# REFLEKSIJA ARHITEKTURNE INTERVENCIJE KOT METODA RAZISKOVANJA JAVNEGA PROSTORA

## REFLECTING ON ARCHITECTURAL INTERVENTIONS AS A WAY OF RESEARCHING THE PUBLIC REALM

## Ključne besede

raziskovanje v procesu oblikovanja; kritična kreativna praksa; javni prostor; predstavitve v arhitekturi

## Izvleček

V skladu s prevladujočim konceptom v teoriji političnih znanosti, naj bi demokracija slonela na razlikah, ki združujejo svetove različnih prostorov in ljudi. To pomeni, da javni prostor ne bi smel biti oblikovan izključno za določen del družbe, in da vsa mesta ne bi smela stremeti v kopiranje podob mest.

V pričujočem članku se posvečam povezanosti svoje lastne arhitekturne prakse in sodobne arhitekturne kritike z različnimi pogledi, in sicer z razumevanjem javnega prostora na različnih kontinentih, z različnih političnih pozicij in kulturnih ozadij. Predstavljam zbirko praks, pogledov in objektov, za katere menim, da lahko osvetlijo pristop k arhitekturi, ki upošteva in združuje merljivo in merljivo, vidno in nevidno. V članku so prikazane možnosti ustvarjanja javnega prostora iz delovanja in ne iz oblike, da bi razumeli svežino takšnega pristopa in izoblikovali orodja za izraz tega, kar vidimo, kar o tem razmišljamo in kako lahko uporabimo novo znanje iz takšnega raziskovanja. Članek je namenjen približevanju prakse in teorije, ne v medsebojno razlago, temveč za vzpostavitev skupne osnove za ustvarjanje novih misli in spoznanj v procesu načrtovanja in oblikovanja za prihodnost.

## Abstract

According to prevalent conceptions in political theory, democracy should be based on differences to accommodate the worlds of many different places and people, which signify that public space should not be designed exclusively for one part of society and that all cities should not look in the same direction for city images to copy.

This paper seeks to draw connections between architectural practice and current critical spatial theory with different contemporary viewpoints on the understanding of the public realm across different continents, political positions and cultural backgrounds. It gathers a collection of practices, theoreticians and things that hopefully can explicate an approach to architecture taking the measurable and the immeasurable as well as the visible and the invisible into account. It explores the possibilities of creating public spaces from action and not from form, to understand the newness in such an approach and to find tools to express what we see, what we think about it and what we can do with that knowledge. The intention of bringing practice and theory in close relation to each other is not to have a mutual illustration of the two, but to provide a common ground for creation of new thoughts and insights when planning and designing for the future.

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## 1. Introduction

Since architects rarely design and build one to one, they need a medium through which they can create visions of the future. Todays medium seem to be renderings consisting of pretty images, made for winning competitions or selling projects to developers. This way of communicating and having a dialogue about our common future does not take the invisible dynamics of a situation into account and does not allow architecture to be open to any modification or interaction with its surroundings. The renderings are usually concerned with portraying only the positive aspects of a development and are not able to address the depth of real-life situations, which include hidden dimensions such as "the feeling of things happening behind our back" together with territorial, economic, cultural, legal boundaries and limits that are drawn into the situation. However, this does not mean that these disruptive challenges do not exist. To change the world we live in I believe we have to understand the different systems involved in our depictions of the world, be critical of those systems and to develop the systems by interfering with them. To be able to explicate the character of the different systems in words, I include the concepts of Giorgio Agamben´s "dark demon" in relation

to Abu Warburg´s Mnemosyne Atlas, the spatial theory 'Thirdspace' by Edward Soja, the Nomadology and Rhizome theory by Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari, the term "critical spatial practice" by Jane Rendell, the relation between public and private spaces, described by Shuddhabrata Sengupta, the relation between the formal and the informal city, depicted by Rahul Mehrotra, the concept of "agonistic pluralism" by Chantal Mouffe, Jacques Ranciére´s theory on aesthetics in relation to politics, Bruno Latour´s "actor-network theory" and the role of artistic intervention in relation to the figure of trickster, described by Jean Fisher. [Agamben, 1999, Soja, 1996, Deleuze & Guattari, 1988, Rendell, 2006, Sengupta, 2012, Mehrotra, 2008, Mouffe, 2000, Rancière, 2004, Latour, 2005, Fisher, 2002]

## 2. Beyond representation

Going back to the 1920es, The Mnemosyne Atlas by "cultural scientist" Aby Warburg is an example of a work in motion, able at transforming solutions into questions. The constellation of images Warburg found meaningful himself, could all of a sudden come back as an unexpected and different assemblage in an insisting and disturbing way. In this way the Atlas proposes an art of the in-be¬tween. Philoso¬pher Giorgio Agamben has

described Abu Warburg's method of research as a way to overcoming the borders of art history. 'It is as if Warburg were solely interested in this discipline solely to place within it the seed that could cause it to explode. ' The in-between disturbance of the images, becomes 'the dark demon of an unnamed science whose contours we are only today beginning to glimpse'. [Agamben, 1999: 90]

A different way of talking about the in-between could be the spatial theory 'Thirdspace', created by urban planner and political geographer, Edward Soja [1996]. It employs a trialectic of spaces consisting of spatiality, sociality and history. Firstspace is the 'real' space – the built form of physical buildings that can be mapped and seen. Secondspace is the 'imagined' representational space (of architectural renderings) – the perceived space that can be seen and argued over. Thirdspace combines Firstspace and Secondspace to create what Soja describes as, 'a fully lived space, a simultaneously real-and-imagined, actual-and-virtual space where everything comes together and is a way of 'thinking about and interpreting socially produced space', where the spatiality of our lives has the same significance as the social and historical dimensions.

The way Thirdspace is always open to interpretation, never final but seen as a starting point for further exploration and modification, connects to the understanding of my own practice as an unfinished and open journey with no distinction between the journey and the destination.

In order to get beyond the simplified representation of situations I look at places within three different times and scales.

- Previous: The place as storage for history - Investigating
- Present: The place as a surface for action - Intervention
- Future: The place as a situation from where to look into the future for new visions - Projection

The investigations, interventions and projections do not claim to provide any direct answers or solutions. By nature they are incomplete and open for different perspectives. Often my favourite medium is the physical
