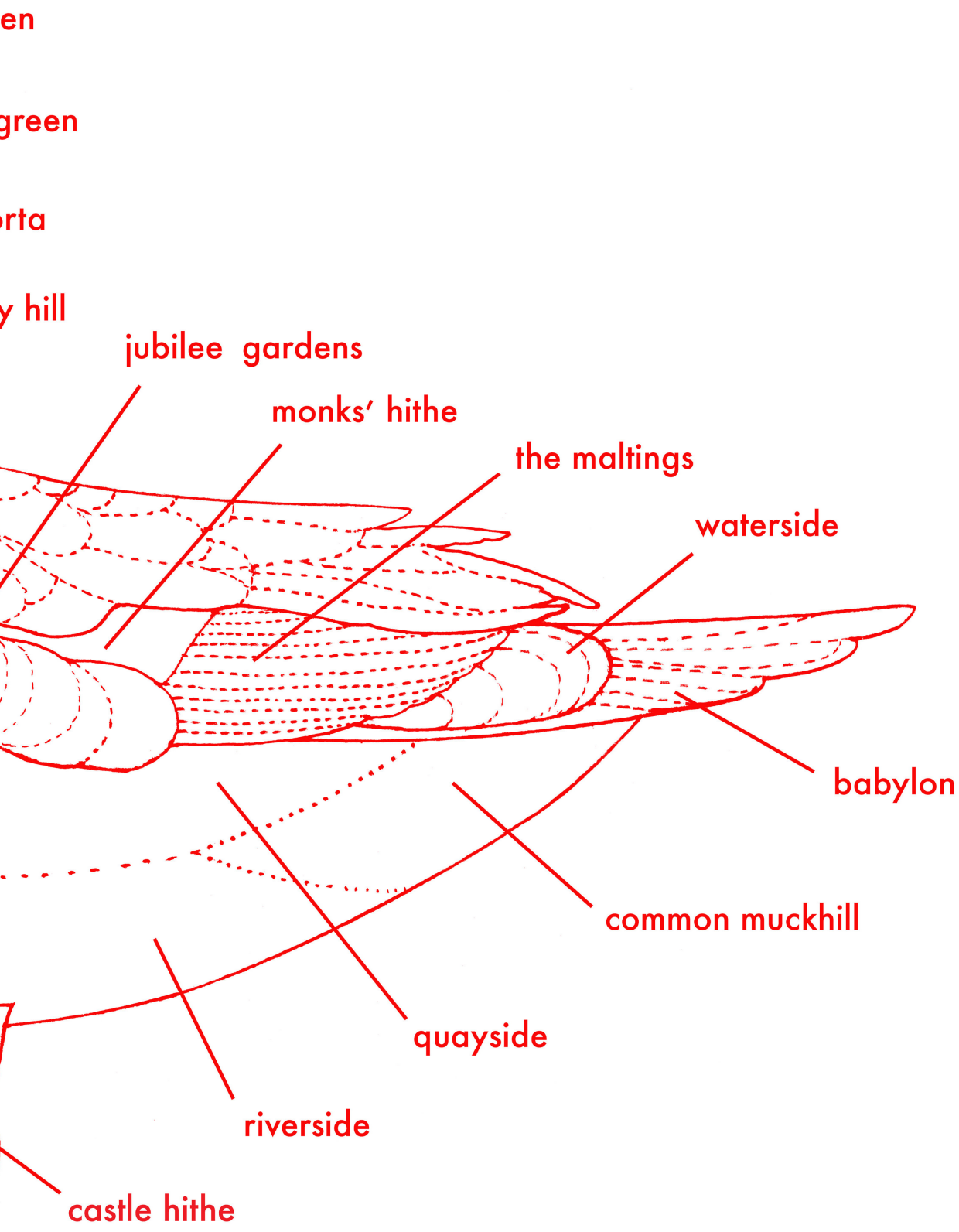


Fig. 95. *Portmanteau Ely* 2012.

2.1 Situations – Relational Processes of Public Space

Portmanteau Ely

Portmanteau Ely is a map of Ely in the image of a Muscovy duck. It is titled *Portmanteau Ely* after Albrecht Dürer's woodcut of a rhinoceros. The infamous story goes that Durer never actually saw a rhinoceros. His woodcut is created not from 'real life' but from a description and sketch by an unknown artist of an Indian rhinoceros.[17] Dürer's *Rhinoceros*, which until the late eighteenth century was referred to by Western society as an actual depiction of the mammal, is then imaginary. It is composed from a wide range of components sourced from the aforementioned sketch and from Dürer's own second-hand knowledge: armour plates, short legs with snakelike skin and a small horn on its neck.[18] A real rhinoceros has none of these elements, which originate from many different species, including human, but assembled together they constitute a single thing: a portmanteau.[19]

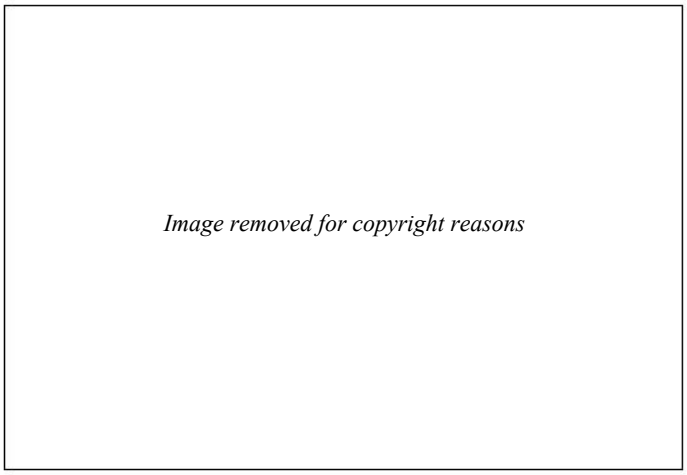


Fig. 96. Albrecht Dürer. Rhinoceros. 1515. 'Rhinoceros', *Artble* <https://www.artble.com/artists/albrecht_durer/engravings/rhinoceros> [accessed 26 March 2021]

[17] The animal in question had been sent from the state of Cambay (or modern Gujarat) in India to the King of Portugal, Manuel I, in Lisbon as a diplomatic gift during the negotiation of permission to build a fort on the island of Diu. See Alexander Lee, 'Dürer's Enduring Rhino | History Today' <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/natural-histories/d%C3%BCrer%E2%80%99s-enduring-rhino> [accessed 26 March 2021]; 'Rhinoceros', *Artble* <https://www.artble.com/artists/albrecht_durer/engravings/rhinoceros> [accessed 26 March 2021].

[18] Kaushik Patowary, 'Dürer's Rhinoceros: A 16th-Century Viral Fake | Amusing Planet' <https://www.amusingplanet.com/2020/06/durers-rhinoceros-16th-century-viral.html> [accessed 26 March 2021]; Skye Sherwin, 'Albrecht Dürer's The Rhinoceros: The Most Influential Animal Picture Ever?', The Guardian, 2016 <http://www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2016/nov/11/albrecht-durer-the-rhinoceros-1515> [accessed 26 March 2021]; 'Dürer's Rhinoceros', Wikipedia, 2021 <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=D%C3%BCrer%27s_Rhinoceros&oldid=1025180683> [accessed 29 May 2021].

[19] The Oxford English Dictionary definition of Portmanteau is 'To combine (two or more ideas, proposals, etc.); to combine elements and meanings of (two or more words) to form a single word'. 'Portmanteau, v.', *OED* Online (Oxford University Press) <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/148218> [accessed 26 March 2021].

In *Portmanteau Ely*, much like the rhino in Dürer's woodcut and much like the waterfowl themselves, the drawing's composition, from observed, photographed and researched aspects of *Cairina Moschata*[20] gives it a comedic visual appearance. The drawing also references representations found in ornithological text books, in which various identifying features of birds are singled out to allow identification by bird watchers.[21] Yet, in *Portmanteau Ely* each section is not identified by the name of part of a duck's body but by a public space, both contemporaneous and historical, transforming it into a map. A resident of Ely would be familiar with the sequence, which, if followed clockwise, forms a round walking tour of the city's public spaces.

I have chosen *Portmanteau Ely* to open this section of chapter three, because in talks about *A Day with a Duck* I often explain that *Portmanteau Ely* stands in for the wider project, 'exploring how public space is composed of sometimes absurd adjacencies and interests which compete to determine how a particular space is performed.' In this section, I will use evidence from the practice to examine what that statement, derived from the practice experience and evidence, means in terms of its implications for public space and participatory practice.

Undoing Hegemonic Constructions of Public Space

In *Portmanteau Ely*, some adjacencies are delineated by dotted lines between the different sections, perhaps implying a porosity between them, yet many are indicated by solid lines. Moreover, even the dotted ones indicate a preferred stable state or hierarchy of placement within the overall 'map'. Haraway's critique of cartography describes how the 'within' of the map implies a place with clear and fixed boundaries, borders and attributes that a subject, equally bounded, can be within.[22] Similarly, through her account of public space as

[20] Carl Linnaeus, *Fauna Svecica : Sistens Animalia Sveciae Regni* (Leiden: Conrad and Georg Jacob Wishoff, 1746).
[21] See for example Fig. 16. *The topography of a duck* in Francis H Kortright, *The Ducks, Geese and Swans of North America - A Vade Mecum for the Naturalist and the Sportsman* (Washington D.C: The Stackpole Company and Wildlife Management Institute, 1953).
[22] For Haraway, 'The history of cartography can look like a history of figure-free science and technique […]. Such a "real" world that preexists practice and discourse seems to be merely a container for the lively activities of humans and nonhumans. Spatialization as a never-ending, power-laced process engaged by a motley array of beings can be fetishized as a series of maps whose grids non tropically locate naturally bounded bodies (land, people, resources and genes) inside "absolute" dimensions such as space and time. The maps are fetishes in so far as they enable a specific kind of mistake that turns process into nontropic, real, literal things inside containers'. Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium.FemaleMan_Meets_OncoMouse*, p. 136.

constructed from a 'play of social relations',[23] Massey critiques the 'sphere of completed horizontality'[24] represented by 'ordinary' maps.[25]

According to Massey, 'the unexpected' of space counters the 'technologies of power' that are expressed through the 'writing over' of the map.[26] Similarly, for Massey, public spaces are generated out of 'heterogeneous and sometimes conflicting social identities/relations […] daily negotiations and struggles […] through which day in and day out these spaces are produced'.[27] For Teresa Hoskyns, in Massey's relational account space is 'always contested and different imaginations for public space are always expressed'.[28] Yet, she also observes how for Massey, like the porous yet fixed lines in *Portmanteau Ely*, 'hegemonic conceptions of public space and capital almost always win'.[29]

This paradoxical aspect of the potentially fluid, yet at the same time deeply hegemonic construction of public space, forms the focus of *A Day with a Duck*. The practice research explores how certain ideals regarding public spaces are projected onto them, with implications regarding who should use them and how. It examines how, as Massey argues, these interests also strive to exclude certain practices and subjects for the benefit of others.[30] In these exclusionary notions of public space, clear boundaries are performed and produced, between legitimate/illegitimate, acceptable/unacceptable, public/private and, in this case, between urban/rural, domestic/wild, with material and social implications.

[23] Massey, *For Space*, p. 153.
[24] Massey, *For Space*, p. 107.
[25] Ibid., p. 111.
[26] Massey here refers to Jose Rabasa's discussion of Mercator's atlas of 1682 which for Rabasa 'constitutes a world where all possible "surprises" have been precodified', alongside feminist and post-colonial reimaginings of the possibilities of cartography which challenge the writing over of the colonial text as the obliteration of the 'other'. Massey, *For Space*, pp. 110–11. Durer's *Rhinoceros* etching has been equally cited as an 'instrument of colonialism'. Jesse Prinz argues 'Dürer is not just making his creature recognizable, by superimposing contemporary armor; he is at the same time making the creature more alien and more threatening, since no animal in Europe looks anything like that. In so doing, Dürer is both constructing a notion of the exotic, and he is enacting a newly emerging conception of the function of art'. Ultimately, for Prinz 'The ability to visually capture a foreign creature was a symbolic stand-in for imperial conquest itself'. Jesse Prinz, 'Artbouillon: Dürer's Rhinoceros: Art, Exotica, and Empire' <http://www.artbouillon.com/2015/01/durers-rhinoceros-art-exotica-and-empire.html> [accessed 28 March 2021].
[27] Massey, *For Space*, p. 152.
[28] Hoskyns, p. 82.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Massey, *For Space*, pp. 152–53.

Sanitised Visions of the City

In *Visions of the City* David Pinder highlights the '"noir" side' of utopian visions in twentieth century Western Europe. He argues how these visions presided over 'forms of repression and discrimination through modes of regulation […] centred around bodies, spaces and social order'.[31] According to Pinder these 'modes of regulation' underpinned the 'Modernist calls to order'[32] of Le Corbusier; expressed in the themes of 'clean up, re-order, purify'.[33] With reference to feminist philosophers and writers, including Braidotti, Mary Douglas and Julia Kristeva, he argues that modernist claims of 'purity' as 'a mark of a "civilised" society' were in fact founded on deep fears.[34]

For Pinder, these encompassed fascinations with 'monstrous figurations'[35] of ambivalent states of dirt or 'out of place matter'[36] and the

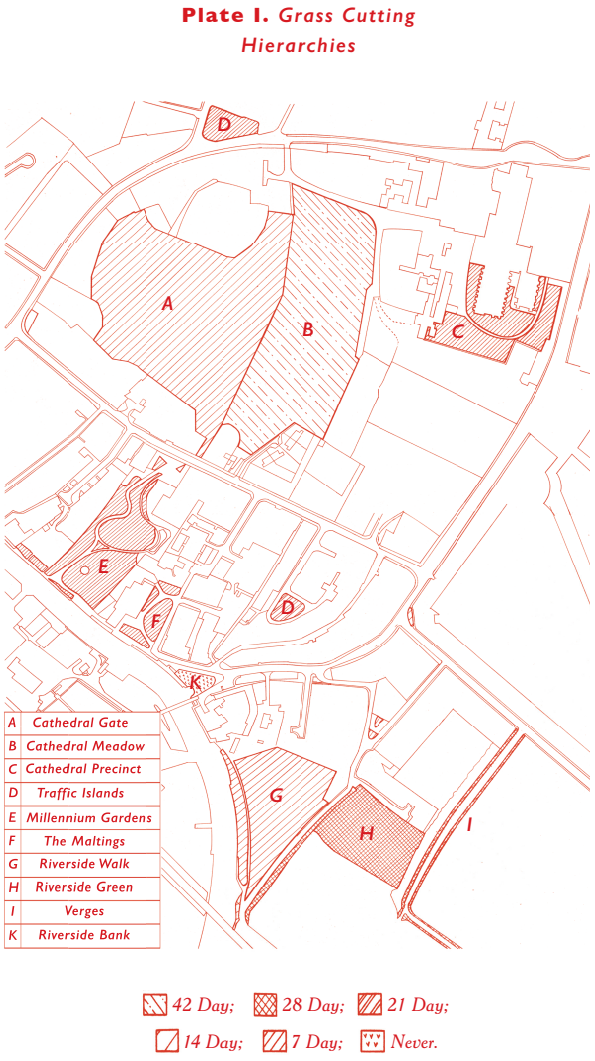


Fig. 97. *Plate I. Grass Cutting Hierarchies*. From Helen Stratford and Lawrence Bradby *The Day of the Duck* 2018.

[31] Pinder, *Visions of the City*, p. 248. Pinder observes that the beginnings of the 'noir' of utopian visions are to be found in 'restorative' utopias such as that aspired to by William Morris and Ebenezer Howard, designed to project a 'new spatial form that was intended to restore and shore up values about urban settlement, community, order and harmony'. Pinder, *Visions of the City*, p. 31.
[32] Ibid., p. 57.
[33] Ibid., p. 65. Pinder describes how for Le Corbusier design claimed to have 'progressed away from the sensuous tactility of ornate decoration and towards an order of perception based more on an intellectual and visual appraisal of the world, with an accent on the abstraction of form and harmony of proportion'. Ibid., p. 71.
[34] Ibid., p. 71.
[35] See Rosi Braidotti, 'Signs of Wonder and Traces of Doubt', in *Between Monsters, Goddesses, and Cyborgs: Feminist Confrontations with Science, Medicine, and Cyberspace*, ed. by Nina Lykke and Rosi Braidotti (London ; Atlantic Highlands, N.J., USA: Zed Books, 1996), pp. 135–52.
[36] See Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concept of Pollution and Taboo*, Routledge Classics (London ; New York: Routledge, 2005).

'abject,'[37] inextricably bound up with the 'wandering tribes'[38] and 'roving gypsies'[39] who inhabited these 'protoplasmic'[40] spaces. To counter these fears, 'geometry and spatial order' brought 'security and purpose'[41] against the 'menacing disaster of the modern city, no longer governed by the principles of geometry'.[42]

Crucially, according to Pinder the legacies of this utopian urbanism live on in contemporary urban developments through continued attempts to make 'proper' environments that counter the 'threat of uncoded and unregulated movement'.[43] For Pinder, the 'authoritarianism of modernist utopias',[44] 'establishing classifications, boundaries and hierarchies […] with zoning functions to ensure "non-contaminating" land-uses',[45] hold a 'continuing influence […] on present conceptualisations of the urban landscape in architecture and planning, and on the spatial logic of the built environment in contemporary cities'.[46]

While the Ely masterplan is certainly not a *Plan Voisin*, a spatial organisation founded in clearly designated zones of use remains an overriding logic; recast through neoliberal terms of 'urban residential extension', 'leisure village' and 'riverside quarter'.[47] Moreover, in Ely assumptions of urban order – and associated fears of disorder – are vividly expressed in residents' visceral revulsion to the ducks and their occupation and degradation of what should be a place to sit 'with a glass of wine'. In this context, the ducks challenge projected desires for both order and commodification. Further, even those comments in favour of the muck and grime of a working and productive river – 'If you live in the countryside you should expect a bit of shit' – express and reproduce the boundaries between and order and disorder, urban and

[37] See Julia Kristeva and Leon S. Roudiez, *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection*, European Perspectives, Nachdr. (New York, NY: Columbia Univ. Press, 2010).
[38] Pinder, *Visions of the City*, p. 103.
[39] Le Corbusier, *The City of Tomorrow and Its Planning* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1975), p. 95, cited in Pinder, p. 104.
[40] Ibid., p. 102.
[41] Ibid., p. 71.
[42] Le Corbusier, p. 25, cited in Pinder, p. 62. Pinder observes how, 'In Le Corbusier's utopian [urban] spaces there is a revulsion to interminglings, ambivalences, violation of boundaries; the things that stagnate or rot, where decay presages an inversion of hierarchies; to the mass, the swarm, the "primitive" cell; and to undifferentiated matter or unchannelled flow that threaten to swamp, sweep away, or bring about the dissolution of the individual'. Pinder, p. 103.
[43] Ibid., pp. 103-4
[44] Ibid., p. 248.
[45] Which Pinder notes were 'enshrined in documents such as the Athens Charter established by CIAM [International Congresses of Modern Architecture] in 1933'. Ibid., p. 104.
[46] Ibid., p. 248.
[47] East Cambridgeshire District Council, p. 10.

rural. Here, the attraction to 'purity' as 'a mark of civilised society',[48] becomes translated into contemporaneous public spaces that should not include 'messy' animals or deviant human actions in order to be clean and fit solely for a particular type of use.

The book *The Day of the Duck* echoes Pinder's observations regarding the 'noir' of architectural visions. The extract 'In the Market Place', which opened this chapter, presents a dialogue between Town Ranger, Ramblers, Muscovy Duck and Shoppers alongside an associated diagram of *Plate S. Duck Deterrent Hard Landscaping Features*. In this vision, exclusionary practices are defined by the physical designation of specific zones for specific city denizens. These are laid out in specially designed landscaping features that prevent the ducks from entering the 'Heritage Zone', reinforced by patrolling town rangers with 'HERE TO HELP' tabards who record any breaches on a BID (Business Improvement District) infringement logging system.

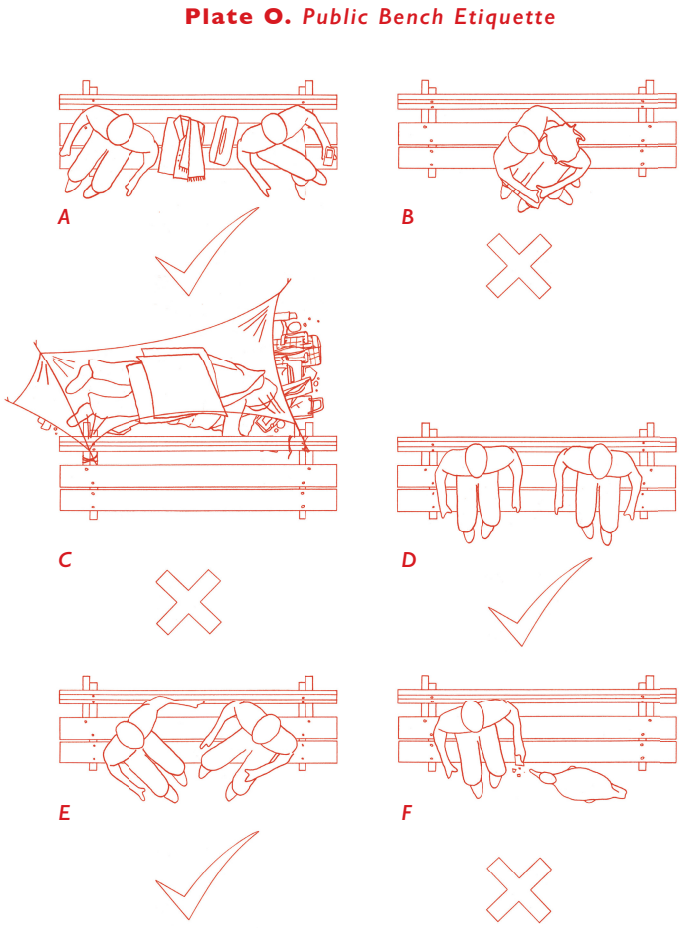


Fig. 98. *Plate O. Public Bench Etiquette*. From Helen Stratford and Lawrence Bradby *The Day of the Duck* 2018.

As discussed in chapter one, this 'stretching' of a 'dominant logic' to a point at which it becomes 'irrational'[49] causes a rupture that goes beyond its referent, 'flagging up' key attributes of the 'original' in exposing its myth.[50]

[48] Pinder, *Visions of the City*, p. 71.
[49] Miles, p. 142.
[50] Kenny, pp. 221–22.

The parodic qualities of the book's design and narrative, it's red, black and white colour scheme based on that of the ducks, take the notion of 'non-contaminating' uses to an absurd intensity in order to challenge this way of conceptualising urban spaces.

Alongside this fictional extrapolation of top-down city visions, the drawings in *The Day of the Duck* also analyse and propose how prejudices, and ultimately public spaces themselves, are already (re) produced at the level of everyday micro actions and complex spatial habits. These include the 'revulsion' to a 'violation of boundaries' manifest in the council's implementation of the three-day cleaning routine, represented in *Cleaning and Gleaning: Accompanying Equipment* [Fig. 85], included in the book as *Plate N*. In addition, *Plate I. Grass Cutting Hierarchies* [Fig. 97] demonstrates how grass cutting rotas seemingly set up specific hierarchies produced through the maintenance of particular public spaces over others.

Furthermore, going beyond a critique of the spatial manifestations of these visions, the diagrams express how ideas surrounding unwanted actions, matter and inhabitations are all too easily extended towards certain people(s) and publics. *Plate O. Public Bench Etiquette* [Fig. 98],[51] refers to conversations between garden volunteers regarding the removal of a rough sleeper's informal occupation of Jubilee Gardens. A sentiment also echoed in *Plate B. Migration Paths: Accompanying Equipment* an extract from the larger drawing [Fig. 83] that refers to the ongoing discussions of the presence of migrant workers in the city.

[51] In this case the naming of the sitting positions refers to architectural/social studies into place occupation that attempt to derive a somehow universal behaviour in particular spaces that might inform their design. See Bryan Lawson, How Designers Think. (Oxford: Butterfield architecture, 2009).

Subverting the Creative City

By making visible overlooked, hidden and abject people and practices, *The Day of the Duck* examines how small daily performances in public space repeat spatial prejudices. Conversely, as discussed in chapter one, it also explores how this focus on everyday practices suggests a 'minor' politics that embraces and offers opportunities to challenge the way public spaces are reproduced.[52]



Fig. 99. *Ely Duck Led Tour* 2012.

For Gresty, 'invoking the arbitrary, random and seemingly misplaced to explore place, suggests an alternative to urban planning predicated on a single trajectory of economic expansion in favour of the quotidienne, unacknowledged and idiosyncratic.'[53] Embedded in this exploration is a critique of the somewhat conservative responses I received regarding the future of Ely. These appeared to be supported by commercially engrained ideas that a contemporary 'English' city must create and focus on its 'assets,' thereby meeting 'the publics'' demands in terms of a marketable city that can 'compete globally'.[54]

[52] In 'The Emancipatory City?' Nigel Thrift and Ash Amin argue that 'minor forms of association' 'the numerous forms of ordinary urban sociality' should be considered as a 'molecular politics' that can drive 'wider social and cultural change'. Ash Amin and Nigel Thrift, 'The Emancipatory City?', in *The Emancipatory City? Paradoxes and Possibilities*, ed. by Loretta Lees (London ; Thousand Oaks, Calif: Sage Publications, 2004), pp. 231–35 (p. 234).
[53] Gresty.
[54] Miles, p. 1.

According to Malcolm Miles within contemporary 'public' spaces, art practice has been instrumental in implementing 'social ordering under neoliberalism'.[55] For Miles, this is demonstrated by 'public art, cultural quarters and flagship cultural institutions' through which 'culture has been co-opted to redevelopment in service, not of local needs, but of the symbolic economies by which cities compete globally'.[56] Likewise, in 'Performing The Common City', Pascal Gielen argues that in the 'creative city' art in public space is designed to 'mark the neighbourhood, to fixate it again with an identity'.[57] For Gielen, in this situation 'the only artists who are tolerated in the public space are those creatives that can cheer up a neighbourhood a little', 'creative entrepreneurs' who 'fit within a wider, indeed *strategic* marketing plan that distinguishes this city from the other one'.[58]

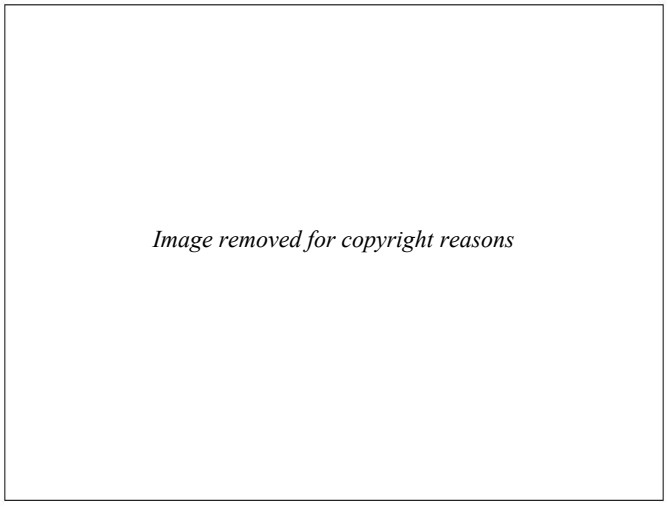
A critique of this situation is manifest most clearly in *Ely Duck Led Tour* [Figs. 86 & 99] This fictional tour picks up on many residents' fondness towards the ducks' place in the city.[59] Simultaneously, the tour's parodic language critiques what Gielen identifies as the creative city's 'alliance with the new capital', manifest in its fixation on identity.[60] In this case, *Ely Duck Led Tour* promotes a figure which, for many, is considered a nuisance and a blight on the city. A figure which certainly does not fit neatly into the 'marketing plan' and 'growth strategy' of the masterplan, not least in their current messy state.

By giving precedence to its messy inhabitants, *Ely Duck Led Tour* reverses and revalues that which is abject in current perceptions of this particular public space and its position within city hierarchies. Nevertheless, like the boundary lines in *Portmanteau Ely*, while the representation of what is minor and overlooked challenges dominant perceptions of public space, in *Ely Duck Led Tour* the binaries of clean/dirty, acceptable/abject, culture/nature urban/rural remain. Conversely, as the residency evolved, I discovered that, in occupying the meeting point of different 'city imaginaries', the duck also straddled, or rather waddled, between them.

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[55] Miles refers to examples of Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), specifically in New York, which adopt public spaces and make them 'nice and safe', excluding marginalised publics through 'privatised management'. Miles, p. 116.
[56] Ibid., p. 1.
[57] Gielen, pp. 286–87.
[58] Ibid. Gielen here refers to Richard Florida's concept of the 'Creative Class' supporting the notion of 'Cultural Capital.' See Richard L. Florida, The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life (New York, NY: Basic Books, 2004).
[59] Claiming they are 'city residents' and 'part of the city', and Ely should remain 'small and in scale with the ducks', see section one of this chapter.
[60] Gielen, p. 285.

Architect and artist Can Altay argues that in order 'to define their boundaries, societies cast aside those who remain outside the norms they set […] The urban poor, the *sans-papier*, the homeless, the Roma, are such definitive groups whose rights are refused in today's cities'.[61] Altay's own project, '*We're Papermen' he said* [Fig. 100], highlights the self-proclaimed 'papermen' in Turkish cities who, before garbage collection takes place, search through rubbish to obtain recyclable material.[61] For Altay, by supporting the very system that casts them aside 'the papermen do not cross, but move within a boundary'.[63]



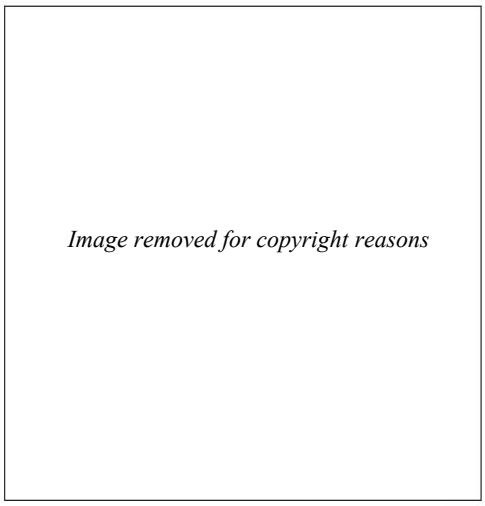


Fig. 100. Can Altay *'We're Papermen' he said* 2003. From (left) < http://cargocollective.com/aslikal/papermen> [accessed 15 March 2021] and (right) Can Altay, 'Transgression in and of the City', *Architectural Design*, Special Issue: The Architecture of Transgression, 83.6 (2013), 102–9

In this context, the figure of the Muscovy duck is a paradox. According to how the city is envisaged, the ducks simultaneously occupy a position of attraction and repulsion, both city nuisance and tourist attraction, alongside a motif for wider paradoxical relationships to nature, culture, local, global. *A Day with A Duck* picked up on this position of the duck as meeting point of opposing cultures and emblem of simmering local politics.[64] By amplifying this position, *The Day of the Duck* and *Ely Duck Led Tour* problematise sanitised visions of the city and the drive for a marketable identity, both of which exclude certain bodies and

[61] Can Altay, 'Transgression in and of the City', *Architectural Design*, Special Issue: The Architecture of Transgression, 83.6 (2013), 102–9 (p. 104).
[62] '*We're Papermen' he said* is a book and exhibition that makes visible the practices of the papermen in order to demonstrate how they create a 'dignified informal sector with inventive ways of inhabiting and navigating through the city'. Altay, 'Transgression in and of the City', p. 105. See also Can Altay and Deniz Altay, 'Counter-Spatialization of Power in Istanbul', in *Urban Makers: Parallel Narratives of Grassroots Practices and Tensions*, ed. by Emmanuele Guidi, 1. Aufl (Berlin: b_books, 2008), pp. 76–101; Can Altay, *Ahali: An Anthology for Setting a Setting* (London: Bedford Press, 2012); Can Altay and November Paynter, 'Pigeons Are People | SALT' <https://saltonline.org/tr/2072/pigeons-are-people> [accessed 29 March 2021].
[63] Altay, 'Transgression in and of the City', p. 105.
[64] This was equally expressed through people's relationship to the river: either accepting it as working, messy and productive or striving for it to be passive, clean and commodified for visitor contemplation.

practices. In this way, they highlight how these city visions, and that which they exclude, compete but also support each other in their struggle for existence.

Place as Assemblage

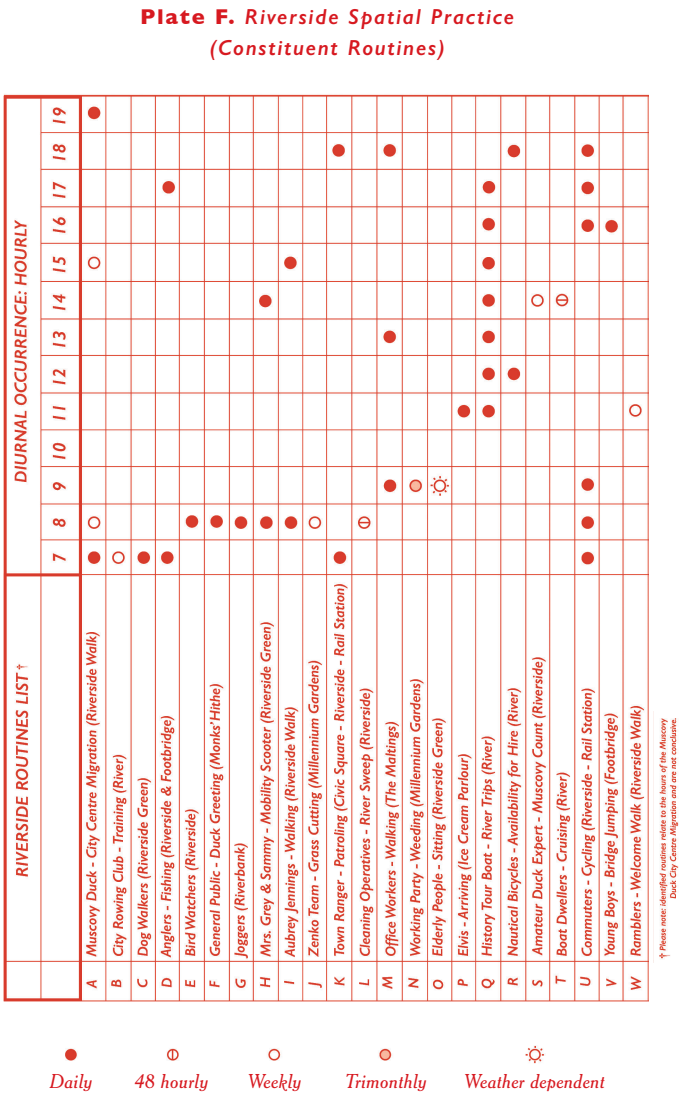


Fig. 101. *Riverside Spatial Practice (Constituent Routines)*. From Helen Stratford and Lawrence Bradby *The Day of the Duck* 2018.

While some interventions in *A Day with a Duck* reverse binaries of urban/rural, domestic/wild, city/countryside, challenging the assumptions they support, others go beyond; focusing on making visible public space as performative assemblage and ongoing series of practices. *Plate. F. Riverside Spatial Practice (Constituent Routines)* [Fig. 101] plots the diurnal occurrence of the multitude of different people and practices that occupy the riverside. Adopting the representational language of the bird spotter and bearing similarities to behavioural observational mapping techniques, a chart and map traces people and practices including dog walkers, elderly people, anglers, bird watchers and the city-centre-trekking Muscovy duck, the paths of whom overlap according to different timescales.

Similarly, in *Migration Paths Accompanying Items* [Fig. 83] rambler, cyclist, migrant worker and wildfowl each have a route to, from and around the city which at certain points cross and compete. In *Weed Removal/Identification of Anomalous Materials* [Fig.84], this competing aspect is taken further; identifying personal items by which a rough sleeper repurposes that which has been designed as an ornate public 'sensory garden'. Finally, in *Cleaning and*

Gleaning Accompanying Equipment [Fig. 85] the contingent and personal play a part in the production of the riverside setting during the performance of a mundane and repetitive cleaning routine.

Each drawing, with its flat representational language, gives an equivalence to all denizens, belying the hierarchies that conventionally situate them within certain relationships to each other. Through the drawings, each city resident possesses an equal claim to the public spaces they occupy. In this sense, they become micro expressions of the collected stories and lived experience of the residents and workers along the river, whose plethora of daily performances both encounter and produce the riverside. In many ways, they are similar to the masterplan drawings in *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* discussed in chapter one. However, in contrast to parodying the totalising vision of the omnipresent masterplanner, the drawings in *A Day with a Duck* highlight the contradictions and contingencies inherent in perceptions of public space. Here, they bring insight not only to Ely but also to public space more generally. Examining how it is shaped by a minutiae of daily habits that frequently sit in tension with each other, while articulating how public spaces are also part of many overlapping ecologies, both natural and social.

As discussed throughout this thesis, this dynamic notion of public space has been ascribed with the capacity to challenge social structures that attempt to define particular places and people within them. This aspect is central to Massey's adoption of 'space' in relation to 'place'. For Massey, 'space' is not abstract in relation to a somehow more concrete 'place'.[65] Here, following Soja and Lefebvre's critiques of 'container' models of space, Massey critiques hierarchies of space and place such as those present in the theories of Michel de Certeau.[66] Critically, Massey adds a feminist focus arguing that, not only class, but gender also operates to structure space and society. Ultimately, for Massey 'space' offers an ethically

[65] Massey, *For Space*, p. 183.
[66] In 'The Socio-spatial Dialectic', Soja argues that notions of 'contextual' space, existing as objectified and absolute, independent and beyond social relations, are inherently flawed. For Soja, 'space itself may be primordially given, but the organization, use, and meaning of space is a product of social translation, transformation and experience'. Soja, p. 210. In his critique of commodified and classed society, Lefebvre goes beyond this notion of 'primordially given' space to the socially produced. See Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*. In relation to notions of place explored earlier in this chapter and practiced place explored in chapter two, for Lefebvre, place and space are interwoven, one does not have an implicit hierarchy over the other. This places it in direct contrast to definitions of place in de Certeau's walking practice. For de Certeau, place and space remain separate and hierarchically structured; space mobilises place through practice. For Massey, this formulation offers a depiction of 'the little tactics of the street in some way resisting the "the proper place" of power', whereby this hierarchy remains intact. Massey, *For Space*, p. 103.

and politically grounded rethinking of 'place', and she includes within that a focus how nature is represented. Massey's reconceptualisation of place and nature as vital trajectory situates both relationally, but, in its feminist critique of implicit hierarchies, offers resistance against dominant power relations that attempt to fix ideas about people in time and place.[67]

In Ely, each person has a different relationship to the river, reproducing it in multiple ways through practices that differ according to the particular social and cultural trajectories they inhabit. The drawings attempt to make visible these negotiated and competing interests and expressions of different 'imaginations'. Here, public space is a network of competing social and cultural effects. It is, as Massey argues 'woven together out of ongoing stories, as a moment within power-geometries, as a particular constellation within the wider topographies of space, and as in process, as unfinished business'.[68]

Massey's concept of place and public space as a 'play of social relations'[69] resonates with that of Gielen, Sander Bax and Bram Leven. In *Interrupting the City* they argue that 'public space is neither "open" nor free', but 'is constantly being shaped and transformed' by a combination of 'economic, social and political forces', marking it as a site of ongoing 'struggle' with democratic potential.[70] Conversely, in his analysis of the 'creative city', Gielen observes how the notion of fluidity is also at the heart of late neo-liberal capitalist society. Yet, for Gielen, 'the paradox of the creative city' is that whilst it appears fluid, 'creative zones, fashion districts, flexible workplaces and lounge bars' form part of an 'urban

[67] Using examples from visits to her 'hometown' in south Lancashire and Skiddaw in the Lake District, Massey proposes a vitality of place, stating that, 'if we can't go "back" home, in the sense that it will have moved on from where we left it, then no more, and in the same sense, can we, on a weekend in the country, go back to nature. It too is moving on'. Through focusing on the geological timescales of Skiddaw changing over time Massey describes how the rocks of Skiddaw are 'immigrant rocks, just passing through here […] and changing all the while'. Massey, *For Space*, p. 137.
[68] Ibid., p. 131.
[69] Ibid., p. 153.
[70] Alongside Massey, for Gielen, Bax and Leven this struggle and vitality holds democratic potential, an aspect which will be examined further in chapter four of this thesis. For Gielen, Bax and Leven, public space forms part of a wider public sphere which is equally 'built up out of the economic and political vectors that come together in the public domain'. They argue that 'the public sphere today is a site of struggle: a struggle both in the sense that participating in the public sphere revolves around continuously trying to open up to new, divergent ideas and actions, and a struggle in the sense that the public sphere is constantly being shaped and transformed by "external" economic, social and political forces'. They go on to state that 'These struggles must be understood as activities that lead toward an interruption of the public sphere and, as a result, a reconstitution of that public sphere'. Sander Bax, Pascal Gielen, and Bram Ieven, *Interrupting the City Artistic Constitutions of the Public Sphere* (Amsterdam: Valiz, 2015), p. 16.

strategy that desperately tries to tame the wild multitude of hip artists, hipsters and other creatives by offering them a fixed *place* within a well thought-out urban space'.[71]

Similarly, for Braidotti rather than 'qualitative differences and multiplicities', the 'traits of advanced capitalism' fall easily into 'a proliferation of quantified differences and not a qualitative de-centering of hyper-individualism'.[72] Like Gielen and Massey, Braidotti aims to reclaim a space of interconnectivity for critical agency. As discussed in chapter one, her nomadic practice can be regarded as a tool by which architecture and public space can be reconceptualised as 'assemblages' and 'fields of forces'.[73] In addition, Braidotti's posthuman 'repositioning of the human […] in an interconnected, collectively conscious manner' has a wider ecological focus.[74] According to Braidotti, 'the posthuman knowing subject has to be understood as a relational, embodied and embedded, affective and accountable entity.'[75] She argues that 'two related notions emerge from this claim: firstly, the mind-body continuum […] and secondly, the nature-culture continuum'.[76]

In this context, the notion of the posthuman subject as relational and shifting, yet produced by a particular network of effects not only reverses but counters the 'quantitative multiplications' to which the 'creative city' strives for in its quest for commodifiable public space. Rather than entrepreneurial 'stakeholders' Braidotti's concept of the subject contains revolutionary potential in enabling 'affirmative self-realisation'.[77] Further, her 'nature-culture continuum' brings ecological implications to bear on conceptions of public space that commodify 'nature' – representing it as 'mute', passive and available for human contemplation.

[71] Gielen, pp. 285–86.
[72] Braidotti, 'Affirming the Affirmative: On Nomadic Affectivity'.
[73] Braidotti, 'Writing as a Nomadic Subject', p. 173.
[74] As Deborah Withers argues, it holds the potential for more 'sustainable and mutually affirmative relations between the inhabitants of the earth'. Withers.
[75] Rosi Braidotti, 'A Theoretical Framework for the Critical Posthumanities', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 36.6 (2019), 31–61 (p. 31) <https://doi.org/10.1177/0263276418771486>.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Braidotti, 'Writing as a Nomadic Subject', p. 173. This argument also forms part of a discussion in relation to the work of feminist collective 'taking place' in Hoskyns and Stratford.

Plate T. *Reported Evidence of Public Threat*



Fig. 102. *Plate T. Reported Evidence of Public Threat.* From Helen Stratford and Lawrence Bradby *The Day of the Duck* 2018.

Speculation on the Muscovy ducks' origins in the city alongside their undulating over and under population, is inextricably bound up with their human counterparts. Whether they arrived with the monks in the abbey, as one person told me, or escaped from a pen along the riverside. Whether their adoption of this particular public space as 'habitat' was initially supported by city council-led initiatives or subject to termination by further council actions, duck and human lives have developed in a symbiotic relationship.[78]

Simultaneously, the space they occupy is subject to visions of 'landscape' for human contemplation and leisure use. In these commodified visions of 'nature' the ducks feature as managed wildlife, a paradoxical tourist attraction whose bodily excretions and 'out of place matter' situate them within a constant struggle with 'culture,' in their hindrance of the reception of this idealised environment.[79]

[78] I was told by the local historian that in the 70s the Muscovy ducks' arrival coincided with the construction of the pedestrian footpath along the river. During A Day with a Duck I also tracked remnants of council signs, indicating specially designated feeding areas. In contrast, I learned of alleged council-led culling practices, including letters with instructions to report duck harbouring and the implementation of 'egg oiling', alongside the fine notice that appeared during the project. In this situation, the ducks' interaction with humans through direct contact and even policy enactment has created a specific topology of public space which constantly shifted in relation to whom I spoke and when.

[79] Recent signs have been installed by the duck area entitled 'A Healthy Duck is a Happy Duck' with instructions for limiting feeding of ducks. The images on the signs contain no Muscovy ducks.

For Karen Barad, 'The belief that nature is mute and immutable […] is a reinscription of the nature/culture dualism that feminists have actively contested.'[80] In relation to nature, culture and the non-human, in her study of 'Abandoned Architectures', feminist architect Karin Reisinger similarly argues for an active repositioning of 'nature'.[81] Reisinger's queer and ecological analysis of the incremental reclamation by wild animals of institutional buildings, situated within preservation and post-industrial sites, argues that 'human-made architectures' are 'radically altered by non-human uses and adaptations'.[82] For Reisinger, while conventional architectural boundaries are built to keep unwanted incursions of weather and wildlife out, through these reclamations 'nature' alters 'architecture' into many 'architectures' for humans and non-humans together.[83]

In *A Day with A Duck* the incremental reclamation of public space by large waterfowl, while welcomed by some is heavily resisted by others. But the specific nature of whether the Muscovy ducks should be permitted to reside in the city of Ely is not the main issue at stake here. For *A Day with a Duck*, it is rather what their presence does to public spaces, both in their current form and in relation to future visions. The ducks' disregard and, as one resident put it, 'disdain' for humans, brings into focus a different city. Reisinger observes how Haraway uses the notion of 'naturecultural assemblages' to critique Western accounts and binaries of nature/culture, human/non-human landscape.[84] For Haraway, in place of universalism and relativism, 'subjects, objects, kinds, races, species, genres, and genders are the products of their relating'.[85] In this context, landscape is not 'natural' or 'wild' but rather a marking of that relating.

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[80] For Barad, 'nature is neither a passive surface awaiting the mark of culture nor the end product of cultural performances.' Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter', p. 827.

[81] Karin Reisinger, 'Abandoned Architectures: Some Dirty Narratives', in *Architecture and Feminisms: Ecologies, Economies, Technologies*, ed. by Hélène Frichot, Catharina Gabrielsson, and Helen Runting, Critiques : Critical Studies in Architectural Humanities, volume 13 (London ; New York: Routledge, 2018), pp. 202–15.

[82] Reisinger, p. 205.

[83] For Reisinger, 'nature reclaims architecture and makes it complex and diverse architectures: architectures for humans and at the same time for non-humans'. Ibid., p. 206.

[84] Ibid., p. 202. See also Donna Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*, Experimental Futures: Technological Lives, Scientific Arts, Anthropological Voices (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016).

[85] Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto*, p. 7. *The Companion Species Manifesto* is a methodological critique of biological and cultural determinism and the positioning of bodies, both human and non-human, that their reductive categories imply. For Haraway, both 'are instances of misplaced concreteness—i.e., the mistake of, first, taking provisional and local category abstractions like "nature" and "culture" for the world and, second, mistaking potent consequences to be pre-existing foundations'. Ibid., p.6

The ducks' expansive occupation of public space in Ely, extending into its city environs, provides the perfect opportunity to rethink non-human relations to our humanly populated environments. It is the ability of 'nature', its often successful 'struggle' to thrive and constantly threaten to take over that provokes endless human management and maintenance on the riverside.[86] Within these tensions, or rather as feminist ecologist Susan Carson terms 'the balance of nature', in which 'Man' is part of a 'fluid, ever shifting […] state of adjustment', there are contradictions and seemingly conflicting positions.[87] *Live Duck Shoot!* picks up on these tensions and conflicts to offer a heightened situation in which public space is re-performed and reclassified as a battleground. In this battleground the ducks as moving targets are humorously represented as a leisure pursuit for human actors in a managed natural environment.[88] It is these struggles between nature/culture and human/non-human that resonate through *Live Duck Shoot!* which hold relevance and connection between how public spaces are performed, pointing towards wider ecological and social implications beyond.

The ongoing constitution of public space, beings and nature found in Braidotti, Haraway and Massey is also echoed in Pinder's critique of utopian visions. According to Pinder, the 'purist' utopian visions were in fact marked by 'never-ending struggles'; never fully able to realise their totality.[89] In fact, as discussed earlier in this chapter, for Gielen and Massey, this constant struggle of dominant visions to assert authority and control, marks the specific character of public space where democratic possibilities lie. Further, for Gielen et al., if artistic interventions are to participate in the 'reconstitution of that public sphere', they must take part in this 'struggle' between 'economic, social and political forces' in order to 'open up to new, divergent ideas and actions'.[90]

The interventions in *A Day with a Duck* do not focus on resolving the tensions that constitute public space in a potential solution. Instead, by building on the 'touch of anarchy' created by the ducks they locate themselves at points of contestations or sites of struggle in order to

[86] This was eventually translated into a mown lawn, benches and a paved area, which, as discussed in chapter one, are the 'props' of humanly occupied public space.
[87] Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, Penguin Classics, Reprinted (London: Penguin, 2000), p. 215, cited in Reisinger, p. 203.
[88] The examination of humour as participatory method is developed in the second part of this section.
[89] Pinder, *Visions of the City*, p. 248. In this, Pinder also refers to Lefebvre's claims to the impossibility of 'existing social relations being adhered to indefinitely'. Henri Lefebvre, The Survival of Capitalism, trans. by Frank Bryant (London: Allison and Busby, 1976), p. 36, quoted in Pinder, p.246.
[90] Bax, Gielen, and Ieven, p. 16.

articulate and take part in these 'assemblages'. Here, like the conflicting nature of different attitudes towards the city, expressed through opinions on the future of the ducks, the practice focuses on making these different versions of reality and their social implications visible. Yet, beyond making visible, there emerges a troubling of binaries: exploring how the anarchic presence of the ducks expands the architecture of public space between human/non-human, nature/culture, productive/leisure, wild/managed. An expanding, which, positions human and non-humans as 'products of their relating'.[91]

Contingent Spatiotemporalities – Performativity and the Non-human

Through making visible the inherent performativity of public space, *A Day with A Duck* situates itself at a site of productive struggle. Yet, alongside reconceptualising and representing public space as performative assemblage, central to the research methodology developed through *A Day with a Duck* is an exploration into how public space might be practiced as an assemblage. In the facilitation of spaces for others to experience, take part in and generate spaces through the practice, *A Day with a Duck* differs from the previous case studies discussed in this thesis.

Plate M. *Financial Disincentives Applied to Cross-Species Bread-Based Interaction*

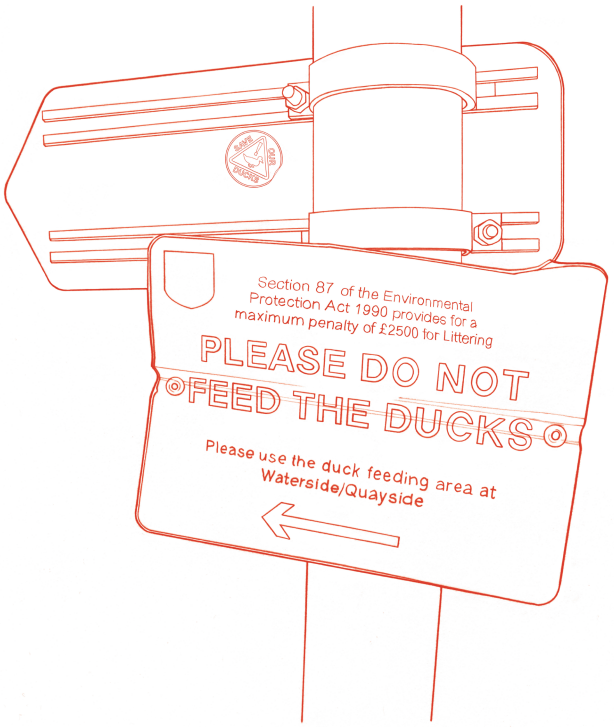


Fig. 103. *Financial Disincentives Applied to Cross-Species Bread-Based Interaction.* From Helen Stratford and Lawrence Bradby *The Day of the Duck 2018.*

This is most evident in *Live Duck Shoot!* Here, a participatory 'situation' or 'setting' was generated between the physical infrastructure (the grassed area, the sign, the super 8 cameras) the existing

[91] Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto*, p. 7. Sections of this page were developed in Helen Stratford, *Alterlives*, 2017.

social infrastructure (the local film group, local artists, residents, people passing) and the ducks, that formed a meeting point of both. Located at the intersection of several practiced realities, this situation generated a multi-layered and deeply contested spatial environment in order to amplify the intensity of feelings in relation to this particular public space.

The multi-layered constitution of space is a key aspect of Barad's posthumanist approach to performativity.[92] Her approach extends performativity theories, including those of Butler and Foucault, beyond the realm of the human/social. For Barad, her 'materialist, naturalist, and posthumanist elaboration' of performativity 'allows matter its due as an active participant in the world's becoming, in its ongoing "intraactivity"'.[93] Moreover, her refocusing of space into what she calls 'spacetimematter', extends Massey's vitalism, Braidotti's nomadism and Haraway's contingent beings to offer a greater focus on the agency of the non-human in relation to performativity and space. For Barad,

> On an agential realist account, discursive practices are not human-based activities but rather specific material (re)configurings of the world through which local determinations of boundaries, properties, and meanings are differentially enacted. And matter is not a fixed essence; rather, matter is substance in its intra-active becoming—not a thing but a doing, a congealing of agency. And performativity is not understood as iterative citationality (Butler) but rather iterative intra-activity.[94]

Ultimately in Barad's approach to performativity '"Humans" are neither pure cause nor pure effect but part of the world in its open-ended becoming'.[95] Further, 'all bodies, not merely "human" bodies, come to matter through the world's iterative intra-activity—its performativity.'[96]

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[92] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, p. 224. For Barad, 'spacetime' is 'a dynamic and changing topology'. Ibid., p. 448. Here, Barad follows Lefebvre and Soja in offering a critique of the Euclidean 'container' model of space, commenting how a 'paradigm shift occurred with Lefebvre's insistence that space is not a given, but rather that space and society are mutually constituted and that space is an agent of change'. Ibid., p. 224

[93] Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter', p. 803. In her development of a posthumanist notion of performativity, Barad critiques how 'performativity has become a ubiquitous term in literary studies, theater studies, and the nascent interdisciplinary area of performance studies, prompting the question as to whether all performances are performative'. In contrast, Barad's notion of performativity incorporates 'material and discursive, social and scientific, human and nonhuman, and natural and cultural factors'. Ibid., pp. 807-8.

[94] Ibid., p. 828.

[95] Ibid., p. 821.

[96] Ibid., p. 823.

In *A Day with a Duck* Barad's 'shifting entanglement of relations'[97] forms the basis of a critical practice research methodology. On this basis, the drawings attempt to make visible public space as performed and produced by many overlapping human and non-human factors, history, social, cultural, political and economic with ecological implications. They present an ongoing series of active practices or Baradian 'intra-actions' where agency is not attributed to individual objects or bodies, but develops via enacted intra-relationships.[98] However, moving beyond representation into practicing, in *A Day with a Duck* the focus on 'practices/ doings/ actions'[99] forms the methodological foundation of the curation of live art events including *Live Duck Shoot!*

Live Duck Shoot! creates a setting which is at once performed and produced by many human and non-human bodies together. By humans, actively taking part and observing; by the ducks, who are the target of the action, and by the place, incorporating the proximity to the river, the recently installed fine notice sign, the position in the masterplan and in the press media etc. Together, humans and non-humans generate the specificity of this particular place, creating an 'infrastructure', 'setting' or 'situation' that supports and invites a particular way of performing. Here, this particular public space is repracticed as an assemblage of human and non-human actors, including aspects 'beyond' human control or agency, opening up questions around certain assumptions regarding its human made architectures, architectural boundaries and how its subjects are conventionally perceived. In this way, the spatial infrastructure is both recognised (theorised and represented) but also mobilised (practiced and experienced) as a constellation of forces that are productive, or rather 'accountable' in their 'congealing' of a particular set of relations and agency, of public space, through their incorporation into the event itself.[100]

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[97] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, p. 224.

[98] For Barad 'agency is not something possessed by humans, or non-humans for that matter. It is an enactment. And it enlists, if you will, "non-humans" as well as "humans"'. Rick Dolphijn and Iris van der Tuin, 'Interview with Karen Barad', in *New Materialism: Interviews & Cartographies*, New Metaphysics, 1. ed (Ann Arbor, [Mich.]: Open Humanities Press, 2012), pp. 48–70 (p. 55).

[99] Crucially, for Barad, 'the move toward performative alternatives to representationalism shifts the focus from questions of correspondence between descriptions and reality (e.g., do they mirror nature or culture?) to matters of practices/doings/actions'. Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter', p. 802. It is this focus on effects; on 'practices/doings/actions', that for Barad questions a 'static relationality' with 'the enactment of boundaries', and while these boundaries are present, the focus and mobilisation through their enactment, their doing, 'always entails constitutive exclusions and therefore requisite questions of accountability'. Ibid., p. 803.

[100] Ibid., p. 828.

Diffractive Methodologies as Constructed Situations

A Day with a Duck makes visible 'intra-actions' of people, place and practices that together combine or 'congeal' to produce specific materialities, which reinforce certain value systems. In *Live Duck Shoot!* and the practice research of the wider project, the performativity of the situations; their intra-action with the many forces of public space, do not simply focus on human agency but on the whole relationship of these forces as 'a congealing of agency'.[101] In the intra-actions of ducks, people, practices and place, the performativity of public space is mobilised through the practice research that works with this network of forces.

In the wider project, enactions of these forces include, but are not exclusive to: the signs indicating a hierarchy of legitimate actions; the portrayal of the ducks in the local press media; the endless actions of council workers attempting to efface the 'out of place matter' left behind by the ducks in order to produce the 'delightful riverside setting'; the alleged unprotected nature of the ducks due to their non-native status; the traditions of hunting and shooting in the UK and the symbiotic relationship of humans and ducks, made ever present in the endless tales of their origins but also the practice of feeding the ducks and filming the process for posterity. Here, the collision of the duck's visceral presence with the structures of public spaces of the city reveals and challenges them. It offers what Barad might call a 'diffractive' mechanism that interrupts the intra-action of people, place, and practice.[102]

In her study of diffractive methodologies in climate education, environmentalist Blanche Verlie argues that a diffractive methodology is 'dynamic, non-linear, transdisciplinary, multi-modal, disruptive, unchartered, transcorporeal, interwoven, and one that troubles established categories'.[103] For Verlie, 'while we might start with intentions and directions, attentions to climate diffractions allows us to be open to how the world might bump into, disrupt,

[101] Ibid.
[102] See Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*. For Barad, reflection is not enough, diffraction is needed. In her theories she highlights and develops Haraway's statement in relation to diffraction, in which 'Diffraction does not produce "the same" displaced, as reflection and refraction do. Diffraction is a mapping of interference, not of replication, reflection, or reproduction'. For Haraway, 'a diffraction pattern does not map where differences appear, but rather maps where the effects of differences appear.' Donna Haraway, 'The Promises of Monsters: A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others', in *Cultural Studies*, ed. by Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula A Treichler (New York: Routledge, 1992), pp. 295–336 (p. 300) <http://site.ebrary.com/id/10656191> [accessed 30 March 2021].
[103] Blanche Verlie, 'From Action to Intra-Action? Agency, Identity and "Goals" in a Relational Approach to Climate Change Education', *Environmental Education Research*, 26.9–10 (2020), 1266–80 (p. 1273) <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504622.2018.1497147>.

reinforce, invert and/or displace our desired trajectories and inclinations.'[104] In *A Day with a Duck*, diffractions, perhaps most visible in the ducks themselves, evidence how the world might block or resist certain configurations of nature and public space. For Verlie, diffractions contain the potential to generate 'novel, new, innovative, different forms of […] action and actors'.[105] In this case, they contain the potential to generate different relations of public space.

This generative aspect of diffractive methodologies in relation to socially engaged practice is examined by arts practice researcher Anna Hickey-Moody. For Hickey-Moody, 'Through a diffractive lens, the materials used to make art are seen as a part of the distributed assemblage of "the artist," or author of a work.'[106] In this context, according to Hickey-Moody, 'diffraction is the relationship between materials, people and ideas. Materials have agency, they engage ideas in certain ways, and they "diffract" human agency in unexpected ways.'[107] And crucially, the artist makes 'cuts' in 'existing material and conceptual assemblages',[108] that 'change relationships between people and build more than human relationships'.[109]

Live Duck Shoot! and the other situations in *A Day with a Duck* make 'cuts' which generate different ways of knowing. In these situations, the infrastructure of public space is thrown into question, but at the same time they create, if only for a moment, or maybe only in the minds of participants, a new reality that problematises the existing. In *A Day with a Duck* this 'new reality' is negotiated between participants, practices and place; embracing both human and non-human actors. Here, public space is inherently performative. It is repracticed as ongoing series of practices and prejudices performed at the level of everyday interactions, the very performance of which opens up other possibilities. The embodied live actions, intra-actions and conversations mobilised by the practice, engender particular procedures and

[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Anna Catherine Hickey-Moody, 'New Materialism, Ethnography, and Socially Engaged Practice: Space-Time Folds and the Agency of Matter', Qualitative Inquiry, 26.7 (2020), 724–32 (p. 725) <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800418810728>.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Ibid., p. 729.
[109] Ibid., p. 731. Further, Hickey-Moody argues that 'agential realism', 'is a way of understanding the politics, ethics and agencies of any act of observation, and any kind of knowledge practice'. Ibid., p. 730.

methods or 'apparatus'; particular ways through which the 'phenomena' of public space is both understood but also produced differently.[110]

So far, this section has examined how in *A Day with A Duck* the presence of the Muscovy ducks offered a vehicle by which to generate 'performative-places' – entangled situations that linked conventional conceptions of public space to wider ecological concerns. The second part of this section focuses specifically on the performative role of the researcher-practitioner within these processes, in order to examine what is at stake in this way of researching for participatory practices in art, architecture, and academic research.

2.2 Negotiated Realities – Participatory Processes of Public Space

Question(s) of Participation



Fig. 104. Ely Masterplan Document cover. 'Ely Masterplan a Framework for the Future Development of the City of Ely' (East Cambridgeshire District Council, 2010), cover <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/FINAL%20Ely%20Masterplan.pdf> [accessed 26 March 2021].

The social production of public space has become a key tenet of contemporary participatory practices in architecture that strive to counter non-democratic practices of urban design.[111] Within architecture, as discourse and practice, this notion is preceded by a long history of participatory practices, with historians including Peter Blundell Jones citing the work of architects Aldo van Eyck, Yona Friedman, Giancarlo de Carlo Lucian Kroll, Peter Hubner and Walter Segal, among others as key practitioners in this field.[112] Many of these examples focus on enabling clients or 'the public' to participate in brief making and

[110] For Barad, 'phenomena' are particular materialized/materializing relations. She argues: 'A phenomenon is a specific intra-action of an "object"; and the "measuring agencies"; the object and the measuring agencies emerge from, rather than precede, the intra-action that produces them.' They are both the thing and the way it is produced – its apparatus of measurement. Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, p. 128.
[111] See Hoskyns; *The Social (Re)Production of Architecture: Politics, Values and Actions in Contemporary Practice*, ed. by Doina Petrescu and Kim Trogal (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017).
[112] Doina Petrescu, 'Losing Control, Keeping Desire', in *Architecture and Participation*, ed. by Peter Blundell-Jones, Doina Petrescu, and Jeremy Till, Digit. print (London: Taylor & Francis, 2009), pp. 43–63.

construction of buildings, applying what in contemporary terms have been reframed as 'co-design' and 'co-production', indicating different levels of participation than that supported by conventional practice. As Doina Petrescu and Kim Trogal comment in *The Social (Re) Production of Architecture*, these participatory practices take steps towards democratic practice through challenging the authority of the architect as master or lead builder/planner. However, Petrescu and Trogal argue that for many the conventional 'service-led' or 'client-oriented' hierarchical and patriarchal structures prevail. Rather than exploring how places and the ways they are produced might be researched or unpacked through participatory practices that question these structures, these practices continue to focus on a solution or end product as their goal.[113]

Ultimately, for Petrescu and Trogal 'contemporary conditions demand that we go beyond participatory or "socially engaged" approaches to work with more radical forms of politics and values'.[114] In relation to this critique, more radical notions of participation, of 'doing architecture otherwise' are evolving. *The Social (Re) production of Architecture* develops critical positions begun in publications such as *Architecture and Participation* by Blundell Jones, Petrescu and Jeremy Till; *Did Someone Say Participate?* by Markus Miessen and Shumon Basar and *Spatial Agency: Other Ways Of Doing Architecture* by Nishat Awan, Tatjana Schneider and Till, to name a few.[115] The theories and practices reviewed in these publications explore modes of participation that from the outset question what participation itself might be. In terms of design and production of relations and interactions, they explore how practices might 'act *with* others (rather than on their behalf) and empower them to become agents themselves, to take collective responsibility in the process of (re)production'.[116]

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[113] Petrescu and Trogal, p. 11. For a summary of the history of participation within planning, architecture practice and its interconnections with participatory and socially engaged modes of working in art practice see also Adam C. Park, 'Performing as Mapping: An Examination of the Role of Site-Specific Performance Practice as a Methodology to Map and/or Re-Imagine Sites of Urban Regeneration' (unpublished phd, University of Sheffield, 2014) <https://etheses.whiterose.ac.uk/7718/> [accessed 30 March 2021].

[114] Petrescu and Trogal, p. 93.

[115] See Nishat Awan, Tatjana Schneider, and Jeremy Till, *Spatial Agency: Other Ways of Doing Architecture* (Abingdon, Oxon [England] ; New York, NY: Routledge, 2011); Petrescu, 'Losing Control, Keeping Desire'; *Did Someone Say Participate? An Atlas of Spatial Practice*, ed. by Markus Miessen and Shumon Basar (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2006).

[116] Petrescu and Trogal, p. 11.

A Day with A Duck deploys methods highlighted in the previous chapters, including making everyday and overlooked actions visible by recasting them as performances that produce public space and performance-based actions. Yet, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, in *A Day with a Duck* these methods focus on the development of situations that involve the active participation of others – 'performative-places' whose form and content evolve and feed back into the practice research as it develops. In this sense, *A Day with A Duck* explores ways in which the research process itself might be performative – generating new spaces through which the specific social, political, material and cultural context might be critically and politically rethought and repracticed. Within this transformative performativity it attempts to implement a model of participation that embodies a constantly reflective and critical position in order to counter hierarchical structures manifest most clearly in the position of the individualistic artist or the expert researcher.

Within socially engaged art practice, questions surrounding the idea of individualistic artist versus the instrumentalisation of participatory practices has formed the basis of lengthy and ongoing discussions.[117] While a comprehensive account of these debates is beyond the scope of this thesis, highlighting one key aspect raised by critics is useful for constructing and reflecting on the performative position of the researcher-practitioner.[118] In their critique of the well-quoted discussions between art critic Claire Bishop and artist Grant Kester, in relation to Nicholas Bourriaud's theorisation of 'Relational Aesthetics,' art writers David Bell and Kim Charnley argue that Bishop and Kester effectively pitch avant-garde

[117] Within both architecture and art practice, these critiques among others have identified the many layers which motivate participatory practices. In this context, artists, critics and academics, including Ash Amin, Loretta Lees Lisa Mckenzie, Claire Melhuish, Malcolm Miles and Stephen Prichard, among others, have been vocal in highlighting the role of the artist in gentrification processes, instrumentalisation or other methods by which the status quo is reinforced or through which people are diverted from political action. See Ash Amin, Doreen Massey, and Nigel J. Thrift, *Cities for the Many Not the Few* (Bristol: Policy Press, 2000); Loretta Lees and Clare Melhuish, 'Arts-Led Regeneration in the UK: The Rhetoric and the Evidence on Urban Social Inclusion', *European Urban and Regional Studies*, 22.3 (2015), 242–60 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0969776412467474>; Lisa Mckenzie, *Getting by: Estates, Class and Culture in Austerity Britain* (Bristol Chicago: Policy Press, 2015); Miles; Steven Pritchard, 'COLOURING IN CULTURE', *COLOURING IN CULTURE* <https://colouringinculture.org/> [accessed 30 March 2021]. This aspect of the role of the artist in specific relation to public space will be discussed later in this chapter.

[118] In *Artificial Hells* Bishop specifically refers to the simplification of Sherry Arnstein's 1969 'A Ladder of Citizen Participation' into 'a gauge for measuring the efficacy of artistic practice', through what Bishop describes as 'progressively more virtuous political forms', at the expense of the critical positionality of the artist in terms of a challenging and confrontational approach. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, p. 279. Grant Kester counters this approach by highlighting how critical projects for Bishop, focus on the aesthetic impulse at the expense of the ethical; finding the political in the dialogic processes between artist and participants. Kester.

negation against an ethics of participation.[119] As a way out of this impasse, Bell suggests 'it would be productive if future work in the field were to explore how collaborative art can simultaneously negate the status quo and affirm an alternative, whilst paying closer attention to the power relations between artists and their collaborators'.[120] In terms of the particular places created through these relations, central to this argument is the role that the artist, architect or researcher-practitioner takes up in relation to participants.

In relation to participatory practice in architecture, architect Markus Miessen has been highly critical of consensual models of participation. Adopting a position that addresses the call by Petrescu and Trogal to 'go beyond conventional participatory or "socially engaged" approaches',[121] Miessen proposes that the architect adopt the position of 'uninvited irritant'.[122] Here, the architect operates within a mandate to 'rethink the frameworks of production that allow space to operate, and to devise different types of engagement for audiences'.[123] In relation to Bell's call for artists to pay closer attention to power relations, Miessen stresses that this practice must be 'accountable'.[124] For Miessen, the accountability of the critical practitioner resides in a responsibility to 'question the status quo or the practices that are producing […] certainties and economic dead ends', in order to question 'how those can be altered towards a more productive and open-ended reality'.[125]

In 'Performing The Common City', Pascal Gielen directly relates these arguments to the role of art and the artist in public space in the Western city. For him, this role has moved from

[119] See David M. Bell, 'The Politics of Participatory Art', *Political Studies Review*, 15.1 (2017), 73–83 <https://doi.org/10.1111/1478-9302.12089>; Kim Charnley, 'Dissensus and the Politics of Collaborative Practice', *Art & the Public Sphere*, 1.1 (2011), 37–53. See also Claire Bishop, 'The Social Turn: Collaboration and Its Discontents', *Artforum International* <https://www.artforum.com/print/200602/the-social-turn-collaboration-and-its-discontents-10274> [accessed 30 March 2021].
[120] Bell, p. 81.
[121] Petrescu and Trogal, p. 11.
[122] Markus Miessen, *The Nightmare of Participation: Crossbench Praxis as a Mode of Criticality* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2010).
[123] Markus Miessen, *Crossbenching: Toward Participation as Critical Spatial Practice* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2016), p. 45. See also Miessen, *The Violence of Participation*.
[124] Ibid., p. 45.
[125] Ibid., p. 61.

'monumental',[126] at the turn of the twentieth century, through to 'situational', in the 50s and 60s, by which the monumental city's authority is undermined by its transformation into a 'situational event'.[127] According to Gielen, these versions of the city are followed by the contemporary 'creative city', which, as discussed earlier in this chapter, is born out of the 'cultural capital' of the 80s and 90s.[128]

Gielen's 'situational city' is predicated on the 'constructed situations' of the Situationist International. As discussed in chapter two, for this artist group the construction of situations took place through a plethora of psychogeographic methods. These, as cultural theorist and psychogeographer Tina Richardson comments, included 'do-it-yourself (DIY) maps', 'architectural designs' and 'urban walking practices' that reperform the city as event or process [Fig. 105].[129] Similarly, with the masterplan process as a background, *A Day with a Duck* deploys alternative maps, walks and events that build on the ducks' irreverent disruption of daily routines to offer a *détournement* of this particular public space. In this context, through their challenging of 'the appearance of the everyday lived experience',[130] the Muscovy ducks become an exemplar 'constructed situation'. Their presence intervenes in material space to bring about what Richardson describes as 'resistance to the overriding forms that appears as the sign of the capital's dominance',[131] which, in Ely, are expressed through notions of clean, sanitized, controlled and commodified public space. Further, these

[126] Gielen, p. 281. According to Gielen, the monumental city resulted from a 'tendency towards rational calculation on the level of the nation-state from the first half of the twentieth century', reflecting 'Haussman's ideal image'. Ibid. He argues that 'The art found here is preferably a national monument, reminding the city of the grand momentum in which the nation and its people are rooted'. Ibid., p. 282. For Gielen, the only means by which artists might disrupt this state control of public space is through parades, funfairs or carnival which ultimately are 'ritual interruptions' that 'serve mainly as social vents (or sublimations) to prevent truly violent eruptions'. Ibid.
[127] Ibid., p. 283
[128] Ibid., p. 284.
[129] Tina Richardson, 'Creating a Situation in the City: Embodied Spaces and the Act of Crossing Boundaries', in *The Routledge Companion to Urban Media and Communication*, ed. by Zlatan Krajina and Deborah Stevenson (London: Routledge, 2019), pp. 405–15 (p. 405) <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315211633-43>. Urban walking practices are also found in many contemporary artists' practices: see Francesco Careri, *Walkscapes: Walking as an Aesthetic Practice*, Land & scape series, 1, 6th print run (Barcelona: Gili, 2009); David Pinder, 'Arts of Urban Exploration', *Cultural Geographies*, 12.4 (2005), 383–411 <https://doi.org/10.1191/1474474005eu347oa>; Richardson, *Walking Inside Out*. See also 'Walking Artists Network', *Walking Artists Network* <https://www.walkingartistsnetwork.org/> [accessed 30 March 2021]. In relation to women artists who use walking in their practice see Qualmann and Sharrocks.
[130] Richardson, 'Creating a Situation in the City: Embodied Spaces and the Act of Crossing Boundaries', p. 405.
[131] Ibid.

notions support and go beyond the idea of the 'wild', which, as discussed earlier in this chapter, ask more fundamental ecological questions about how we relate to nature in the city.

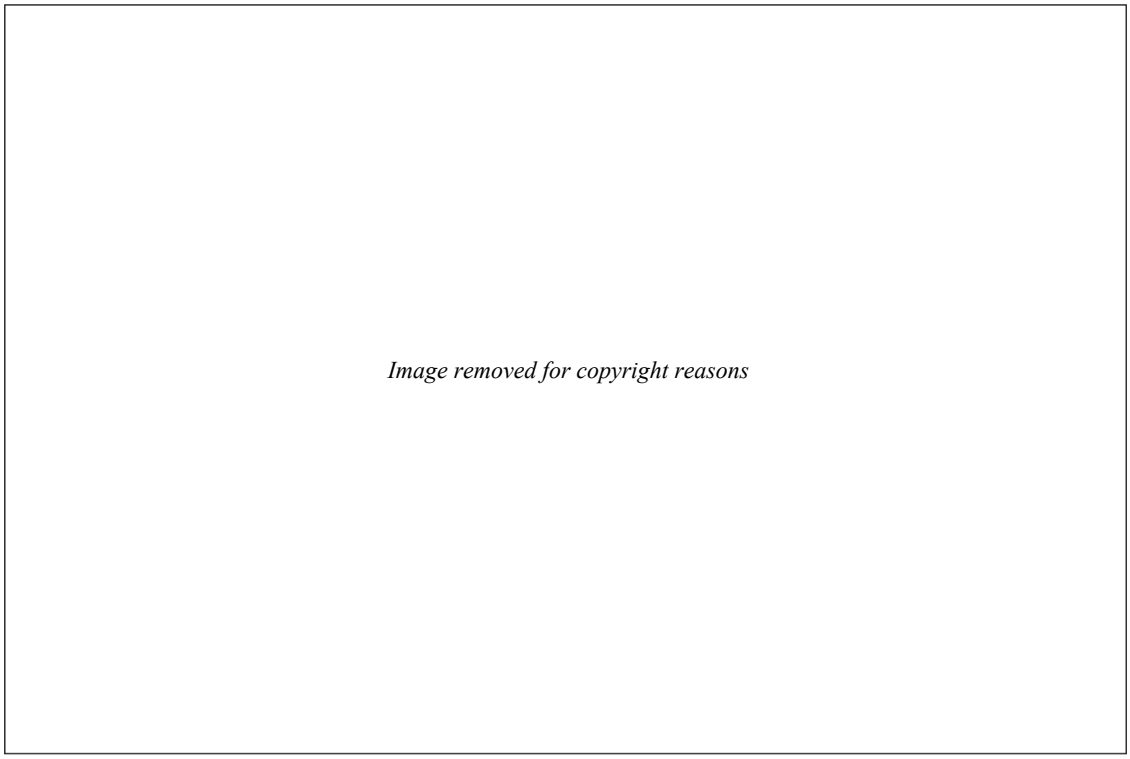


Fig. 105. Guy Debord. *The Naked City* 1957. From David Pinder *Visions of the City* 2005.

In line with this wider ecological focus, in *A Day with a Duck* the focus shifts from, what some have critiqued in relation to the work of the SI as, an individualistic and exclusive psychogeographer's account to a collective one.[132] As Gielen argues, while resisting the 'bourgeois institutions' that conventionally supported them, the artists in the 'situational city' still relied on these institutions as a backdrop or foil that maintained the conventional 'hyper-individualistic' position of the artist.[133] Further, according to Francis Stracey, the appreciation of the nuanced and differentiated nature of alienation was something only recognised late in the existence of the SI.[134] In this context, while similar to the constructed

[132] See Morag Rose. As discussed in chapter two. In *For Space*, Massey echoes this critique of the Situationist International by asking whether in their search for 'laddish thrills' some 'situationist capers' were simply 'another form of eroticised colonisation of the city?'. Massey, *For Space*, p. 47.
[133] Gielen, p. 293.
[134] Stracey argues 'A sense of differentiation, as being significant to the struggle against spectacular conditions was somewhat belatedly, acknowledged at the end of the SI's life in 1972, when they declared that: "Everywhere the respect for alienation has been lost. Young people, workers, coloured people, homosexuals, women and children, take it into their heads to want everything that was forbidden them"'. Stracey, p. 121.

'

situations of the SI, the situations in *A Day with a Duck* are less about arbitrarily drifting and wandering through the city than responding to and facilitating collective insights into the nuanced way particular public spaces are performed and produced.

In a feminist approach, the acknowledgement and analysis of these nuances within a broader collective context is critical.[135] While the attention in *A Day with a Duck* rests less on specifically gendered aspects of public space, in analysing and focusing on those very differences by which subjects are produced, it remains deeply situated within a feminist methodological framework. In this context, Gielen argues for a 'common city', which 'calls for "growing up"'.[136] He suggests that 'artists must adopt an attitude in and towards a world that is in continuous transmutation; a world that also asks of them to continuously redefine [and reflect on] their artistic position'.[137] On this basis, he calls for artists to find and produce a collective model outside the state and market, a model that 'balances on tightrope between legality and illegality and therefore cannot operate purely artistically or architecturally but are always forced to also think and act politically'.[138] Ultimately, for Gielen 'within this fluid urban space, artists themselves are the performers *of* a common ground […] a common city that is constantly in the process of becoming'.[139]

Gielen's examples of practices that operate on this tightrope include the protest group Occupy and the architectural studio Recetas Urbanas. In contrast, the situations in *A Day with a Duck* do not follow these examples in terms of overt transgressions of legal structures, but rather locate themselves within the performance of the rules in order to experience their absurdity. Permissions for events were gained and 'illegal' signs were removed before fines could be implemented. Here, as discussed earlier in this chapter, these interventions think and act politically through situating themselves squarely within the site of the struggle of public space. Furthermore, in relation, but also in contrast, to the frictional participatory practice proposed by Miessen, in focusing on the 'irritant' of the duck, of the immigrant, of the

[135] As discussed earlier, for Braidotti 'the posthuman knowing subject has to be understood as a relational embodied and embedded, affective and accountable entity'. Braidotti, 'A Theoretical Framework for the Critical Posthumanities', p. 31.
[136] Gielen, p. 293.
[137] Ibid.
[138] Ibid., p. 295.
[139] Ibid. Gielen's hope for the future is inspired by the 'common city' found, for him, in the likes of the Occupy movement born out of the urban space 'made liquid by human flows from the bottom up and capital flows from the top down'. A space, open to a field of tactics creating 'an autonomous social space that doesn't submit itself to the laws of either government or capital'. Ibid., p. 290.

refugee and of the 'embodied outsider', the practice research does not step outside existing borders but attempts to create situations that work with them. Here, it attempts to work from a position that embodies Braidotti and Haraway's affirmative and relational ethics and ontology. It responds to calls to 'stay with the trouble',[140] in order to generate critically reflexive participatory methods that ground the 'relational' in politically motivated and situated approaches.[141]

The Performative Methodology of the Researcher-Practitioner

Immersive and Serendipitous

During *A Day with A Duck* many different methods were used to solicit participation with people whose lives interacted with the river. Alongside the live events, research was conducted through arranged meeting and conversations, including walks with Muscovy duck experts, visits to local historians and boatyard owners, trips in boats and rambles with Ely Rambling Society. In many ways, these processes resemble ethnographic methods including 'deep hanging out' or 'go-alongs', 'walk-alongs' and 'ride-alongs' in which ethnographers spend many hours with people in order to establish 'a direct relationship with the social actors'.[142]



Fig. 106. I joined David the local Muscovy duck expert on his weekly counts. From *A Day with a Duck* 2012. Photograph Helen Stratford.

In *A Day with a Duck* a key aspect was that these processes embraced both the formal and informal. Connections to people grew through arranged meetings and events but also through

[140] Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble*.

[141] Braidotti argues that 'The politics of location, or situated knowledges, rests on process ontology to posit the primacy of relations over substances'. Braidotti, 'Posthuman, All Too Human', p. 199. See also Rosi Braidotti, 'Nomadic Ethics', *Deleuze Studies*, 7.3 (2013), 342–59 <https://doi.org/10.3366/dls.2013.0116>; Braidotti and Regan.

chance encounters, including word of mouth and informal links. These processes resonate with those of ethnographic methodologies that, for social anthropologist Sarah Pink, 'are either planned or (like many moments in ethnography) serendipitous'.[143] They embrace a methodology that responds to issues arising out of a particular site rather than arriving with a predetermined plan of enquiry.[144]

This open and evolving process was also reflected in *A Day with A Duck's* research focus. Through my encounters the sheer intensity of feelings expressed towards the ducks and the public space they occupied prompted a refocusing of the project towards the river's overlooked position within the city. This informed the content and nature of events, which included the *Live Duck Shoot!* made in collaboration with local amateur film group Cambridge Super 8 who I also met through this informal chain of encounters. In this way, the methods in *A Day with A Duck* generated insight through open-ended modes of participation and engagement, including working collaboratively with other artists, which directed and inflected the form and content of the practice research. Here, as in reflexive ethnographic processes, methods are developed 'as you go along' to 'serve the aims of the research' in contrast to the research serving 'the aims of the method'.[145]

[142] Giampietro Gobo, *Doing Ethnography*, 2nd edition (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2016), p. 5. In parallel to art and architecture participatory practices, academic research practice has undergone critical self-reflection of the traditional researcher role. Ethnography is key in this area. Its focus on understanding 'the socially constructed meanings of people's social worlds and lives by examining them as they act within their natural contexts', introduces qualitative methodologies that build on quantitative research methodologies to offer more experiential ways of researching. Ocejo, p. 3. Ethnography's focus on 'examining society' by observing actions as they are 'performed in concrete settings', has led to methods that involve a close and long-term proximity to those who live within a particular society. In this context, 'participant observation' has developed to include immersive methods that comprise working with people through 'staying in their natural environment […] interacting and participating in their everyday ceremonies and ritual and learning their code […] in order to understand the meaning of their actions'. Gobo, p. 5. In relation to 'go-alongs', 'walk-alongs' and 'ride-alongs', ethnographer Margaret Kusenbach describes how these methods enable researchers 'to observe their informants' spatial practices in situ while accessing their experiences and interpretations at the same time'. Margarethe Kusenbach, 'Street Phenomenology: The Go-along as Ethnographic Research Tool', *Ethnography*, Special Issue: Phenomenology in Ethnography, 4.3 (2003), 455–85 (p. 464).

[143] Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography*, p. 19.

[144] Sociologist Richard E. Ocejo describes how 'in many cases ethnographers do not know what they are going to study before they enter a field site. But by embedding themselves in a place and among a group and forming relationships with people, fieldworkers give themselves the opportunity to learn new phenomena and expand existing knowledge'. Ocejo, p. 3.

[145] Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography*, p. 5.

The fluidity of this type of research practice, which develops in practice, and its relationship to ethnographic processes is useful for reflecting on how these research methodologies question conventional models of knowledge within academic research. This emerging methodology challenges and critiques the 'objectivity' model of research that, as discussed earlier in this and previous chapters, for many feminist thinkers, forms the problematic backbone of Western epistemology.[146] In embracing the informal and the serendipitous, these methods recognise and value 'situated' and 'partial knowledges'.[147] Moreover, these knowledges question what participation itself might be. Engaging in participation with a set of predetermined methods can, as Miessen argues, only ever reinforce and bolster the 'status quo'.[148] Conversely, methods that shift according to the issues at hand, contain greater potential to foster creative conditions that are site responsive and context informed.

Nevertheless, in *A Day with a Duck*, while the initial processes of meeting people embraced the informal and serendipitous, the adoption of somewhat conventional interview methods inevitably prioritised some connections over others. To widen the reach of the research, methods were developed that drew on performance and art practice; using provocation and humour to engage people in different ways. While broadening the scope of participation, in terms of numbers and range of people, these methods started to shift from observational to generative; recognising and using the performative role of the researcher to open up further questions and dialogues with others.

[146] Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography*. See also Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning.*
[147] Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium.FemaleMan_Meets_OncoMouse*.
[148] Miessen, *Crossbenching*, p. 61. Here, methods based on prior knowledge of an objectified 'site', 'community' or 'public' perpetuate the unreflective position of the 'researcher' 'artist' or 'architect', parachuted in to study the 'researched' or 'participants'.



Fig. 107. The duck survey props matched the colouring of the Muscovy ducks. From *A Day with a Duck* 2012. Photograph Helen Stratford.

At the very start of *A Day with a Duck*, the guise of the 'survey' offered an 'official', if fictional, reason to occupy public space. As discussed in chapter two, in performance and live art parodic identities are frequently adopted to critique those positions they conventionally support. An example of a practice located between art, architecture and performance that serves to undermine the hierarchy of objectification supported by these ways of surveying is *A Plan with a Goat* by artist and architect Polonca Lovšin [Fig. 108].[149]

A Plan with a Goat involves Lovšin following a goat through an overgrown construction site earmarked for regeneration in the city of Ljubljana, Slovenia, making notes of its movements to develop a plan for its spatial organisation. Lovšin describes how '"without a plan," *A Plan with a Goat* was a provocation of the rationality of planning; an experiment which questions the role of the architect and the possibilities of an improvised creation of space'.[150] Further, in considering urban spatial organisation through non-human experience, Lovšin describes how her intention was 'an imaginary rehabilitation of the relationship between humans and domesticated animals in an urban environment'.[151]

[149] Also see the work of artists Reverend Billy Talen and Richard Dedomenici who adopt positons of authority for comedic and critical effect. Jana Kasperkevic, 'The Church of Stop Shopping Doesn't Pull Punches on Its Return to New York', *The Guardian*, 2015 <http://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/nov/27/reverend-billy-church-of-stop-shopping-black-friday> [accessed 17 March 2021]; 'Reverend Billy and the Stop Shopping Choir | Reverend Billy and the Stop Shopping Choir' <https://revbilly.com/> [accessed 17 March 2021]; Tim Atack and Rachel Lois Clapham, 'British Artist Richard DeDomenici Interviewed by Tim Atack and Rachel Lois Clapham on the 26th September 2007 in the Offices of Live Art UK', *Tumblr*, 2007 <https://dedomenici.com/2007interview> [accessed 17 March 2021].

[150] Polonca Lovšin, 'A Plan with a Goat, 2010 : Polonca Lovšin' <http://www.lovsin.org/eng/on-site-project/a-day-with-a-goat/> [accessed 30 March 2021]. This was the starting point for what was to become the community garden project Beyond a Construction Site (2010–ongoing), set up by Lovšin together with co-founders of Kud Obrat association (Stefan Doepner, Urška Jurman, Apolonija Šušteršič and Polonca Lovšin) Kud Obrat, 'Kud Obrat » Beyond a Construction Site' <http://www.obrat.org/onkraj-gradbisca-beyond-construction-site> [accessed 30 March 2021].

[151] Lovšin.

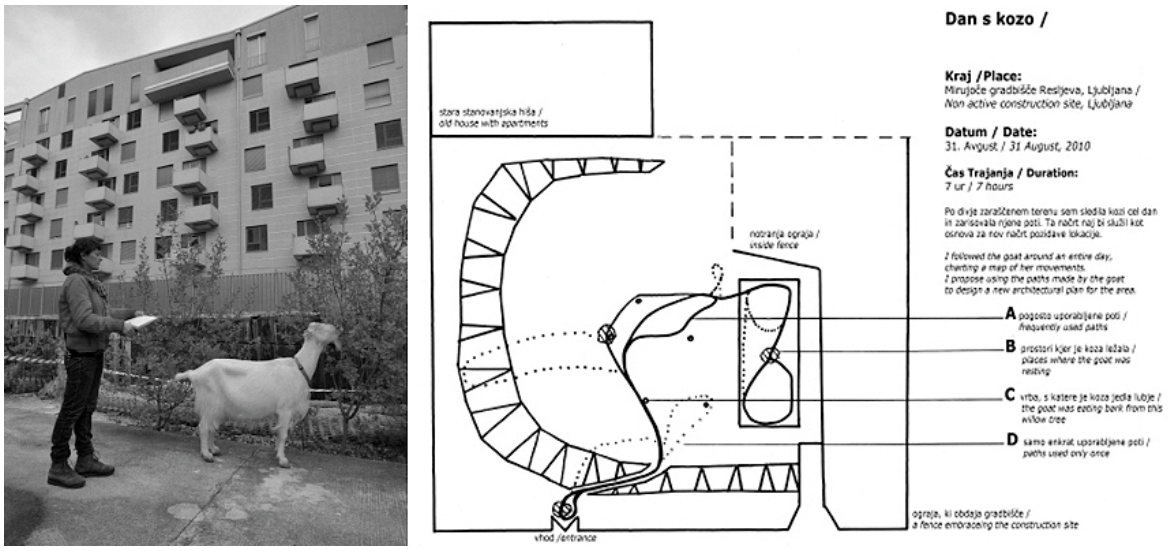


Fig. 108. Polonca Lovšin. *A Plan with a* Goat 2010, <http://www.lovsin.org/eng/on-site-project/a-day-with-a-goat/. [accessed 30 march 2021]. Photograph Tomaž Tomažin. Courtesy of Polonca Lovšin.

In *A Day with a Duck*, while raising questions about the role of human officials in the future planning of a city through a parody of objective surveying methods, a key aspect of the pseudo duck survey was the generation of interactions with passers-by. In following one particular duck, which hardly moved, or did so at an incredibly slow pace, I visibly positioned myself as 'different' to that which was expected within this particular public space, provoking people to ask why. Exaggerated by the bright red jacket and 'black and red' notebook, my presence matched the colour code of the ducks but clashed with the expectations of this particular environment; causing people to look twice. This created what visual and performance studies critic Shannon Jackson describes as a 'cross disciplinary art performance', 'combining spectacle, choreography, and theatre into a site-specific performance', offering what she refers to as a 'social provocation' that makes a new 'dialogue of being in space'.[152]

Architect and urban designer Amro Yaghi deploys 'performative interventions' to provoke discussions in public spaces in Amman, the capital city of Jordan [Fig. 109]. These comprise

[152] Jackson, *Performing Art, Supporting Publics*, p. 5. Jackson develops these observations in relation to disability culture activist Petra Kupper's analysis of Walter Benjamin's reading of Charles Baudelaire regarding the nineteenth century flâneurian practice of taking a turtle for a walk in the Parisian Arcades. Examining this practice through Kupper's particular perspective of disability studies, Jackson reflects on how a slow pace 'brings the enabling conditions of mobility into view'. For Jackson, the change of pace and focus exposes a 'systemic whole' that supports the normativity of some bodies (and actions) over others. Jackson, *Performing Art, Supporting Publics*, p. 5. Sections of this page and the account of Polonca Lovšin's *A Plan with a Goat* appear in forthcoming Stratford, 'Collective Performing'.

walking around carrying a hand written sign that reads 'I am a public space, talk to me' written in Arabic and English.[153] Yaghi's research highlights the contextual nature central to these interventions. For Yaghi, in this particular context, 'signs were somehow culturally acceptable because they have been often used in the region for political protests.'[154] Further, in a city where the gathering of people is restricted and public spaces are predominantly privately owned and managed, the phrase 'I am a public space' is particularly pertinent.[155] As Yaghi argues, these interventions 'critically disrupted the rules of this space and functioned as an attempt to raise people's awareness about their right to access the city's spaces'.[156]



Fig. 109. Amro Yaghi 'I am a public space: talk to me' Abdali Boulevard, Amman, Jordan 2017. From Yaghi, Petrescu, and Nawratek 'Performative interventions to re-claim, re-define and produce public space in different cultural and political contexts', 2019. Photograph R. Hadid.

Critically, rather than a formal research inquiry through which people are chosen and enrolled, Yaghi highlights how these impromptu interventions deploy a 'self-selection process', making it more accessible.[157] This aspect also informed the pseudo duck survey. Rather than set up formal structures of enrolment, via a performance or workshop, the situation itself generates an open invitation, engendering momentum and interest through the

[153] Amro Yaghi, Doina Petrescu, and Krzysztof Nawratek, 'Performative Interventions to Re-Claim, Re-Define and Produce Public Space in Different Cultural and Political Contexts', *Archnet-IJAR: International Journal of Architectural Research*, 13.3 (2019), 718–35 (p. 724) <https://doi.org/10.1108/ARCH-04-2019-0077>.
[154] Ibid., p. 725.
[155] Yaghi et al. observe that in Amman 'dancing in public space is socially and culturally unacceptable for both genders. These norms are resulting from the Muslim rule, which prevails in Jordan'. Further, in relation to the city's 'public' spaces, they argue that 'The city is a real pawn to a "market-based paradigm" of development'. Ibid., p. 725.
[156] Ibid., p. 726.
[157] Ibid., p. 725.

live gathering of people. In their study into 'Creative Site Surveying', architects and activists Carolyn Butterworth and Sam Vardy identify a critical role of these types of intervention in challenging the hierarchy of observation which conventional architectural tools presume.[158] Similarly, the multi-layered accessibility of the duck survey, also present in the dissemination of the wider project, made the project available to a wider range of people then those accessed through conventional consultation processes, whether in architecture or participatory art practices housed within arts establishments.[159]

As discussed earlier in this chapter, the ducks' flagrant disregard for traffic rules, byelaws and the 'order' and 'purity' of public space is a 'constructed situation' that makes visible the absurdity of these assumptions. The 'social provocation' of the survey built on and pushed the absurdity of this existing situation in order to provoke discussions around the future of the city and the economic growth strategies for the riverside. This aspect was extended through the other events including *Ely Duck Led Tour* and most notably *Live Duck Shoot!* which invited participants to actively take part in actions that repeat assumptions and power relations in order to reconsider them.

The construction of curated events as participatory device is central to the work of interdisciplinary design studio Transparadiso.[160] Linking their work to the 'direct action' of the anarchist theories of Emma Goldman, Transparadiso claim to make socially engaged situations that act as 'direct urbanism'.[161] An example is *Borderline Badminton* [Fig. 110], a situation set up as part of a wider international workshop with students to examine the city of Nova Gorica/Gorica where, at the time, the EU border running between Italy and Slovenia divided the city in two.[162] In this particular context, while enacting a momentary heightened crossing of the border, the game offered a space to gather speculations by residents on the

[158] See Carolyn Butterworth and Sam Vardy, 'Site-Seeing: Constructing the "Creative Survey"', *Field*, 2.1 (2008), 125–38.
[159] Other events and outcomes in *A Day with a Duck* were similarly disseminated through a variety of public channels. These included social media, local press media and radio, online art journals and networks but the project also attracted the attention of the agricultural sector and was advertised in magazines such as Poultry Today. The critique of the exclusivity of art galleries has a long history in socially engaged practice. See for example *The Gallery as Community: Art, Education, Politics*, ed. by Marijke Steedman (London: Whitechapel Gallery, 2012).
[160] Founded in 1999 by architect and urbanist Paul Rajakovics and artist Barbara Holub,
[161] 'Transparadiso | Atelier' <http://www.transparadiso.com/en/studio> [accessed 17 March 2021].
[162] Barbara Holub and Paul Rajakovics, *Direkter Urbanismus: transparadiso = Direct urbanism* (Nürnberg: Verl. für moderne Kunst, 2013), pp. 78–87.

city's future. Here, as in much of Transparadiso's 'direct urbanism', existing urban infrastructures are playfully repurposed to create frameworks that, within their particular cultural, social and/or geopolitical context, offer an open invitation to participate. In considering the construction of alternative models of participation, a key aspect of Transparadiso's work is the deployment of simple provocative props that build on existing and frequently contested urban situations in order to engage others in discussion.[163]

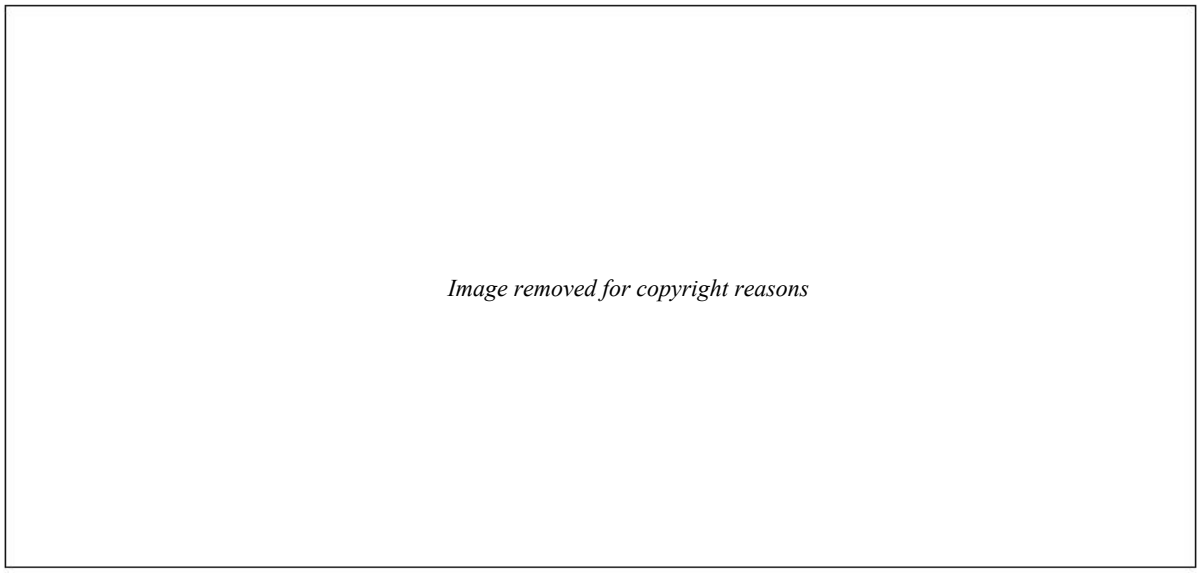


Fig. 110. Transparadiso *Borderline Badminton* 1998. From Barbara Holub and Paul Rajoviks Direct Urbanism 2013.

In Transparadiso's 'direct urbanism', every element is rigorously thought through to create a situation that both resonates with and critiques its context. Similarly, in *A Day with A Duck*, through its carefully selected props the pseudo duck survey assumes an incredulous and absurd authority. Likewise, *Ely Duck Led Tour* is printed on shiny tourist office style paper with clearly recognisable graphics and format to fit into postcard racks and leaflet dispensers. Further, *Live Duck Shoot!* is a play on words whose actions critique the conservative nature of small town Englishness and its historic association with hunting game as a leisure pursuit. Here, the choice of the nostalgic medium of super 8 film contradicts the event's title, bringing

[163] Here the props are similar to Yaghi's 'culturally acceptable' signs. Yaghi, Petrescu, and Nawratek, p. 725. In a completely different geopolitical context, Love Sum Game8 (2006) by Israeli artist Eitan Heller with fellow Israeli artist Joseph Sprintzak, included the installation of a game of tennis, played across an eight-meter high separation barrier in Jerusalem. In this situation, the artists were the only participants, yet the act of watching the game and joining in vocally or with car horns from both sides of the wall, offered a different level of participation in this deeply contested context. For a further discussion of this project see Idit Elia Nathan, 'Seam and Separation Lines and Practices – Three Artworks' "Profanation" of the Divide in Jerusalem.' <https://www.academia.edu/6175704/Seam_and_Separation_Lines_and_Practices_Three_artworks_profanation_of_the_divide_in_Jerusalem> [accessed 17 March 2021].

into focus the paradoxical position embodied by the ducks. However, these deeply contextual and popular references do more than simply resonate with the structures of power that frame the social and cultural context. Like Lovšin's dead-pan portrayal of *A Plan with a Goat*, they poke fun at them.

Humour as Critical Participatory Method

A key aspect of *A Day with a Duck* is its use of humour. As discussed in chapter one of this thesis, humour and, in particular, parody can be deployed as a critical tool to make visible and challenge social norms through their 'deviant' disruption.[164] From a different direction, as discussed earlier in this chapter, rewriting the limits between the 'human' and 'animal' is also central to Haraway and Braidotti's re-evaluation of the human in relation to the non-human.[165] In this context, the book *The Day of the Duck*, can be read as a simple tale about ducks, yet it is a talking duck looking for its lost comrades. What might appear at first glance to be an ethnographical study of an English city, is in fact a highly crafted fiction.

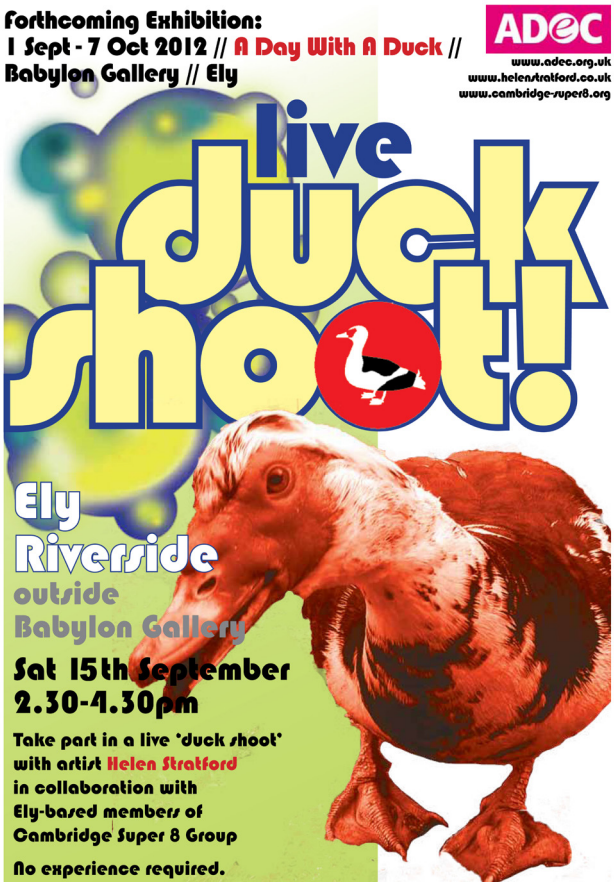


Fig. 111. *Live Duck Shoot!* poster design by Cambridge Super8 Group. From *A Day with a Duck* 2012.

Here, *The Day of the Duck*'s attempt to write 'from the place of the animal',[166] aligns with an absurdist tradition, taking part in 'those contradictory acts of establishing and then

[164] See Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*; Butler, *Gender Trouble*.
[165] See Braidotti, 'Posthuman, All Too Human'; Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto*. For Haraway, the use of fiction is a method by which to both critique and reimagine another reality. In relation to *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*, Haraway has described how her addition of the term 'Chthulucene' into discussions of Anthropocene, Capitalocene among other 'cenes', was done 'partly as a joke', poking fun at the 'geeky words' that attempt to describe the current reality. Marcela Mendoza Taylor, *Donna Haraway and Rosi Braidotti*, 2017 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXQTex0a3dc> [accessed 31 March 2021].
[166] Simon Critchley, *On Humour*, Thinking in Action (London ; New York: Routledge, 2002), p. 35. Referring to the work of Franz Kafka, Critchely argues that 'the constant overstepping of the limit between the human and the animal', points out what he describes as the paradox of the human through 'recalling the benign humanity of the animal and the disturbing animality of the human'. Critchley, p. 36.

undercutting prevailing values and conventions in order to provoke a questioning'.[167] Based in the contextual thoroughness of the on-site research and inflected through Bradby's literary background, the book exposes the 'structures of meaning' by which public spaces are understood in order to question them, thereby generating fictional and comedic places that shed light on everyday conditions which are already absurd.[168] The book is an account of how, against the duck, the citizens rise up, refusing to listen to those that challenge their way of life.[169] In this way, it aligns with the all too frequent result of public consultation in its removal or silencing of certain voices which disturb particular ideals regarding city life and associated public spaces.[170]

In *Ely Duck Led Tour* the unlikely comedic figure of the lone duck wandering into town cuts an incongruous sight. Its depiction of the duck as city guide parodies prevailing views about the assumed priority of the human in relation to the urban landscape. Further, in *Live Duck Shoot!* the question of the control and commodification of 'nature' is examined through actions that parody the way 'English landscape' serves the purpose of leisure pursuits for the wealthy.[171] In this way, these interventions, along with the pseudo duck survey, evidence methods by which humour can question the basis of powerful institutions, individuals and ideologies.

However, a key aspect of *A Day with a Duck* that extends humour beyond a critical tool is its use as participatory method. In the pseudo duck survey there is a parody of the market researcher; of the serious architectural consultative survey. This challenges these objective ways of collecting 'data', but there is also incongruity. Sitting in the duck territory, I, like the

[167] Celeste Derksen, 'A Feminist Absurd: Margaret Hollingsworth's The House That Jack Built', *Modern Drama*, 45.2 (2002), 209–30 (p. 224).
[168] Ibid.
[169] In this, the book references a tradition of absurdist writing found in the work of Franz Kafka such as *The Metamorphoses* that Critchely refers to but also Eugene Ionesco. See Franz Kafka, *The Metamorphosis*, trans. by Ian Johnston (Mansfield Center, CT: Martino Pub., 2009); Eugène Ionesco, *Rhinoceros, and Other Plays* (New York: Grove Press, 1994).
[170] See Jeremy Till, 'The Architect and the Other', *OpenDemocracy*, 2006 <https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/architecture_3680jsp/> [accessed 31 March 2021]. See also Suzanne Hall who in *The Migrant's Paradox* observes how 'how regeneration agendas are subject to an assertive professionalization of planning processes'. Suzanne Hall, *The Migrant's Paradox: Street Livelihoods and Marginal Citizenship in Britain*, Globalization and Community, volume 31 (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2021), p. 120. This aspect of the silencing of voices in consultation and public space is examined further in chapter four.
[171] See Nick Hayes, *The Book of Trespass: Crossing the Lines That Divide Us* (London ; New York: Bloomsbury Circus, 2020).

ducks crossing the street on the way to the weekly market, am clearly in the wrong place. As described earlier in this chapter, this is a 'social provocation'. Yet, my incongruity, which forms a key attribute of humour, also causes people to laugh.[172] Furthermore, there is a measure of self-depreciation, thereby critiquing the serious and often intimidating position occupied by the architect, artist or researcher. In opening up connections to others that might otherwise not be possible, this action contributes to what has been identified as 'sourceliking'.[173]

In his discussion of the use of humour in activism for global justice, international relations scholar John D. Cameron argues that humour '"lowers the threshold" for political engagement and activism because it is not intimidating and makes it psychologically easier for people to engage in political action than serious messages allow'.[174] While I am not suggesting that the pseudo duck survey, *Ely Duck Led Tour* or *Live Duck Shoot!* are comparable to activism in global justice, they demonstrate how the use of humour in the form of parody and self-depreciation can create playful and accessible situations. This is made evident by the responses and comments they generated. Which also demonstrates how these humorous situations are deeply serious, encouraging people to engage with difficult subjects, including, in this case, the ethical and ecological ideas, people and practices that are included or excluded in future city visions.[175]

Nevertheless, the use of humour as a method of engagement in participatory practice brings with it certain caveats. Making fun of oneself runs the risk of both the research and the researcher being dismissed, while making fun of others can risk reinstating the superiority of

[172] For a summary of the different theories on humour which include: superiority theory, the relief theory and the incongruity theory see Critchley, p. 2.
[173] John D. Cameron, 'Can Poverty Be Funny? The Serious Use of Humour as a Strategy of Public Engagement for Global Justice', Third World Quarterly, 36.2 (2015), 274–90 (p. 278) <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2015.1013320>.
[174] Cameron, p. 283.
[175] In relation to different types of humour appropriate to participation and engagement, for Cameron parody and self-deprecation are more appropriate and ethically grounded than notions of superiority. Yet, it is also an issue of positionality, a key question in Cameron's discussion of humour is 'does it ridicule the marginalised or challenge the powerful?'. Cameron, p. 281.

the position under critique.[176] The use of humour may also generate offence and cynicism,[177] as demonstrated by the visceral responses to the pseudo duck survey.[178] Indeed, as discussed in chapter one, any subversive possibilities of humour are deeply dependent on their context, thereby risking appropriation.[179] But, this is also what makes humour a powerful participatory tool. For philosopher Simon Critchley, humour is 'local' and 'context specific'.[180] It is, he argues, 'a form of cultural insider-knowledge'.[181] My use of humour in *A Day with a Duck* emerged from being deeply aware of the cultural context within which I was operating. Not only was this due to the time spent in Ely, but also because I am familiar with the 'English' customs and the conventional position of the architect, of which it makes fun.

Returning to questions around instrumentality and engagement identified earlier in this chapter, *A Day with a Duck* evidences how humour can sit in-between and critique those viewpoints that pitch the 'virtuousness' of participation against the confrontational violence of criticality.[182] Poking fun at hierarchies and power structures embedded in 'English' culture, alongside those of the artist, architect and researcher, can, as discussed in chapter one, destabilise them, thereby taking away the fear, piety or intimidation of a particular discourse. Yet, it can also create accessible conditions by which difficult personae, subjectivities and issues can be reconsidered, thereby allowing further questions to emerge. Further, while humour brings certain risks, the foregrounding of 'context-specific' and popular knowledge through parody and self-depreciation, can challenge universalising notions of artist, architect, researcher and correspondingly the public spaces they produce, thereby subverting the very rationalising discourses that these positions support.[183]

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[176] In relation to feminist stand-up, comedy theorist Eleanor Tomsett describes how comedy 'must always be considered (for both audiences and performers) as challenging and reinforcing restrictive patriarchal attitudes towards women simultaneously'. Ellie Tomsett, 'Positives and Negatives: Reclaiming the Female Body and Self-Deprecation in Stand-up Comedy', *Comedy Studies*, 9.1 (2018), 6–18 (p. 6) <https://doi.org/10.1080/2040610X.2018.1437167>.

[177] Cameron, p. 286.

[178] Also in the local journalist's positioning of my project on the children's page of the local newspaper.

[179] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, p. xxviii.

[180] Critchley, p. 67.

[181] Ibid.

[182] Bishop refers to participation in artistic practice being measured through what Bishop describes as 'progressively more virtuous political forms'. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, p. 279.

[183] Cameron, p. 286. See also the work of Antanas Mockus, Mayor of Bogotá, who uses humour, including mime and self-depreciating acts such as adopting personae of a Supercitizen to challenge violence, lawless traffic and corruption in Columbia's capital city. See Mara Cristina Caballero, 'Academic Turns City into a Social Experiment: Mayor Mockus of Bogotá and His Spectacularly Applied Theory', *Harvard Gazette*, 11 March 2004 <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2004/03/academic-turns-city-into-a-social-experiment/> [accessed 1 April 2021]. Sections of this page appear in forthcoming Stratford, 'Collective Performing'.

Who Participates? – Rapport and Complicity

So far, this section has reflected on how the participatory methods in *A Day with A Duck* aimed to reach as many people as possible to solicit conversations and develop further questions. Yet, there were limits to this process. The reception of socially engaged and live art practices in a place unfamiliar with this kind of work brought to light issues around the boundaries between artist and participant, researcher and researched. Situated between art and architecture the research processes of *A Day with A Duck* placed emphasis on different roles and methods according to their reception. Each time I made it clear that the research was part of a public art project, but I was aware that perceived roles of architect and artist would be held in different regard by different people. While adopting and critiquing aspects of both, working in-between different roles enabled greater access to a wider range of people, somewhat countering the divide of the individualistic artist or the expert architect.



Fig. 112. My postcard inviting people to the exhibition was placed just above the local attractions and to the left of shoplifters. From *A Day with a Duck* 2012. Photograph Helen Stratford.

For Rendell, this situation in-between is a key characteristic of 'critical spatial practice', offering ways by which to create transformative spaces that 'transgress the limits of art and architecture'.[184] Yet, the adoption of these different positions, however fluid, also raises questions regarding expectations, particularly in relation to the aforementioned 'service-led' structures and associated design solutions, which professional bodies, such as architects, are conventionally expected to fulfil.[185] Similarly, Pink observes how any ethnographer becomes

[184] Rendell, *Art and Architecture: A Place Between*, p. 6.

[185] Petrescu and Trogal, p. 11. In relation to these expectations, Miessen highlights a possible drawback of the location of Rendell's 'critical spatial practice', existing outside the 'profession' and therefore implicated in a 'lack of either obligations, demands or repercussions'. Miessen, *Crossbenching*, p. 45. Yet, the feminist position and criticality inherent in Rendell's 'critical spatial practice' brings with it an inherent acknowledgement of accountability and ethics, explored more recently her text and associated actions challenging the ethics of University College London (UCL) for receiving funding from oil mining company BHP Billiton to finance a sustainability centre. See Jane Rendell, 'Hotspots and Touchstones: From Critical to Ethical Spatial Practice', *Architecture and Culture*, 0.0 (2020), 1–13 <https://doi.org/10.1080/20507828.2020.1792107>.

an actor in ethnographic processes and should 'consider how their identities are constructed and understood by the people with whom they work'.[186] In this context, the performativity of the researcher-practitioner is critical, not only in terms of ethics in relation to the expectations of participants but also in the nature of the particular space of participation created through the research process.

In contrast to the predominantly frictionless acceptance of my research in Cambourne, discussed in chapter one of this thesis, in Ely some welcomed the discussion and participation wholeheartedly but others were cautious and reticent to respond. One example is the ice-cream vendor. Initially very suspicious, after several weeks of conversations he became a willing participant and even ambassador for the work! Similarly, access to the owner and staff of the antiques shop demanded similar levels of persistence. Returning over many weeks ultimately lead to 'insider knowledge', corroborating earlier tales about the itinerant duck. At first glance, these examples appear to establish what Ocejo identifies as 'trust and rapport'.[187] However, in the antiques shop, the display of my exhibition invitation, in-between a board of photographs of suspected shoplifters and local attractions, perhaps better indicated my location and the acceptance of the project within the daily life of the city [Fig. 112].

For Ocejo, through establishing 'trust and rapport' the researcher can overcome 'socially constructed boundaries and stratifying categories that create social distance'.[188] Yet, in many ways these barriers; these differences ultimately cannot be overcome. Furthermore, as

[186] Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography*, p. 24.
[187] Ocejo, p. 11. A key learning process was the process of gaining access to people to develop the research. In *Ethnography and the City*, Ocejo discusses ethnography often starts with 'getting in' or getting introduced to the right person both in terms of permissions but also in terms of access to knowledge. Ocejo, p. 10. These people are sometimes referred to as 'gatekeepers', who unlock other contacts and links to a particular community. See for example Julie Latchem-Hastings, 'Gatekeepers in Ethnography', in *SAGE Research Methods Foundations*, ed. by Paul Atkinson and others (London: SAGE Publications Limited, 2020) <https://methods.sagepub.com/foundations/gatekeepers-in-ethnography> [accessed 30 March 2021]. Aided by the gallery, links were made to a number of primary 'gatekeepers' such as the mayor and local community groups, who then gave me contact details and names of other people or secondary 'gatekeepers'. The first thing to change about this research method in relation to earlier projects such as 'Communities under Construction', discussed in chapter one, was the time spent with people. I realised that one or two hours combined with a questionnaire was a much better way of reaching more people with less onerous timescales for both myself and participants. This change in research methods was also related to the nature of the wider context of the 'city'. In contrast to Cambourne, Ely wasn't a private development; there wasn't a distinct hierarchy of management with one clearly identifiable 'gatekeeper' who opened doors to others, therefore the spread of people was much broader, including more residents and visitors to the city, as well as workers.
[188] Ibid. p. 11. Ocejo also states that 'barriers' to access people lives 'such as race, ethnicity, age, gender, and social class', must be carefully navigated 'so as not to offend anyone, to be understood as trustworthy, and to put themselves in an advantageous position to collect data'. However, Ocejo's use of the term 'advantageous position' immediately counters the notion of 'rapport' and the collaborative relationship it implies. Ibid., p. 150.

discussed in chapter two of this thesis, 'failures' and associated moments of miscommunication exert a critical influence on the direction of the research. In *A Day with a Duc*k, hostility, such as that experienced during the pseudo duck survey, alongside exposure to conservative views in relation to migrant workers and rough sleepers, was essential in bringing to light salient issues demanding further exploration. In Miessen's notion of participation, which unequivocally explores difference and 'antagonism' as productive resource, these conflictual aspects of participation must not be avoided or papered over.[189] In these situations, the differences between researcher and researched, artist and participant remain, suggesting a different participatory relationship than the often uncritical collaborative connotations associated with 'rapport'.

In the context of socially engaged art practice, theorist and curator Irit Rogoff problematises 'rapport' and the ideas of collaboration it assumes. With reference to the writings of anthropological researcher George E. Marcus, Rogoff proposes a shift from 'rapport' to 'complicity'.[190] In his study of complicity, Marcus argues that rapport indicates a situation where the researcher tries to get as close as possible to 'reality'; to 'inside', while still being aware of being an outsider, whereas in complicity no one is or can be 'inside'.[191] Yet, for Marcus, complicity is not simply about being an 'accomplice', as the common use of the term implies, for him it also describes a state of being 'complex or involved'.[192] For Rogoff, this relationship is reframed through a feminist 'understanding of one's complicity with the work'.[193] Here, she foregrounds a complex situation of complicity with the very power structures one tries to dismantle, acknowledging that those with whom one speaks are also part of these structures, but differently.[194]

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[189] Miessen, *Crossbenching*. In this context, Miessen refers to the political theories of Chantel Mouffe see also Markus Miessen and Chantal Mouffe, *The Space of Agonism*, ed. by Rabih Mroué, Critical Spatial Practice, 2 (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2012).

[190] Irit Rogoff, 'In Conversation Catherine David and Irit Rogoff', in *Contemporary Art: From Studio to Situation*, ed. by Claire Doherty (London: Black Dog, 2004), pp. 81–89.

[191] Marcus describes how 'while it begins from the same inside-outside boundary positioning, investment in the figure of complicity does not posit the same faith in being able to probe the "inside" of a culture.' George E. Marcus, 'The Uses of Complicity in the Changing Mise-En-Scène of Anthropological Fieldwork', *Representations*, 59 (1997), 85–108 (p. 97) <https://doi.org/10.2307/2928816>.

[192] Marcus, p. 87.

[193] Rogoff, 'In Conversation Catherine David and Irit Rogoff', p. 86.

[194] In this Marcus specifically refers to the term 'illicit discourse' with reference to the work of social anthropologist Douglas Holmes whose critique of right wing economies necessitated engagement with the 'fluid, appropriative capacity of right-wing discourse'. Marcus, p. 103.

While the research practice in *A Day with a Duck* embraced serendipitous encounters, connections and links grew out of a particular set of people who had particular views about Ely and were part of a particular demographic. At the time I didn't speak to migrant workers or rough sleepers. This was partly due to language differences and partly due to concerns that I would be singling them out for attention, thereby repeating prejudices towards them while unable to do justice to their situation. Yet, in this way, I was complicit in a silencing of their voices implicit in the very prejudices held by many towards these city inhabitants that I set out to challenge. Conversely, being aware of this complicity supports a feminist situated position that does not attempt to make a solution or produce a universal notion of public space. Instead, it makes visible and critiques the hegemonic and exclusionary imaginaries of public space produced in this specific context.[195]

Critically, 'complicity' sheds light on the reception of this type of research. It highlights a different position to participatory practices that focus on collaboration. In *A Day with a Duck*, rather than 'co-designers' or 'co-producers', participants are perhaps more akin to what Pink describes as 'informants'.[196] This indicates participants who have a particular knowledge of a place but who are not necessarily co-producers of the research. In this context, participants might still be regarded as subjects of study, yet processes and outcomes are contingent upon their involvement. Further, participants might not necessarily only be human. In this situation the practice research operates through different engagements that inform how and in what form the space of the research develops.

[195] Massey, *For Space*, p. 153.
[196] Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography*, p. 39.

Negotiated Realities and the Researcher as 'Facilitator'

The notion of the complicit position of the artist, architect and researcher resonates with Pink's observations on reflexive ethnographic research methods. For Pink, ethnography should not 'claim to produce an objective or truthful account of reality, but should aim to offer versions of ethnographers' experiences of reality that are as loyal as possible to the context, negotiations and intersubjectivities through which the knowledge was produced'.[197] Pink's acknowledgement of the subjective processes at work in ethnographic research aligns with Rogoff's discussion of complicity and its connection to feminist and situated knowledges. It acknowledges that 'the sense we make of informants' words and actions is "an expression of our own consciousness"'.[198] Yet, Pink identifies the contingencies of these processes; how 'any experience, action, artifact, image or idea is never definitively just one thing but may be redefined differently in different situations, by different individuals and in terms of different discourses'.[199]



Fig. 113. 'PLEASE FILM THE DUCKS' sign installed by the riverside. From *A Day with a Duck* 2012. Photograph Julian Hughes 2012.

In *A Day with a Duck*, the recognition of my particular 'complicit' position acknowledges the different perspective I held to those with whom I worked, walked and talked. My making sense of people's actions and responses was set within the overall framework of the ducks as an 'irritant' to the Masterplan and creative city vision. My architectural background interpreted the role of the ducks within the spatiality of the city, historically and contemporaneously. While my research developed in an interconnected way, this position afforded me a different viewpoint. Further, in this situation, the research developed through

[197] Ibid., p. 22.
[198] Ibid.
[199] Ibid., p. 23.

proximity and interconnections not only with human participants but also with the ducks. Here, in relationship to notions of assemblage, relating and entanglement discussed earlier in this chapter, through active embodied 'entanglements' with the non-human inhabitants of this space, relational responses were generated that problematise the conventional ways public spaces are visioned and performed.[200]

Similarly, for Pink it is not a simple channelling of 'informants' responses through the ethnographer but there is a more complex interweaving at work. She argues that 'it is not solely the subjectivity of the researcher that may "shade" his or her understanding of "reality," but the relationship *between* the subjectivities of researcher and informants that produces a *negotiated version of reality*'.[201] In this understanding, participants may not necessarily take collective responsibility in the process of the research, rather researcher and participant 'collude'[202] together to construct 'negotiated realities' in an interchange. Again, this complex relationship aligns with Barad's posthumanist understanding of performativity discussed earlier in this chapter, in which 'differentiating is not about Othering, separating, but on the contrary, about making connections and commitments'.[203] In this context, for

[200] In socially engaged art practice, the notion of 'critical distance' has been scrutinised by various critics including Hal Foster who critiques the role of the artist ethnographer as perpetuating power structures that position participants as 'others' to be studied and appropriated by the artist. See Hal Foster, 'The Artist as Ethnographer', in *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1996), pp. 171–204. Similarly, in the introduction to Situation Claire Doherty problematises the position of the artist as 'participant-observer'. 'Introduction//Situation', in *Situation*, ed. by Claire Doherty, Whitechapel, Documents of Contemporary Art (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2009), pp. 12–19. This problematising of the role the researcher plays within these processes also forms the basis of Rendell's 'critical spatial practice'. Rendell argues that 'critical spatial practice aims to transpose the dual actions of critical theory taken from the Frankfurt School into [spatial] practices that are both self-reflective and emancipatory'. Rendell, 'Hotspots and Touchstones', p. 11. Here, Rendell proposes 'theories [and methodologies] that are '"reflective" rather than "objectifying" – they take into account their own procedures and methods'. Rendell, *Art and Architecture: A Place Between*, p. 8.

[201] Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography*, p. 24. The notion of many factors coming together to generate a 'negotiated reality' also relates to 'triangulation' raised by Kusenbach in her description of 'go-alongs', noting how ethnologists 'seek to gather "many kinds of evidence" to enhance the validity of their particular conclusion'. Margarethe Kusenbach, 'The Go-along Method', in *Sensing the City: A Companion to Urban Anthropology*, ed. by Anja Schwanhäusser, Bauwelt Fundamente, 155 (Gütersloh : Basel: Bauverlag ; Birkhäuser, part of Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2016), pp. 154–57. This 'triangulation' is something I experience in my practice research, but not to validate a conclusion but rather generate situations that open up questions.

[202] Rogoff, 'In Conversation Catherine David and Irit Rogoff', p. 86. In parallel, in Doherty's notion of 'situation', place is reimagined as 'a set of circumstances, geographical location historical narrative, group of people or social agenda'. Within this context, she coins the term 'situation-specific, rather than site-specific' and proposes that rather than revealing something to participants or local inhabitants, practices that work with situations might be '"complicit" rather than "investigative"'. Doherty, 'The New Situationists', in *Contemporary Art: From Studio to Situation*, by Claire Doherty (London: Black Dog, 2004), pp. 8–13 (pp. 9–12). See also Bishop's observation on the shift in art practice in the 1990s from 'an individual producer of discrete objects' to 'a collaborator and a producer of situations'. Bishop, *Artificial Hells: Participatory Art and the Politics of Spectatorship*, p. 2.

[203] Dolphijn and Tuin, p. 69.

Barad 'ethics is therefore not about right responses to a radically exteriorized [and therefore distanced] other, but about responsibility and accountability for the lively relationalities of becoming, of which we are a part'.[204]

Returning to the role of the researcher-practitioner within these processes, in 'Losing Control, Keeping Desire', Petrescu proposes that in participatory practices architects take up a position of 'curator'.[205] Here, the architect is also a participant while occupying a 'professional location' which curates the actions of participants; enabling different ways of thinking and working.[206] However, in *A Day With A Duck*, the 'negotiated realities' produced through the practice research imply a different relationship. In light of Barad's impossibility of 'standing off at a distance',[207] acts of differentiation within the practice research processes enabled issues to surface. And while these acts were inflected by my position and those with whom I worked, including other artists, curators and gallery staff alongside participants of all kinds and species, the practice research focused on facilitating conditions by which issues might continually evolve. On this basis, the role of the researcher-practitioner shifts from 'curator' towards 'facilitator'; evidencing ways by which methods and methodologies might evolve out of 'negotiated realities' created in the discussions, interactions and differences between participants, place and researcher.

Circular, Iterative and Feminist Emergent Processes

The participatory methods in *A Day with A Duck* aimed to engage as many people as possible – creating processes that were context specific, accessible but also critical. In embracing the experiential and qualitative, informal and serendipitous, provocative and humorous, these methods included ethnographic processes



Fig. 114. *Live Duck Shoot!* From *A Day with a Duck* 2012. Photograph Julian Hughes.

[204] Ibid.
[205] Petrescu, 'Losing Control, Keeping Desire', p. 60.
[206] Ibid.
[207] In 'New Names and Nomoi' the preface to *Crossbenching,* with reference to Barad's theories of diffraction, Armen Arvanessian describes how 'according to the methodology of diffraction, there is no standing off at a distance but only immanent differences or acts of differentiating from within'. Armen Avanessian, 'New Names and Nomoi', in Miessen, *Crossbenching*, pp. 11–18 (p. 16).

(participant observation, participant questionnaires, immersive methods and interviews) critical representations (drawings, films and artist's books) and performance-based actions and interventions (the pseudo duck survey, *Ely Duck Led Tour* and *Live Duck Shoot!*) but it was through the iterative and circular processes between all of these that the research developed.

Many of the situations in *A Day with A Duck* were highly crafted events. Yet, their critical purpose is not to examine people in their 'natural environment'[208] but to make an environment with them; not to monitor or represent their responses but to generate discussion and critique. In fact, the entire project solicited participants' input into questions around regeneration processes and the future of the city, but did not aim to resolve them. Like the exhibition and gallery events, to which new people never ceased to arrive with more contributions, these processes were never conclusive. Instead, they provoked people into contributing their own views and knowledge, generating further questions in a reflective feedback loop to inform further events and discussions. This places it in direct contrast to the city masterplan consultation process, where sets of questions, post it notes, flip board charts and marker pens, generate a framework of already determined answers.[209]

Iterative processes can occur in architectural design, yet iterations of design, between client, economic and physical constraints, planning and legal processes, invariably culminate in an end product or solution.[210] Similarly, as discussed earlier in this chapter, residencies and art practices, however socially engaged, are often situated within frameworks that exert pressures to reach a (marketable) conclusion.[211] Yet, in *A Day with a Duck* whilst outcomes were made, including *The Day of the Duck*, *Ely Duck Led Tour* and a 'final' screening of the *Live Duck Shoot!*, they never claimed to reach a conclusion but continued to open up to more processes and participants in developing and raising questions. In response to Miessen and others' call to 'devise different types of engagement for audiences' that 'question the status quo' and 'produce an open-ended reality',[212] these research methods engage with and make space for the unplanned and emergent in architectural research practice.

[208] Gobo, p. 5.
[209] See also Suzanne Hall; Jeremy Till, 'The Architect and the Other'.
[210] See Petrescu and Trogal.
[211] See Gielen.
[212] Miessen, *Crossbenching*, p. 61.

Research processes with 'emergent outcomes' are central to practice as research methodologies that form the methodological foundation of this thesis.[213] They also form a key aspect of non-representational methodologies, that for geographer Nigel Thrift, 'render the world problematic by elaborating questions.'[214] However, theorists of non-representational methodologies have been criticised for jettisoning the particular situated and performative nature of representation that prevails in relation to embodiment. Here, there is a risk of a 'lack of attention paid to understanding how social norms constrain and enable specific bodies to perform in particular ways'. [215] While a detailed discussion of these theoretical arguments in relation to non-representational methodologies is outside of the focus of this thesis, these criticisms highlight a critical aspect of an emergent practice that starts from a feminist approach. In focusing on how 'social norms' and particular ways of knowing affect and produce specific bodies, a feminist emergent practice is necessarily situated and reflexive.

Citing the 'situated knowledge' of Haraway, Robin Nelson argues that in focusing on a 'multi modal' approach that recognises and values different modes of knowing, practice as research methodologies are informed by feminist 'standpoint epistemologies'.[216] Similarly, artist and art theorist Barbara Bolt identifies this connection of practice as research methodologies to the reflexive political focus of the situated theories of Haraway. In this context, 'an "object of knowledge" is no longer a resource, ground, matrix, object, material or instrument to be used by humans as a means to an end, but becomes an "active, meaning-generating axis of the apparatus of bodily production".'[217] In *A Day with a Duck* these emergent yet situated processes, which recognise the performative position of the researcher-practitioner, engage in

[213] Nelson, p. 47.
[214] N. J. Thrift, *Non-Representational Theory: Space, Politics, Affect*, International Library of Sociology (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon ; New York, NY: Routledge, 2008), p. 18. See also *Non-Representational Methodologies: Re-Envisioning Research*, ed. by Phillip Vannini, Routledge Advances in Research Methods, 12 (New York: Routledge, 2015).
[215] In *Performativity, Politics, and the Production of Social Space* Michael R. Glass and Reuben Rose-Redwood observe how 'Some have called into question the methodological individualism that underpins non-representational approaches to performativity as well as the lack of attention paid to understanding how social norms constrain and enable specific bodies to perform in particular ways'. Michael R. Glass and Reuben Rose-Redwood, 'Introduction: Geographies of Performativity', in *Performativity, Politics, and the Production of Social Space*, ed. by Michael R. Glass and Reuben Rose-Redwood, Routledge Studies in Human Geography, 51 (New York: Routledge, 2014), pp. 26–92 (p. 57).
[216] Nelson, p. 52.
[217] Barbara Bolt, 'Material Thinking and the Agency of Matter', *Studies in Material Thinking,* 1.1 (2007), p. 2 <https://www.materialthinking.org/papers/37>.

processes that generate dialogues with the spaces in which they are located through critically reflecting on this position while embracing and emphasising difference.

Conclusions – Performative Architectures as Relational Public Space

In *The Empty Space*, Hoskyns argues that truly democratic public space must offer ways by which citizens can actively participate in the 'processes of its production'.[218] Yet, in the first instance, access to these processes depends on an awareness of their existence. These processes are all too often hidden; absorbed into subjectivities and ways of being. The practice research explored in this chapter implies a preceding step in participation in order to engage people in researching what the processes of public space might be. This research engages with participants of all kinds to examine in what way networks of forces and relations come together through different 'apparatus' to generate the 'phenomena' called public space.[219]

Similar to 'Communities under Construction' and *Manchester Blind Spots*, discussed in chapters one and two of this thesis, the interventions in *A Day with a Duck* play with the institutional frameworks of the architect, the masterplan and public space as a foil. They make everyday and overlooked actions visible by recasting them as performances that produce public space, while exploring performance-based actions as research. However, going beyond making visible, central to the development of the practice research in *A Day with A Duck* is its expansion into facilitating situations through which participants of all kinds practice public space as performative assemblage.

Deploying interventions that open up fundamental questions relating to nature and 'wildness' in the city, the practice research in this chapter links these questions to undemocratic and commodified notions of public space, thereby recasting public space into 'a shifting entanglement of relations'.[220] Here, rational, fixed, objective and anthropocentric visions of public space are challenged through research processes that embrace the contingent, the informal and the relational. Further, in embracing a situated feminist relational approach, this chapter argues that participatory processes are also contested and deeply contextual. Here, the

[218] Following the theories of Lefebvre, Soja and Ernesto Laclau, Hoskyns focuses on Lefebvre's 'Right to the City' which for her implies 'participatory inhabitation of the city,' implying 'access to the democratic processes of the city and access to the processes of production of the city'. Hoskyns, p. 84.
[219] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*.
[220] Ibid., p. 224.

performative role of the researcher plays an active part in the generation of spatialities in which the differences between researcher and participants are recognised as ethical points of negotiation within the development of the practice research.[221]

The discussion of this practice research has raised questions around notions of intervention and irritant, collaboration and complicity, ownership and conflicts of interest. It has examined in what degree different participants take part in making public space and who these 'participants' might be. In this sense, in relationship to participatory practices, the situations in *A Day with a Duck* are not developed *with* citizens in co-design or co-production. In contrast, they are developed *in relation to* the place and participants. Furthermore, in this particular context, participants are not only human. In this way, the situations engender shifts in perceptions that generate new spatial knowledge during the process of participation.

Ultimately, in *A Day with a Duck* the focus was not on solving issues, creating a consensus or placating participants through a consultative process. It was not about somehow making a place 'better', resolving tensions or diverting attention away from them. A key aspect of the situations is that they deployed provocative and humorous actions to solicit different levels of interaction that are ongoing. In this way, *A Day with a Duck* develops an emergent method of thinking and making with others where each step is vulnerable to the previous and through which tensions and questions are discovered and generated. These emergent situations generated intra-actions between participants and existing social, material and cultural infrastructures, enabling people to look carefully and critically at existing power relations in order to develop ecological questions and concerns. In generating an embodied awareness of interconnections and interrelations with each other, including other species, the spaces in *A Day with a Duck* contain wider transformative potential.[222] Proceeding from this basis, this chapter has argued that it is through active embodied engagement and 'entanglements' with participants of all kinds that 'performative-places' – spaces which question the conventional ways public spaces are visioned and performed – are generated.

[221] In 'Anticipating Feminist Futures While Playing with Materialisms', Nina Lyke argues that feminist collaborative processes are founded in difference, 'interference patterns' that emerge out of relational and transformative processes. Nina Lykke, 'Prologue: Anticipating Feminist Futures While Playing with Materialisms', in *Feminist Futures of Spatial Practice: Materialisms, Activisms, Dialogues, Pedagogies, Projections*, ed. by Meike Schalk, Thérèse Kristiansson, and Ramia Mazé (Baunach: AADR, Art Architecture Design Research : imprint of Spurbuchverlag, 2017), pp. 27–32 (p. 30).
[222] Braidotti, 'A Theoretical Framework for the Critical Posthumanities', p. 31.

A question prompted by this research is how to go beyond facilitating an embodied experience of the performativity of public space to the generation of alternatives; enabling others not only to influence the research process but also to act? Accounting and reflecting on practice research that took place within the PhD timeline in a contested public space outside the UK, the next chapter examines how these embodied and performative practices might be transferable. Transferable not only geopolitically but also in terms of others leading the research process. Through analysing in what way this practice research offers an active development of the feminist participatory methodologies developed through the previous chapters, this chapter will examine what type of public space it generates in order to propose how this methodology might form a precursor to wider democratic processes.

Chapter Four

Provocations-in-place

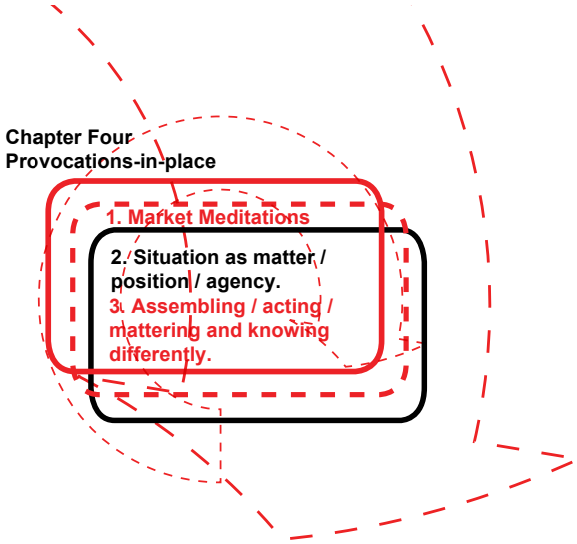


Fig. 115. Provocations-in-place, structure diagram.

Practice Prelude

Market Meditations



Fig. 116. *Market Meditations* film still #1.



Fig. 117. *Market Meditations* film still #2.



Fig. 118. *Market Meditations* film still #3.

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the generation of agency within practices that research the production of public space. As a development of the feminist relational spaces discussed in chapter three, it examines in what way situated, embodied and material understandings of the performativity of public space, might create spaces that enable others to act. Here, it investigates how the performance-based methodology developed in this thesis might be transferable; examining how this methodology might form a precursor to wider democratic processes. Throughout this chapter the practice research of *Market Meditations* becomes the primary means by which to extend this methodology. Conceived and implemented within the timeline of the PhD, *Market Meditations* was an artist's residency including performative workshops and gallery presentation that addressed a newly regenerated yet non-functioning public market building in the city of Celje, Slovenia. In the context of a highly charged situation between the market's architects and its 'users', this chapter examines in what way the performance-based methodologies developed in *Market Meditations* act as dramatisations of shared concerns around regeneration processes affecting gendered and age-discriminatory exclusions within this particular public space.

In the first three chapters of this thesis I have examined how 'place-as-performance' (critical representation), 'performing-place' (embodied actions) and 'performative-places' (participatory situations) open up questions around how public spaces are performed and practiced. The separation of these methods was necessary to reflect on the different ways they question and unpack performativity in architecture and public space. However, in this chapter, these three methods are brought together and inform each other in a circular reflective process in order to reflect on how these methods more accurately perform and inform each other in 'praxis'. The term 'praxis' is used in relation to a multi-modal practice-as-research methodology, discussed in the introduction to this thesis. It implies the particular situated, embodied, embedded and reflexive ways of knowing, or 'theory imbricated in practice', present in practice as research.[1] This multi-modal praxis, developed throughout this thesis embraces an emergent research practice that adopts different

[1] Nelson, p. 5. For Nelson, theory 'is not prior to practice, functioning to inform it, but theory and practice are rather "imbricated within each other" in praxis'. Nelson, p. 62.

modes of situated knowledge production in relation to issues that emerge through the practice research.[2]

On this basis, rather than three separate sections, 'reflection on practice through theory' and 'reflection on theory through practice' are interwoven with the 'reflection on practice through practice', the account of which forms the primary structure of the chapter. Through this organisation the practice research becomes the principal means, in terms of content and structure, through which to analyse and extend the methods from the previous three chapters. Moreover, in this relationship these different ways of knowing are interwoven and performatively presented as equivalent, thereby offering a clearer reflection on the circular and dialogic process by which each mode of knowing informs the other in the development of the practice research.

Market Methodology

The chapter begins by examining how the particular context of *Market Meditations* directed the methodological foundations of the practice research. Whilst heralded as an exemplar public space by the architects and press media, it examines in what way initial serendipitous and ethnographic methodologies uncovered how the particular space of the new market building in fact reinforces gendered and age-related discriminations. Considering the practice research alongside Butler's notions of visibility as a means to public life, this first section investigates how these discriminations effectively prevent the body of the market traders participating within public life. On this basis, this section proposes in what way a feminist research methodology might contain the potential to generate new relationships in which the agency of the market space itself might also be brought into the discussion and questioned.

Following this initial section, the three methods developed in the thesis form the structure of the next part of this chapter. Informed by the ad-hoc adaptions deployed by the traders to make the space function according their needs, the first, 'place-as-performance', examines how my drawings in the gallery presentation recast these everyday actions as performances that produce public space. Critically, it examines in what way this recasting addresses the dominant position of the architects and the city in order to make visible the specific conditions through which the non-functioning 'public space' of the market is reproduced.

[2] Ibid., p. 37.

The second, ‘performing-places’, investigates in what way ‘performative workshops’, made in collaboration with local secondary school students, explored the possibility to generate other forms of agency and expression in the stalemate between the architects’ vision and the experience of the dissatisfied traders. It examines how in reprogramming the space of the market the students’ actions open up connections between themselves, the traders and the wider city context, whilst questioning their own preconceptions of this public space. In this context, as an extension of this chapter’s examination of transferability, this section investigates how these ways of working might form part of a pedagogical agenda, in order to take part in a more explicit transfer of experiential knowledge generated through practice.

The third, ‘performative-places’, analyses how the particular ‘situations’ generated in *Market Meditations* set up material frameworks that rethink agency in relation to how this public place is performed and produced. Considered alongside Karen Barad’s posthuman critique of Butler’s human and social centred performativity, this section investigates in what way the matter of the market itself might be considered performative. Further, by examining the role of materiality in the traders’ adaptations and the students’ actions, it investigates in what way these interventions challenge the passive inscription of the body of the traders understood as being produced by social and discursive forces acting on the space.

As they did in practice these three sections overlap and inform each other in circular feedback, extending the practice research into one more reflexive method, ‘provocations-in-place’, that forms the basis of the final section of the chapter. Critically, the focus on the performativity of matter in the previous section responds to shifts in my research practice that took place during *Market Meditations*. These shifts, which included reconstructing part of the market building in the gallery space, responded directly to the sheer physical and symbolic weight of the architecture and the issues it raised. Placing these aspects of the practice research in dialogue with other practitioners who deploy material interventions to critique public institutions and spaces, including the work of feminist group ‘taking place’ and artist Krzysztof Wodiczko, this section examines how positions of agency might be generated through these ways of working.

To conclude, this section examines in what way recasting the situation of the market into a performative assemblage of discursive and material forces redefines the relations between researcher, participants and public space. Here, it examines in what way these methodologies extend questions around agency and participation by examining how the practice research

develops a shift in the role of the researcher-practitioner from 'facilitator' to 'mediator.' Reflecting on how this shift evolved out of my 'complicit' relationship with this space as well as its participants, this section develops the emergent research practice methodology examined in chapter three. Further, it investigates in what way this emergent practice, in which each subsequent step is contingent and vulnerable to the previous, embraces a feminist approach that resists the demands for objective and rationalising ways of researching. These provocations were something that *Market Meditations* examined in detail; looking at how critical and embodied practices, that place oppositional and conflicting visions of public spaces together, challenge singular and objective ways of knowing.

Finally, in the context of the research of this thesis into feminist modalities that expand the conventions of architectural practice,[3] this chapter also examines the application of these methodologies in a different cultural and geopolitical context – Slovenia rather than the UK. Through reflecting on *Market Meditations*' particular combination of the three methods developed throughout this thesis, it examines the relevance this interdisciplinary and multi-modal methodology might have beyond the particular context in which it was developed. Here, it examines in what way the practice research embraces a feminist approach that goes beyond gender to open up questions around all modes of subjectification.[4] In this way, it builds on the rest of the thesis by developing methodologies that extend feminism towards a critical approach that offers a 'bulwark, against injustice and oppression of all kinds'.[5]

Ultimately, this chapter argues that the findings from the practice research point towards a transferable and pedagogical methodology that reclaims performativity as an active process by which the formations of public space itself might be opened up to alternative spaces and critical action. It argues that in its 'activation' and critique of the 'failed' space of the market, the practice research develops an emerging, iterative and reflective topological approach to research processes that contain the potential to generate 'democratic' positions and 'agency' within the daily (re)production of public space.

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[3] As discussed in chapter one of this thesis, a feminist approach attempts to find ways of '"knowing and doing otherwise," "practicing otherwise," or doing architecture in other ways'. Karin Reisinger and Meike Schalk, 'Becoming a Feminist Architect, ... Visible, Momentous, With', *Field*, 7.1 (2018), 1–10 (p. 1).

[4] This follows arguments that propose 'feminism as a broad vision for the rights of all bodies, identities, voices and viewpoints'. Schalk, Kristiansson, and Mazé, p. 13. Such an approach critiques power relations that reinforce patriarchal structures but looks for ways to open up questions around modes of subjectification that extend beyond the specific categorisation of women.

[5] *Architecture and Feminisms: Ecologies, Economies, Technologies*, ed. by Hélène Frichot, Catharina Gabrielsson, and Helen Runting, Critiques : Critical Studies in Architectural Humanities, volume 13 (London ; New York: Routledge, 2018), p. 3.

Section One – Background: the Market, the City and the Residency

- *We don't like to stand the whole day*
- *The market should be closed in order to be more warm*
- *The market should consist of wood, we don't like the concrete*
- *The tables are ugly, they don't attract costumers*
- *There are no people on the market during winter*
- *The current market is like a person without a soul*
- *The rent is too high*
- *The road is too near the market*
- *The opening hours of the market should be longer*
- *On the weekends there could be events on the market*
- *The ventilation is bad*
- *The customers are demanding, grumpy*
- *The market is too modern, is not functional*
- *We want the old market back*
- *The floor is slippery*

Fig. 119. Market traders' complaints list.

The Market and the City

Market Meditations formed part of an artist's residency at the Centre for Contemporary Arts, Celje Slovenia in 2013/14. Funded by Zavod Celeia, Slovenia, the British/Arts Council International Artists Development Fund, and conducted as research towards this PhD, it was the result of a selection for an artist's residency via open call. Located in the Lower Styrjia region, in the North-East of Slovenia, Celje is the third largest city of this 'post-socialist' country.[6] In recent years, the city has undergone a regeneration programme led by the city authorities, funded by the city council and other funding bodies, including the European Union, which Slovenia joined in 2004.[7]

[6] 'Celje', *URBACT*, 2014 <https://urbact.eu/celje> [accessed 15 April 2021].
[7] European Union, 'Slovenia', *European Union*, 2016 <https://europa.eu/european-union/about-eu/countries/member-countries/slovenia_en> [accessed 10 May 2021].

Located in the centre of the old city, the market building was one of the first buildings in this programme.[8] In 2006 the city council invested over two million euros in renovating the existing, largely self-adapted, structure of the market building, which was considered unstable [Fig. 121].[9] The result of a public competition run by the council, the new building was completed in 2009 by architects ARK Arhitektura Krušec [Fig. 122]. The summary text on the Public Space award website, for which the project was shortlisted, hails it as the 'transformation of a market building into an economical, sustainable arcade'.[10] According to the award summary, the project's aim was 'not only to improve the state of the structure and its installations but also to upgrade its relationship with its urban setting so as to obtain the maximum benefit from its capacity of dynamising the neighbourhood'.[11]



Fig. 120. Celje. Photograph Helen Stratford.

[8] The market regeneration was part of the overall regeneration plans for the city. The architects describe how the city's mayor Bojan Šrot, who during the time of the project was re-elected for a fifth term, wanted to use the new building works to put Celje 'on the map'. Arhitektura Krušec, Arhitektura Krušec [interview]., 2013.
[9] Public Space, 'Refurbishment of the Municipal Market Celje (Slovenia)', 2010 <https://www.publicspace.org/works/-/project/f141-refurbishment-of-the-municipal-market> [accessed 15 April 2021].
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid.

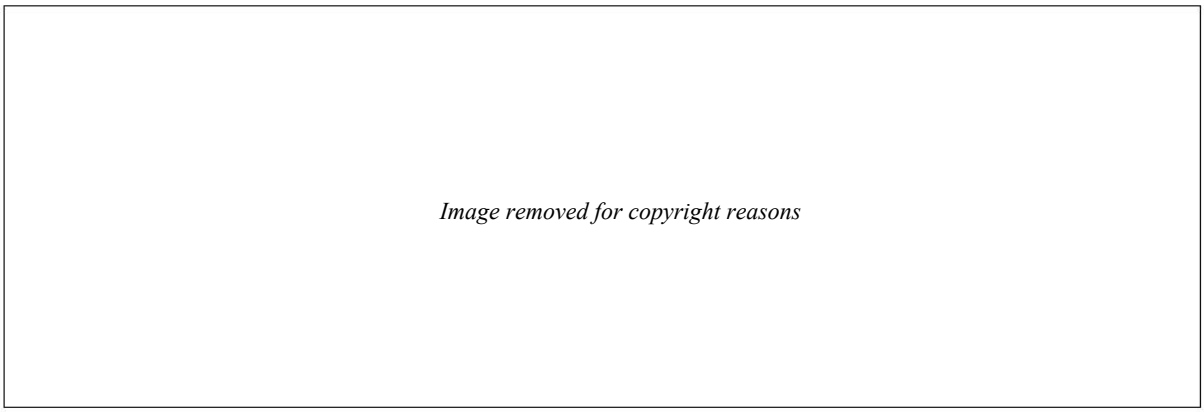


Fig. 121. Before: The old market building. 'European Prize for Urban Public Space' nominations 2010. <https://www.publicspace.org/works/-/project/f141-refurbishment-of-the-municipal-market> [accessed 15 April 2021].

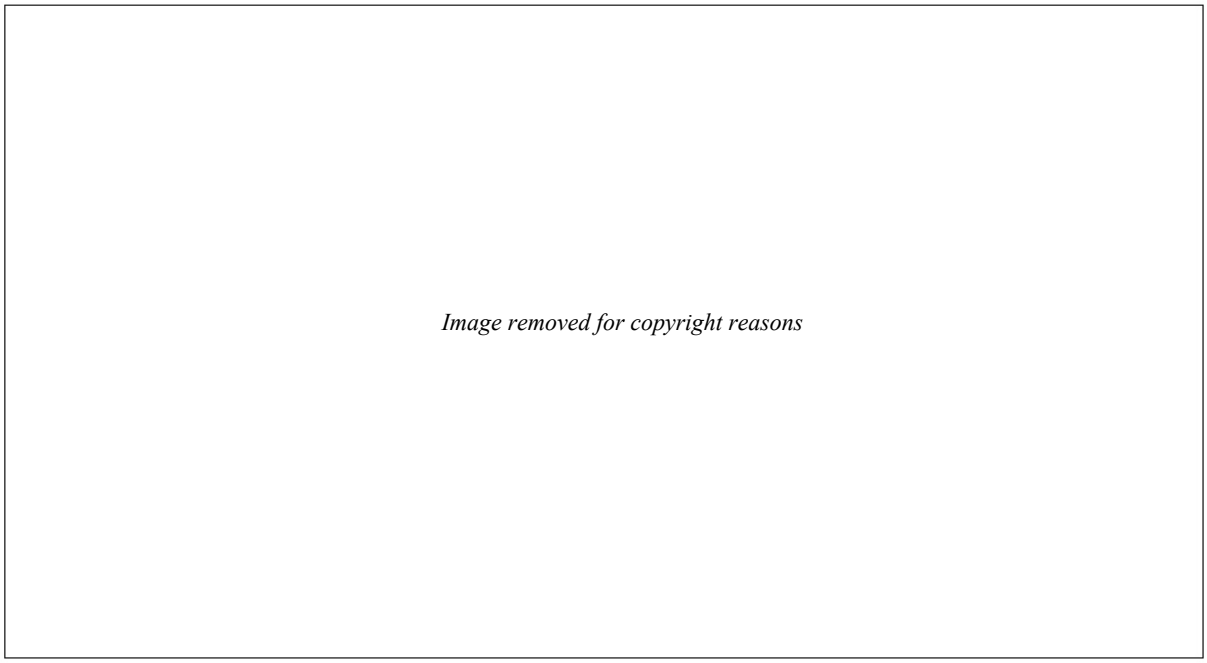


Fig. 122. After: The renovated market building. 'European Prize for Urban Public Space' nominations 2010. <https://www.publicspace.org/works/-/project/f141-refurbishment-of-the-municipal-market> [accessed 15 April 2021].

In addition to the Public Space award, the market has also been shortlisted for the Mies van der Rohe award, an aspect that features prominently in its depiction in the city's tourist guide.[12] Constructed from a limited palette of concrete, painted steel and white terrazzo, the new building is described in a monograph, edited by the architects, as 'an exceptional example of a new sensibility of space in Slovenian architecture', with 'the square and market' constituting 'a successful spatial tandem'.[13] According to the architects, the design takes the traditional shape of the original basilican market place as inspiration for the roof, whose folding rhomboid shape follows the geometrical ground plan of the site [Fig. 123]. Following

[12] 'Celje Tourist Guide' (Institution for Cultural Events and Tourism Celeia Celje, 2015).
[13] ARK Arhitektura Krušec (Ljubljana) and Miloš Florjančič, 'Tržnica Celje: Celje Market', in *Arhitektura Krušec, by Tomaž Krušec (Ljubljana: Dessa : Arhitektura Krušec, 2011), pp. 28–39 (p. 30).*

the basilican form, high clerestory windows create cuts in the folding roof which allow light in from above, while hiding the diagonal truss beams that offer the main structural support, spanning the twenty two metre width of the building [Fig. 124].[14]

The architects describe how the height and design of the grey steel corrugated roof allows light to penetrate deep into what was, according to them, a previously a dark and enclosed space. It 'floats' four metres above white terrazzo benches and three grey steel enclosed structures that house offices, ancillary services and a few of the traders' kiosks.[15] The Public Space award summary claims the roof is 'public-spirited', 'with the intention of protecting [the traders] from sun and rain alike', and argues that in opening up the market to the streets, the project creates a 'public space' 'in harmony with the neighbourhood around it'.[16]

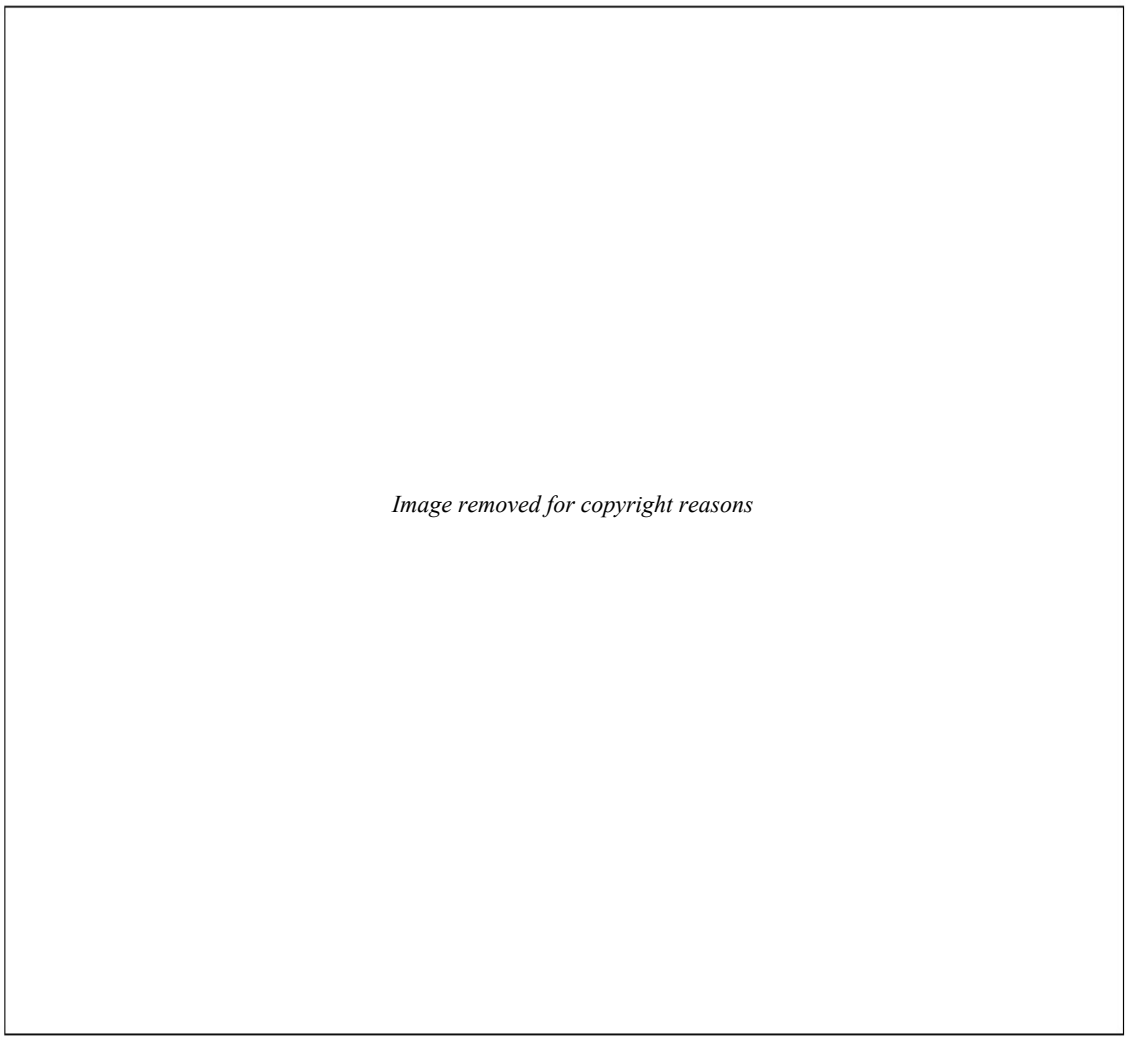


Fig. 123. Celje market building. Site plan diagrams. From Tomaž Krušec Arhitektura Krušec 2011.

[14] Arhitektura Krušec, 'Arhitektura Krušec [Interview].'
[15] Ibid.
[16] Public Space.

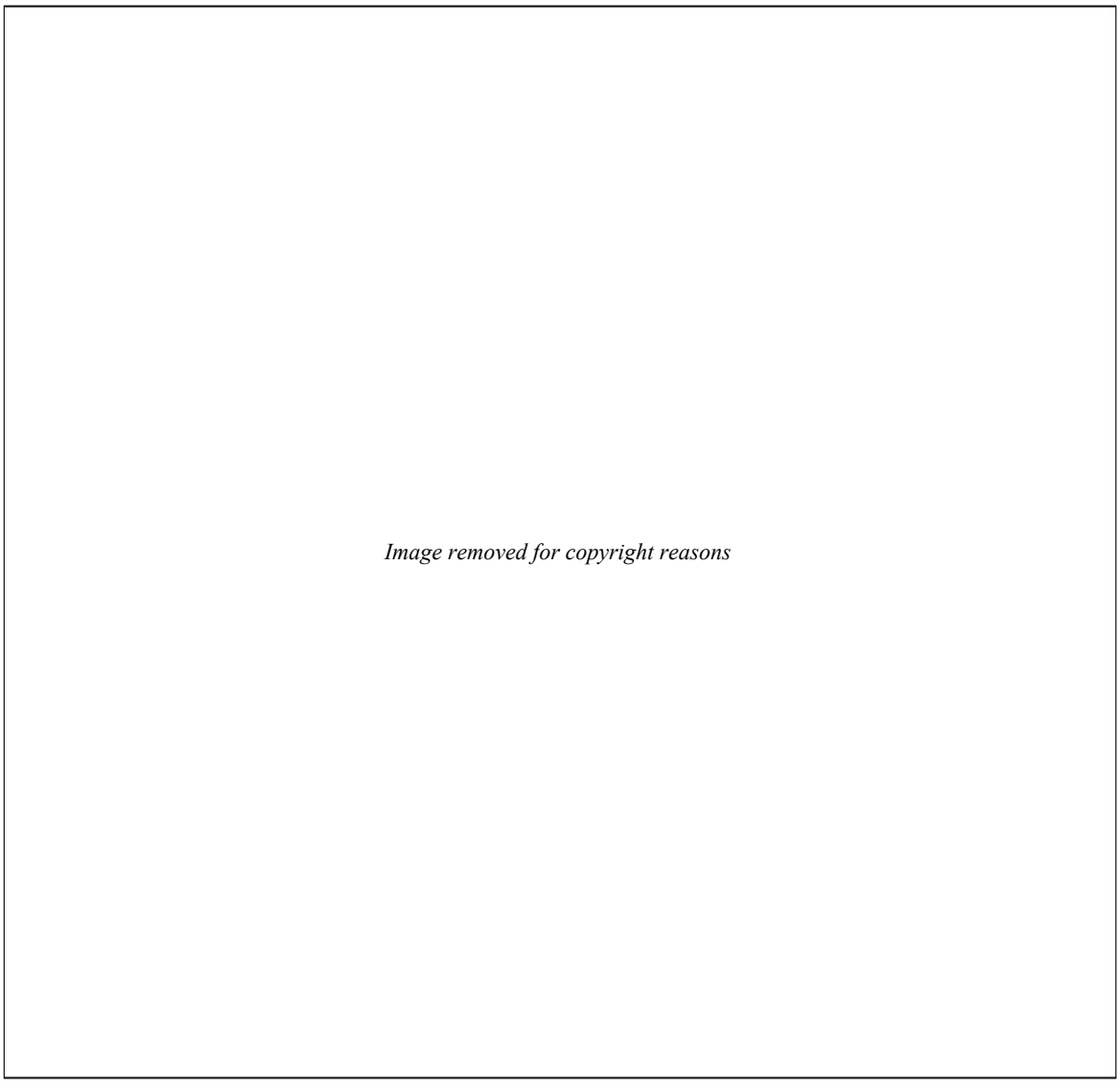


Fig. 124. Celje market building. Roof folding diagrams. From Tomaž Krušec Arhitektura Krušec 2011.

A key aspect, stressed by the architects and reviewers alike, is the 'neutrality' of the space and materials used in the market's construction. For the architects, the 'neutral environment' permits the image of fruit and vegetables, the purpose of the building, to be as 'present' as possible.[17] This viewpoint is echoed by the architectural press, who suggest that 'the monochrome colour design featured in the new market creates a neutral spatial background, which accentuates the colour diversity of the fruit, vegetables and other products available at the stalls'.[18] The final sentence of the public space award summary takes the spirit of this glowing appraisal of neutrality to the ultimate architectural precedent. It heralds the 'not-being' of this 'public space' as none other than the 'fruit of a wise understanding of its own

[17] Arhitektura Krušec, 'Arhitektura Krušec [Interview].'
[18] 'New Market in Celje / Arhitektura Krušec | ArchDaily' <https://www.archdaily.com/60657/new-market-in-celje-arhitektura-krusec> [accessed 15 April 2021].

genealogy, at the start of which there was nothing other than an agora occupied by a temporary market'.[19]

In contrast, during my residency I discovered this was but one side of a long, difficult and conflicting story. In opposition to the opinion of the architects, supported by the glowing reviews in the press and the award summaries, for many, the market is non-functional. In reality, the 'public spirited roof' does little more than 'intend' to protect from sun and rain. Both people and produce are provided with little protection from the elements, rents have increased dramatically, and the traders – the majority of whom are elderly women – feel limited in their capacity to make the space their own. Some complain that the floor is slippery and the roof is too high. They claim that 'because it's so high the sun goes in, it rains'. Others describe how they can't stand all day because 'it's very cold', and [in the winter] 'I didn't go to work because it was too cold'.[20] In fact, during the project I uncovered a whole range of accounts of the market building that directly contrast with the glowing reviews and narrative of the architects.

The Residency and Emergent Practice Research Methodology

The Market

Arriving in Celje in March 2013, an 'outsider' with no knowledge of Slovenia or the city of Celje, my research methodology initially embraced a somewhat serendipitous ethnographic approach.[21] While I applied for the residency with the proposal of working with the city's public spaces, I had no idea which one(s). And while my background inevitably framed the choice of 'site', I arrived with no awareness of the market, the traders or their story that would eventually lead the direction of my research. At this time, the entire city was effectively a construction site. Every major road in the old town was being dug up and repaved as part of the regeneration programme led by the municipality. Adopting a somewhat traditional ethnographic methodology based on 'participant observation' I immersed myself

[19] Public Space.
[20] Market Traders, Market Traders [interview]., 2013.
[21] In this way, rather than arriving with a predetermined plan of enquiry, I aimed to respond to issues arising out of the particular context. Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography*.

in the city. I decided to walk it daily, not only to get to know it better, but also to see which moments in relation to public space might stand out.[22]

I first visited the market building on a wet Sunday afternoon. While fully accessible, this public space, located in the centre of the old city, was completely empty. For me, the language of the space, it's monochrome neutrality, spoke of a particular vision of regeneration – at odds with its immediate environs: white and grey, clean, controlled and precise, with few signs of human intervention [see appendix two]. Later, searching online, I found images and photographs on the architects' website and in the architectural press that supported my initial reactions. Emphasising the building's cool clear geometry, with an abundance of night time shots with few or blurred occupants, the images echoed my initial experience of the building. In many ways, I was both disturbed and fascinated by the space. Its geometrical order and the symbolic weight of its materiality struck a chord with my architectural background. In Braidotti's terms, my situated 'embodied and historically located' subjectivity; my experience and training in architecture, determined the selection of the market for further exploration.[23] Yet, from that initial visit, I had no idea of the building's actual reception and use. Beyond this initial selection, an evolving iterative methodology subsequently informed how this exploration developed.

The Architects

During an interview at their offices in Ljubljana, the architects showed me an image similar to one I had found on the internet. They described how 'this kind of slide is made more or less for architects – really clean, perfectly done. All the composition is well prepared and if it's not it's then corrected in photoshop and so on'.[24] They went on to state that 'we actually hate these kinds of pictures, because this is not the real image of the marketplace'.[25] Showing me a picture of the market full of traders and produce, they claimed that

> this is something which is closer to how the market looks – this is actually, the image of the market today, so it's full of honey here, it's full of some bottles here, some boxes with vegetables here, you know, the floor is not perfectly clean it's always full of, smashed potatoes or something and so on, and actually none of these people know

[22] Moments here relate to public spaces that speak of a certain neoliberal glossing of 'pseudo' public space rather than Lefebvrian revelatory 'moments' which offer a temporary release from consumer capitalism. Lefebvre, Critique of Everyday Life; Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*.
[23] Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, p. 123.
[24] Arhitektura Krušec, 'Arhitektura Krušec [Interview].'
[25] Ibid.

> who made this market, and that's I think the point of every building, it has to become a part of everyday city life and when it becomes like that you know you made a great building.[26]

Returning to the market during the week and taking up a viewing position in the market café, I observed how expertly the traders made amendments to the space. Arriving early in the morning from long distances outside the city, the majority of traders were not commercial farmers or sellers, but instead brought produce from their own gardens. I noted how their brightly coloured tablecloths and plastic sheets, wooden crates, coloured umbrellas, vegetables, fruits and flowers transformed the cold and grey space into one that was vibrant and living. From these observations, the actions of the traders and their creative adaptations, framed by my fascination with the architecture, seemed to align exactly with the architects' description of how they envisaged and presented the space. It seemed the architects were right. It appeared that the 'neutrality' of the space not only served to accentuate the diversity of its contents, in terms of produce and colour, but also supported the actions of the traders in creating what appeared to be a highly successful public space.

The Traders

Following my initial observations, I decided to try to engage the traders in conversation. I wanted to discover more about their daily routines and adaptations through which they seemed so expertly to participate in making the 'great building' of which the architects spoke. Assisted by Maja Hodošček, the Arts Centre's curator, I proposed to ask the traders a series of questions centring on their organisation of the space. These questions included 'What time do you arrive at the market? What time do you leave? Where do you come from? What do you bring with you? How do you organise your space? Conversely, rather than find answers to these questions, the action of starting to ask them opened many more. Instead of offering an elucidation of what I had observed, the questions themselves opened the door to the traders' varied and complex opinions and complaints about the market. In this context, the initial sense I had made of the traders actions was an expression of my 'own consciousness'.[27] Yet, this view of the traders' apparently successful appropriation of the space, was radically challenged by the version of reality that they presented. Similar to the conversations and mappings discussed in chapter three, these conversations made visible the

[26] Ibid.
[27] Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography*, p. 22.

overlapping of different 'ongoing stories' and expressions of different and contested 'imaginations' through which this 'public space' was performed.[28]

Through the unexpected answers generated by the act of asking very different questions, we discovered the story of the traders' discomfort. Among their many complaints, they claimed that 'the market is too modern, is not functional', and ultimately how it 'is like a person without a soul' [Fig. 119]. When the market opened the traders' story had made national media. An article from 2009, entitled 'Mausoleum' appeared in *Jana*, a popular weekly Slovenian family magazine, illustrated by a photograph of an elderly female trader standing in an empty market. The article reads 'If this market is the heart of the city then it needs a cardiologist because, in the middle of the cold, wind and lack of traders/customers, this heart isn't functioning'.[29] However, the traders' dissatisfaction with what, for them, continued to be a non-functioning building – thereby reflecting a lack of dialogue during the design process – was not common knowledge. Indeed, the general understanding that the traders' story had somehow been resolved was reflected in Maja's shock at the traders' emotive response to the questions. It was also reflected in conversations when researching the market in the local library and in the architects' responses and eventual request to edit our interview.

In starting to embed myself in the market, using an albeit somewhat conventional ethnographic methodology, I already expanded my existing knowledge or rather challenged my preconceptions of the space. At the same time, the conversations with the traders' marked a shift from a conventional ethnographic approach towards an emerging reflexive site-responsive methodology that developed in practice.[30] This methodology made space for and, in fact, further embraced the serendipitous, the unplanned and the emergent, which collided with my preconceptions and informed the development and focus of the rest of the practice research. In this situation, the research question – in terms of both focus area and methodology – evolved in an iterative way; in dialogue with the particular context.

On this basis, *Market Meditations* evidences a clearer iterative practice research methodology than that found in *A Day with a Duck*, discussed in chapter three of this thesis. In *A Day with a Duck* initial explorations confirmed a suspicion regarding the position of residents in relation to the ducks and the city of Ely. In contrast, in *Market Meditations* I entered the

[28] Massey, *For Space*, p. 153.
[29] Šimen Zupančič, 'Mavzolej (Mausoleum)', *Jana*, 21 December 2009, p. 18.
[30] See Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography*; Nelson.

research process with a certain research question that was turned on its head by the responses of the traders. Similarly, the methodology shifted from an exploration and mapping of the traders and architects' relationship in the production of an apparently successful public space, to a focus on how the spatiality of the building interacted in a less than productive way with the agency and subjectivities of the traders. In this situation, a body of people, whose voices had somehow been silenced over time, seized the opportunity to make that silence visible and those voices heard. In response, the practice research shifted away from mapping and representing towards a relational methodology that aims to 'render the world problematic by elaborating questions'.[31]

Agency – Public Space, the Body and Discursive Practices

The historical lack of access to and presence within urban public space by women has long been a key focus of feminist architectural historians, theorists and activists; making visible and championing the rights of those who lack representation.[32] In the market, the design of the space holds subjective implications for the body of the traders. Moreover, because the traders are predominantly women, limiting their actions within and consequently access to this public space replicates the gendered hierarchies of public space. At the same time, because they are elderly, it extends these inequalities further to age-based discrimination. In addition, other discursive forces exert further practices of control on the space and those bodies who work within it.

During our interview, the architects claimed the building could be used for any number of uses. However, they also claimed they had no control of the way certain budget cuts had been implemented.[33] Further, they observed that the market had been placed in what they described as 'private ownership' with a number of CCTV cameras and signage to prevent certain forms of activity [see appendix two Fig. 163]. In fact, the ownership of the market remains

[31] Thrift, p. 18.
[32] See for example *Sexuality & Space*, ed. by Beatriz Colomina and Jennifer Bloomer, Princeton Papers on Architecture, 1 (New York, N.Y: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992); *Making Space: Women and the Man-Made Environment*, ed. by Matrix (Organization) (London: Pluto Press, 1984); Jane Rendell, *The Pursuit of Pleasure: Gender, Space & Architecture in Regency London* (London: Athlone, 2002); Lynn Walker, 'Home and Away: The Feminist Remapping of Public and Private Space in Victorian London', in *New Frontiers of Space, Bodies, and Gender*, ed. by Rosa Ainley (London ; New York: Routledge, 1998); Elizabeth Wilson, *The Sphinx in the City: Urban Life, the Control of Disorder, and Women*, 1st University of California Press ed (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).
[33] In the initial design and construction of the market timber platforms had been removed due to budget cuts, some of which were reinstated after the traders' initial complaints at the time of the opening. Arhitektura Krušec, 'Arhitektura Krušec [Interview].'

with the Municipality of Celje and the space is managed by a company in their ownership.[34] Nevertheless, images from the old market show a distinct lack of CCTV cameras which, in the UK at least, have become the ubiquitous markers of pseudo-public space.[35] In a reflection of this sentiment and change in the nature of the space of the market building, the traders exclaim that 'they have money to put all these cameras above our heads but no money for electricity'.[36] In this context, while the architects and the architectural press consider the Market open for all, an exemplar 'agora' perhaps, the cameras and signs prescribe a different situation. Here the space's use is linked to specific and commercially informed agendas which clash with the practice of the traders.[37] This aspect resonates with Miles' critique of contemporary 'public' spaces in the US and UK discussed in chapter three of this thesis, where 'social mixing' is not ascribed in equal measure and is more akin to 'social ordering'.[38]

The question of how bodies are not only 'ordered'and produced, but also mobilised through the 'theatre of legitimacy' 'housed in public space', is central to Butler's arguments in *Notes Towards a Performative Theory of Assembly*.[39] Following Hannah Arendt, Butler equates political agency, or rather the 'political', squarely with the 'space of appearance', arguing how this is inextricably related to bodily presence and visibility.[40] According to Butler, for Arendt, 'political action takes place on the condition that the body appear'.[41] Here, as an extension of Arendt's theories, Butler claims that the possibility to take part in politics, or the right to participate in public life in all its dimensions, is exercised by the act of appearing 'to' and 'between' others.[42] Linking Arendt's understanding of the rights of assembly and free speech to the classical Greek Polis and, presumably, it's Agora, for Butler, public space belongs to the alliance created 'between the people',[43] with this 'appearance' extending beyond visual phenomena to include the registration of voices that 'must be heard'.[44]

[34] 'Mestna Tržnica Celje' <http://www.trznicacelje.si/sl/domov> [accessed 30 April 2021].
[35] Minton.
[36] Market Traders.
[37] I also witnessed this clash of agendas in a café in the city in which an elderly woman traded a bunch of radishes for a glass of wine, indicating a different type of economy than that prescribed by neoliberal contexts.
[38] Miles, p. 116.
[39] Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, p. 85.
[40] Ibid., p. 72
[41] Ibid., p. 76
[42] Ibid., pp 72-82.
[43] Ibid., p. 73
[44] Ibid., p. 76

Critically, the 'space of appearance'[45] is both a 'plural' and 'bodily' act [46] in which the age and physicality of these bodies matter. According to Butler, 'the persistence of the body […] calls that legitimacy [of the state] into question and does so through a specific performativity of the body. Both action and gesture signify and speak.'[47] Here, for Butler 'the body itself exercises a right', and 'the right to have rights' is exercised as 'the persistence of the body against those forces that seek its debilitation or eradication'.[48] For Butler,

> the basic requirements of the body are at the center of political mobilizations—*those requirements are, in fact, publicly enacted prior to any set of political demands*. Over and over against forces of privatisation, the destruction of public services and the ideals of the public good precipitated by the takeover of neoliberal forms of rationality in governance and everyday life, bodies require food and shelter, protection from injury and violence, and the freedom to move, to work, to have access to health care; bodies require other bodies for support and for survival.[49]

With relation to the elderly bodies of the traders, according to Butler 'it matters, of course, what age those bodies are, and whether they are able-bodies, since in all forms of dependency, bodies require not just one other person, but social systems of support that are complexly human and technical'.[50] In this sense, the qualities of the market space are socially and discursively produced by the visions and rhetoric of the architects and architectural media in combination with its management, with associated security provision and signs. Following Butler, this production hinders or rather prescribes a means of access to this public space, the space of the city, and 'the right to appear' for all the traders.[51] Yet, as mentioned above, the effects of this hindrance are felt most acutely by those who historically have been excluded from 'taking place' in public.[52]

The particularities of this situation directly affected the development of the practice research. Within this complex layering of place, practices and people there was, in Butler's terms, a

[45] Ibid., p.77
[46] Ibid., p. 8.
[47] Ibid., p. 83.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Ibid., p. 182
[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid., p. 174.
[52] See Judith Butler and Athena Athanasiou, *Dispossession: The Performative in the Political* (Malden, MA: Polity, 2013), p. 194. Sections of this page and these arguments appear in forthcoming Stratford, 'Collective Performing'.

performance of public space as both 'social' and 'infrastructural',[53] in which the embodied subjectivities of the traders' played a key part. In this context, it seemed fundamental that a multi-modal practice research methodology, including representational and embodied practice methods, might offer an appropriate way by which the production of these different layers of spatial knowledge could be better comprehended. Further, beyond making visible the many levels, layers and stories of the space's performance, it offered way to research how, in Irit Rogoff's terms, 'the rhetoric of the site' might be 'taken up and made to work against itself'.[54] Here, these methodologies contained the potential to generate a new space; a new 'between' of different bodies of this particular public space in which the agency of the space itself might also be brought into the discussion and questioned.

Section Two – Place-as-performance: Assembling Differently

Practice – Discursive Drawings and Documents

The gallery presentation I made, just around the corner from the market, highlighted the discursive practices that combined to produce the particular space of the market. Here, the gallery walls were occupied by a set of drawings of the traders' spatial adaptations, alongside which three documents were presented. The documents included sections from the Slovenian Code of Conduct for Architects that stipulate public buildings cannot be changed without the architect's consent, the conversation with the traders and a transcript of the conversation with the architects.[55] During an interview with the landscape architects for the new paving in the city, I discovered that at the time of the residency, in contrast to the UK, changes to public buildings in Slovenia require a direct application to the architect for consent. The documents evidence how the traders cannot change the space of the market without the permission of the architect. In this relationship the architect sits in a hierarchical relationship to the traders with direct implications for their actions.

Presenting the documents in the context of the public gallery makes visible how the subjectivities of the traders are formed in relation to the specific place, or rather site, of the market. According to feminist architects, Hélène Frichot, Catharina Gabrielsson, and Helen

[53] Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, p. 21. In her use of the term 'infrastructure' Butler refers to the social implementation of infrastructural support on which everyone is dependent, 'in order to maintain a liveable life'. Ibid.
[54] Rogoff, 'In Conversation Catherine David and Irit Rogoff', p. 87.
[55] See appendix two for copies of the documents.

Runting, 'the question of how subjectivities come to be formed in relation to spaces, places and material relations that are entangled with ecologies, economies and technologies, matters.'[56] It is this aspect that the gallery presentation addresses. It makes visible the production of the subjectivities of the traders; their particular position in relation to the organisation of their space. Making the documents visible, makes visible the expression of the material relations of these discursive elements. In this way, it takes part in an active critique of, what Frichot et al. claim as, the 'closure of alternate modes of subjectification' by the 'solidification of patriarchy'.[57] Here, making visible brings with it the possibility of resistance.

Similarly, the drawings focus on the adaptations of the traders and the paradoxical position they occupy between closure and resistance. The drawings take the adaptations and employ exactly the same computer projection used by the architects to translate them into architectural propositions [Figs 125 & 126]. Unframed, printed by an architectural printing office and pasted directly to the walls they provide a gesture of communication of information. They take what are essentially fragile, ordinary and temporary, and propose that these minor everyday actions are re-valued as architecture. Further, in the drawings the use of red reverses the current hierarchy within which the adaptations are located. It singles out and 'exits' them from their everyday reception, thereby transforming them into architectural interventions.[58] As a development of the use of the colour red in much of the practice research discussed throughout this thesis, in *Market Meditations* it becomes a performative device by which to make visible that which is overlooked or repressed by the dominant power relations of the space.

With reference to a genealogy of feminist practice that, as discussed in chapter one, critiques notions of artistic creation as 'pure', 'abstract' and unencumbered by everyday activities,[59] the drawings revalue that which is conventionally deemed outside of creative architectural practice. Yet, beyond this action of revaluing, specific representational language of the

[56] Frichot, Gabrielsson, and Runting, pp. 6–7.
[57] Ibid., p. 6.
[58] Here they build on the performative use of the red jackets discussed in chapter two of this thesis. See also Abulhawa, 'Are You Known to Us?' The colour red is famously deployed by Tschumi not as a colour but as an 'idea'; a means 'to emphasize the concept, namely, the overriding idea of the project'. Samuel Medina, 'Interview: Bernard Tschumi Paints The Town Red - Architizer Journal', *Architizer*, 26 November 2012 <https://architizer.com/blog/inspiration/industry/interview-bernard-tschumi-paints-the-town-red/> [accessed 10 May 2021]. See also Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture Concepts: Red Is Not a Color* (New York: Rizzoli, 2012).
[59] See the 'maintenance art' of Lierle Laderman Ukeles discussed in chapter one of this thesis.

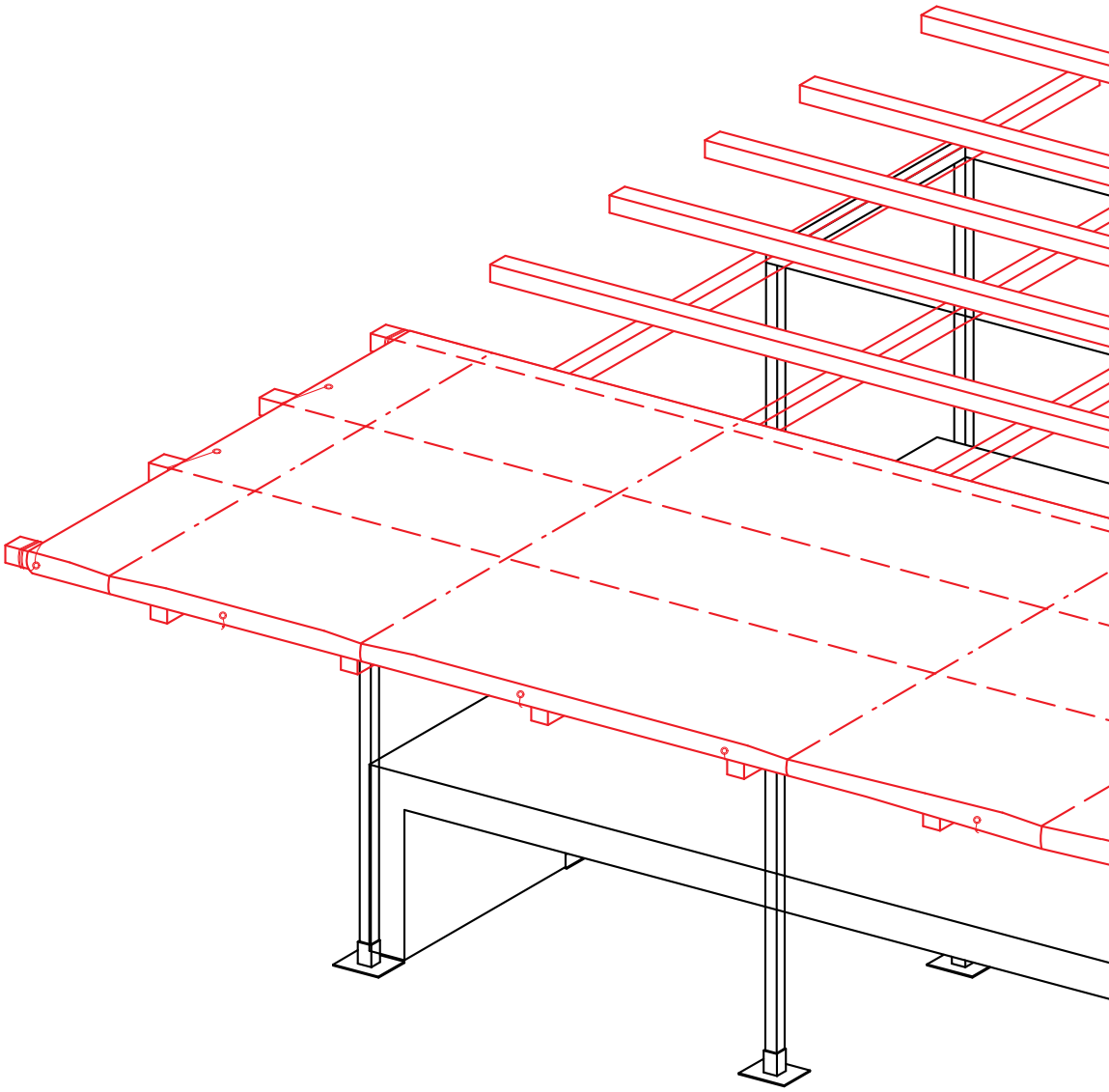
drawings forms an essential element in deconstructing this particular 'theatre of legitimacy'.[60] In light of the fact that the traders are required to submit an application to the architect to transform the market, the professional language of the drawings is key. Through adopting the language of the architects, they become propositional and provisional documents towards such an application. Here, there is a parodic subversive tactic at work. Not only do the drawings redeploy the communicational codes of the architects to revalorise what they consider as problematic insertions into their architectural design, but they also subvert the very language by which this design is enacted. As discussed in chapter one, by stretching its 'dominant logic'[61] they undermine the hegemonic and patriarchal expression of hierarchies that determine the occupation and use of this particular public building.

Mot's d'ordre and Micro-Politics of Power

In the situation of the market there exists a 'micro-politics' of power within which the traders are inscribed.[62] The discourse of the traders is suppressed by the rationalising discourse of the architects, expressed in the Code of Conduct, the accolades in the awards summaries/press media and the city council's promotion of the market in the tourist brochure. These discourses have spatial implications.[63] Through prescribing what the building *is* they also prescribe what the traders can *do*. In this situation, the adaptations the traders make to the building are both a product of and resistance against these spatial power relations.

By working within and adhering to these spatial relations, the adaptations concretise the limits on agency and action within the relational space of the market; they express in built form the local exercise of hegemonic power.[64] Yet, at the same time, in expressing the relationality of these micro-politics of power, these 'micro-points' become the starting point for a means of expression for those whose space and discourse are circumscribed by

[60] Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, p. 85.
[61] Miles, p. 142.
[62] This notion of the 'micro-politics' of power is informed by earlier research into 'micro-strategies of resistance' as a mobilisation of Michel Foucault's model of power/spatial relations for feminist praxis. See Stratford, 'Micro-Strategies'. It also refers to Deleuze and Guattari's use of the term to describe the 'molecular' organization of forces that sustain the 'macropolitics' of the state. Deleuze and Guattari, p. 183.
[63] See David Leatherbarrow discussed in chapter one of this thesis, *Architecture Oriented Otherwise*, Writing Matters, 1st ed (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2009).
[64] Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*, ed. by Colin Gordon, 1st American ed (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980).



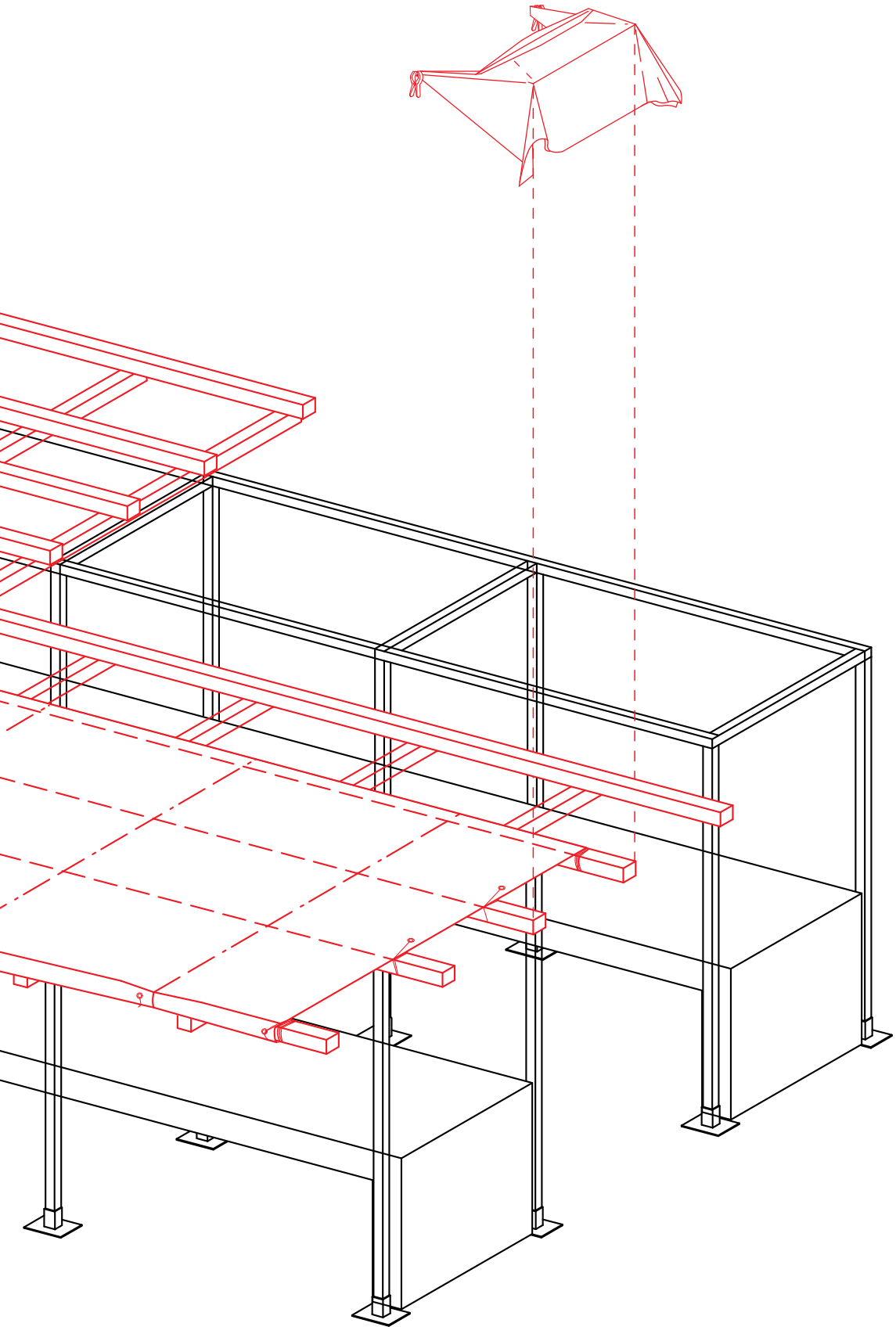
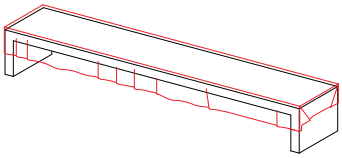
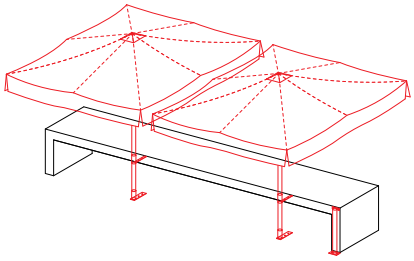
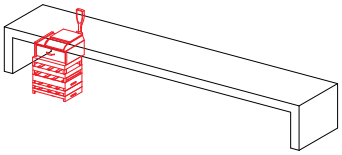
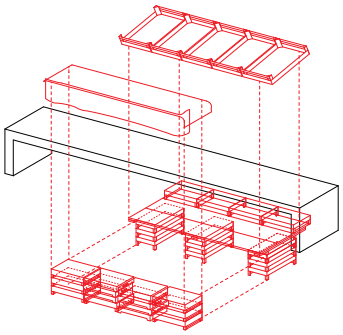


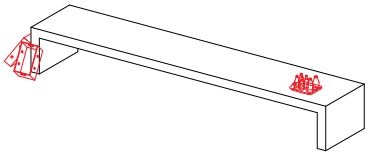
Fig. 125. *Market Meditations – Market Trader Adaptation #13* 2014.

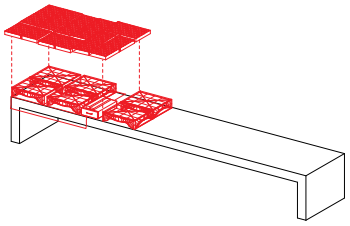


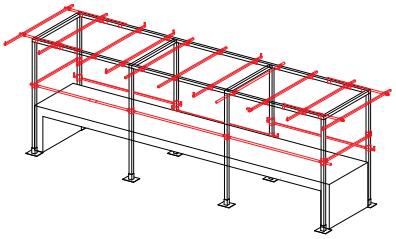


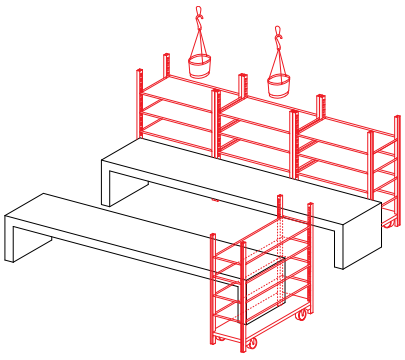


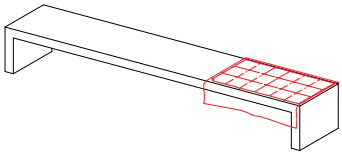


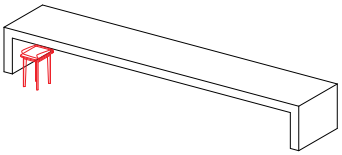












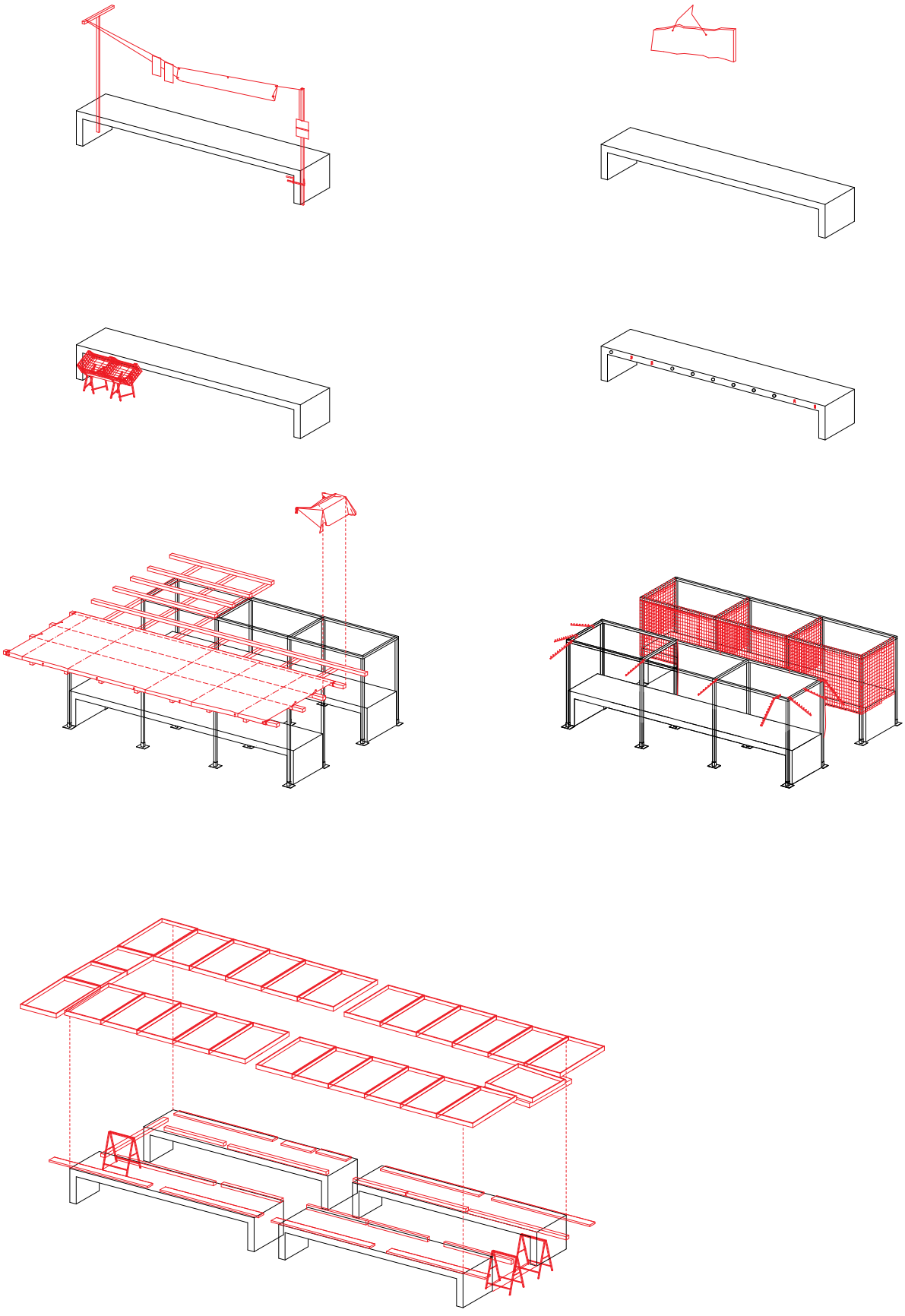


Fig. 126. *Market Meditations – Market Trader Adaptations* Compendium 2014.

'fragmented and diffuse', yet 'interlocking' structures of power.[65] Like the adaptations themselves, in highlighting the hegemonic structures of power reproduced in the market, which are patriarchal in their reproduction of gendered and age-related subjectivities and relations, the drawings also undermine them.

The drawings offer a way to conceptualise how patriarchal power and domination perform through spatial relations. Yet, at the same time by adopting the architectural representational language of the market, which forms part of the 'rhetoric of the site', the drawings also make it 'work against itself'.[66] In adopting the language of the architects, the drawings propose that the adaptations might become part of an application for their approval. On this basis, not only do the drawings acknowledge that the adaptations are a product of the rationalising discourse of the architects, but they also afford them agency. They recognise and build on their temporary and fragile presence as 'micro-points' of resistance.[67]

Presented in the gallery, the evidently unfinished task of compiling a compendium of traders' adaptations, show just how many are needed to make the building function; they show how it has failed. At the same time, their sheer amount demonstrates a success in the building's openness to multiple adaptations. This ambivalence and ambiguity of the drawings highlights the fragility of the performative within architecture. It highlights how, as discussed earlier in this thesis, the citational gravity of architecture endures, yet simultaneously how through 'misappropriation' spaces are always open to 'potential and unforeseeable futures'.[68] In the traders' adaptations, these 'unforeseeable futures' bring practices rooted in memories of the past building into dialogue with the new one. Further, placed alongside the Code of Conduct and the transcripts of the interviews, the drawings of the adaptations investigate how access to these 'potential futures' depends on a whole series of overlooked, or rather, hidden aspects in the production of architecture and public space.

[65] M. E. Bailey, 'Foucauldian Feminism', in *Up against Foucault: Explorations of Some Tensions between Foucault and Feminism*, ed. by Caroline Ramazanoglu (London ; New York: Routledge, 1993), pp. 99–122 (p. 104). See also Stratford, 'Micro-Strategies'.
[66] Rogoff, 'In Conversation Catherine David and Irit Rogoff', p. 87.
[67] Stratford, 'Micro-Strategies'.
[68] Mersch, p. 48.

Hidden Discourses

In the gallery, alongside the drawings and the Code of Conduct, transcripts of the conversations with the architects and the traders were presented for people to leaf through and read. During the conversation with the architects we talked about the design of the building and the other structures – the CCTV, signs and ownership, that construct the space. Yet, there are hidden aspects of the conversation that couldn't be made public. At the last minute, just before the exhibition install began, I was asked by the architects to edit the transcript of our conversation. Reasons for this were political – due to the forthcoming Mayoral elections in Celje; legal – due to the protection of the power expressed in the Code of Conduct and professional – due to personal expressions of opinions in relation to the adaptations and the traders. One page is almost empty of text, including my questions [Fig. 127]. Yet, rather than delete these edited parts they are retained as redacted red blocks of colour.

According to political theorist Chantal Mouffe 'critical artistic practices' hold the potential to make 'visible what the dominant consensus tends to obscure and obliterate', presenting 'other possibilities that have been repressed'.[69] In the tourist guide to Celje an aesthetically optimised photograph of the market accompanies a description of how 'its refurbished design has earned it a place among the 39 best projects running for the European Prize for Contemporary Architecture (Mies van der Rohe Award)'.[70] However, the glossy image and accompanying text obscures the financing and timetable of the build and political relationships. These aspects cannot be disclosed in this thesis either, but were made visible through their abject presence in the redacted documents in the gallery.

In many ways, by diplomatically engaging with the architects, accepting their version of events and their edits to our conversation, I was complicit in giving voice to the dominant power relations to which the traders were subjected. However, in presenting the removal of these edited sections in red blocks of colour, the transcript makes visible both the power differentials maintained through the construction of the building and the hierarchical processes within the architectural profession. It exposes the contingent nature of architectural

[69] Chantal Mouffe, 'Artistic Activism and Agonistic Spaces', *Art & Research*, 1.2 <http://www.artandresearch.org.uk/v1n2/mouffe.html>.
[70] 'Celje Tourist Guide', p. 18.

CONVERSATION WITH ARCHITECT MAY 2013

HS: I was interested in who commissioned the Market building in the first place Was it the Municipality?

TK: Actually it was a competition made by the Municipality. It was an invited competition, so they invited, I think, 6 Architects. We won, we had luck to win this, and that was the story.

HS: I was looking at a video of the old building and I wondered if you could tell me what inspired the original concept?

TK: Yes, actually the old building was quite nice, but in fact, it had been rebuilt and there was some additional buildings, or part of it, which destroyed the original outlook of the building, so…. and also there was a problem also with construction which was so old and in a bad shape, so it was quite a dangerous building, and that's why they decided to destroy it and this was actually the idea to destroy the old building and to build a new one.

But the old one had quite an interesting section – which was like a basilican section. It had the traditional shape of this basilican market place.

But the problem was that here on this side, what is a bit strange, in Celje we have one of the biggest prisons, so this is really a strange situation that in the city centre you have a prison which is somehow not only not quite in the right place but cannot come to the building very easily, with police cars and something, its quite a strange situation.

So, this high wall [of the old market building section], which I think was 7 metres high, enabled the sun to penetrate through these windows.

But, the problem with this kind of section was that there was not enough light coming under this big roof, so in the old market, there was problem, from this side, there was not enough light coming into the market so when it was sunny outside they had to have all the lights on. So it was really dark.

So that's why what we did is change it. We could not get enough light from the south, so we turned the logic into the different direction so we received enough light from east and west.

How we did that, we cut this big slab from both sides and we folded or divided this big slab into smaller pieces so what we got is this fine cut between these two roofs and we used it to receive enough light and also we used it as the main construction. The main construction is actually hidden in this cut between the two roofs, that's the whole story of why it is shaped like that.

That's why today you have nearly more or less enough light inside. And, of course, with this kind of construction you have enough height to have a big beam that can span quite a long way. It's 22metres actually.

HS: And so then the boxes, the enclosed spaces, that run down the side of the building, is that also a kind of barrier to the prison?

TK: Exactly, that's the floor plan, so the idea was to open the market to all the streets,

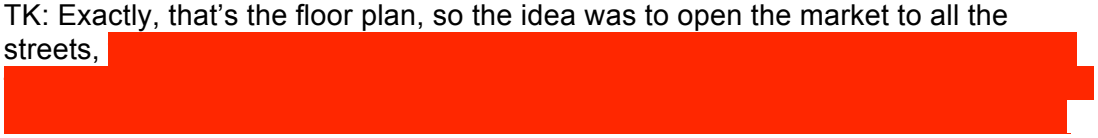


Fig. 127. In the edited transcript of the conversation with the architects one page is almost empty of text, including my questions. *Market Meditations – Conversation with the Architect* 2014.

The competition, which was organised by city authorities was made for open market An open Market means that a market is ‘open,’. It has a roof but no facade. In Ljubljana an open market has for example just umbrellas . So all six participants of the competition made projects for open markets, some even without the roof

If the subject of the competition would be the closed market, we would have made the building with the facade, heating, ventilation, etc. But this was not the case.



production, making visible how it is compositionally produced through a complex of social, economic, political and spatial assemblages; often at the mercy of the powerful who commission building projects. This finds alignments in the feminist theories discussed throughout this thesis, which undermine fixed and hegemonic notions of subjectivities and spaces by focusing on the conditional nature of their production.[71]

Beyond an observational and ethnographic exploration and representation of the relationship between the traders and the architects, the practice research responded to the traders' predicament, thereby occupying a propositional and provocative position. Here, its attempt to critique the dominant position of the architects and the city, actively responded to the specific conditions of the market. For art historian and critic Rosalind Deutsche, this way of working indicates a point where 'public art can enter the arena of urban politics […] perhaps facilitating the expression of social groups excluded by the current organisation of the city'.[72] In many ways, my position as 'outsider' enabled this facilitation, which, as discussed earlier in this chapter, offered a space for the traders to voice that which was considered resolved in the context of the dominant regeneration narrative of the city.[73]

However, as discussed earlier in this thesis, the notion of acting as a voice for 'others' brings with it important questions and caveats, whereby it is necessary to recognise and foreground the complicit and performative role of the researcher in the generation of spatial relations. The next section discusses how the performative workshops with the students offered an opportunity to further extend the position of 'facilitator' developed in chapter three. It examines how the workshops offered the possibility to develop the iterative research process that had begun through the conversations with the traders into an embodied method. A method by which bodies, following Butler, might take part in an 'acting together that opens

[71][974] Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*; Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*; Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto;* Massey, *For Space.*

[72] Rosalyn Deutsche, *Evictions: Art and Spatial Politics*, Graham Foundation/MIT Press Series in Contemporary Architectural Discourse (Chicago, Ill. : Cambridge, Mass: Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts ; MIT Press, 1996), p. 78.

[73] The Major of Celje was re-elected in 2018 for a sixth term and is currently pursuing plans for the longest pedestrian 'Tibetan style' footbridge in the world see 'Celje Plans the World's Longest Tibetan-Style Bridge Across the Savinja River' <https://www.total-slovenia-news.com/news/728-celje-plans-the-world-s-longest-tibetan-style-bridge-across-the-savinja-river> [accessed 19 April 2021]; Blaž Skok, 'A step closer to the suspension bridge between the Old Castle of Celje and Miklavški hill (photos of the bridge visualization) Korak bliže visečemu mostu med Starim gradom Celje in Miklavškim hribom (fotografije vizualizacije mostu)', Celje.info, 2019 <https://www.celje.info/aktualno/korak-blize-visecemu-mostu-med-starim-gradom-celje-in-miklavskim-hibom-foto/> [accessed 19 April 2021].

up time and space outside and against the established architecture'.[74] In this way, the performative workshops explored the possibility to generate other forms of agency and expression in the stalemate between the architects' vision and the experience of the dissatisfied traders.

Section Three – Performing-place: Acting Differently

Practice – Performative workshops

In May 2013 and September 2014 in three workshops, one at the school and two at the market, I invited art students aged 17 from the local Gimnazija Centre, (secondary school) to join me in a performative exploration of the market building. In contrast to the site responsive and reflective focus on the traders' situation, embedded in the drawings and gallery presentation, the workshops focused on developing the performance-based actions discussed in chapters two and three of this thesis. Here, they deployed bodily 'utterings',[75] which combined an 'unknowing' or 'doing-body'[76] with facilitating participatory 'social provocations'[77] in order to both research and affect the way the particular public space of the market was performed.

Whilst the research question and focus of *Market Meditations* developed through an iterative research methodology, in many ways the drawings and the gallery presentation remain representational. Like the drawings in 'Communities under Construction' discussed in chapter one, they adopt the position of the architects in order to offer a critique of the power relations occupied by that position. However, the particular place of the market building – how it was performed through the relations between the traders, the architect and the space – invited a more active methodology. Similar to *Manchester Blind Spots* discussed in chapter two of this thesis, this set of circumstances invited an active use of the body in order to open up wider points of discussion in relation to the intersection of these different power relations. However, a key difference from *Manchester Blind Spots* was that the workshops enabled me to test out the transferable aspects of these methods and within that examine the wider concerns and relevance of the practice research. Through facilitating embodied and

[74] Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, p. 75..
[75] Moira Gatens, *Bodies: Ethics, Power and Corporeality* (London: Routledge, 1995).
[76] Noland, p. 195.
[77] Jackson, *Performing Art, Supporting Publics*.

provocative live actions, the workshops invited the students to both investigate and critique the manifestations of the power relations through which the market was performed.

The possibility to collaborate with the students was enabled due to the strong connections Maja Hodošček had developed through her work with the nearby school. I picked up on this opportunity for several reasons. First, as mentioned above, it allowed me to explore how the methods I had been developing in my practice research might be transferable; enabling or inviting others to experience how these methods might be used to research public space. This thesis has already examined how these methods contain the potential to facilitate participatory and embodied situations through which participants experience and question the conventional ways that public spaces are produced and performed.[78] The difference in this case was that rather than simply taking part, the students were invited to devise actions themselves. This exploration into the transferability of these methods was heightened by *Market Meditation*'s location within Slovenia. This offered an opportunity to investigate the use of these processes in a different cultural and geographical context.

A second reason for working with the students was the opportunity to reflect on the transferability of these processes in a pedagogical context. Finally, the students were 'locals', they had access to language, in terms of visual, verbal and gestural codes that were specific to this particular context. Whilst there was a deeply practical element to this relationship, in the fact that the students could speak both English and Slovenian, the workshops also offered the opportunity to examine in what way this 'locality' affected the practice research.[79] The students were familiar with the market, therefore working with them offered an opportunity to examine how the market was regarded in the wider context of the city. Further, it enabled the possibility to examine how perceptions of a familiar public space might be challenged through a self-facilitated practiced methodology. In this sense, the performative workshops offered an opportunity to test out collaborative processes with the students that extended beyond the specificities of that relationship into a triangulation between me, the students, the market and the traders.

[78] These methods that were discussed in chapter one in 'Communities under Construction' and chapter two *Manchester Blind Spots* were extended in chapter three in *A Day with A Duck*.
[79] These notions of 'local' and 'locality' follow that of Doreen Massey's definitions of place discussed earlier in this thesis as a 'constellation of trajectories'. Massey, For Space, p. 149. See also Doreen Massey, 'The Political Place of Locality Studies', *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space*, 23.2 (1991), 267–81 <https://doi.org/10.1068/a230267>.

Embodied Knowledge

The first workshop took place in a classroom at the school. After discussing typical uses for the market – how people acted, which spaces they used and for what – the students were asked to develop new actions/instructions for ways the building might be performed differently. This was framed in terms of thinking about how the market might be used once it became empty, as the traders' diminishing numbers was one manifestation of their discomfort. In this way, the project was conceived as both proposal and provocation; it was located in actions that took place in the here and now, but introduced a commentary and critique on the longer term implications of the traders' condition.

In the school, the discussions around alternative ways the market might be performed proved difficult. The market was not a space that figured prominently in the lives of the students. Whether due to the age difference between the students and the traders, the security controls in place or even the architecture itself, for many, it was not a public space to which they felt connected or in which they wanted to spend any long periods of time. Consequently, they found it hard to think outside the market's current and conventional use. Yet, despite this slow start, in the market itself the students tried out activities including hide and seek, tennis, massage and meditation. They hid under, stood, sat and led on the white terrazzo tables. They interacted with the traders who joined in the playful actions, including arranging funereal flowers around one prone student. Finally, a poster of instructions written by the students for future users was put on display [Fig. 128]. Taped to the wall of a concrete water fountain in the centre of the market, it was about thirty minutes before it was cleaned away.

Following Butler, this performative research actively explores how buildings and spaces are performed via preconceived social networks of support and use.[80] The students' initial difficulty and slow start in thinking outside conventional market activities revealed entrenched ways of conceptualising the building's present and future use. In the context of the school classroom, there were many reflections by the students, on how the market was performed, opening up debates and discussions on how all spaces have visible and invisible and 'house rules'.[81] In addition, the students discussed mental borders; expressing preconceptions towards a place they appeared to know well, yet visited rarely. Crucially,

[80] See Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*; Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly.*
[81] Thereby resonating with Butler's 'theatre of legitimacy' 'housed in public space'. Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly, p. 85.*

for the students it was difficult to conceptualise other activities beyond those of the traders' or ones with similar commercial exchanges. All these conceptual difficulties align with Braidotti's arguments, discussed earlier in this thesis, on how 'the positioning that comes from our embodied and historically located subjectivities also determines the sort of political maps and conceptual diagrams we are likely to draw'.[82] Correspondingly, in performing it differently, through simple games and actions, the students started to challenge these entrenched ways of thinking.[83]

In this context, for the students the notion of the market as a public space, grew and changed over the course of the workshops. Here, as discussed in chapter two, there is a connection yet also a difference between performance and performativity. As Sophie Wolfrum argues 'performance designates the execution of an action or the uttering of a sentence that attributes a particular meaning to a current situation. Performative, on the other hand, refers to a situation in which a new reality is created'.[84] In this case, performativity, in the sense of the transformative act not only occurred in the creation of new situations between the traders, the market and the students, but critically it also occurred within the students themselves.

In *Multitude*, political philosophers Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri identify a 'conceptual shift from *habit* to *performance*'.[85] For Teresa Hoskyns, in this statement Hardt and Negri communicate a 'shift in citizenship' 'from habit to performance' as a political act.[86] In this context, she argues that 'performance subverts social bodies and new social forms are invented through performing everyday actions differently'.[87] For, Hardt and Negri, this shift to performance has its origins in postmodern feminist and queer theories including those of Butler.[88] Critically, they argue that Butler's 'performative processes of constitution' are 'constrained by both the weight of past performances and social interactions'.[89] Here, for

[82] Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, p. 123.
[83] Sections of this page and parts of these arguments appear in forthcoming Stratford, 'Theatres of Legitimacy'.
[84] Wolfrum, 'Performative Urbanism: Generating and Designing Urban Space', p. 13.
[85] Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2005), p. 199.
[86] Hoskyns, p. 74.
[87] Ibid.
[88] For Hardt and Negri, Butler 'develops clearly the performative processes of constitution' as the 'most sophisticated theory against the body'. Hardt and Negri, p. 199.
[89] Ibid., pp. 199–200.



Fig. 128. 'What you can do at the market' instructions for future users.
Market Meditations – Performative workshop poster 2013. Photograph Helen Stratford.



Fig. 129. *Market Meditations* – Performative workshop 'Meditation' 2013.
Photograph Nick Cheek.

them ‘performance, like habit, involves neither fixed immutable nature nor spontaneous individual freedom, residing instead between the two’.[90]

In the context of public space, Hoskyns argues that, following Hardt and Negri, ‘habit is politics, the everyday activities that contribute to the formation of the public realm, and performance is political, the activities that challenge and re-imagine the public realm.’[91] In the market workshops, the students’ discussions reflected the ‘weight of past performances,’ the ‘habit’ based in preconceptions of this particular public space.[92] Conversely, in prompting and enabling them to question and challenge their personal preconceptions of this public space, their embodied performative provocations started to become political performances. Not only did these actions enable the students to ask themselves what this building *is*, but also to ask the wider political context, including themselves, the traders, the architects and the city authorities, what can this building *do*?[93]

Crossprogramming and the Unknowing Doing Body

Loud and joyful, visual and embodied, the students’ actions transformed the place of the market. Their alternative actions challenged the existing programming of the space, through re-appropriating it for uses beyond what was socially expected. To some extent, these actions – their enacting out of creative (re)imaginings – remained constrained within the existing power relations of the market. Technically staying within the rules of the market designated by the signs, they remained within the existing approved concepts of ‘leisure’ and ‘play’. Nobody rollerbladed, cycled or brought a dog. Moreover, the poster, containing a list of activities with instructions for future users, was removed almost immediately.

Conversely, actions, including meditating [Fig. 129], hide and seek, massage, singing and resting, point towards playful actions that stretched the limits of these rules; reprogramming the space away from the commercial. In the spirit of Tschumi’s ‘crossprogramming’, while momentary and ephemeral, these actions confronted ‘space and use’[94] in order to test the limits of socially acceptable practices or ‘norms’.[95] In this way, the students’ actions started

[90] Ibid., p. 200. Critically, for Hardt and Negri, as also discussed throughout this thesis, is the ‘political significance of the recognition that sex along with other social bodies is produced and continuously reproduced through our everyday performances is that we can perform differently’. Ibid.
[91] Hoskyns, p. 74.
[92] Hardt and Negri, p. 200.
[93] This embodied and practice further develops the political critique Leatherbarrow’s argument discussed in chapter one. See Leatherbarrow, *Architecture Oriented Otherwise*.
[94] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 19.
[95] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*.

to re-imagine and redefine or, as Dorita Hannah argues, trouble or rather 'tremble' the architecture.[96] The students' actions made visible the constellation of performative forces, which, as discussed earlier in this thesis, in some places and for some people are more corporeally tangible than others, while challenging them through displaced and 'dissonant' actions.[97]

In the workshops, gestures, including meditative sitting, massage and simply lying down, were displaced. Like the actions in *Manchester Blind Spots* discussed in chapter two, in the context of the market, these displaced or dissonant gestures held specific connotations which only became visible once adopted. At odds with the official 'discursive formations' of this particular place, the students' actions, following Hoskyns, 'remove function from form', pointing towards practices by which places might be creatively reimagined.[98] Further, whilst the actions were preplanned, in their enaction they allowed for 'appropriations, chance and events'.[99] In these 'unknowing' otherwise gestures, bodies were positioned differently in relation to others, thereby opening up a dialogue that enabled a different version of the space to be envisaged.

As discussed earlier in this thesis, any gestures are deeply contextual, affected by the response of others in relation to the spatial context, with some curtailed at the expense of others.[100] In the market, while ultimately curtailed by the management in the removal of the poster, the gestures of the students also opened up joyful exchanges between the traders and the students. Prior to the workshop these connections and dialogues had been hitherto unrealised. In this sense, like the fountain game discussed in chapter two and developed through 'social provocations' in chapter three, not only were these actions incongruous but they were also playful; making a new 'dialogue of being in a space'[101] that provoked critical and participatory engagement with others. Yet, in the context of the market these 'new

[96] Hannah, p. 309.
[97] The notion of dissonance is discussed in chapter two of this thesis in relation to the theories of Noland. Further, in 'Spaces of Appearance, politics of exposure', feminist social anthropologist Athena Athanasiou argues that the 'question of who can appear gets complicated, and occasionally gets into trouble, when a realm of appearance comes face to face with an uncanny stranger whose appearance and claim to public space are taken to yield a dissonance'. Butler and Athanasiou, p. 195.
[98] Hoskyns uses this phrase in relation to her argument that through indeterminate design Tschumi's *Parc la Villette i*s a democratic and therefore public space. Hoskyns, p. 78.
[99] Ibid.
[100] Ruprecht.
[101] Jackson, *Performing Art, Supporting Publics*, p. 5.

dialogues' did more than simply make visible or critique the specific power relations at play, they also generated new spaces with emergent outcomes.

The culturally inferred experience produced by the students' displaced and playful gestures provided new knowledge about the space of the market that was non-verbal. While, in many ways, the actions were, as mentioned earlier, largely generic leisure pursuits, through the responses of the traders the enaction of them by the students resonated with their cultural and geographical context. These connections, through the language of gestures, fostered relational spaces between the students, the traders, and the place of the market; creating feedback loops that brought new insights to the practice research. Critically, in the second market workshop, made in collaboration with local artist Andreja Džakušič, these emergent spaces generated between the students and the traders enabled the collection of the traders' complaints in a list displayed on a market table. This public display of complaints attracted not only the attention of citizens but also the newly appointed market director.

In her research 'On Complaint', feminist writer and independent scholar Sara Ahmed argues that 'complaints are both personal and institutional'.[102] For Ahmed, the register of the complaint in and on the body is a 'register of the institutional'.[103] Yet, she also argues that a body can announce a complaint. Unlike the bodies of the students, the bodies of the traders announce their complaint through feelings of cold and heat which eventually lead to the inability to go to work. Aligning with the performance theories of Carrie Noland discussed earlier in this thesis, this 'announcement' forms part of kinaesthetic knowledge; it is embodied knowledge that the space is not working.[104] Similarly, Ahmed argues how 'you notice a structure when it stops you'.[105] In this sense, the market's design has stopped the traders' bodies from functioning. Yet, in refunctioning the market, the gestures of the students generated a space that facilitated an opening of the discussion around the traders' complaints to a new audience, disseminating it to citizens and management alike.

Within the context of the two contested positions – that of the dissatisfied traders and that of the architects – the students' actions offer an intermediary space of transition. Their actions are not constrained by the regulations that restrict the traders from making changes. Through

[102] Sarah Ahmed, *On Complaint* (Wheeler Centre, 2018) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4j_BwPJoPTE> [accessed 19 April 2021].
[103] Ibid.
[104] Noland.
[105] Ahmed.

'performing-places' they liberate this position; offering multiple versions of this particular place. In addition, if momentarily, they also step outside the architects' vision. Here, the students' actions exert a performative force on the space that challenges its use, which is reinforced through management, raised rents, CCTV cameras and signage. In this context, the performative actions productively disrupted the particular networks or assemblages of the space, making way for the creation of new frameworks which support different ways of being. At the same time, they make possible an interconnectedness of self and other (beings, places, and practices) with concrete outcomes in the form of the public complaints. Re-assembled in the gallery alongside the drawings, table, code and transcripts, and re-presented at the start of this thesis and in this chapter as film stills, combining actions overlaid with traders' complaints and architects' comments, the students' actions open up new possibilities.[106] Here, their actions move from asking what does this building *do*, to what can it *become*? Thereby pointing towards 'performative-places' that generate performative potential for future users.

Section Four – Performative-places: Mattering Differently

So far, this chapter has largely focused on practices that examine and critique how the specific public space of the market and the traders' associated subjectivities are produced through networks of social relations and discourse – or rather 'discursive practices'.[107] It has examined how the market is produced and expressed through the legislation surrounding its construction, the vision of the architects/architectural press and the representations of the city council. Further, it has investigated in what way these discursive practices are replicated in everyday performances and how they might be challenged through performative actions that socially reprogramme the space. But what, of the matter of the space itself? The market was very particular in this respect. It was, after all, the very specific materiality of the space that had attracted me to it in the first place.

In the market, the high roof and the cold concrete floor preclude both produce and people, both traders and customers, from adequate physiological protection from the elements. These meteorological aspects are exacerbated by the corporeality of the traders whose elderly

[106] The film submitted as part of this thesis, from which the stills are taken, is an edited version of the film that was presented in the gallery. This edited version aims to communicate the many layers and voices that produce the space of the market into which the students' actions intervene. The gallery film consisted solely of the students' actions and their associated titles.
[107] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, p. 63.

bodies suffer more readily than those with less years. These physical forces interact with the particular material aesthetics of the building. The concrete and steel materiality reproduces an ideology of fixity and cleanliness that, as discussed earlier in this thesis, resonate with an architectural tradition to create order in the city, or rather to bring 'security and purpose' to an otherwise 'primitive or undifferentiated matter'.[108]

According to the architects 'the image of the market today' is 'not perfectly clean', but 'part of everyday city life'.[109] However, they also describe how the materials used are as 'neutral as possible', belying their tradition within a modernist aesthetic.[110] This discourse is materiality supported by the market's cleaning regime expressed by the rapid removal of the students' poster. Further in relation to the height of the roof, the architects claim that laws in relation to building type set out in the competition brief determined its design; thereby offering a selective idea of history as a determining factor on the material form of the market.

Following Barad's feminist posthuman performativity, discussed previously in relation to non-human entanglements, the space of the market is 'marked' by these intra-actions of material and discursive 'forces'.[111] This 'moving substrate of force relations'[112] manifests unequal power relations played out between the city, the architect and the traders. Power relations that are further enacted by the traders' 'gendered' and 'elderly' condition, the historical reception of which positions them in a passive and exclusionary relationship to public space.[113] In this context, the intra-actions of spatial layout and materiality, in combination with the regeneration programme of the city, enact a certain agency that is exclusionary within its current notion of what a market (and trader should be. Crucially, for

[108] Pinder, *Visions of the City*, p. 103.
[109] Arhitektura Krušec, 'Arhitektura Krušec [Interview].'
[110] Ibid. As discussed in chapter three, Pinder argues that a modernist aesthetic is rooted in a progression 'away from the sensuous tactility of ornate decoration', towards 'an accent on the abstraction of form and harmony of proportion'. Pinder, *Visions of the City*, pp. 57,71. This viewpoint is echoed in Lefebvre's critique of supposedly abstract 'space of architects' discussed in chapter one. Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, p. 361. Further, it has been extensively critiqued by architects and architectural historians, including Beatriz Colomina and Jeremy Till who alongside Elizabeth Grosz and Mark Wigley argue for the making visible of the social, cultural and political aspects that inform the production of what are claimed to be apolitical and even 'timeless' spaces. In addition to the references in chapter one, see Beatriz Colomina, *Privacy and Publicity: Modern Architecture as Mass Media* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 2000); Beatriz Colomina, 'The Split Wall: Domestic Voyeurism', in *Sexuality & Space*, ed. by Jennifer Bloomer, Princeton Papers on Architecture, 1 (New York, N.Y: Princeton Architectural Press, 1992), pp. 72–128; Mark Wigley, *White Walls, Designer Dresses: The Fashioning of Modern Architecture*, 1. MIT Press paperback ed (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2001).
[111] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, pp. 237, 226.
[112] Ibid., p. 235.
[113] See references mentioned earlier in this chapter in relation to the exclusion of women from public space. See chapter one for a discussion of exclusionary practices in relation to age in research by Sophie Handler.

Barad, agency is 'a matter of intra-acting', it is 'an enactment', and 'not something that someone or something has'.[114] Central to this reviewing of agency, is the notion that 'intra-actions are constraining but not determining'.[115] In the market, the impossibility for the traders to take up the position of 'trader' in the manner they perceive it should be enacted, prompts them to question the 'congealing of agency',[116] enacted through the particular discursive-material forces, by implementing their own material constructions.

The recasting of the traders' actions and subjectivities as entangled within the discursive-material relations of the market affects a different possibility of those relations.[117] Here, the traders' adaptations are performative. According to Barad's performative understanding of matter, materiality is not solely 'an effect or consequence of discursive practices'.[118] She argues that approaches that embrace this position 'lack an account of materiality as an agentive and productive factor in its own right'.[119] In the market, on the one hand, the temporary adaptations, can be seen as a product of the traders' powerlessness to make permanent changes to the market building; a powerlessness also re-produced by their adherence to these rules. However, on the other hand, like the students' actions, the adaptations are material manifestation of the possibilities of the market to become something other than intended. Here, the temporariness of these constructions reside within and reproduce the discursive rules manifest by the Code of Conduct. Yet, at the same time, their physical presence enacts a performative force that 'troubles' the market in their threat to become more dominant than the supposedly 'neutral' aesthetic of the space itself.

In this situation, the robust matter of the market, which in many ways is debilitating for the traders, is absorbed into their temporary, fragile and minor constructions. Here, the adaptations enact a resistance to the market's 'neutral' materiality by enabling the building to function, at least partially, according to their desires. Paradoxically, this refunctioning is exactly what the architects claim to be *their* vision. They claim to have made a building that

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[114] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, p. 235.
[115] Ibid. p. 234. This rereading of the space of the market is informed by Barad's agential realist reading of feminist theorist Leela Fernandes' study of power relations on the shop floor of a Calcutta jute mill. Ibid., pp. 226-246.
[116] Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter', p. 828.
[117] Barad also refers to these intra-actions of relations as 'phenomena' which are 'relational beings'. Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, p. 239.
[118] Ibid., p. 225. For Barad 'As Foucault and Butler emphasize, power is not an external force that acts on a subject; there is only a reiterated acting that is power in its stabilizing and sedimenting effects—only now, in my agential realist account, ''the moving substrate of force relations'' is not limited to the social'. Ibid., p. 235.
[119] Ibid.

can be used and manipulated; a building in which they, as authors, have become redundant in giving up their control of the space.[120] Yet, the traders' adaptations provoke a response that highlights the limits of this claim. When asked what they think about the traders' adaptations, the architects reply that 'there is always a problem how much they intervene you know, of course'.[121] In this sense, the traders' adaptations both incorporate but also push the material limits of the market, thereby challenging the discursive apparatus by which it is understood. Ultimately, the agency of the traders' ad-hoc adaptions resides in the enactment of a provocation which undermines the particular discourse of the architects through making visible the non-neutrality of the market itself.

The possibility to transgress the discursive implications of the spatial layout was also the provocation proposed by the student workshops. The students utilised the spatial layout and materials of the market to introduce actions that counter the intended design of the space. These actions reprogrammed the space but, as with the traders' adaptations, the materiality of the market played a central role in this reprogramming. Whilst hide and seek and tennis extended the space of the individual trader from a single bench to encompass and affect the whole space of the market, other actions, including sitting, lying and dancing on the benches made use of but also encountered their robust concrete construction.

In this situation, the matter of the market is not primarily socially or discursively produced. Moreover, it does not, as Butler argues, primarily serve to 'support' human action,[122] its very materiality affords a different type of action to take place. Here, the design of the market, in terms form and materiality, mattered but in a new way. In this respect, the enacting of the playful (re)imaginings of the space by the students echo the balancing act of the traders' adaptations. Rather than being 'produced' by the discursive forces of the market, the traders entanglement with its material apparatus, entails a possibility for new intra-actions that 'contest and rework […] what is excluded from mattering'.[123] Similarly, the students actions investigated how the materiality of the market affords a certain way of acting and

[120] They comment how 'that's I think the point of every building, it has to become a part of everyday city life and when it becomes like that you know you made a great building'. Arhitektura Krušec, 'Arhitektura Krušec [Interview].'
[121] Ibid.
[122] Butler observes how the material infrastructure of 'the square and the street' are 'material supports for [human] actions. Further she argues that the public space of the street is an 'infrastructural good', the demand for which is a 'demand for a certain kind of inhabitable ground'. Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, pp. 72, 127.
[123] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, p. 235.

understanding of the space of the market, thereby pointing towards the possibility that it might afford others.

In 2015, I returned to the market to see if anything had changed. Interviewing the market director, I learned how the traders' complaints had led to further discussions with the architect, which eventually resulted in the approval and implementation of new umbrellas to aid with protection from the elements.[124] On the one hand, the white and symmetrically arranged umbrellas might be considered as simply re-asserting the architects' control and power; absorbing the traders brightly coloured versions into a clean and unified vision.[125] Yet, on the other hand, there is agency in their material presence. According to Ahmed, even if it results in little actual change, the act of complaining leaves 'writing on the wall' it says 'we are here', 'we did not get used to it'.[126] The umbrellas are material manifestations of the ongoing negotiations of power relations between the architects and the traders that were generated through the practice research. In this context, *Market Meditations*' argument against the social and material consequences of the city regeneration programme that were registered at the level of the bodies of the traders, generated a 'negotiated reality'[127] that changed the material narrative of this particular public space.

Section Five – Provocations-in-place: Knowing Differently

Practice – Performative objects

Central to Barad's 'agential realist' account of performativity is its implications for reframing knowledge. According to Barad 'we do not obtain knowledge by standing outside of the world; we know because "we" are *of* the world. We are part of the world in its differential becoming'.[128] In the reflection on the relationships enacted by *Market Meditations*, one intra-action needs more focus. By examining the active role of the material interventions I set up in the market and the gallery, the final section of this chapter examines how I was

[124] Returning in 2016, I was greeted by a crisp and precise array of white umbrellas. [see Fig. 172 appendix three]
[125] Indeed, the architects have gone on to build another market in Ptuj, Slovenia's oldest city, whose design is almost identical to that of the market building in Celje, albeit for a slightly 'reddish' amendment to the grey and white palette. Arhitektura Krušec, 'Arhitektura Krušec' <https://www.arhitekturakrusec.si/en/projects/trznica-ptuj> [accessed 27 May 2021].
[126] Ahmed.
[127] 'Negotiated realities' were developed in chapter three of this thesis as a development of Sarah Pink's 'negotiated versions of reality' generated between the subjectivities of researcher and informants in ethnographic methodologies. Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography*, p. 24.
[128] Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter', p. 829.

implicated or rather, 'complicit'[129] within the particular material-discursive apparatus set up by the practice research. Proceeding from this basis, it examines what type of public space is generated out of these processes in order to develop the relational participatory practices discussed in chapter three.

Taking inspiration from the traders' colourful temporary adaptations, the first workshop in the market began by laying a red tablecloth and rolling out a map of the city onto one of the concrete tables. The future city vision, made from market produce in cake form[130] was placed on the map alongside printed information about the future regeneration plans for the city [Fig. 130 see also appendix two]. It was evident that whilst easily accessible on the internet, citizens weren't really aware about the city vision, of which the market building was an integral step. At the same time, in the gallery show, a table displayed a film of the students' actions alongside a film of the old market building in use. Constructed in exactly same proportions as the white terrazzo market tables, the gallery table was remade in timber – the dominant material of the old market [Fig. 131]. In these actions the focus shifted from the social components of the market to the physical; intimately connecting the material to the discursive.

In both workshops, occupying a table in the market utilised the apparatus of the market to create a space, which like the traders' adaptations, was both part of its structure but also performative in its transformative implications. While actively choreographing and enabling the self-facilitated actions of the students, these actions opened up discussions regarding the regeneration trajectory of the city [Fig. 132]. Like the 'social provocations' of the 'situations' discussed in chapter three, these interventions drew on performance-based methods to mediate a particular exchange. Further, the presence of other participants, including curator Maja, local artist Andreja and my mother – the maker of the cakes and an elderly woman herself, formed a key part of this assemblage. In the market, this situation fostered moments of exchange between the traders, the students, the citizens *and* the materiality of the market; making a new 'dialogue of being in space', that was both social and material [Fig. 133].[131]

[129] See chapter three for a discussion of the notion of complicity in relation to the researcher-practitioner.
[130] Made by my mother Hilary Stratford.
[131] Jackson, *Performing Art, Supporting Publics*, p. 5.



Fig. 130. A red table cloth was laid on a market table, overlaid with a map of the city. On the table new buildings made in cake form from market produce sat alongside information about the regeneration plans. *Market Meditations* – Performative workshop table 2013. Photograph Nick Cheek.



Fig. 131. In the gallery a market table was remade in timber opening up discussions on the matter of the market. *Market Meditations* – Gallery opening installation view 2014. Photograph Nik Jarh.

In many ways, these interventions can be regarded as props that set up or 'stage' a particular 'environment'. For Rachael Hann this potential to create 'environments' is part of a scenographic process.[132] While, as mentioned earlier, a detailed study of scenography is beyond the scope of this thesis, a consideration of the performative nature of objects in terms of framing and staging is useful in this context for reflecting on the role of objects and actions in *Market Meditations*. Moreover, this aspect relates and refers back to Cathy Turner's notion of 'expanded dramaturgy'' discussed in chapter two, examining the 'existing dramaturgical elements' of the Market.[133] At the same time, diffractively reading these interventions through the notion of 'performative' situations within a feminist material context highlights their potential as material and discursive tools that have an intrinsically transformative critical imperative.[134]

In *Market Meditations*, the gallery presentation highlighted how the building form 'market,' which brought with it the promise of the 'agora' or as Deutsche might describe the 'phantom' of democracy, in fact contrasted with the labour conditions and lack of voice of the traders during the design process.[135] In the gallery table, the market's history as a self-made and predominantly timber building contrasted with and drew attention to the concrete, linear spatial layout and geometrical landscape of its current manifestation. This material manifestation raised further questions over how the conditions of the traders interacted with the regeneration trajectory of the city, of which the market building was considered a forerunner. In this way, this subversion of 'inert' matter literally transformed what are

[132] Hann.
[133] Turner, 'Mis-Guidance and Spatial Planning', p. 156.
[134] Staging is also central to the work of feminist/queer group MYCKET. MYCKET focus on staging spaces of the 'club scene'. Here, as Meike Schalk and Karin Reisinger observe, 'existing material qualities' of spaces are 'augmented through the decorative "dressing" of space, the use of objects, props and artifacts, costumes, make-up, accessories, food, music and performances'. Meike Schalk and Karin Reisinger, 'Styles of Queer Feminist Practices and Objects in Architecture', *Architecture and Culture*, 5.3 (2017), 343–52 (p. 345) <https://doi.org/10.1080/20507828.2017.1386942>. Further, in their account of the 'Styles' salon at the Architecture & Feminisms Conference at KTH Stockholm in 2016, Schalk and Reisinger introduce the notion of 'worldmaking' termed by performance theorist José Esteban Muñoz. Like the 'worlding' of Hann, here 'performance is a worldmaking practice that "labors" to make worlds of transformative politics that create new possibilities'. Ibid., p. 344.
[135] Deutsche, p. 324. In *Evictions* Deutsche focuses at length on the 'phantom' of democracy represented by public space. For Deutsche, 'public space is crucial to democracy not despite but because it is a phantom – though not in the sense of pure delusion, false impression, or misleading appearance […] Democratic public space might, rather, be called a phantom because while it appears, it has no substantive identity and is, as a consequence, enigmatic'. Ibid. For Deutsche the phantom of public space resides in the fact that it has never existed; it is an illusion that is not located within a particular identity or place but at a point of negotiation. This notion of public space as a point of negotiation, as also defined by Hoskyns, is examined later in this chapter.



Fig. 132. The 'situations' set up new relations between practice, people and place, within which I was implicated. *Market Meditations* – Performative workshop 2013. Photograph Nick Cheek.



Fig. 133. Inspired by the traders' adaptations, occupying the table in the market actively choreographed the self-facilitated actions of the students, while opening up discussions on the city regeneration processes. *Market Meditations* – Performative workshop 2013. Photograph Helen Stratford.

conventionally seen as 'physical properties' into an intra-action of the discursive and the material.

In these situations, the objects deployed in *Market Meditations*, both in the gallery and in the workshops, exert a performative force on the market building that critically rethink the power relations it supports. In relation to 'critical spatial practice', Rendell argues that 'projects that put forward questions as the central tenet of the research […] tend to produce objects that critically rethink the parameters of the problem itself'.[136] In this sense, the material interventions supported the adaptations of the traders and the actions of the students, while actively collaborating with them to open up questions about the way the structures of the market were reproduced.[137]

This use of material interventions to open up questions around intersections of power relations in public spaces and institutions is also found in the work of feminist collective 'taking place'. An example is the project *The Other Side of Waiting*, located within the Mother and Baby Unit in Homerton Hospital London. This public art project proposed six artworks that worked with a range of locations – corridors, waiting areas, wards, staff rest rooms and ensuite bathrooms of delivery rooms – in order to explore what happens 'when waiting is valued, rather than merely located as an "absence" in the interstices of clinical and administrative functions'.[138] As I have discussed elsewhere, *The Other Side of Waiting* marked a shift in the work of 'taking place' through focusing on the use of material interventions to explore 'the notion of assemblage through material means'.[139] This included my own project *Routine Procedures* comprising signage and ideas around long-term curtain design in the postnatal ward. [Fig. 134]

In the context of this thesis, my intervention and many of the those in *The Other Side of Waiting* might be considered 'performative objects' in that they started to 'redefine the material (the spatiality of the hospital and its associated bodies)' revealing its constellation of power relations, including 'the levels of hierarchy in the hospital itself'.[140] *Routine Procedures* created a space to engage with implicit negotiations between medical perceptions of health, observation and procedure, alongside cultural and social perceptions of privacy and

[136] Jane Rendell, 'Architectural Research and Disciplinarity', *ARQ*, 8.4 (2004), 141–47 (p. 145).
[137] The gallery table itself generated a situation for exchange of cakes at the exhibition opening and also a separate artist's talk and workshop which migrated into the market space.
[138] 'Takingplace.Org.Uk'.
[139] Hoskyns and Stratford, p. 415.
[140] Ibid.

dignity. Similarly, Katie Lloyd Thomas's project, *This Is For* You, explored the collective nature of looking after a premature baby manifest through focusing on curating the plethora of objects and acts which 'stand in for the mother's body and the wish they relay to "be well"'.[141] On this basis, I have argued elsewhere that the interventions deployed 'material presence' to enable greater provocation and reflection than practicing alone.[142]

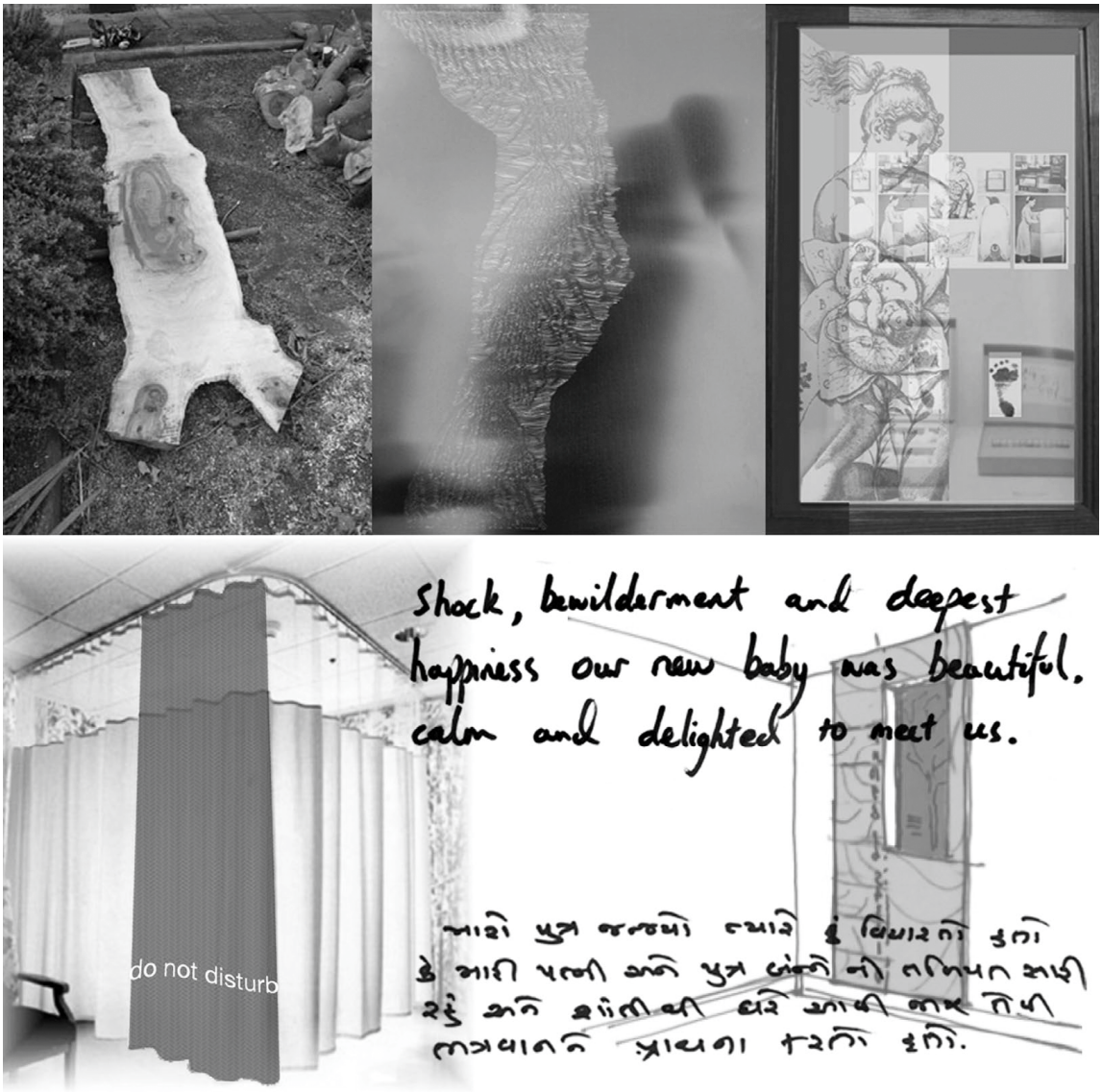


Fig. 134. taking place 6: The Other Side of Waiting interventions 2012-17. Clockwise from top left: *The Homerton Tree* Julia Dwyer and Sue Ridge, *In The Name of Love* Bridgid McLeer, *This is for You* Katie Lloyd Thomas, *First Moments* Teresa Hoskyns, *Routine Procedures* Helen Stratford. Courtesy of 'taking place'.

[141] 'Takingplace.Org.Uk'.
[142] Hoskyns and Stratford, p. 415.

In *Market Meditations*, the material interventions operated in a similar way to those in *The Other Side of Waiting*. They worked with the students and traders to open the space of the market to be critically rethought. Yet in 'redefining the material'[143] to generate a critical position they also supported and made visible the traders' specific condition within the market. In this sense, the situations created between the objects, the students and the market were not a performance or even a performative gesture but a provocation; a dramatisation of a shared concern. The term 'dramatisation' relates to that used by Deutsche in relation to the *Homeless Vehicle Project* of artist Krzysztof Wodiczko.[144]

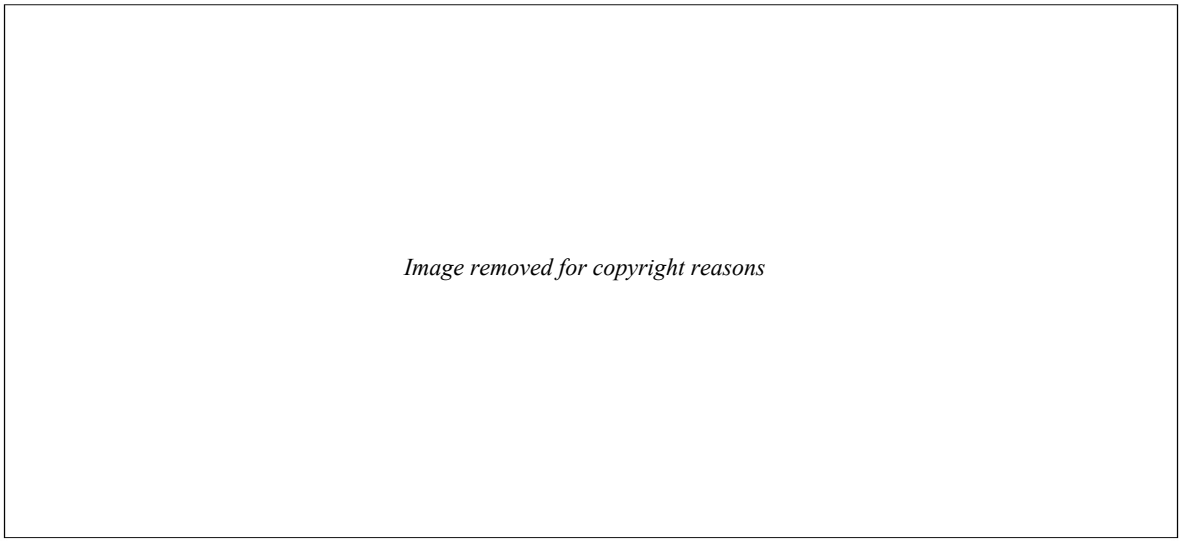


Fig. 135. *The Homeless Vehicle Project* by Krzysztof Wodiczko 1988-1989 acts as both dramatization and troubling of undemocratic spatialities. Left: 'Krzysztof Wodiczko' <https://www.krzysztofwodiczko.com/instrumentation#/homeless-vehicle-project/> [accessed 8 May 2021]. Right: 'The Machine Is Unheimlich: Krzysztof Wodiczko's Homeless Vehicle Project' <https://walkerart.org/magazine/krzysztof-wodiczkos-homeless-vehicle-project> [accessed 20 April 2021].

Made in consultation with homeless people in New York, *Homeless Vehicle Project* focuses on the creation of prototypes for mobile pavilions that make visible the plight of those who are conventionally excluded from public space [Fig. 135]. According to Deutsche, 'by increasing the visibility of the evicted who, in reality, already inhabit urban space, the homeless vehicle dramatizes the right of the poor not to be isolated and excluded.'[145] However, she also emphasises how *Homeless Vehicle Project* is more than just visualisation. For Deutsche 'heightened visibility, however, is only the necessary, not the sufficient, condition for this dramatization', she comments how 'visibility can also be used, as it is by conservative urban critics, to strengthen demands for the removal of the evicted'.[146] Indeed,

[143] Hoskyns and Stratford, p. 415.
[144] See Deutsche, pp. 93–107.
[145] Deutsche, p. 98.
[146] Ibid.

in a contemporary context, critics have argued that *Homeless Vehicle Project* risks trivialising homelessness, thereby reproducing hierarchies and discriminations surrounding poverty.[147] However, a key aspect of the *Homeless Vehicle Project* is that is does not propose a solution to the homeless problem. In contrast, it introduces an object that exists within and makes visible the hierarchies and exclusions of public space in order to provoke discussions on its future development.[148] It is, as Deutsche argues, 'both a practical instrument and a symbolic utterance'.[149]

This focus on dramatisation aligns with feminist performative architectures as the creation of situations, including performative objects, that trouble 'undemocratic' and gendered spatialities reperformed through the built environment. Further, in relation to the notion of 'collusion' and 'complicity', discussed in chapter three of this thesis, the vehicle is itself a product of the very conditions it troubles. Indeed, for Deutsche 'the homeless vehicle's function, far from general or inevitable, is clearly a socially created scandal'.[150] Yet, at the same time, Deutsche suggests that the project appropriates 'the space of the city – reclaiming space for social needs against space organized for profit and control'.[151] For Deutsche, the project's 'mixture of fantasy and reality'[152] 'contributes as well to the construction of an oppositional public sphere that counters the dominant relations organizing public space'.[153]

As discussed earlier in this thesis, Susan Melrose uses the term 'performative' to indicate a 'performance-making strategy' that uses the body to utter – producing triggers or rather provocations.[154] Similarly for Pascal Gielen, artist 'interruptions' contain the potential to introduce 'a "dismeasure" into the measure that is regarded as "normal"' interrupting and

[147] Dick Hebdidge, 'The Machine Is Unheimlich: Krzysztof Wodiczko's Homeless Vehicle Project' <https://walkerart.org/magazine/krzysztof-wodiczkos-homeless-vehicle-project> [accessed 20 April 2021]
[148] The notion of the performative object that exists within the rules of public space in order to trouble them is also found in the 'Co-machines' by ON/OFF, an interdisciplinary design studio based in Berlin who create temporary and tactical objects that disrupt public space. *Disco Späti* for example is a mobile bar that plays with the notion of late night shops or *Spätkauf* while pushing to its limits the rules which allow for transportation of alcohol to avoid incrimination for the illegal sale of alcohol on the streets of Berlin. See ON/OFF, 'Disco Späti' <http://www.onoff.cc/projects/disco-spati/> [accessed 20 April 2021]; ON/OFF, *Co-Machines: Mobile Disruptive Architecture* (Berlin: Guerrilla Printing Press, 2018).
[149] Deutsche, p. 99.
[150] Ibid., p. 105
[151] Ibid, p. 106.
[152] Ibid.
[153] Ibid., p. 107.
[154] Melrose, '"The Body" in Question: Expert Performance-Making in the University and the Problem of Spectatorship', p. 16.

making public space anew.[155] In the context of *Market Mediations*, in dialogue with *Homeless Vehicle Project*, provocations here are extended into 'material interruptions'. These provocations, both acknowledge power relations while opening up alternative and multiple versions or performative architectures of this particular place. Further, not only do they operate at the level of direct participant involvement – in this case the students and traders – but they also contain implications for ways of thinking about how public spaces are produced more generally; examining how agency and knowledge are constrained but also mobilised within those relationships.[156]

Triangulations – the Researcher-Practitioner as 'Mediator'

For Barad, 'all bodies, not merely 'human' bodies come to matter through the world's iterative intra-activity – its performativity.'[157] In this context, being depends on degrees of extensive relations between bodies, or 'knowing in being', that intimately connects practices of knowing to wider spatial, technological, social and material contexts.[158] In *Market Meditations*, and many aspects of the practice research discussed throughout this thesis, there is a triangulation of experience between me, the place I work with and the people who inhabit, move through and produce it. This active and relational practice explores how these elements can never be defined independently but are rather co-produced and connected by and through the practice research.

In *Market Meditations*, this triangulation is more pronounced than in the previous case studies. I move between different performative locations that mediate different positions with different implications for different spatial knowledge production. From architect observer (in my selection of the market, interview with the architects and landscape architect, and representation of the traders' adaptations) to reflexive ethnographic mode (embracing emergent questions from interviewing the traders and making their concerns central to the direction of the research) to facilitator (in setting up the 'situations' of the workshops and the gallery presentation). As a development of the position of the researcher-practitioner as 'facilitator' in chapter three, in *Market Meditations* the assemblage in my practice is formed in the doing, in setting up new relations between practice, people and place, within which I

[155] Gielen, p. 278.
[156] Sections of this page and parts of these arguments appear in forthcoming Stratford, 'Theatres of Legitimacy'.
[157] Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter', p. 823.
[158] Ibid., p. 829.

am also implicated. In this context, in operating at a 'social interstice' my position is closer to what has been described in contemporary participatory art practice as 'mediator' rather than 'facilitator'.[159]

As discussed in chapter three, these situations of exchange generated within contemporary participatory art practice have been variously debated as individualistic versus instrumentalised; caught between an avant-garde 'negation' of the status quo and an 'affirmation' of alternatives.[160] Conversely, in the situations created in *Market Meditations*, while there is a framework within which I operate, I try to avoid a position of expertise but attempt to become closer to a spatialised version of Haraway's 'modest witness'.[161] As discussed in chapter one, for Haraway, the 'modest witness' is a way of working that does not adopt the conventional objectified role of the observer, but instead makes visible 'contingent freedoms' and 'situated knowledges', 'where location is itself always a complex construction as well as inheritance'.[162] Here, the notion of the 'modest witness' as 'mediator' indicates a position that pays close attention to the power relations between the researcher-practitioner and the particular collaborations or rather, with reference to the notion of 'complicity' foregrounded in chapter three, the 'collusions' that take place within these situations.[163]

In *Market Meditations*, a photograph of me in the market apparently talking to a trader surrounded by students could be read as some form of 'open' exchange in line with fostering a 'culture of "friendship"' that somehow resolves the differences inhabited by the particular position of the researcher.[164] Yet, I cannot understand the elderly trader, and while a student did step in to translate her concerns in relation to the market, the different intergenerational, geopolitical but also professional positions we occupied remained and were not levelled out by the practice. Likewise, in the broader practice research, the relations between researcher, students and traders were never 'equal'.

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[159] See Nicholas Bourriaud, 'Relational Aesthetics', in *Participation*, ed. by Claire Bishop, Documents of Contemporary Art (London : Cambridge, Mass: Whitechapel ; MIT Press, 2006), pp. 160–71 (p. 166); Maria Lind, 'Why Mediate Art?' <http://www.marysialewandowska.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/05/Maria-Lind_Why-Mediate-Art-.pdf>; *Contemporary Art: From Studio to Situation*, ed. by Claire Doherty (London: Black Dog, 2004).
[160] Bell, p. 81. See also Charnley.
[161] Haraway, *Modest_Witness@Second_Millennium.FemaleMan_Meets_OncoMouse*.
[162] Ibid., p. 270.
[163] Rogoff, 'In Conversation Catherine David and Irit Rogoff', p. 86. As discussed in chapter 3, David Bell argues that 'it would be productive if future work in the field were to explore how collaborative art can simultaneously negate the status quo and affirm an alternative, whilst paying closer attention to the power relations between artists and their collaborators'. Bell, p. 81.
[164] Bourriaud, 'Relational Aesthetics', p. 164.

As discussed in chapter three, this indicates a differential set of relationships in which the architect researcher or researcher-practitioner is a participant but on different terms. Here, it acknowledges a situation in which the researcher-practitioner instigates a critical dialogue through an 'enlarged definition'[165] of existing relations, but does not control its direction. Framed within feminist notions of relational ethics, performativity and the implicated position of the researcher as 'mediator', in *Market Meditations* the positions of researcher, traders and students intra-act with each other *and* the place of the market, thereby building an iterative and reflective relationship. These intra-actions focused on developing emergent and ethical ways of working together in order to critique the hierarchies and exclusionary 'phenomena' or intra-actions of relations that constitute the market.[166]

Relational and Topological Public Spaces

Personally, *Market Meditations* marked a departure in my practice, inviting others to devise site-specific actions rather than setting them up myself. This proved extremely effective in engaging students, traders and citizens alike. In contrast to concerns around a silencing of voices discussed in chapter three, my lack of language skills in the market facilitated a further relinquishing of control. Here, the collaboration with the students activated points of discussion; enabling conversations about the market to take place within the context of the wider city regeneration strategies. Importantly, the workshops also alerted the market director to the traders' complaints. In this situation, moments of dialogue were generated between those who determine the use of public space and those who work within it.

According to Hoskyns, the possibility for a democratic exchange itself creates a public space in the moment of dialogue. She argues that 'discursive practices allow us to reconceptualise architectural practice to allow for democratic spatial practices to contribute to the construction of space', giving 'the imagination of architecture not as forms in space but as the

[165] Braidotti, 'Posthuman, All Too Human', p. 206.
[166] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, p. 239. In relation to emergent and ethical ways of working together, the University of Sheffield initially required signed 'consent forms' for interviews in the market, which would have led to suspicion on behalf of the traders. Indeed, the traders' concerns that I might be from the media and their complaints would thereby be linked to specific people, emerged during the interview process. Fortunately, a solution was found with the university in the fact that the interviews in the market were taking place in a designated 'public space', meaning a signed consent form was not required. At the same time, the anonymity of the specific traders who complained was maintained. Here, the practice research worked within the structures of ethics set out to protect both researcher and researched, but recognised that within this particular situation a dynamic reframing of them was necessary. For Pink, the dynamic development of situated research methods must also apply to ethics. She argues 'because ethics are so embedded in the specific research contexts, ethical decisions cannot be concluded until the researcher is actually in the field'. Pink, Doing Visual Ethnography, p. 49.

social and political relations that construct that space'.[167] Returning to the notion of 'pseudo-public space' discussed in chapter one of this thesis, the idea that a democratic public space resides in negotiations between social and political relations, challenges ideas that 'good public spaces' can be produced through a series of normative and ultimately measurable qualities.

As discussed earlier in this thesis, in recent times, journalists and critics have claimed that public space in Western neoliberal cities is predominantly 'pseudo'.[168] Yet, alongside Hoskyns, many feminist theorists from architecture, geography and art practice, including Rosalyn Deutsche, Susan Lacy, Doreen Massey, and Doina Petrescu, to name a few, join a long tradition reaching back into the 70s disputing the 'public' of public space. In a contemporary context, these theorists argue that squares and spaces which masquerade as public are in fact, supported by countless private interests, neoliberal, gendered and exclusionary practices, which compete to determine what types of 'publics' can use these spaces, how and when.[169] However, these critiques, which focus on the loss of democratic public space, have themselves been subject to criticism.

Architect, planner and researcher Matthew Carmona argues that in 'lamenting the privatisation of public space in the modern city, some observers have tended to romanticise its history'.[170] He claims that throughout the 'neoliberal era' the central narrative has been that of 'loss, wrapped up in notions of "decline" and reduced "publicness" stemming from the sorts of privatisation, commercialisation, homogenisation, exclusion and other pressures that the critiques articulate'.[171] According to Carmona, these critiques identify 'neglected', 'invaded', 'exclusionary', spaces for 'consumption', 'privatised', 'segregated' 'insular' 'invented', 'scary' and 'homogenised' spaces.[172] Conversely, through typological, behavioural observation and interview based 'mixed-method' research methodologies he

[167] Hoskyns, p. 77.
[168] Shenker.
[169] See Hoskyns; Lacy; Massey, *For Space*; Minton; Petrescu, 'How to Make a Community as Well as the Space for It'. Whether they claim a loss of public space or otherwise, these theorists explore possibilities (or lack) of agency and democracy bound up in notions of 'publicness'. See Jeremy Németh and Stephen Schmidt, 'The Privatization of Public Space: Modeling and Measuring Publicness', *Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design*, 38.1 (2011), 5–23 <https://doi.org/10.1068/b36057>; Yaghi, Petrescu, and Nawratek.
[170] Matthew Carmona, 'Re-Theorising Contemporary Public Space: A New Narrative and a New Normative', *Journal of Urbanism*, 8.4 (2015), 373–405 (p. 375).
[171] Carmona, p. 398.
[172] Ibid., p. 375.

claims that, in London at least, 'this is certainly not the whole story, or even the dominant one.'[173]

In Carmona's rebuttal to critiques of the loss of public space, his criteria for a successful public space start from a different place than that of Hoskyns, Deutsche or Massey. Like many of these feminist writers and theorists, Carmona argues that public space has been romanticised, never been 'lost' and has always been contested.[174] However, while for Hoskyns, Deutsche and Massey, public space resides in these very contestations,[175] for Carmona, a successful public space does not necessarily focus on how 'effective public life is linked to a public realm where the affairs of the public are discussed and debated'.[176] Further within his particular criticism of the 'romanticising' of public space, no dialogue with the past, such as that found in the traders' adaptations, is possible. Rather, public space is firmly located in the present, where 'the desire for relaxation, social contact, entertainment, leisure, and simply having a good time may be equally as important'.[177]

According to Carmona, research into public space must work towards resolving those very contestations that, for the aforementioned feminist theorists, holds the possibility of a democratic public space.[178] This notion is based on a particular understanding of what constitutes public space and, for that matter, space itself. A notion that is reflected in the research methods that Carmona adopts to study public spaces in the city of London. Carmona's study is based on 'typologies of space according to form, function, and rights and responsibility'.[179] These are supported by 'policy analysis', 'stakeholder narratives', 'popular debate and analysis', 'user assessment', through interviews, 'time-lapse observation' and 'character assessment' based in the physical structure and features of each space.[180] While these methods use a mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches, they fail to take account of the role that the researcher and the 'apparatus' of the research play within the process of the production of specific spatialities.[181] Here, the premise of what constitutes a

[173] Ibid., p. 398.
[174] Carmona.
[175] For Hoskyns 'a truly political sense of public space rises up when space is negotiable, open or contested'. Hoskyns, p. 81. See also Deutsche, p. 324; Massey, *For Space*, p. 153.
[176] Carmona, p. 375.
[177] Ibid.
[178] Hoskyns; Deutsche; Massey, *For Space*.
[179] Carmona, p. 378.
[180] Ibid., p. 381.
[181] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*.

public space largely remains based in a research model whereby subject and object, mind and body, matter and discourse remain separate. In this case, rather than relational and topological, public space is typological and Carmona concludes with a set of criteria which will guarantee, or at least against which, a 'good' public space can be measured.[182]

While Carmona's analysis is based on many interacting factors that themselves are acknowledged as evolving, the focus ultimately, is on what a public space *is*, or might *be*, rather than what it *does* or what it might *become*. In this context, public space is a space with clearly defined boundaries and typological parameters. In contrast, the performance-based methodologies developed in this chapter focus on opening up relational spaces that are critical of the existing set of relationships in order to produce the conditions for their transformation. These methodologies closely align with the public space of Hoskyns, but also follow the theories of Barad, in proposing a relational and topological public space at the point of negotiation or discussion.[183]

This type of public space sits in opposition to the conventional client focused role of architecture or urban planning within which Carmona's research resides. As discussed in chapter three, in this role, the architect or researcher focuses on resolving tensions and solving problems by working within the existing power differentials; accepting them as the 'status quo' within which a public space might be produced.[184] This can be seen within Carmona's argument that public spaces have been 'central to a successful business and policy model in which public space is increasingly viewed as a critical value-adding asset to a range of economic, infrastructural, social and cultural concerns'.[185] In contrast, the methodologies developed within this thesis critique these terms, exposing their performative tensions and power differentials in order to trouble them.

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[182] For Carmona, 'good public spaces' are 'evolving', 'balanced', 'diverse', 'delineated', 'social', 'free', 'engaging', 'meaningful', 'comfortable' and 'robust'. Carmona, pp. 399–401. This means that according to Carmona they recognise temporality, they have a good mix of traffic and pedestrian use, no one size fits all, they rely on the notion of private and public in terms of access, they are open unrestricted and gratis, they include consumption, are safe and securitised, open to adaption yet rooted in context.

[183] According to Barad 'questions of size and shape (geometrical concerns) must be supplemented by, and reevaluated in terms of, questions of boundary, connectivity, interiority, and exteriority (topological concerns)'. Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, p. 244. Here, topology is a relational aspect of social and material forces, not to be confused with the formal architectural use of the term as a description of the manipulation of structural and material form through parametrics such as that found in the work of Patrik Schumacher. Patrik Schumacher and Lei Zheng, 'From Typology to Topology: Social, Spatial, and Structural', *Architectural Journal*, 590.11 (2017) <https://www.patrikschumacher.com/Texts/From%20Typology%20to%20Topology.html>.

[184] See Petrescu and Trogal; Miessen, *Crossbenching*.

[185] Carmona, p. 398.

For Hoskyns, the shift from the physical (*is*) to the discursive (*does*) allows for democratic or rather political agency. Following the theories of Deutsche and philosopher Claude Lefort, she argues that 'political public space occurs when the meaning of social life is negotiable and this occurs when public space is negotiable'.[186] Further, Gielen et al. identify how 'the political – that is to say, the public sphere in which political discussion and action take place […] is primarily driven by public passions, affects and shared emotions […] at the intersection of the personal and the public', which gives the 'public sphere is specific dynamic […] the desire for the political'.[187] In this sense, during *Market Meditations*, a public space was produced through momentary negotiations that operated at the intersection between the personal and the public; opening up the possibility for the traders to participate in its production.

In the context of this chapter and the particular exchanges produced during *Market Meditations*, this momentary negotiation; this moment of dialogue is not only spoken. Further, it is not only discursive; it is both material and discursive. This material and discursive negotiation expands the possibilities of Hoskyn's notion of public space as produced through negotiated exchange while further politicising the 'negotiated realities' discussed in chapter three. Here, performance-based actions are not used as a political tool in the form of protest. In this sense it is not about Butler's 'bodies on the street' who assemble and assert, in bodily form, a 'collective resistance'.[188] Rather, it is about the space created between bodies; an exposure to other bodies including 'other places, and other politics' that enable discussions to take place that might otherwise not occur.[189]

In *Market Meditations*, this space of discussion, generated between the students' actions, the drawings, the table, the cloth, the cakes, the interactions with the traders *and* the architecture of the market itself, including the traders' adaptations, opened up an alternative public space. Here, the practice research opened up 'other' possibilities that were formerly repressed through morphological layers of sedimented social practices, material presence and relations

[186] Hoskyns, p. 82.
[187] Bax, Gielen, and Ieven, p. 18.
[188] Butler and Athanasiou, p. 197.
[189] Ibid., p. 194. In 'Spaces of Appearance, politics of exposure', feminist social anthropologist Athena Athanasiou in conversation with Butler suggests, a 'shift from *spaces of appearance* to *spacing appearance*'. For Athanasiou, 'the notion of space should by no means be taken as synonymous with fixity, but rather implies a performative place of "taking place"'. Further, 'In this sense "appearance" is not reducible to a surface phenomenality; rather it opens up to concern what is performed in ways that avow the unperformable' and she asks 'how could appearance relate to exposure […] exposure to others, other places, and other politics?'. Ibid.

of power. In this way, *Market Meditations* operated beyond the discursive to acknowledge, take part in and 'mediate' an ongoing discussion between the traders, the director and ultimately the architects; bearing witness to and opening up a new space in a story which many thought, and hoped, was resolved and forgotten.[190]

Conclusion – Performative Negotiations of Topological Public Spaces

In the market, the discursive and material forces that produce the building challenge the very corporeality of the body of the traders. The building's impossibility to function in the manner for which it was designed causes a dysfunction. It impedes the possibility of the traders conducting or rather performing their everyday lives. In leaving the market, the traders are becoming excluded in terms of visibility and participation within the city.[191] In the gallery presentation, *Market Meditations*' visual and material interventions picked up on the market's dysfunctions, building on and making visible overlooked practices and legislation in order to set up critical frameworks for rethinking how this public space is performed. The drawings, the Code of Conduct, the conversations and the gallery table worked together to translate the issues raised by the traders and their disregarded adaptations into architectural propositions that problematise the apparent power of the architects and the architecture by redefining both as performative.

Chapter two discussed how 'thinking in movement' and 'thought in the act,' are 'underacknowledged, valuable ways of knowing and creating space'.[192] The 'performative workshops' extended these methods further by opening both their development and deployment to the students. In this context, these methods became pedagogical steps through which the performativity of the market was explored simultaneously as practice and theory or

[190] This critical approach to generating public spaces of discussion is also found in the work of architect and artist Apolonija Šušteršič. In 'The Hustadt Story – So Far', Šušteršič reflects on how to 'maintain a critical position' while leading a project located within a stigmatised 'ghetto' of the city of Bochum in Germany. A few months into the project, Šušteršič organised a local team of activists called AKTION-STEAM, to work with her on actions in the main square. For Šušteršič, the unofficial, everyday and yet 'out of place' actions – including dancing, reading, cooking, repairing bicycles and gardening – communicated with the public on many levels 'bodily, culturally and socially', which 'helped create arguments for public discussions with local politicians who were making decisions about the processes and direction of the regeneration project'. For Šušteršič, in these actions a space was generated which 'started to shift the spatial development processes against gentrification and other socially negative processes', pointing towards a situation through which 'it is possible to act politically within the existing system and affect its direction of change'. Apolonija Šušteršič, 'The Hustadt Story – So Far', in *The Social (Re)Production of Architecture: Politics, Values and Actions in Contemporary Practice*, ed. by Doina Petrescu and Kim Trogal (London: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017), pp. 347–60 (pp. 352, 358).
[191] Butler, *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*, pp. 82, 182.
[192] Weinstein, p. 190.

'knowing in being'.[193] Yet, going beyond a transfer of methodologies, the workshops generated new connections and conversations between the students and the traders that moved from researching what does this building *do*, to asking what can it *become*? Further, like the wider practice research, the workshops generated interventions that combined actions with material presence to spatially develop Barad's performative understanding of matter. Here, the performative shifted from the discursive or social towards a greater focus on the material.

The interventions, in *Market Meditations* redefined the spatiality of the market, into a performative 'apparatus' which included its 'physicality' and associated bodies.[194] Not only deploying, but also extending the methods of critical representation, embodied actions and participatory situations developed earlier in this thesis, *Market Meditations* created performative objects that amplified and played with the agencies of the market. Critically, in *Market Meditations* not only did these interventions make visible the market's material and discursive forces – examining how patriarchal hierarchies of gender and age-related discriminations are materially and discursively produced – but they also work at their points of intra-action. Here, these 'provocations-in-place' investigate how in this relationship no one thing has a specific agency over another but rather how agency is produced topologically in the relations between – between the city, the legislation, the architect, the traders, the spatial layout and materials into which the practice research intervenes.

In this sense, whilst in many ways *Market Meditations* might be seen to advocate for the traders, it cannot claim to give people agency. It rather creates the conditions through which people might become aware of the agencies that produce a particular public space and their relationship to it, through which the possibilities for that space to be negotiated exist. In this way, it explores an expanded understanding of public space that enables it to be thought/intervened in politically. For Barad, agential realism holds the possibility to enact a 'shift in theoretical perspective' that 'makes visible particular kinds of agency and possibilities'.[195] It is within these contingent intra-actions that the practice research of

[193] Barad, 'Posthumanist Performativity: Toward an Understanding of How Matter Comes to Matter', p. 829.
[194] For Barad, 'apparatuses are not mere observing instruments but boundary-drawing practices—specific material (re)configurings of the world—which come to matter.' Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*, p. 140. Further, for Barad these boundary-drawing practices 'enact what matters and what gets excluded from mattering'. Ibid., p. 148.
[195] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*, p. 239.

Market Meditations is located. In this chapter, this shift is produced through both practiced and theoretical analysis. Not only is it produced through the practice research, consisting of performed, represented and constructed modalities, but it is also diffractively read through the writing practice of the thesis, including observation, analysis and reflection. In this context, performativity is both feminist research methodology and method; both a way of thinking and a way of acting which together make 'provocations-in-place' – a space for actions, negotiations and dialogues to challenge processes, practices and places that debilitate specific bodies' and their ability to participate within public life.

Conclusion – Expanding the Idea of Performativity in Architecture

As the research cited within this thesis shows, whilst the term 'performativity' has gained currency in architectural theory and practice, all too often it is undertheorised; used to describe efficiency in architectural performance or the creation of performances and performance spaces, including 'dynamic' spaces that literally perform.[1] At the same time, the term 'public space' in new developments and regeneration strategies has been criticised as 'pseudo' due to a vacuous use of the term 'public' at a time of increasing privatisation, neoliberalisation and securitisation.[2] This thesis has developed a new interdisciplinary, iterative and emergent performance-based methodology that critiques these ubiquitous uses of performativity and public space in order to address the power relations they support and reproduce. This conclusion sets out what has been demonstrated by my research; how it answers and responds to the central thesis questions, alongside the themes and aims set out in the introduction. It focuses on what has been achieved by my research, in what ways my thesis has moved professional discussion along and how this might be developed further in the future.

The overall research questions ask:

1. How might a performance-based methodology be developed in architecture that makes visible and tangible the performativity of recently developed public spaces or those situated within regeneration frameworks, in order to facilitate the rethinking of them by their users?

2. In what way might this methodology critique prejudices, hierarchies and 'undemocratic' spatialities reperformed through these contexts (and propose alternatives: new definitions of, new spatial knowledge and public space)?

3. What is at stake in these ways of practicing for participation in architecture and research practice? In terms of the production of new roles and spatialities?

4. What implications might these questions have in shaping future architectural research practice?

[1] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*.
[2] See Shenker; Miles.

Expanding the understanding of public space through a performance-based research methodology

The originality of this thesis resides in the contribution of 'theoretical' and 'practical' knowledge in architectural research, developed through the particular methodological approach of my practice research. Through its development of a performance-based interdisciplinary methodology this thesis has demonstrated how, in its reframing of an architecture practice located at the intersection between art, performance, ethnography, civic action and participation, 'feminist performative architectures' constitutes a form of architecture. Here, architecture is recast as an ongoing assemblage of social, material and cultural conditions in order to question conventional ways of understanding public space.

Blended from architecture, performance and contemporary art practice, the methodology developed by this thesis offers a different model of spatial knowledge production to that used by conventional architectural practice in researching public space. Further, rather than implementing a set of predetermined methods, this methodology is multi-modal and emergent; developing iteratively in response to the particular issues that emerge out of the practice research.[3] Here, in this emergent practice research, the researcher employs different methods from different disciplines, in relation to the particular power relations at stake in the particular public space under examination. While relational methods are prevalent in contemporary art practice, the potential of their use within architecture and the understanding of how feminist relationality grounds and politicises these methods remains underdeveloped. This thesis has addressed this underdevelopment. Through practice research, it has extended feminist transformative concepts of performativity into spatial practice; demonstrating how this methodology can make visible and tangible the potential of the performativity of public space. In this way, this thesis has examined how different instances of 'feminist performative architectures', exemplified in practice, expand the understanding of public space.

In this thesis, there was a clarification of terms, but also reinterpretations and developments in how performativity might underpin a rigorous and interrogative practice research methodology. There was a move from performativity defined in terms of efficiency of design or performance into a way of conceptualising public space as inherently performative itself. Here, methods were chosen that exerted a performative force on the dominant vision or

[3] Nelson.

spatial knowledge underpinning the public space in question. Ideas of critical representation, developed in chapters one and three hold to account supposedly 'neutral' representations of place and public space. Here, methods that oscillate between parody and fiction make visible that which these representations conventionally disregard. These methods included representing everyday maintenance and socially disapproved actions in *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne*, alongside focusing on the 'out of place' matter stirred up by deviant wildfowl in *A Day with a Duck*. Both demonstrate ways by which the logic of idealised environments might be stretched and troubled, while 'laughing at power' to undermine dominant discourses and imagine alternatives.[4]

Ideas of embodied knowledge, as developed in chapter two, bring a new way of exploring how tacit methodologies, including the 'unknowing' 'doing-body',[5] still undervalued in architectural practice and research, can make tangible the many power relations that comprise the performativity of public space. Here, the invented and discovered, displaced and dissonant actions of researchers and participants in *Manchester Blind Spots*, extend performance theories on 'expanded dramaturgy',[6] 'cross programming',[7] and 'event space'.[8] These actions evidence ways by which performance-based methods can both research and challenge power relations expressed through neoliberal structures and the bodies they circumscribe. Crucially, in this context, these performance-based actions also uncovered gendered aspects of this public space. Here, the research practice politicises Tschumi's notion of 'crossprogramming'.[9] It brings a situated positionality into theories of fluidity, which, while admitting the 'paradox' in decoupling form from function, can fail to take adequate account of gendered, racialized and classed identities expressed through the acculturation of spatial practices over time.

These methods, that make visible and tangible public space as a 'constellation'[10] and 'assemblage'[11] of competing interests, underpin ideas of participatory 'situations'. These 'situations,' as developed in chapters three and four, bring a new way of conceptualising research into public space by generating embodied and relational spatial experiences that

[4] Butler, *Gender Trouble*; Critchley.
[5] Noland. Weinstein.
[6] Turner, 'Mis-Guidance and Spatial Planning'.
[7] Rufford, *Theatre and Architecture*; Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*.
[8] Hannah; Tschumi, *Event-Cities*.
[9] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*.
[10] Massey, *For Space*.
[11] Braidotti, 'Writing as a Nomadic Subject'.

incorporate both critical representation and embodied knowledge into an entanglement of people, place and practice. Interventions, including *Live Duck Shoot!* and the performative workshops in *Market Meditations,* work across different media and collaborations to enact physical, social and material 'intra-actions'[12] of place, people and practice. In this way, they develop a methodology that itself can be described as an 'assemblage'.

To research the potential of this methodology in generating different ways of understanding public space, in the thesis I generated three different ways of knowing: 'reflection on practice through theory', 'reflection on practice through practice' and 'reflection on theory through practice'. Building on the triple modes of knowing articulated in a multi-modal practice as research methodology,[13] in this relationship two types of theory are mobilised by the practice: an abstract more conceptual or historical reflection and a critical practice-led reflection.

By assembling these ways of knowing together differently in each chapter the structure of the thesis offered a multi-modal approach that changed according to the epistemological positions and associated ways of understanding public space researched by the practice. Here, starting from a more conventional position of the application of theory, the practice research moved through theory, influencing it in different degrees to culminate in a situation of parity, that recognises an equivalence, yet difference, on a spectrum of knowledge production. Moreover, as an extension of 'practice as research' theories into architecture, this continually reflective process has examined the spatial implications of a multi-modal, incremental and iterative approach to researching public space. On this basis, it has examined and made evident how these emergent knowledge processes offer wider implications for the conception and practice of public space itself.

[12] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*.
[13] Following Nelson, a multi-modal methodology as proposed by this thesis articulates a triple articulation between theory and practice. Nelson, p. 37.

Expanding the idea of public 'placemaking'

The gap between the (theoretical visions and rhetoric surrounding the conceptualisation of public space, by architects, urban planners and all manner of authorities, and the (practiced lives of those that both maintain and use these places has been addressed in this thesis. Yet, rather than offering a solution to close this gap, this thesis has demonstrated methods that can be used to interrogate it. It has exposed how the places where these different ideas of placemaking collide or overlap, can be used as productive resource to explore why, how and through what means dominant relations of particular public spaces continue to reproduce themselves at the expense of others.[14] Further, against those positions through which architecture and public space are presented as 'neutral', 'absolute' or a 'container' of social relations,[15] the methodology proposed by this thesis expands ideas of public placemaking. Through re-practicing and re-performing public space in terms of a dynamic relationship between material, physical and social conditions, it generates alternative public spaces through articulating a different type of relational spatial knowledge than the typological normally conveyed by conventional architectural and placemaking processes.

In this thesis my focus has been on how power relations that produce public space are performed, specifically how social, cultural, economic and political hierarchies and exclusions, based around class, gender, xenophobia, anthropocentrism, ableism and ageism, intersect and are reproduced in and with public space. Informed by feminist discursive and material theories of performativity,[16] this thesis has developed a methodology by which the normative rules or *mots d'ordre*[17] by which particular public spaces are produced can be made visible and tangible. Furthermore, it has extended these theories of performativity through practice research that mobilises them in generating relational ways of theorising and practicing public space with others. Here participants include those who are largely dismissed in accounts of placemaking, including road workers, children, ducks and young people, whose presence serves to act as a diffractive mechanism in disrupting existing power

[14] Massey, *For Space*, p. 153.
[15] Soja; Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway.*
[16] Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of 'Sex'*; Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway.*
[17] Deleuze and Guattari.

relations, thereby exerting a performative force on public spaces by highlighting the fragility of normative spatial production.[18]

In the thesis, methods are chosen specifically in relation to the different ideas of placemaking they critique. Here the methods embody the methodology. In chapter one methods of critical representation, which parody objectified accounts of placemaking, demonstrate how abstract notions of architecture and public space are in fact performative; enacting *mots d'ordre* that reproduce social economic and cultural hierarchies. From a different direction, chapter two focuses on how embodied methods make visible and challenge objectified ways of conceptualising and producing public space. Here, ideas of public space as an assemblage of hegemonic social, material, cultural, legal and economic forces that are embodied, challenge the typological by exploring what public space *does* rather than *is*.[19]

These ideas are further developed through evidencing how this re-imagining and re-practicing of spaces and subjectivities generates relational spaces. Here, the ecological implications of methods that trouble binaries of domestic/wild and nature/culture, as developed in chapter three, bring new ways of focusing on relations between human and non-human actors, including aspects beyond human control.[20] At the same time, the implications for agency of these relational spaces, as developed in chapter four, brings a new way of thinking through democracy and participation in public space, in which matter, of bodies and architecture, becomes part of these performative architectures.[21] Ultimately, this thesis argues that these relational, yet situated, spaces challenge hierarchical, patriarchal and objective accounts of placemaking that underpin non-democratic processes in the production of public space.

[18] Mersch.
[19] In this they bring an additional political layer to the theories of Leatherbarrow. Leatherbarrow, *Architecture Oriented Otherwise.*
[20] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*; Haraway, *Staying with the Trouble.*
[21] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway*.

Reinterpreting participation through the performativity of the researcher-practitioner

This thesis brings reflexive methods of 'critical representation', 'embodied actions' and 'relational situations' into architectural research. Here, I argue that the traditional position of the architect and researcher as enlightened expert fails to reflect on how particular positions and associated modes of production implement specific spatialities. While this has been addressed by some feminist practitioners and critics in architecture,[22] unlike performance and art practices, it is still often under acknowledged. Similar to the arguments embedded within 'critical spatial practice', this thesis has developed a methodology that works reflexively between art and architecture in order to critique its own processes.[23] At the same time, through blending and constantly shifting between different modes of practice, its multi-modal methodology offers a complexification of this position, thereby contributing to ongoing debates regarding positionality and reflexivity within architectural practice and research.

Informed by feminist situated critiques, the acknowledgement of the researcher's own performativity within these processes underpins all chapters, reflecting on ways of practicing that start from politically and ethically grounded positions. From these findings it brings a situated research position that not only changes reflectively in relation to 'embodied and historically located'[24] positioning, but also acknowledges and plays with the implementation of specific spatialities. In this context, the shifting positionality of the researcher-practitioner is central to the critique of objectifying epistemological positions researched through this thesis. Further, it enables a way to reflect on the ethics of certain positionalities in relation to the participatory nature of the particular spaces created through the research process.

This thesis has explored how performativity, both of the researcher and the people and places she works with, can be adopted as a critical position. It has developed theories and practices from contemporary art practice and ethnography in order to examine how this situated practice generates alternative participatory practices in architecture. Here, the thesis developed methods that generate relational spaces. Rather than the lone architect, artist or researcher, through the practice research it has developed research processes that evolve out

[22] See Petrescu and Trogal; Rendell, *Site-Writing: The Architecture of Art Criticism*.
[23] Rendell, *Art and Architecture: A Place Between*.
[24] Braidotti, *Nomadic Subjects*, p. 123.

of intra-dependent relationships. It has argued that intra-actions with other artists, curators, writers, film makers, family members, authorities, communities and publics of all species, generate situations in which participants might play with/challenge/critique the power relations of public spaces themselves. In fostering multiple insights, these performance-based interventions have opened up questions about participation and agency. Here, this thesis has examined how the researcher and those she works with occupy different positions within relations of power and privilege. Yet, rather than try to flatten or resolve these tensions, differences are mobilised through the practice and allowed to coexist, thereby informing each other in critical relation, serving to generate new insights for both researcher and participants alike.

Critically, my practice research has resulted in participatory methods which can be employed individually, in succession or in a circular reflective process. For the purpose of the thesis, methods were separated out into distinct case studies, but in practice, as demonstrated by *Market Meditations* in chapter four, they overlap and inform an iterative and reflective process that combines them all.

'Place-as-performance' as developed in chapter one, brings 'critical representation' methods by which to critique a more distanced positionality of the researcher as 'participant observer'. Here, in many ways, the researcher occupies a conventional position, generating an understanding of public spaces through observation and a telling of it to others. Yet, the exaggeration of this position through parody and fiction problematises it. At the same time, the practice research evolves in relation to the context, indicating a situated and reflective position that is developed further in chapter two. This chapter brings 'embodied actions' and performance-based methods of **'performing-place'** in which the researcher occupies the position of an 'embodied outsider;' interacting in a direct way with public space. These ideas explore a 'doing-body'[25] through which a personal and intimate spatial knowledge is made possible through a critical space of proximity that researches how specific power structures and relations operate through corporeal means. This entangled research method lays the ground for more active involvement of participants developed in chapters three and four.

The researcher as 'facilitator', developed in chapter three through **'performative-places'**, evidences how 'feminist performative architectures' might generate participant-facilitated

[25] Noland.

situations that embody and practice the notion of place as assemblage. It develops methods by which participants might enter the research process through 'relational situations' in which the researcher, participants and the setting within which they operate together generate 'negotiated realities'. Here, participants are invited to explore manifestations of power relations through embodied live events that enable them to re-perform public spaces. In this chapter, ways of practicing are generated and made evident in which the process of making is itself performative. Performative in terms of making work that responds to the specific social, political, material and cultural context in which it is situated but also in terms of opening up new situations or 'social provocations' that make a new 'dialogue of being in space'.[26] Moreover, the use of humour in these new dialogues brings ways of engaging people in complex and serious issues, while finding methods to counter the intimidating position performed by the architect or researcher herself.

In this context, the researcher as 'facilitator' develops a model of participation that aligns with reflectively critical ethnographic methods. As a development of the 'participant observer' and 'embodied outsider' it brings a mode of participation where the research practice is informed and lead by participants' interpretations. Here, questions around who participates are opened up, indicating a situation in which participants are neither 'co-designers' or 'co-producers' but rather closer to 'informants'.[27] Furthermore, it argues that participants are also not only human; examining ways by which researcher and participants (including other artists, authorities, curators and non-humans 'collude' together in an interchange through which difference is explored as productive resource.[28] This responds to calls to move beyond modes of participation in architecture that focus on service or client focused ends,[29] indicating a position that does not simply gain knowledge but 'diffracts' it through the intra-actions mobilised by the practice.[30] Here, rather than 'consultation', which all too often focuses on a solution, identity or end product, the situations, such as those generated in *A Day with a Duck*, amplify opposing city imaginaries in order to open up questions around regeneration processes and city visions, without the focus of a singular resolution.

[26] Jackson, *Performing Art, Supporting Publics*, p. 5.
[27] Pink, *Doing Visual Ethnography*.
[28] Rogoff, 'In Conversation Catherine David and Irit Rogoff'; Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning.*
[29] Petrescu and Trogal.
[30] Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning*.

The fourth position developed in chapter four, is **'provocations-in-place'** that introduces the researcher as 'modest witness' or rather 'mediator'. In this role, similar to the facilitator, the researcher focuses on facilitating situations that enact the performativity of public space, but in this case relinquishes the choreographing of those situations to participants. Here, social and material provocations that interrupt existing public spaces are made, but the evolution of those provocations shifts from the researcher towards participants. Reflecting on insights gained from the practice *Market Meditations*, chapter four discusses how the 'mediator' develops ideas of participation into relationships where there is a triangulation between, researcher, place and participants. Critically in this situation the students generated additional unexpected dimensions in terms of the direction of the research. Here participants take part in research processes and influence their direction in a generative space of interchange with the researcher. Yet, going beyond the participant-researcher relationship, the notion of the researcher as 'mediator' creates the conditions by which people might become aware of the material and discursive agencies that produce a particular public space, and how their interaction within those agencies might generate other possibilities. In this context, the practice research operates performatively in its dramatisation of shared concerns; creating 'provocations-in-place' that foster a public space of discussion through which the possibilities for spaces to be negotiated exist.

Future Development – Transferability, education, spatial disciplines and architectural practice

This thesis has demonstrated the transferability of this performance-based methodology. It has indicated how it can be employed as a series of incremental steps that iteratively build on each other in order to offer a continually reflexive and emerging practice research. It has also examined the transferability of this methodology to contexts beyond the UK, demonstrating the relevance of this methodology to wider geopolitical contexts. In terms of designing research in a different way, this transferability is particularly relevant for architectural students, art practice and design practitioners. It offers a methodology by which students and practitioners of urban design, spatial planning, urban geography, placemaking (of all kinds), cultural studies, public space studies and political theories, can open up ideas and discussions around the production and performance of specific public spaces and wider placemaking. In this context, it evidences how a multi-modal approach to research can be communicated to and used by others, in order to raise broader questions about the value of different modes of spatial knowledge production. This methodology has formed the basis of

Organisational Diagrams for Everyday Life an ongoing research project that focuses on developing diagramming and drawing processes as a means by which to generate discussions, participant-led actions, communities and connections around implicit critiques of productivity. Developed in the public spaces and institutions of what have been designated as some of the UK's most 'deprived' communities, *Organisational Diagrams for Everyday Life* also formed the basis of an installation in 'The Library' at Oslo Architecture Biennale: Enough! The Architecture of Degrowth in 2019.

The methodology outlined in this thesis offers the potential to be developed further into a pedagogical design practice. I have already started to explore this through teaching on the Masters in Architectural and Urban Design at the University of Sheffield. Most recently this included leading a studio in 2017-18 with urban designer and researcher Amro Yaghi, in which a cohort of students employed this methodology to research and generate proposals for public spaces in China. This methodology also formed the basis of a collaborative workshop with Yaghi at the Floating University in 2018, organised by architecture studio Raumlabor, in which art, theatre and architecture practitioners deployed the methods developed throughout this thesis to explore public spaces in and around Templhofer, Berlin. Further, it has been employed by Yaghi in his own research practice in Amman, Jordan.[31] It has also formed the basis of and benefited from development through workshops at Oslo National Academy of the Arts for students on the Masters in Art and Public Space between 2016-19, lectures for Masters in Architecture and Urban Design students on the Architecture and Participation Module at the University of Sheffield from 2016-20 alongside presentations to architectural researchers and practitioners at Design Research (in) Practice symposium at the University of Reading in 2016.

There is much scope for further research into the incorporation of this methodology into consultation and participation processes in architectural practice. This thesis demonstrates how performance-based methodologies offer more effective ways to research the dynamic layers of social, material, cultural, economic and political forces that produce public space, including the position of the researcher herself, than those conventionally used within architectural practice. The incorporation of circular and reflexive methodologies into architectural practice at all stages of the design process, but particularly at the start and end, would facilitate ethically reflective and site responsive design approaches that enable issues

[31] Yaghi, Petrescu, and Nawratek.

and research questions to develop iteratively. The deployment of this methodology during visioning phases and post occupancy processes contains the potential to enable people to engage with important issues and voice concerns, thereby generating more democratic spaces through enabling the act of participation itself.

Led directly by my practice, this thesis is by no means an exhaustive survey of ways of working and thinking. Rather it is a starting point which I hope in the future to expand with others. In this context, it opens up possibilities for further developments into ways of consulting and researching in architecture that are part of an activist practice; enabling hidden and overlooked voices, of all kinds and species, issues and practices to be expressed. Here, I recognise that an analysis of public space that focuses on discrimination, and by implication levels of inclusivity, requires an extended examination of difference 'with a focus on what the question of what difference difference makes'.[32] These methodologies lend themselves to being developed in spaces of all kinds with a focus on intersections with race and ethnicity in the performance of public space.

This thesis has expanded the spectrum of practice led research methodologies and the modes of researching public space. It has demonstrated how a performance-based research methodology extends understandings of public space by making visible its performativity in ways that are unavailable to conventional architectural research methods. In its development of situated and emergent research processes this methodology operates through visual, embodied and participatory methods, which embrace serendipity and failure, in order to critique objectified accounts of 'placemaking'. Through these processes, this methodology develops feminist situated research spaces that generate 'negotiated realities' between the researcher-practitioner, participants and place. Here, by proposing iterative processes of exchange and entanglements between the researcher-practitioner and her surroundings, including humans and non-humans, it also expands who are considered participants in these processes

Ultimately, this thesis argues that by enabling an exposure to 'other places, and other politics'[33] these entanglements of people, place and practitioner, themselves generate an alternative public space; 'provocations-in-place' that enable discussions to take place that

[32] Kimberle W Crenshaw, 'Close Encounters of Three Kinds: On Teaching Dominance Feminism and Intersectionality', 46 (2010), 41 (pp. 162–63).
[33] Butler and Athanasiou, p. 194.

might otherwise not occur. Here, this methodology creates the conditions through which people might become aware of the agencies that produce a particular public space, through which the possibilities for that space to be negotiated exist. Not only does this enable power relations expressed through neoliberal and patriarchal structures to be addressed, including classed, gendered and age-related discriminations, but also those manifest in anthropocentric ideologies. In this way, this thesis argues that this methodology opens up possibilities for public space repressed through morphological layers of sedimented social practices, material presence and relations of power to be 'otherwise',[34] while also opening up other possibilities for research practice in architecture. In this context, performativity is both feminist research methodology: an emergent, performance-based, relational yet situated practice, and research subject: a way of thinking about or through the place of public space.

[34] Mersch, p. 41.

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Appendices

Documentation of practice
relating to case studies in
Feminist Performative Architectures:
making place in and with public space.

Introduction

These appendices are designed to support the thesis Feminist Performative Architectures – making place in and with public space. It consists of four sections. The first provides examples of the research documents mentioned in the practice accounts and reflections on the case studies discussed in the first three chapters relating to 'Communities under Construction', *Manchester Blind Spots* and *A Day with a Duck* including films where applicable. The second provides copies of the research documents and tools referenced in chapter four in relation to the practice research Market Meditations. The third appendix details a project archive consisting of projects and presentations completed between 2008 and 2021. This summary contextualises the case studies included in this thesis in the wider context of my research practice, while also summarising practice research outputs undertaken during the research period of the thesis. In addition to these three appendices that accompany the thesis in written form there is also a fourth that consists of a portfolio of practice work referenced in the thesis.

Appendix One

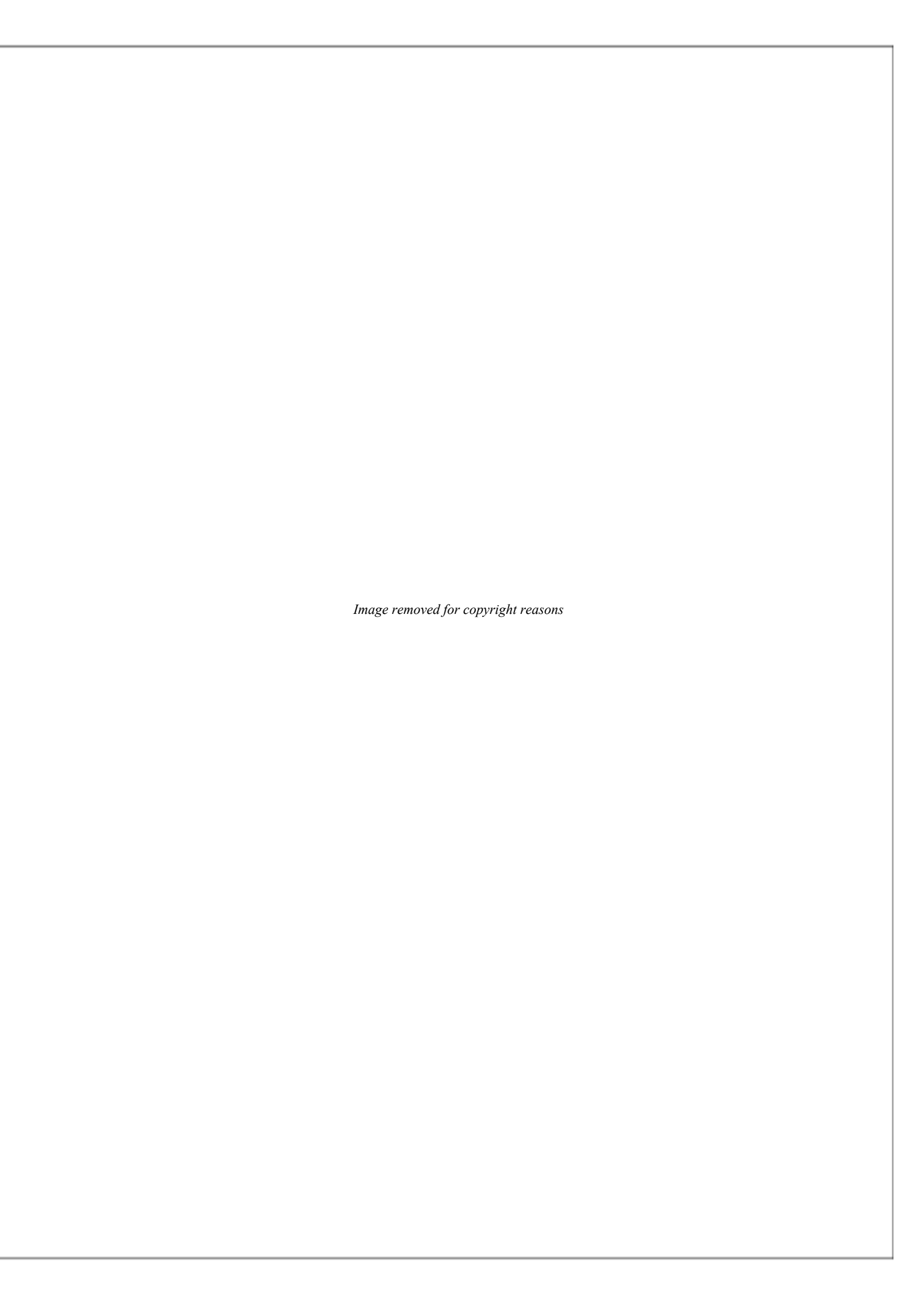
Communities under Construction

Manchester Blind Spots

A Day with a Duck

Communities under Construction

Fig. 136. Residential Design. From Cambourne Design Guide 1996.
Notations produced during realisation of *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne.*


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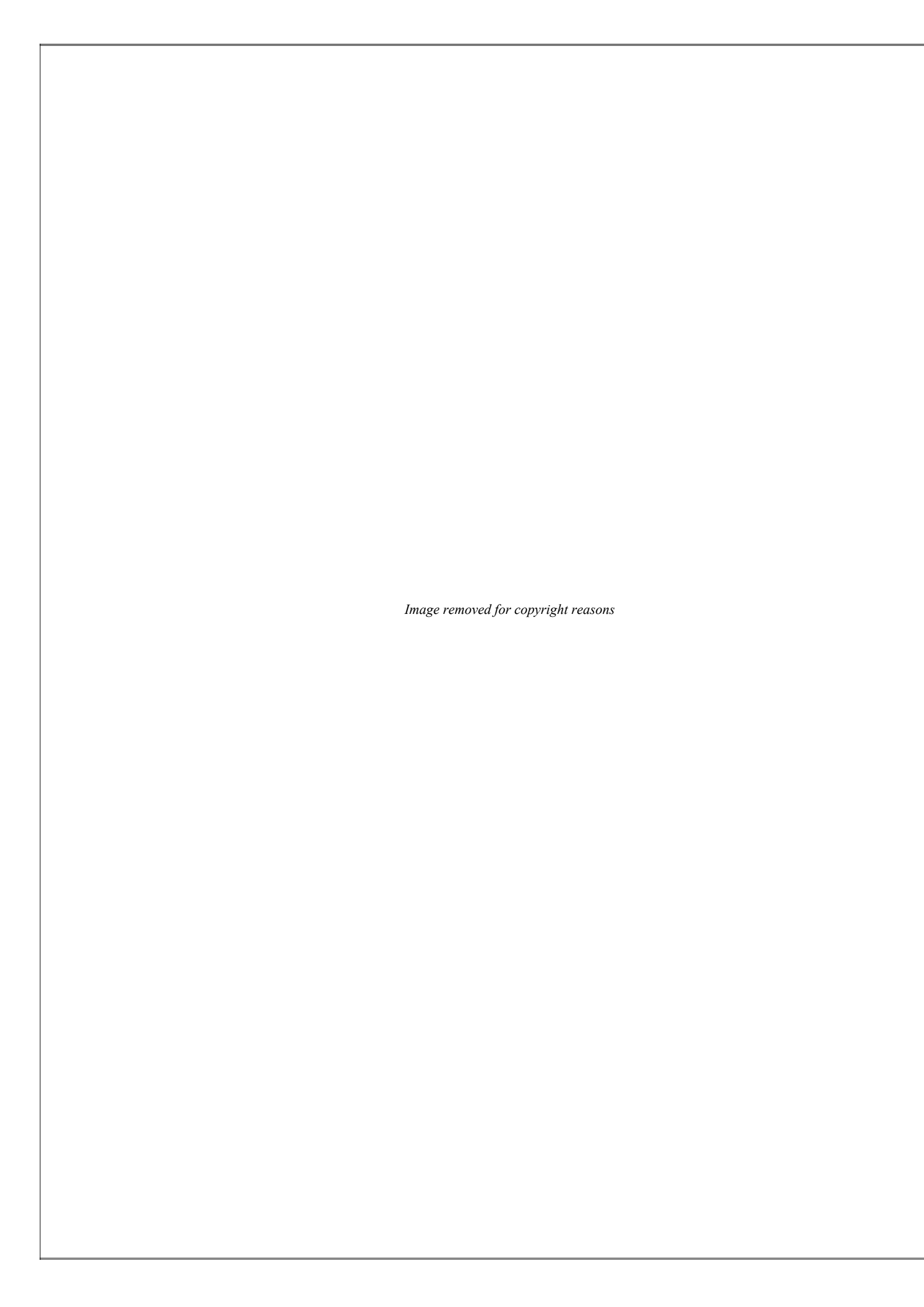

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Fig. 137. Materials Design Guide Checklist. From Cambourne Design Guide 1996.

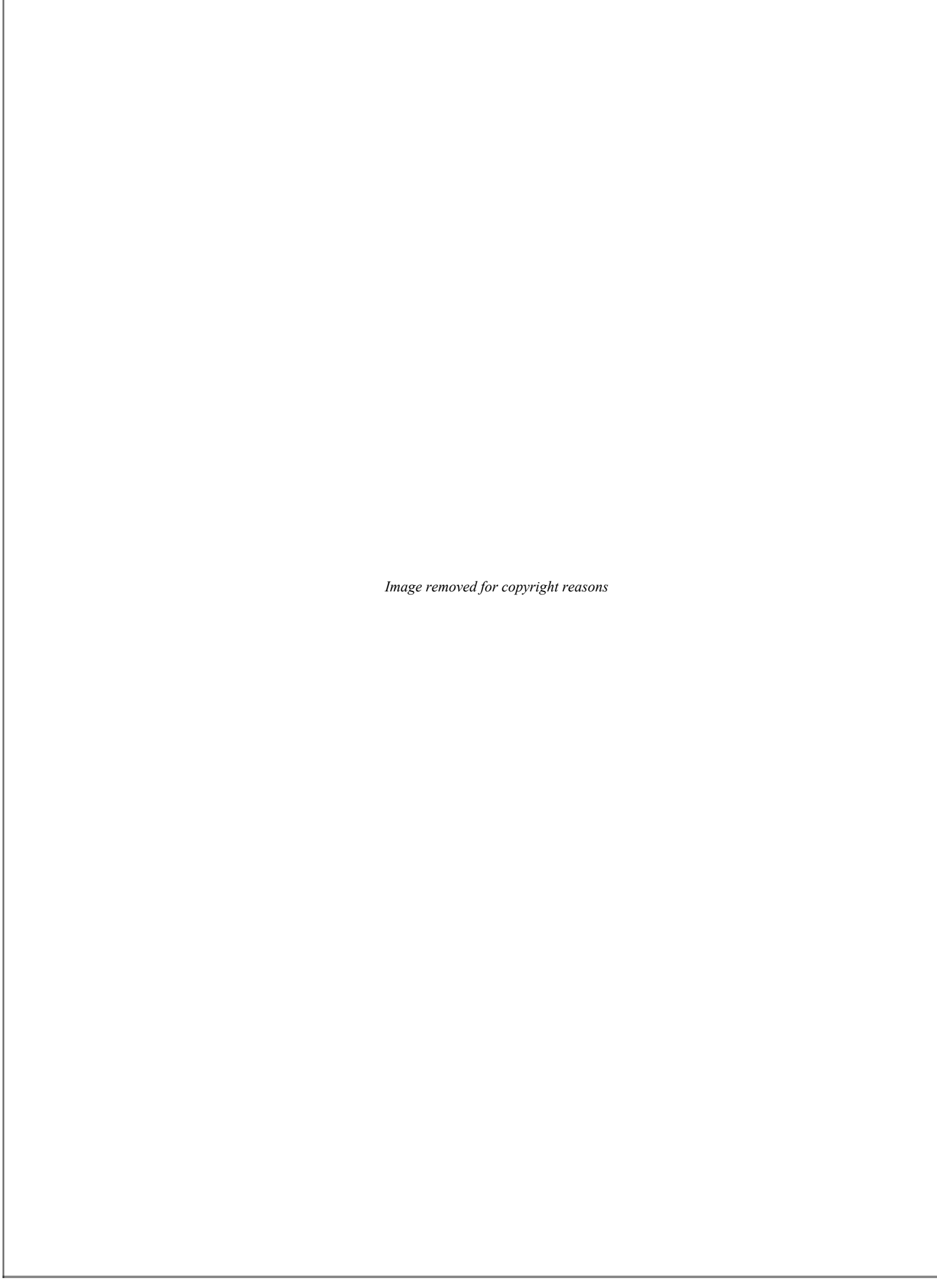

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Fig. 138. Market Square. From Cambourne Design Guide 1996.

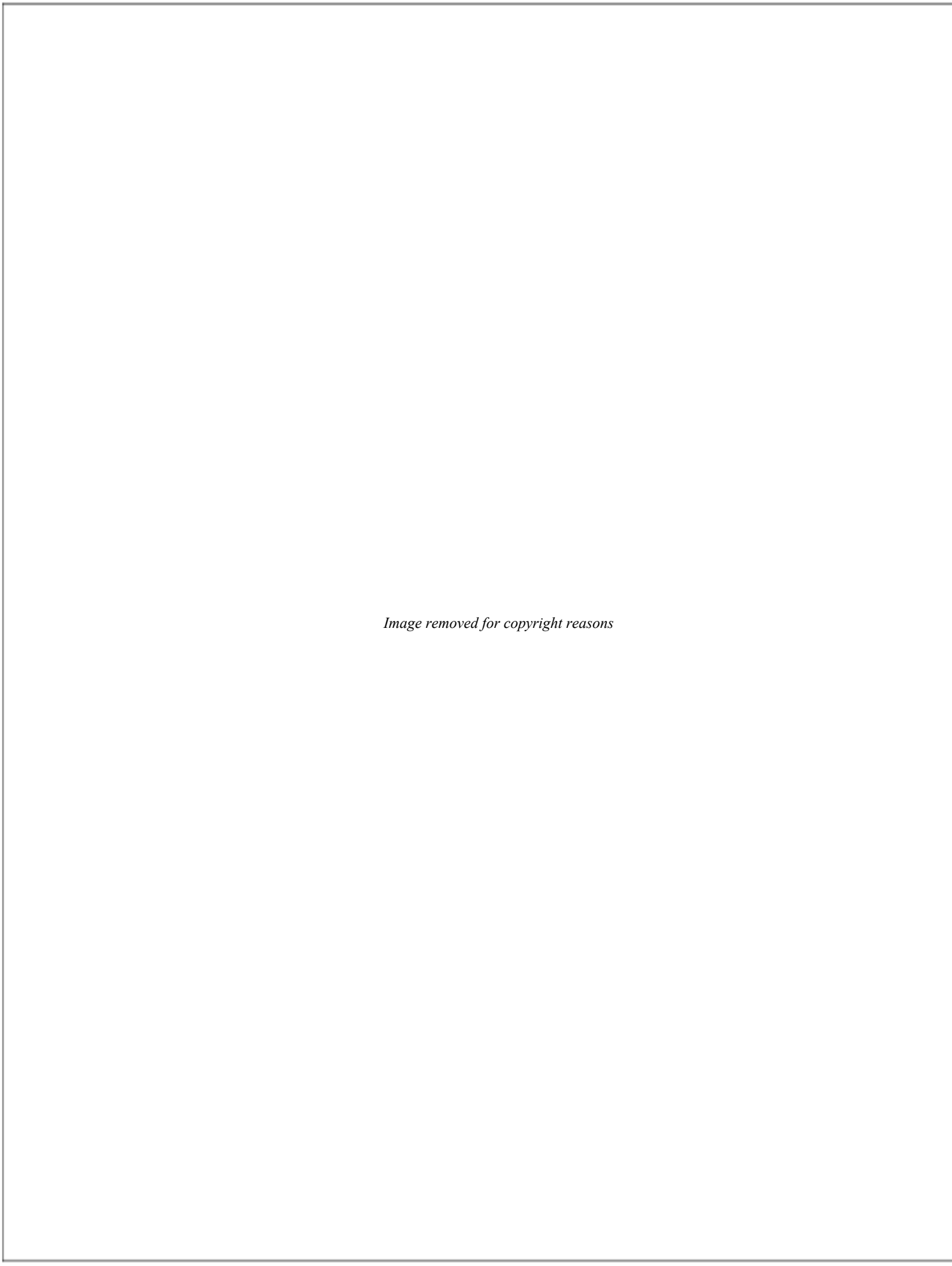


Fig. 139. Generic Form Modelled to Site. From ‘Cambourne_masterplan_1995_reduced_file_size.Pdf’ <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/media/3309/cambourne_masterplan_1995_reduced_file_size.pdf> [accessed 2 March 2021].


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Fig. 140. Walking Diagrams. From ‘Cambourne_masterplan_1995_reduced_file_size.Pdf’ <https://www.scambs.gov.uk/media/3309/cambourne_masterplan_1995_reduced_file_size.pdf> [accessed 2 March 2021].



Fig. 141. A copy of *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* was given to all the people I talked and walked with during the residency. Clockwise from top left: Maurice – on-site engineer WSP; Pat – Breheny contractors; Stuart – Tilbrooks Landscapes Ltd.; Warren – Parish Chargehand. Photographs Helen Stratford.

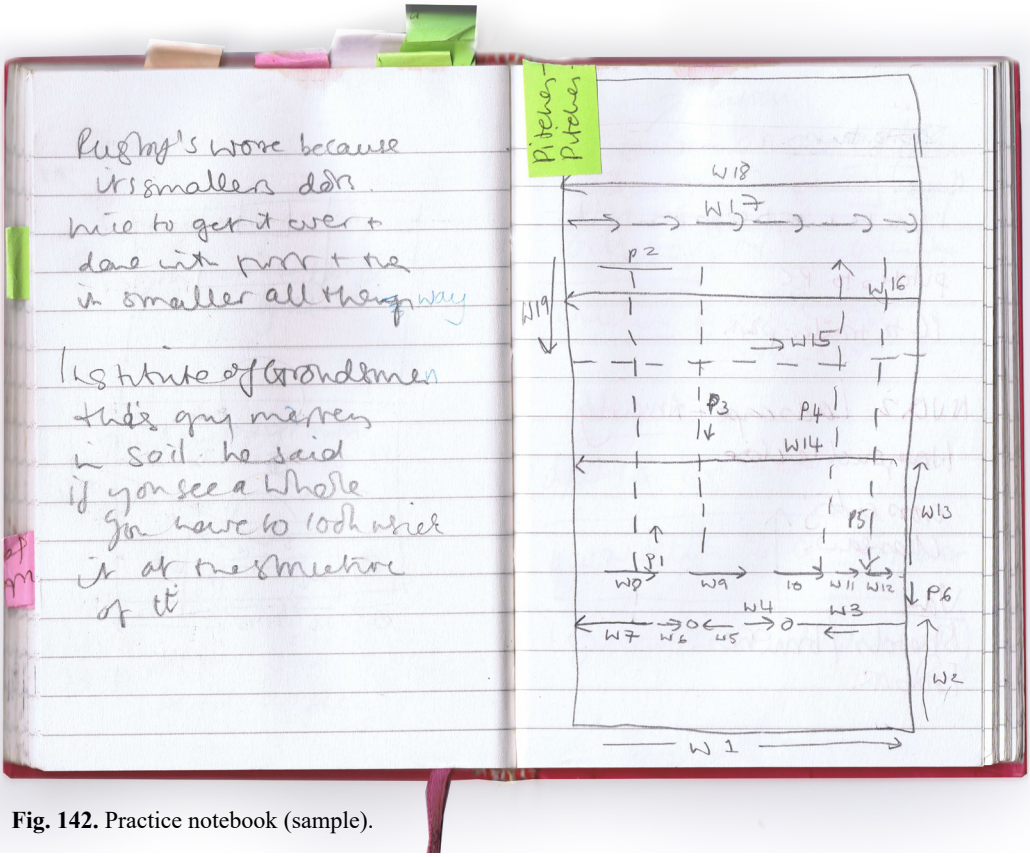


Fig. 142. Practice notebook (sample).

GALLERY EXHIBITION LAUNCH
SATURDAY 25 JULY, 2–6PM

TOWNLEY AND BRADBY, HELEN STRATFORD, A KASSEN SHOW DOCUMENTATION FROM THEIR RESIDENCIES

During June, artists Townley and Bradby will create an intimate portrait of the landscape and the communities around Wysing through a series of brief events; public readings on public benches, sowing a meadow with yellow balloons, and chalking out the patterns created in the village car park by the flurry of arrivals at nursery drop-off time. And during August Helen Stratford will use site-specific and audio-based interventions to make visible the practices that produce and maintain public space in the nearby settlement of Cambourne. Gathered by Helen during her residency, these practices include the voices of local residents, teenagers, groundsmen, road sweepers, light scouts, planners, and people working on their allotments. Documents of these residencies will be shown alongside A Kassen's new video work *Minus Roof*. Helen Stratford will give a talk about her residency on Thursday 20 August, 6–8pm.

2–4PM
A FREE DROP-IN WORKSHOP FOR FAMILIES WILL TAKE PLACE DURING THE LAUNCH
VIEW POINT–PLUS WINGS

Ideal for 5–13 years of age.

Below left: *A Game Using Balloons and Long Grass* by Townley and Bradby
Below right: *5 hours: 600 gallons of water* by Helen Stratford



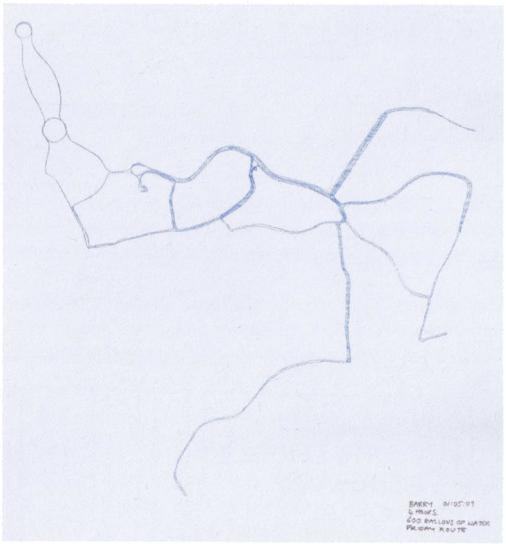


Fig. 143. The end of the residency period included an exhibition at Wysing Arts Centre. Exhibition flyer Wysing Arts centre 2009. See also http://www.wysingartscentre.org/archive/residencies/cuc_helen_stratford/2009



JOIN THE TOUR: Helen, centre, with library supervisor Caroline Aldridge, left, and Lynda Martin of the county library service

Picture: Warren Gunn 610219

Mechanics of life

THE story of the workers who make Cambourne tick is told in a new book and audio tour.

Artist Helen Stratford launched "Mechanical Operations in Cambourne" at the village's library.

Since March she has been spending time with people who look after open spaces in the community, including groundsmen, road sweepers, planners and allotment holders.

She also met families and visited some of the lesser-known areas of the village.

Helen is based at nearby Wysing Arts centre and her research was part of the Communities Under Construction programme.

Fig. 144. *Cambridge News* press coverage of *Mechanical Operations in Cambourne* book launch 2009.

Manchester Blind Spots

‘urban (col)laboratory’
Manchester: Blind Spots
(Piccadilly Gardens)

Lecture video

https://vimeo.com/8611770

_HOW ARE POWER STRUCTURES MANIFEST IN THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT?
_WHAT ALTERNATE CRITICAL SPATIAL PRACTICES EXIST?
_WHAT ARE THE RELATIONS BETWEEN MOVEMENT IN/ USE OF PUBLIC SPACE AND ARCHITECTURE?
_WHAT IS THE SITUATION OF PARTICIPATORY PROJECTS - ARE THEY ART, SOCIAL INTERVENTION OR EVEN ARCHITECTURE?

What connections exist between Performativity and Architecture?
How can we approximate definitions of these terms through each other?
The words overleaf were collected at the Performative Architectures discussion event hosted by the Showroom, London, 25th October 2011, with contributions from Kathrin Böhm (public works, London), Emily Pethick (the Showroom, London), Doina Petrescu (University of Sheffield and Atelier d'Architecture Autogerée, Paris), Jane Rendell (the Bartlett – Faculty of the Built Environment, UCL, London), Helen Stratford and Diana Wesser (both urban (col)laboratory, Cambridge/Leipzig).

Please make your own connections between the words by outlining, joining, deleting or adding to them in colour and send to: contact@urbancollaboratory.net.

Contact UK:
Helen Stratford
Wysing Arts Centre, Studio 3, Fox Road
Nr. Bourn, CB23 2TX

Contact Germany:
Diana Wesser
Simildenstr. 7, 04277 Leipzig

Performative Architectures is a collaborative research project by urban (col)laboratory - architect/ artist Helen Stratford and artist/performer Diana Wesser. Working with artists, curators and publics, the project aims to open up possibilities for exchange and dialogues, to extend existing networks and to develop new practice directions working between concepts of architecture/public space and performativity. Performative Architectures is supported by Arts Council England as part of the Escalator Live Art programme.

URBAN (COL)LABORATORY
www.urbancollaboratory.net

ESCALATOR SUPPORTING ARTISTS IN THE EAST OF ENGLAND

ARTS COUNCIL ENGLAND
LOTTERY FUNDED



Fig. 145. DIY leaflet from 'Performative Architectures' event organised by urban (col)laboratory Helen Stratford and Diana Wesser at The Showroom London 2011.

A Day with A Duck

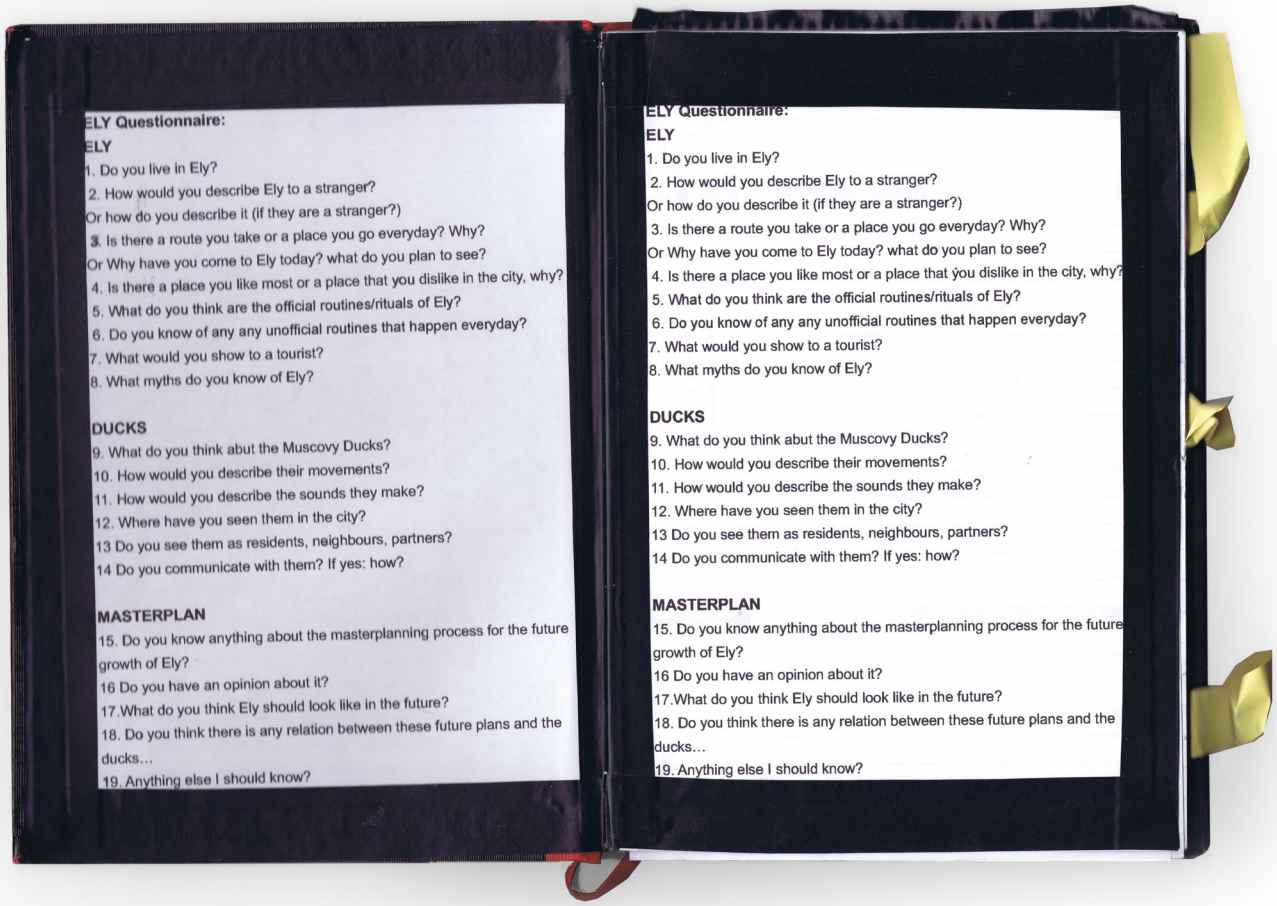


Fig. 146. Practice notebook (sample) – questions from the duck survey.
A Day with a Duck 2012.

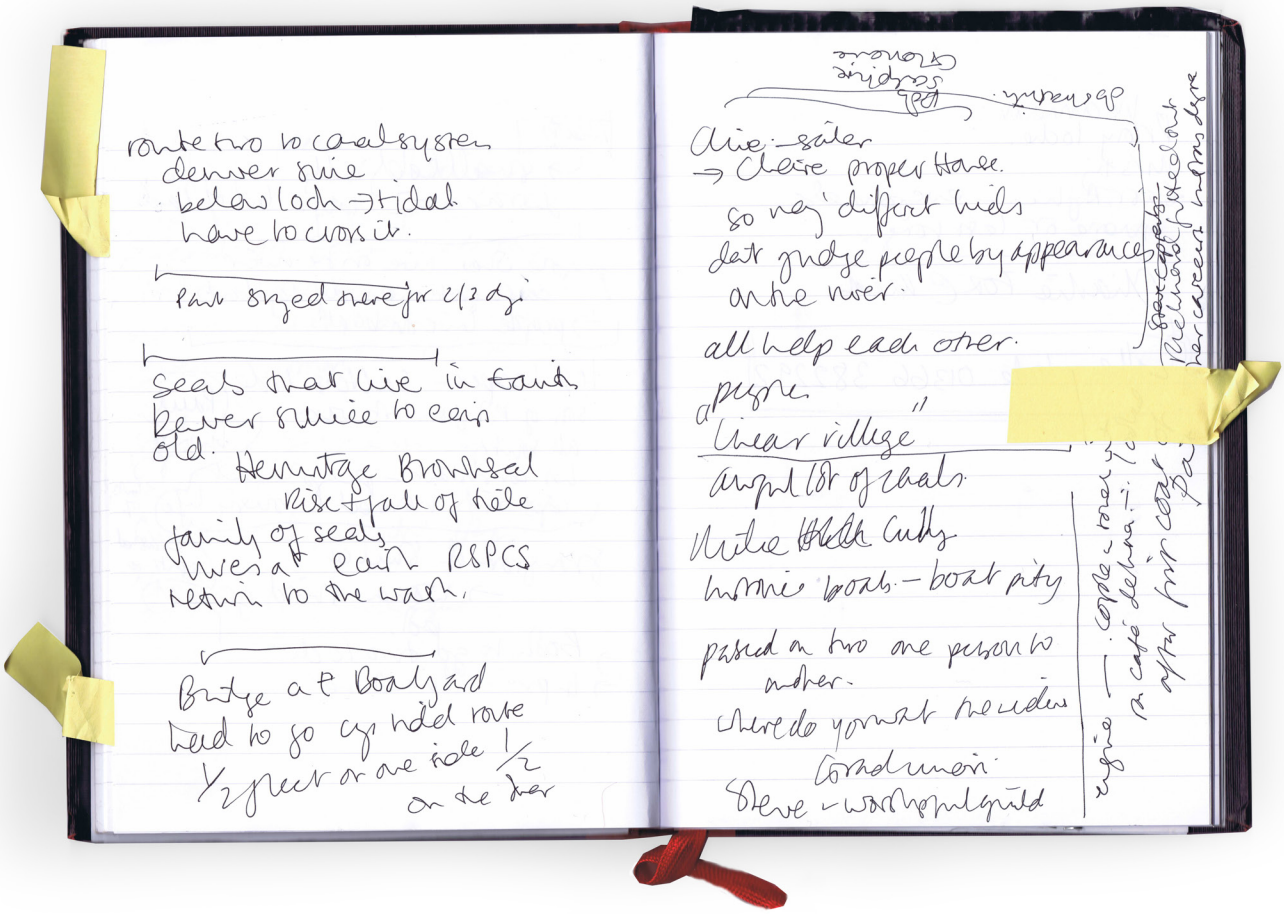


Fig. 147. Practice notebook (sample).
A Day with a Duck 2012.

Thurs.

Helen Stratford: ELY Questionnaire: return to contact@helenstratford.co.uk

ELY

1. Do you live in Ely?
No, Soham.
2. How would you describe Ely to a stranger? —Jewel in the crown, Gem of the Fens., can describe Ely without mentioning cathedral small city so not far any. — do shops do River do attracts + eat Quality of attracts Landscape things Shopping + Eating experience
Or how do you describe it (if you are a stranger?)
3. Is there a route you take or a place you go everyday? Why?
A142 to work — car. → do not take a route this a year
walk to Grange — palace green. oh to be a tourist
Or Why have you come to Ely today? what do you plan to see?
4. Is there a place you like most or a place that you dislike in the city, why?
This should relax, calm ambiance, not noisy people to make it look busy — lovely to see — lovely environ.
5. What do you think are the official routines/rituals of Ely?
Eel day Wed off season — unique thing
go to town green — quirkyness • Market. → 2/4 Sat FM
6. Do you know of any any unofficial routines that happen everyday?
photos taken with statue outside — not advertised — Butchers. ✱
7. What would you show to a tourist?
Eel trail — one stop shop — part all paid attractions, interior, building
8. What myths do you know of Ely?
part of
stop. — Riverside — shop not.
→ all expect to see
with riverside beauty of a "TIC."
The route to get to the riverside.

DUCKS

9. What do you think abut the Muscovy Ducks?
lovely / lovely to walk past / children feed them.
(love because nature nuisance bites them
10. How would you describe their movements?
feed song par them. — ugly birds ugly one.
11. How would you describe the sounds they make?
Herds.. — nice noise
12. Where have you seen them in the city?
Maltjs / city centre.
13 Do you see them as residents, neighbours, partners?
partners — part of city in Ely in top 20 → city to remember
14 Do you communicate with them? If yes: how?
little chat en route — panic if heading my way — is grabbing close the

MASTERPLAN

15. Do you know anything about the masterplanning process for the future growth of Ely?
lack of materials / chains / some would say trees or beauty.
16 Do you have an opinion about it?
stop people commuting out. ensure city/dist change.
city is the life of TIC.
17.What do you think Ely should look like in the future?
(modern use of TIC.
10 yrs ago not a destination
18. Do you think there is any relation between these future plans and the ducks...
env. awareness leaflet — share to feed + shy / rats / manure...
invested in river.
19. Anything else I should know?
"Information services"
never expected knew to go & answer but angered if do
How has shopping on tourism perceived → Accommodation → Restaurant
Carnival Lilly
Worcs. serves.
12 staff.
Roads closed
Road blocked A142. Common occurrence
Q have you got a menu + spencer.
Friendly Boathouse.
Bonehouse
Pets R Us
Strawberry Fields + Hero.
sets a certain standard

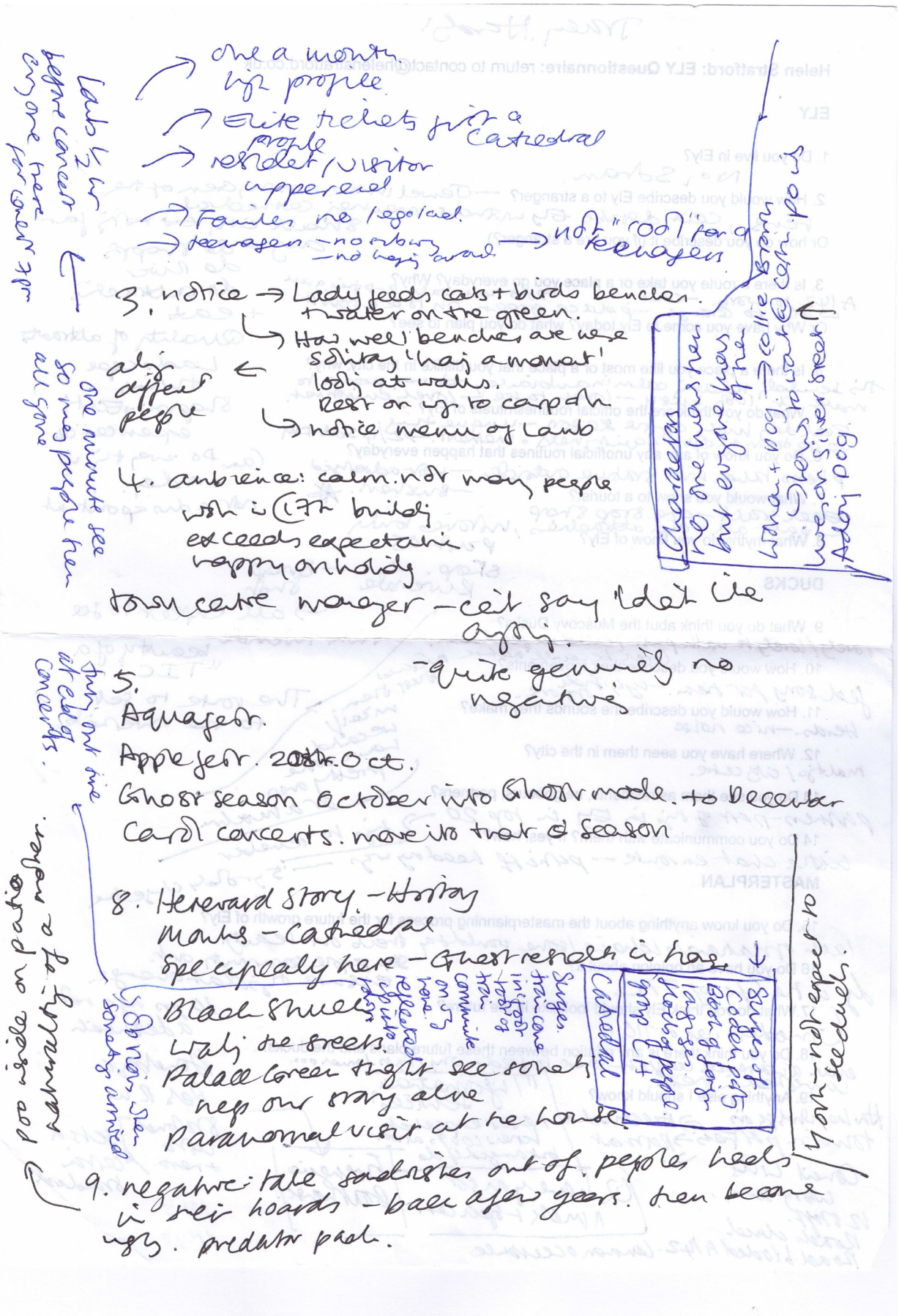


Fig. 148. Practice questionnaire (sample).
A Day with a Duck 2012.



Fig. 149. Gallery presentation *A Day with a Duck* 2012. *Taking Liberties* made with Lucy Francis. Photograph Helen Stratford.



Fig. 150. Gallery presentation *A Day with a Duck* 2012.
Photograph Helen Stratford.



Fig. 151. Gallery presentation *A Day with a Duck* 2012. Lyndall Phelps *Ely Red Data Book* 2012. Photograph Helen Stratford.



Fig. 152. Gallery presentation *A Day with a Duck* 2012. Photograph Helen Stratford.

A Day with a Duck

Video documentation
by Bob Banks
2012

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L9arhHzUZmw

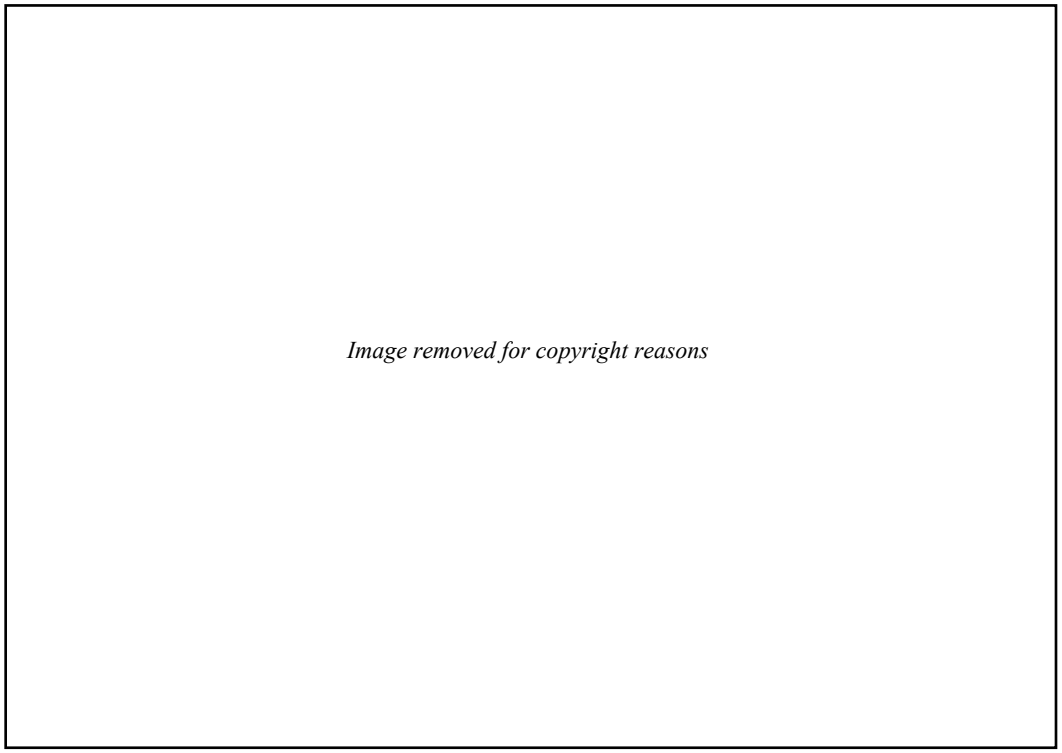


Fig. 153. During *A Day with a Duck* a local tour guide directed me towards a duck-themed guide to Ely**.** *The Ducks of Ely visitors' guide* by Frand Bussard and Joy Lea 2007.

Selected visitor comments
to gallery presentation and events

‘Dear Helen, I love the exhibition – made me laugh.
Have you noticed the muscovy ducks hardly ever go in the water?
I’ll come back with my partner – he has go to see this!’

‘Delightful humorous project with creative purpose and provoking ideas about aspects of Ely’.

‘A really wonderful experience – thank you’.

‘A Ducking good day down in Ely
Duck you very Muscovy’.

‘An excellent afternoon really good to see community efforts’.

‘Love the Ely Ducks. Long may they stay this is all very surreal!’

‘Very well put together informative entertaining fun :)’

‘Good to see the city from a refreshing new perspective’.

‘Interesting juxtaposition of nature and human urbanism’.

‘It makes you question about what to retain and what to destroy in Ely in the future’.

Ducks inspire bid to find city's soul



Project: Helen Stratford was inspired by Ely's controversial Muscovy ducks.

Picture: Keith Heppell 831696.

BY JORDAN DAY

Email: editorial@elyweeklynews.co.uk

THEY are criticised for fouling pavements, blamed for messing up green spaces – and even moaned at for obstructing traffic.

But now Ely's Muscovy ducks are the inspiration behind a project which is exploring what it is that gives Ely its unique identity.

Local architect and artist Helen Stratford is carrying out a major research project to explore how residents, visitors and workers use Ely and how their actions maintain its quirky character.

Mrs Stratford, who works at Mole Architects in Waterside, Ely, has been commissioned by the Arts Council and Arts Development in East Cambs (ADeC) to carry out the project.

She said Ely's controversial Muscovy ducks were her main inspiration.

She said: "The aim of this project is to get people thinking about what it is that makes Ely the unique city it is. It was the Muscovies that inspired me.

"The fact that these ducks have taken over Ely's Riverside area is so interesting.

"They've taken it over as their own public space and it's now their territory. Some people love them yet some people hate them, and all of that is so intriguing. They are part of Ely and part of what makes it the city it is today."

Mrs Stratford, who lives with her husband in Fordham and also has a studio at Wysing Arts Centre in Cambridge, will also be spending time following numerous people as they go about their usual routines in the city, including street cleaners and the people dedicated to tending to Ely's blooms.

The research will culminate in a presentation and series of live-art events at the Babylon Gallery in Ely this autumn.

On Sunday, Mrs Stratford will also be holding an 'A Day with a Duck' event. She will be spending all day (8am-8pm) with the Muscovies and investigating what they do.

She is inviting people to join her during the day and to speak to her about Ely.

Find her in Ely's Riverside area on the day or email *contact@helenstratford.co.uk* or visit *www.helenstratford.co.uk* or *www.adec.org.uk*.

Smallholder

Only £3.75 - **FREE P&P**

POULTRY

A Day With a Duck - in Ely

10:39am Tuesday 18th September 2012 in Poultry

Helen Stratford specialises in making site-specific work in response to the use of space in our daily activities. Ely has a unique relationship with the feathered denizens of its city and Helen presents an interactive presentation of the way in which public areas of the city are shared between human and duck.. Focusing on City territories, hidden spaces, and contrasts between the urban and the wild, A Day With A Duck is a gallery presentation of new work and public programme of events curated by Helen made in collaboration with invited artists, local people and wildlife. Artworks and events inside and outside the gallery will include duck-led tours, walks, performances, interventions and a chance to get involved in 'One Minute Bird Watching' and a 'Live duck-shoot. with Helen in collaboration with Ely-based members of Cambridge Super 8 Group. No experience required' Saturday 1 September - Sunday 7 October 2012 Babylon Gallery | Waterside | Ely | CB7 4AU

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6. Lake girl, two, fights for life
7. Survey suggests shopping habits changed by horse meat scandal
8. April issue of Smallholder OUT NOW!
9. Bernard Matthews told to replant trees felled at proposed wind turbine site
10. Smallholders warned over antibiotic resistance

Fig. 154. Dissemination of *A Day with a Duck* took place on many different levels. *Ely News* and *Poultry Today* press coverage of *A Day with a Duck* 2012.

A Day with a Duck

Review by Hilary Gresty for *a-n The Artists Information Company*

https://www.a-n.co.uk/p/2632538/



The Day of the Duck - reviews (links)

'Artists' Books 2018: 10 of the best, from irreverent fun to brutal heartbreak' by Sarah Bodman for a-n The Artists Information Company.

'Helen Stratford and Lawrence Bradby: The Day of the Duck'
by Blake Morris for Living Maps Review 2019.

'Review: The Day of the Duck, by Helen Stratford and Lawrence Bradby'
by Ewa Giera 2018.

Fig. 155. Book launch and performance reading of *The Day of the Duck*
RIBA bookshop London 2019. Photograph Gordon Shrigley.

Appendix Two

Market Meditations

Market Meditations

video

link to google drive



Figs. 156-160. I first visited the market building on a wet Sunday afternoon. While fully accessible, this public space, located in the centre of the old city, was completely empty. For me, the language of the space, it's monochrome neutrality, spoke of a particular vision of regeneration – at odds with its immediate environs: white and grey, clean, controlled and precise, with few signs of human intervention. Photographs Helen Stratford Celje 2013.






SB
134
SB
135





Zgrešena obnova celjske tržnice

MAVZOLEJ

Za branjevce je na voljo 198 prodajnih mest pod nadstreškom, ki ne ščiti pred vetrom, dežjem in snegom. Stojnice ob zunanjem robu strehe so tako v slabem vremenu popolnoma neuporabne, zmrzujejo pa na tržnici vsi – kupci in prodajalci.

Na svetega Miklavža dan so v Celju slovesno odprli prenovljeno tržnico, za katero je mesto odštelo 3,8 milijona evrov. Občinski veljaki so jo v svet pospremili z velikimi besedami in jo poimenovali srce mesta. Če je tako, potem celjsko srce resno potrebuje kardiologa. Zastalo je namreč v primežu mraza, vetra in pomanjkanja tako branjevcev kot kupcev.

Tekst: **T. N. S.**, foto: **ŠIMEN ZUPANČIČ**

Natanko tako, kot so to najkompetentnejši strokovnjaki za prenovo tržnice – branjevci sami – napovedovali že vnaprej. Pred začetkom del, ko so podpisovali peticijo o tem, kakšno tržnico si želijo in potrebujejo.

Kot pokopališče

S fotografom sva se v Celje odpravila, da bi dan preživela za stojnico in na lastni koži preizkusila, ali je res tako težko biti branjevka na prenovljeni tržnici. V starem mestnem jedru pa naju je pričakalo presenečenje. Beli kamniti mavzolej, ki že sam po sebi deluje hladno in nedomačno, kot kak del pokopališča, je zeval prazen. Na ledeno mrzlih kladah so svoje pridelke ponujali trije, morda štirje branjevci. Zaviti v bunde, šale in kape so se prestopali z noge na nogo in si puhali topel zrak v dlani. Zeblo me je že, ko sem jih samo pogledala. Ure dolgo stati na mrzlih tleh za kamnito mizo, izpostavljeni pišu zimskega vetra, pač ni šala. Nič čudnega torej, da se jih le malo odloči svoje izdelke kupcem ponuditi vsak dan. Še posebno ker teh tako ali tako ni. V času najinega obiska je na enega kupca svoje storitve ponujalo vsaj šest prodajalcev. Ali kupcev ni zato, ker je (pre)majhna ponudba, ali ponudbe ni zato, ker je premalo kupcev, je težko reči, dejstvo pa je, da nove celjske tržnice očitno vsaj do spomladanske otoplitve ne bo mogoče uporabljati, za kar je bila zgrajena.

Nezadovoljni prodajalci

Eno od gospa, ki s pordelimi lici v mrazu kljub vsemu vztrajajo, povprašam, kako je zadovoljna s prenovljenim delovnim mestom. Pogleda me izpod čela, če se morda zafrkavam: »Zadovoljna?! Ne, ta beseda ni prava. Prej ogorčena. Toliko denarja je šlo v to, da zdaj še težje delamo kot prej. Zebe nas, piha od vsepovsod, moči nas dež. Res smo pričakovali boljše razmere, zdaj pa tole. Ne, prav nič nisem zadovoljna.« Pripombe imajo vsi. Tržnica je preveč odprta, streha previsoko, betonska tla so hladna. Zunanje stojnice so preblizu roba strehe in zato izpostavljene snegu in dežju, ki moči izdelke, prodajalce in kupce. Betonske mize so preozke, težave imajo z dostavo, saj ima vsak prodajalec le 15 minut časa, da razloži svojo robo. Mnenja kupcev so mešana. Nekateri so zadovoljni z modernim videzom tržnice, drugim se zdi pusta in hladna. Velika večina pa se strinja, da so za tak denar pričakovali več.

Ljubljančani pa zdaj s strahom pogledujemo proti svoji tržnici, brez katere mesto ne bi bilo enako, in razmišljamo, kaj bo iz nje naredil župan Janković. Prenova starega mesta, ki mu je v tako veselje, doslej še zdaleč ni navdušila vseh, hladni minimalistični stil, ki mu je najbolj pri srcu, pa se marsikateremu obiskovalcu tržnice tudi ne zdi primeren za prostor, ob katerem naj bi pomislili na naravo, babičino kuhinjo in toplino doma. To so namreč, poleg velike izbire zdravih in domačih pridelkov, tisti občutki, ki nas na tržnice vedno znova zvabijo. ■

Kar najtoplejša obleka je za branjevce tako ali tako nuja, a kaj, ko na celjski tržnici tudi ta ne pomaga. Želijo si vsaj lesenih podstavkov, ki bi jih zaščitili pred ledenim mrazom betonskih tal.

Zunanje mize v slabem vremenu namakata dež in sneg.

Fig. 161. When the market opened the traders' story made national media.
Šimen Zupančič, 'Mavzolej (Mausoleum)', *Jana*, 21 December 2009, p. 18.



Fig. 162. Celje Tourist Guide highlights the award winning aspects of the municipal market building. 'Celje Tourist Guide' (Celje: Institution for Cultural Events and Tourism Celeia Celje, 2015)



Fig. 163. The signs in the market formed part of the layers of infrastructure that produced the space. Photograph Helen Stratford.

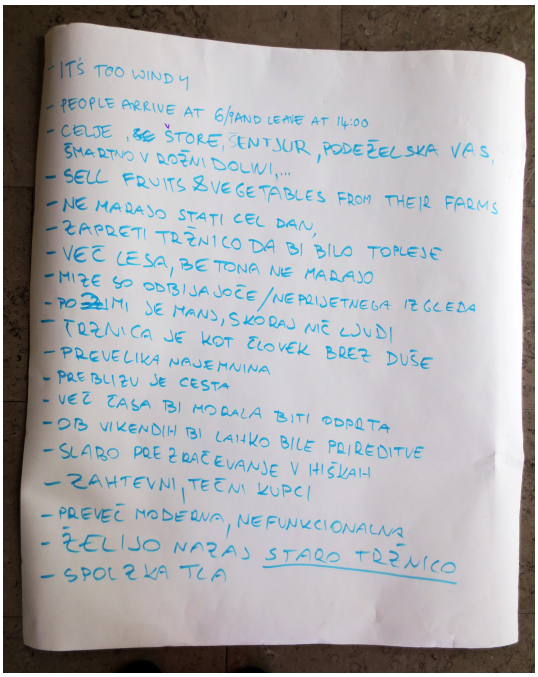
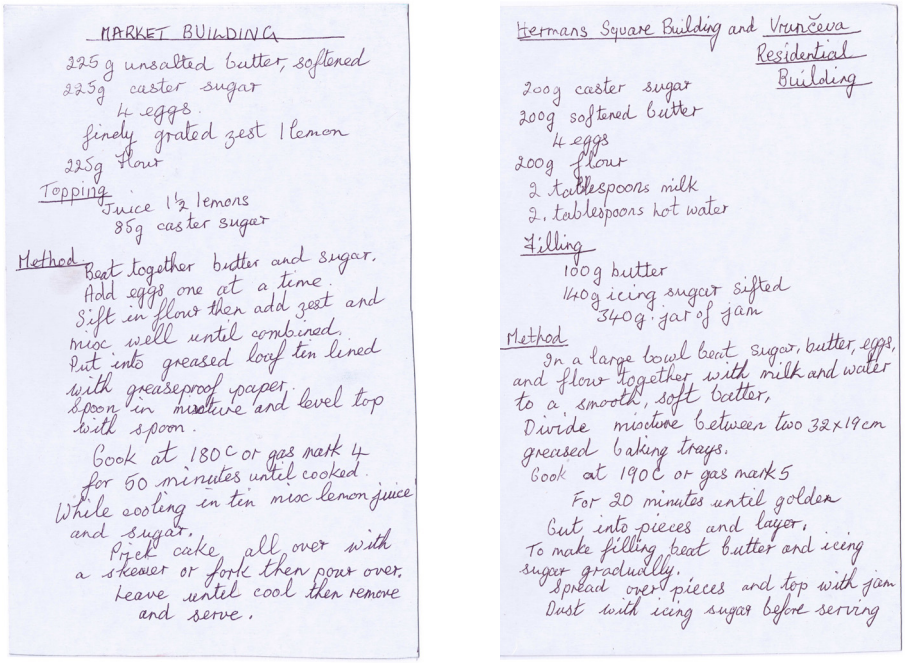


Fig. 164. The second student workshop led to the collection of traders' complaints for public display. Photograph Helen Stratford.



MARKET BUILDING

225 g unsalted butter, softened
225g caster sugar
4 eggs
finely grated zest 1 lemon
225g flour

Topping
Juice 1½ lemons
85g caster sugar

Method
Beat together butter and sugar.
Add eggs one at a time.
Sift in flour then add zest and mix well until combined.
Put into greased loaf tin lined with greaseproof paper.
Spoon in mixture and level top with spoon.
Cook at 180C or gas mark 4 for 50 minutes until cooked.
While cooling in tin mix lemon juice and sugar.
Prick cake all over with a skewer or fork then pour over.
Leave until cool then remove and serve.

Hermans Square Building and Vrunčeva Residential Building

200g caster sugar
200g softened butter
4 eggs
200g flour
2 tablespoons milk
2 tablespoons hot water

Filling
100g butter
140g icing sugar sifted
340g jar of jam

Method
In a large bowl beat sugar, butter, eggs, and flour together with milk and water to a smooth, soft batter.
Divide mixture between two 32x19cm greased baking trays.
Cook at 190C or gas mark 5
For 20 minutes until golden
Cut into pieces and layer.
To make filling beat butter and icing sugar gradually.
Spread over pieces and top with jam
Dust with icing sugar before serving

Fig. 165. During the workshop with the students cakes made from market produce in the shape of newly regenerated and future buildings for the city were laid on a market table. The recipes formed part of the opening event at the gallery in 2014. Cake recipes Hilary Stratford 2013.

Image removed for copyright reasons

Fig. 166. On the table images of future buildings planned for the city were printed out for citizens to leaf through as it was evident that most weren't aware of the furture plans for the city. Herman's Square / Arhimetrics + Enota. From <https://www.archdaily.com/133320/hermans-square-arhimetrics-enota>

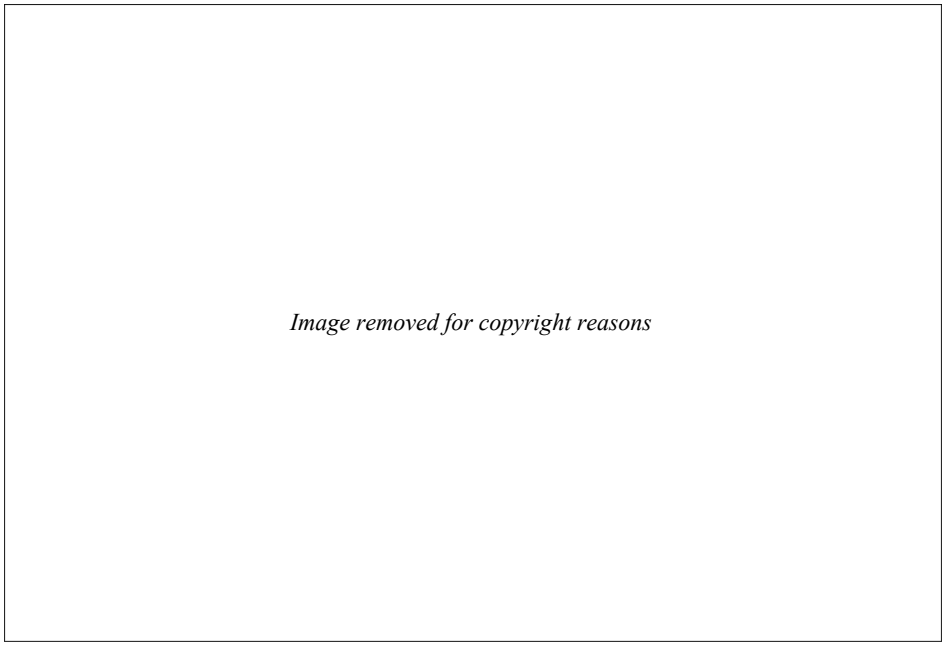


Fig. 167. Herman's Square / Arhimetrics + Enota. From <https://www.archdaily.com/133320/hermans-square-arhimetrics-enota>

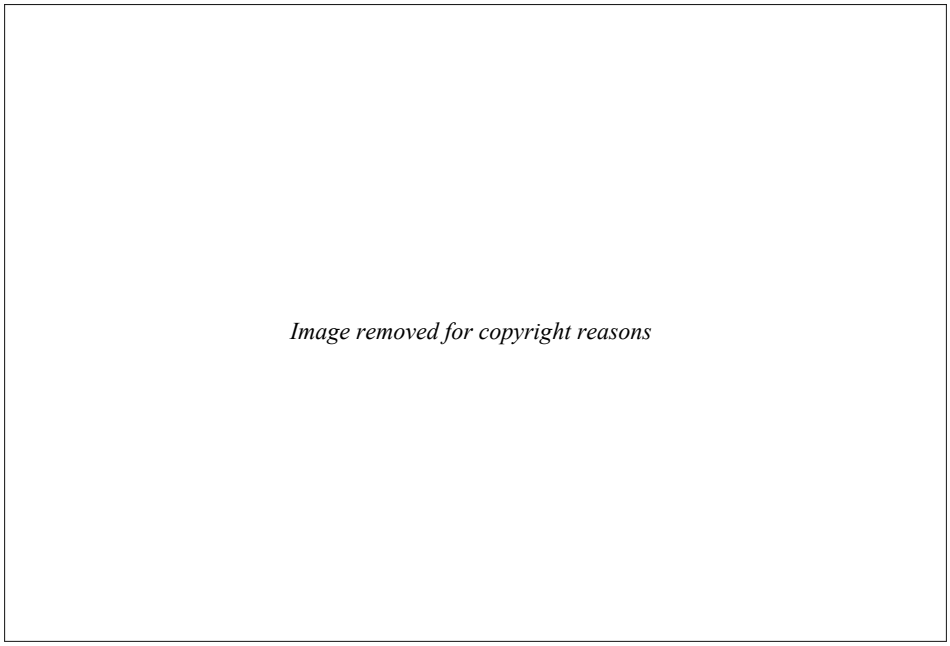


Fig. 168. Vrunčeva Residential Building in Celje, Slovenia by Enota Architects.
From <https://www10.aeccafe.com/blogs/arch-showcase/2012/03/28/vrunceva-residential-building-in-celje-slovenia-by-enota-architects/>

C O D E

Ethics of architects, landscape architects

and spatial planners

INTRODUCTION

Due to the fact that:

- Architecture represents the cultural image of the country and the society, the nation's heritage and tangible cultural identity,

-Architectural creations sustained in time and space, and usually spends his designer, builder and owner of the first users

- Architectural creation to a large extent determines the conditions for long-term life and stay and the impact on the environment and space

- Architectural creation is based on a synthesis of aesthetic and ethical values and is therefore different from most other business services

There is a fundamental objective and ethical assumption in architectural activities in the protection and enforcement of public interest to high-quality living and working environment. Concern for the environment and sustainable development and protection of architectural heritage, cultural and economic goods are the fundamental duties of an architect. The architect must have this required knowledge and skills and possess the means to fulfill the tasks undertaken. In carrying out its activities, the architect is required to seek the most appropriate solution taking into account the applicable regulations, site characteristics, available resources, and ecological, appearance and social aspects of the proposed solution.

Chapter 1: The Code

Article 1

(The purpose of the Code)

The Code of Ethics of Architects (hereinafter referred to as the Code) sets out the principles and rules to be followed in carrying out the activities of architects.

Article 2

(definitions)

Under this Code, the terms have the following meanings:

1 "Architect" in the directory of certified registered architect, certified landscape architect or authorized spatial planner.

2 "Activity" is to provide services of architectural and landscape architectural design, planning, audit plans, architecture and landscape architecture, and provide construction supervision.

3 "architectural work" as architectural plans and architectural objects.

4 "architectural plan" is a plan for architecture, landscape architecture or planning.

5 "architectural object" is an object, landscape arrangements, or other tangible creations, which was constructed on the basis of architectural design.

6 "The Chamber" is a Chamber of Architecture and Spatial Planning of Slovenia.

7 "Directory" is a directory of authorized architects, landscape architects authorized and certified planners, led by the Chamber of Commerce.

8 "Client" is the party who is the architect of this service.

...

Article 17

(transition to ongoing projects)

(1) The architect, who is contracting a consultant on the project, which designed by another architect does not undertake this engagement in their own execution.

(2) The Architect shall, before entering into a contract to carry out the project, which was previously implemented and is still carried out by another architect, the latter written notification of the conclusion of the contract and asked for consent. If the architect consent can not be obtained at the conclusion of the contract must notify the Chamber of Commerce.

Article 18

(public speaking)

(1) An architect must be in business and public speaking apply only truthful information. With clients, with colleagues and with the public must communicate patiently and nežaljivo.

(2) The architect is entitled to their own views and opinions on the publication of another architect, architectural works, and may be used only justified and objective facts.

Article 19

(copyright compliance)

(1) An architect shall not sign architectural plans, which are not directly produced or supervised.

(2) If the associate architects largely contributed to the auteur architect, the architect must appoint as co-author on the plans at public competitions for publication in the scientific literature, etc..

Article 20

(interventions in architectural buildings of other architects)

(1) An architect must design before the start of the recovery or other interventions in architectural facility provide written notification to the author of this architectural object and ask for consent. If the architect is not able to obtain the consent of the author must, before starting work, notify the Chamber of Commerce.

(2) The architect without the consent of the author may not be designed processing or other interventions in architectural object that was awarded in a public tender or the author having received national or international architectural award.

Article 21

(Cultural Heritage)

The architect can be designed processing or other intervention in an architectural object that is cultural heritage or cultural monument, only in accordance with the regulations on the protection of cultural heritage.

CONVERSATION WITH ARCHITECT MAY 2013

HS: I was interested in who commissioned the Market building in the first place Was it the Municipality?

TK: Actually it was a competition made by the Municipality. It was an invited competition, so they invited, I think, 6 Architects. We won, we had luck to win this, and that was the story.

HS: I was looking at a video of the old building and I wondered if you could tell me what inspired the original concept?

TK: Yes, actually the old building was quite nice, but in fact, it had been rebuilt and there was some additional buildings, or part of it, which destroyed the original outlook of the building, so…. and also there was a problem also with construction which was so old and in a bad shape, so it was quite a dangerous building, and that's why they decided to destroy it and this was actually the idea to destroy the old building and to build a new one.

But the old one had quite an interesting section – which was like a basilican section. It had the traditional shape of this basilican market place.

But the problem was that here on this side, what is a bit strange, in Celje we have one of the biggest prisons, so this is really a strange situation that in the city centre you have a prison which is somehow not only not quite in the right place but cannot come to the building very easily, with police cars and something, its quite a strange situation.

So, this high wall [of the old market building section], which I think was 7 metres high, enabled the sun to penetrate through these windows.

But, the problem with this kind of section was that there was not enough light coming under this big roof, so in the old market, there was problem, from this side, there was not enough light coming into the market so when it was sunny outside they had to have all the lights on. So it was really dark.

So that's why what we did is change it. We could not get enough light from the south, so we turned the logic into the different direction so we received enough light from east and west.

How we did that, we cut this big slab from both sides and we folded or divided this big slab into smaller pieces so what we got is this fine cut between these two roofs and we used it to receive enough light and also we used it as the main construction. The main construction is actually hidden in this cut between the two roofs, that's the whole story of why it is shaped like that.

That's why today you have nearly more or less enough light inside. And, of course, with this kind of construction you have enough height to have a big beam that can span quite a long way. It's 22metres actually.

HS: And so then the boxes, the enclosed spaces, that run down the side of the building, is that also a kind of barrier to the prison?

TK: Exactly, that's the floor plan, so the idea was to open the market to all the streets, [redacted]

So, the idea was to open the market place to all streets, except this one, which is the internal street used by the prison, we made these closed shops or boxes, to prevent somebody to see this ugly façade. So, the orientation is made towards north and east and maybe west, not to the south.

HS It's a really interesting problem, that completely different public institutions are next to each other.

TK: It [The line of boxes] is a filter between the public part and let's say the more or less 'service areas,' also all this storage, these toilets are meant to be not as public, that's why they are oriented to this side, to the south.

HS: I was interested in the different uses in the space – because there are quite a lot of different sellers aren't there? There's clothes sellers and fruit sellers and then there's people who just come every now and again. In the old building I could see [from the pictures] that they had kind of made their own sort of spaces and I just wondered how you'd approached those quite different ways of selling.

TK: This is the invention that we did, these closed shops. The sellers they didn't actually know how they will sell, somebody wants to sell their goods on the table and somebody else wants to have a shop, like a classical shop where you can enter the space and then you go out. That's why what we did is we divided these panels into two heights so you can open just the upper two and you can sell the goods on the table or you open also the down part and then this box functions as a normal shop, of course in the smaller dimensions.

Also, because its quite hard to get to the city centre with a car, it's quite crowded in the morning and in the afternoon when they all come to collect what they didn't sell or just to bring in the morning things to sell. So what we did is make it so that in the night you can close all four panels and you can store things.

HS: So they didn't have this kind of storage facility before.

TK: No not before.

HS: So they just brought everything anew everyday.

TK: Exactly. This is something which is now quite well expected and they use these kind of things.

But what I wanted to show you is this image actually from a lecture I gave yesterday. This kind of slide is made more or less for architects - really clean, perfectly done. All the composition is well prepared and if it's not it's then corrected in photoshop and so on. What I explained yesterday, when I finished the lecture, is that we actually hate

these kinds of pictures, because this is not the real image of the marketplace. That's why we hate these kind of pictures.

This is something which is closer to how the market looks– this is actually, the image of the market today, so it's full of honey here, it's full of some bottles here, some boxes with vegetables here, you know, the floor is not perfectly clean it's always full of, smashed potatoes or something and so on, and actually none of these people know who made this market, and that's I think the point of every building, it has to become a part of everyday city life and when it becomes like that you know you made a great building. Otherwise, [redacted] this architecture lacks this human quality and that's why we like it like it is today, [redacted]

But what I think is important is this thing: is that we used materials which are as neutral as possible.

HS: Yes, I was going to ask you about the material choices.

TK: This means that the colour of vegetables, the colour of fruits, the colour of whatever they are selling has to be present, so you have to create a neutral environment around it. So this, the image of fruit and vegetables, is actually the purpose of this building and is as present as possible.

At first, when they saw the market like that everybody said "But why grey? Why there is just one colour? Why?" It was on the opening day. Then I said, "wait until tomorrow, when it will be full of colourful fruits and vegetables." This is actually the real image of the market, [redacted]

Also, what I believe, but it's not so much realised, is that when they close the market, in the afternoon, a space like that can be used as a public space. You can have performances here, you can do… I don't know what.

HS: That's interesting, because we did a workshop there two weeks ago. We worked with school children and we asked them exactly that. What about when the market is closed? What uses can we do? So they invented lots of different uses, like meditating and playing tennis… For me, because those benches are so solid, I was thinking you can come up with lots of things. But it was interesting because for them it was quite difficult to start to think about how it could be used other than a market.

TK: Mmm

HS: But children do play there as well, I've seen them playing there.

TK:Yeah it's the perfect place…. Because I saw some skaters for example using this.

HS: Some of the things are banned though, they've got notices up saying no skating.

TK: Yes but it's really nice. It is made to be used not only as a market.

HS: Personally I think it's quite difficult because as an architect I can see that it's possible, but perhaps other people don't feel that they can have that sort of freedom?

TK: But we talked with the city authorities and they actually agreed to use it also after hours. But the problem is that a private company operates the market, not the Municipality so they cannot make the agreement on how to use it.

HS: Ok, yes there are lots of CCTV cameras around.

TK: Yes, that's their way you know.

HS: And they keep it really clean don't they? In another place it would be graffitied

TK: Mmm

HS: The other thing I was going to ask you, because what interests me is exactly what you were saying: the difference between this very architectural image and the other images of the market in use and how some of the traders have actually adapted some of the benches. They bring coloured cloth and then also there are wooden platforms in-between the benches… So there were two things. First, I was wondering what you thought about all those adaptions, for example, the fruit sellers they bring lots of boxes and stack them up all around and …

TK: Yes, there is always a problem how much they intervene you know, of course. We have experiences in other buildings where they ask us for our opinion and somehow we are always here to help them. The same thing happened on the market. So, for example, we even convinced the city authorities to make wooden platforms for all the stalls. Before these platforms were part of original project, but they were left out, because of cost reductions.

HS: For me it's interesting, we did have a chat with some of the sellers about the building so I know some of them aren't so happy … they were talking about the height of the roof and things like that and the fact that they've put up umbrellas and things. It's interesting hearing you say how you liked some of these sorts of adaptations even if to a limited degree. In some of the other buildings [in Celje] the library building for example, they had problems with the entrance because it opens directly onto the street and they wanted to have a different layout. So they asked the architect for permission to change it but I think he must have said no. For me, that's quite amazing that the architect has that sort of power, but you are saying it's not quite so clear.

TK: [redacted]
But I'm still satisfied with how the market looks today, I am there regularly and I don't think that somebody destroyed it. [redacted]

But, the point is that you know the people who are complaining they don't know what the regulations are. I know this story about the height of the roof. Sorry, we have a regulation which says that the roof has to be 4 metres high and that's it, it's the law. They were talking to me that they want to have ceiling that is 2 metres and 50 centimetres that they calculated because of the rain, but I'm sorry, the law says it has to be 4 metres for a market building.

Then there is a general misunderstanding.

[redacted]

The competition, which was organised by city authorities was made for open market An open Market means that a market is ‘open,’. It has a roof but no facade. In Ljubljana an open market has for example just umbrellas . So all six participants of the competition made projects for open markets, some even without the roof

If the subject of the competition would be the closed market, we would have made the building with the facade, heating, ventilation, etc. But this was not the case.



HS: To me it's very appealing as an object from a conventional architectural point of view, and that was how I saw it before I came, I did a bit of research about the new buildings in Celje and then I just found images like this of the market building [neat and empty of people] So when I came it was interesting to go there, to see how the way it's been inhabited is really colourful with different things going on…

TK: Yes, the building was built when Celje had really a big ambition. [redacted] Our Mayor [redacted] wanted to [redacted] put it on the map. Somehow, he managed to achieve this [redacted] The paving is the last project, actually it is the last project he promised to realise – there is also one bridge by the library [redacted] and a beautiful promenade by the river, which was also renovated.

MARKET CONVERSATION WITH TRADERS APRIL 2013

MH: How do you feel about the renovation of the market?

TRADERS.: We don't want to be rude and spread gossips. But, the market is nothing special now .. we have been working here for 25 years. Before at least we had a roof, now we had to buy this umbrella to protect the goods from the rain, sun and snow.

MH: And the former market had a roof?

TRADERS: Yes it had. The old market was different. Was better. [redacted] There was a roof, I mean there is a roof also now but its too high. Because its so high the sun goes in, it rains …

MH: How much do you pay for renting?

TRADERS: Too much.

MH: What about the Municipality?

TRADERS: The Municipality has no money to renovate the market. We, the traders said that we will invest ourself and make a roof on our own. But we can not even do that [redacted] We cannot change anything, we have to accept it even if we don't like it.

MH: Is the number of the sellers the same as it was during the old market?

TRADERS: No, lower … before we were many, like ten and now we only two.

MH: And where did the rest go?

TRADERS: Some went on the road to sell goods, others … well ok, then is also the financial crisis, for sure it has some affects on the market. Also the shopping malls contibute that there not so many people on the market….competition… [redacted] We don't even know who owns the market because they have a concession and there is no person with who we could talk to. Like during winter if it snows [redacted] the problem is we cannot sell the goods that are wet because of the snow. [redacted]

MH: Who gets the money for the rent? The Municipality?

TRADERS: No, one company gets the money. Anyway, about the roof, I think would been better if they wouldn't do the roof at all – then we could improvise by our own.

MH: And how are the customers?

TRADERS: Customers are very nice. But they are also not satisified with the market. During rain or snow they don't want to walk here because it is slippery. Older people are afraid to walk on the floor, young families also – besides its hard to navigate around here with a wheelchair.

MH: And Saturdays?

TRADERS: On Saturdays there are more customers. [redacted]

[redacted] … Because the roof is so high we had to buy umbrelass and one umbrella costs 350 eur. So, we are on our own here.

MH: Horror.

TRADERS: It was in the newspapers. I mean the biggest problem is that we cannot do anything, the buiding is protected. [redacted]

MH: Does the Mayor ever buys apples from you?

TRADERS: yes, he comes… I mean, we have to pay a lot to be able to sell here…we have to rent the whole benches not just one.

MH: But what about those there? They can have just one bench?

TRADERS: Yes, because they are farmers. [redacted] Anyhow, the biggest problem is the roof, before the wind didn't blow here, the snow didn't come in and so on … and the other problem is we have to pay no matter if we are here or not …. Like even if there is snow and you cannot sell for ten days on the market, we still have to pay full rent. Every market in Slovenia has a rule, where you can pay less – depends on the season … but here is always full rent.

I mean it's not like we don't want to work, we do, but if the weather is not good then we can't work. Like this year, for 6 months we had winter.

And then there is another thing. We don't have electricity. We have batteries.

MH: And the old market had electricity?

TRADERS: Yes. They have money to put all this cameras above our heads but no money for electricity.Now imagine working here on a minus degrees when the batteries run out in about an hour…

MH: Nobody here has electricity?

TRADERS: No one.

MH: And can you say anything positive about the market?

TRADERS: The positive thing is that we are still here..

MH: Thank you for your time. We will also ask other traders what they think..

TRADERS: They are afraid, just like we are. We are mad only because we pay much more but have less than before. We had more customers before, nobody wants to walk around here freezing.

MH: Thank you really.

[redacted]

MH: Helen will talk with the architect too.

TRADERS: Really?? Well, that is good. I really want to know what he was thinking…I heard they ranked the market as being the number three on the world most beautiful markets. Anyhow, we just want a normal roof.

Three years ago when they opened the market I said that the market is not functional [redacted] Three people went or more… they closed. If she goes to the architect then say to him we need a roof and electricity. Where is she from?

MH: From England.

TRADERS: Oh, really??

……

MH: Hi, how long have you been working here?

TRADER: More than 12 years. Can you come back in 5 min?

MH: OK.

……

MH: Hi, can we ask you how do you feel about the renovation of the market?

TRADER: I think it is really bad, there is no sale.

MH: Why?

TRADER: People buy in shopping malls.

MH: Is it cold in the winter?

TRADER: Yes, is very cold. I didn't go to work because it was too cold.

MH: You have to pay rent?

TRADER: Yes, but its not so much…I sell here for 30 years already. Former market was better, there were more customers.

ANOTHER TRADER COMES: I sell also for 30 years. We have a farm at home. I don't like the market but what can I do ? [redacted]

MH: That is not nice.

TRADER: We have to wear so many clothes so we are not freezing here. And the sale is so bad, people buy in shopping malls not on the market. There is only more people on Friday and Saturday.

……..

MH: Hi, do you like the renovated market?

TRADER: I sell here for 65 years. If I like the market, who cares what I think.

MH: The other people there said you don't have electricity?

TRADER: We have it.

MH: What do you mean?

TRADER: Well look above, we have the lights....

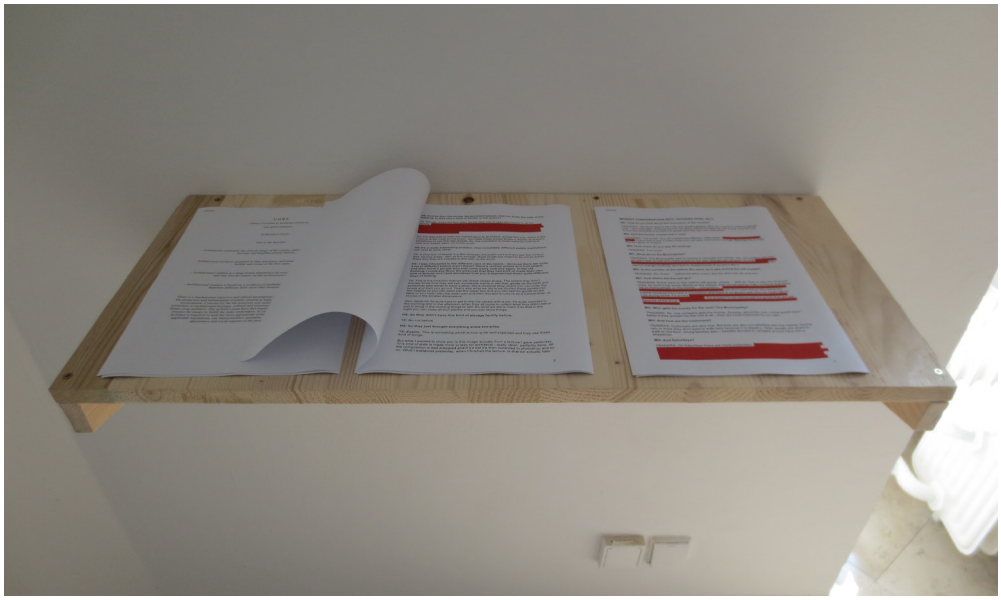


Fig. 169. Transcripts of the conversations with traders, the architects and the code of conduct were presented in the gallery. Gallery presentation *Market Meditations* 2014. Photograph Helen Stratford.



Fig. 170. In the gallery a market table was remade in timer – the predominant material of the old market. Gallery presentation *Market Meditations* 2014. Photograph Helen Stratford.

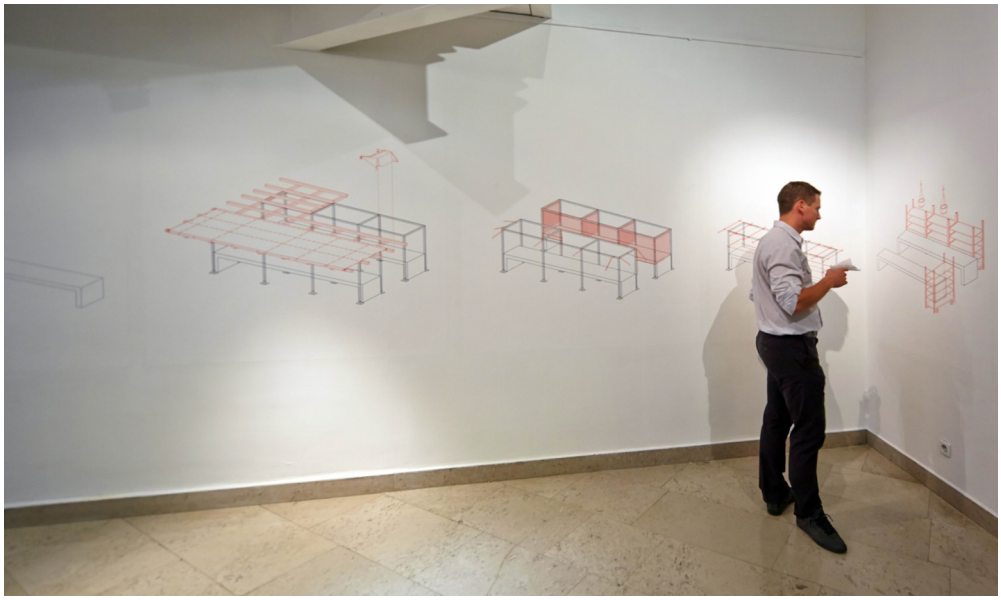


Fig. 171. The drawings of the traders adaptations were printed by an architectural office and pasted directly to the walls. Gallery presentation Market Meditations 2014. Photograph Helen Stratford.



Fig. 172. Following the traders' complaints a new set of white and symmetrically arranged umbrellas approved by the architect were installed in the market. Photograph Helen Stratford.

Market Meditations – press coverage (links)

'Namizni tenis na tržnici'– 'Table Tennis at the Market.' *Dnevik* 2014.

'Celjska mestna tržnica, kot bi tudi lahko bila' – 'Celje City Market as it could be.' Celje.info 2014.

Ms Helen Stratford
School of Architecture
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Sunday, 14 April 2013

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Dear Helen,

PROJECT TITLE: Performative Architectures: phase 1 Celje City Routines, public space identification, Celje, Slovenia

On behalf of the University ethics reviewers who reviewed your project, I am pleased to inform you that on 14/04/2013 the above-named project was unconditionally **approved** on ethics grounds, on the basis that you will adhere to the following document that you submitted for ethics review:

- University research ethics application form (12.04.2013)
- Participant information documents (Celje 1 HS, Celje 2 HS, Celje 3 HS)
- Participant consent forms (1 and 2)

If during the course of the project you need to deviate significantly from the above-approved document please inform me since written approval will be required. Please also inform me should you decide to terminate the project prematurely.

Yours sincerely
Rosie Parnell
Ethics Coordinator

Appendix Three

Project Archive
and
Presentations

Chronological List of Exhibitions, Events and residencies

Selected projects and professional residencies

2016-ongoing *Organisational Diagrams for Everyday Life*
Bloc Projects Sheffield 2020
Oslo Architecture Triennale 2019
Real Estate Micro Residency Leftcoast CPP Blackpool (2019)
Transitions17 Saabat Gallery, Middlesbrough (2018)
The Drawing Room 3-day residency, Oriel Davies Gallery, Newtown, Wales (2016)

2018-2021 *Between the Gallery and the Park* residency
Yorkshire Sculpture Park and Furtherfield Gallery with Idit Nathan

2017-2018 *Walk & Play YSP!*
Walking artists residency
Yorkshire Sculpture Park with Idit Nathan

2017 The Remote Lab residency
Fermynwoods Contemporary Art, Northamptonshire

2015-2016 *Play the City Now or Never!*
METAL 2-year residency with Idit Nathan

2016 UNIT(e) g39 10 week development residency/intensive
g39 Cardiff Wales

2015 *How to Re-Make a City*
residency with demolition workers, Sheffield, Yorkshire Artspace

MSB2015 three-part residency exchange:
Castlefield Manchester, Bloc Sheffield, ESP Birmingham

2014 AA2A 8 month residency, Sheffield Hallam University

2013-2014 *Market Meditations*
Performative research of the Market Building Celje Slovenia
Including AIR Celeia: 2 month residency at the Centre for Contemporary Art, Celje Slovenia and gallery presentation

2013 Time & Space METAL 1 month residency Peterborough with Idit Nathan

Birdland is Everywhere: 6 month residency - Poly-Technic, Soar Works, Sheffield

METAL Culture Lab, Peterborough, 1 week residency with Idit Nathan

2012 / 2018 *A Day with a Duck*
6-month residency including publication, live events and gallery presentation
Babylon Gallery, Ely

2011-12 *Performative Architectures*
Arts Council England funded practice development with Diana Wesser

2007-12 *taking place 6: The Other Side of Waiting: Routine Procedures*
curated public arts project, Homerton Hospital Hackney, London,
with taking place feminist collective www.takingplace.org.uk

2009-2015 Studio Artist Wysing Arts Centre, Cambridge

2009 *Communities Under Construction*
6-month residency, including publication, live events and gallery presentation
Wysing Arts Centre, Cambridge

Selected Solo Performative Tours Walks & Actions

2018 *A Lexicon of Gestures for Everyday Public Life*
public engagement commission for Commission Projects in connection with 'Corpus' by Dalziel and Scullion, Capella Biomedical Campus, Cambridge.

Vsakogaršnjaemlja Participatory walk, Kud Obrat Ljubljana

2015 *Perimeter Perambulations* Queen's Park, RADAR Loughborough

Flora & Fauna Tours Castlegate Festival, Yorkshire Artspace Sheffield

Things to Do with Shopping Centres public event, Cornhill Walk, Bury St Edmunds

2013 *An Architectural Cleaning Cupboard Tour* Cambridge Junction: Unfinished & Unleashed

2011 *Approaching Art* performative tour Camberwell School of Art, London

2008 *In-between House & Home* performative lecture walk, Arts Theatre, Cambridge Festival of Ideas

2006 *In-between House and Home* performative lecture "A Question(ing) of Gesture" Leipzig Opera House

2001 *taking place 2*: performances: 'diffident voices' and 'washing up'
School of Architecture, University of North London

Selected Collaborative Performative Tours Walks & Actions

2017	*Play Cambridge Now or Never!* WATCHOUT Festival, Cambridge with Idit Nathan
2016/17	*Lightbulb Walks* National Theatre, London with Idit Nathan
	Play The City Now or Never! CounterPlay 16 Aarhus (DK) with Idit Nathan
2015	*Play Welcome Now or Never!* Welcome Trust Play Spectacular London with Idit Nathan
2014	*Play Cambridge Now or Never!* Curating Cambridge with Idit Nathan
2013	*Sunder & Land* performative walk, with Idit Nathan On Walking Sunderland University & NGCA
2012	*Time to C&B* performative tour with Idit Nathan, CB1, Cambridge Curiosity & Imagination & Aid&Abet
2012	*Practising Firstsite*: 10 ways to Misuse a Visual Arts Centre performative tour Firstsite Gallery Colchester
2011	*Choreographing Knowledge* with Diana Wesser: Murray Edwards, Cambridge Festival of Ideas
	Walking Through Walls audio walk-for-one with Diana Wesser: Stadttheater Bremerhaven (DE)
	Intervals audio-walk, with Diana Wesser: Metropolis Biennale Copenhagen
2010	*Walking Through Walls* audio walk-for-one, Centraltheater Leipzig play! LEIPZIG Festival with Diana Wesser
	Practising Wysing: 10 ways to Misuse an Arts Centre Wysing Arts Centre Cambridge with Diana Wesser
2009	*Choreographing Knowledge* performative walk and talk with Diana Wesser: Murray Edwards College, Nightjar festival & Festival of Ideas, University of Cambridge
	Fissures in the Harbour of Knowledge lecture performance walk with Diana Wesser: TANZ MACHT RAUM _ RAUM MACHT TANZ, Symposium Ruhr University Bochum
	Home is Where the Piano Is CROP MARKS contemporary art trail, with Diana Wesser, Cambridge
2008	*Manchester Blind Spots* performance lecture walk, Get Lost! Festival TRIP conference MMU with Diana Wesser.

2002 *pater-noster-phobia* taking place 3: installation with artist Petra Marguc University of Sheffield

Chronological list of conference papers, artists talks and presentations during the PhD timeline

2019 *Making Place in and with Public Space: performative architectures as feminist design research practice* Theatre, Performance and Urbanism: International Federation for Theatre Research conference, Shanghai

Market Meditations Built Upon by Design invited symposium on gender and sexuality in cities: XYX Lab / Gender + Place Monash University Centre Prato

Making Place in and with Public Space: performative architectures as feminist design research practice Fielding Architecture: Feminist Practices for a Decolonised Pedagogy University of Brighton

If Artists Built the World symposium facilitation, Peterborough Presents, Peterborough

The Day of the Duck book launch with Lawrence Bradby, RIBA London

2018 *Performative Architectures* RIBA Research Matters Sheffield Hallam University, Sheffield

Market Meditations International Federation of Theatre Research: Theatre & Migration World Congress, Belgrade, Serbia

Organisational Diagrams of Everyday Lives of Socially Engaged Artists Social Art Summit workshop, Site Gallery Sheffield

2017 *Market Meditations* AHRA Festival and The City conference University of Birmimgham

2017 *Was (is) taking place a Nomadic Practice?* with Teresa Hoskyns The Nordic Geographers Conference, Stockholm

Was (is) taking place a Nomadic Practice? with Teresa Hoskyns AHRA Architecture & Feminisms conference KTH Stockholm

Wild Learning workshop Fermynwoods Art Gallery, Fermynwoods

2016 *A Day with a Duck* Pecha Kucha at Walking Women Forest Fringe, Edinburgh Fringe Festival

2015 *Market Meditations* Plank Techniques of Art & Protest, Kings College, London

Standardised Versions (Rubble)
Drawing Conversations with Craig Fisher Coventry University

2014 *Mechanisms of Control* participatory workshop presentation
The politics of Framing and Staging: performance as paradigm II conference
CRAASH, University of Cambridge

Performative Architectures Performing Cities: "Occupy" and Playgrounds
CRAASH, University of Cambridge

Market Meditations P74 Gallery Ljubljana

Play the City Now or Never! with Idit Nathan METAL, Peterborough.

2013 *Play the City Now or Never!* with Idit Nathan Futurepark METAL Southend-on-Sea

Mechanical Operations flip-chart presentation with Lawrence Bradby, Cambridge Junction

2012 *Gestures of Resistance* AHRA Architecture and the Paradox of Dissidence Conference, Faculty of Architecture and Spatial Design, London Metropolitan University

A Day with a Duck Beacon Bi-Monthly 12 Beacon Art Projects, Lincoln

Publications during the PhD timeline

H. Stratford, *Forthcoming* 'Theatres of Legitimacy', in *Six Years (RE)-Activist. Six Cities Sixty Projects.* (University of Sheffield, 2021)

H. Stratford, *Forthcoming* 'Collective Performing', in *Movement for Public Speech*, by Polonca Lovšin (Ljubljana: Museum and galleries of City of Ljubljana, 2021)

T. Hoskyns and H. Stratford, 'Was (Is) Taking Place a Nomadic Practice?', *Architecture and Culture*, 5.3 (2017), 407–21

H. Stratford, *Alterlives* (2017) Online publication

H. Stratford, 'Market Meditations' in Samuel, F. and Dye A. (eds) *Demystifying Architectural Research* (London: RIBA Publishing 2016)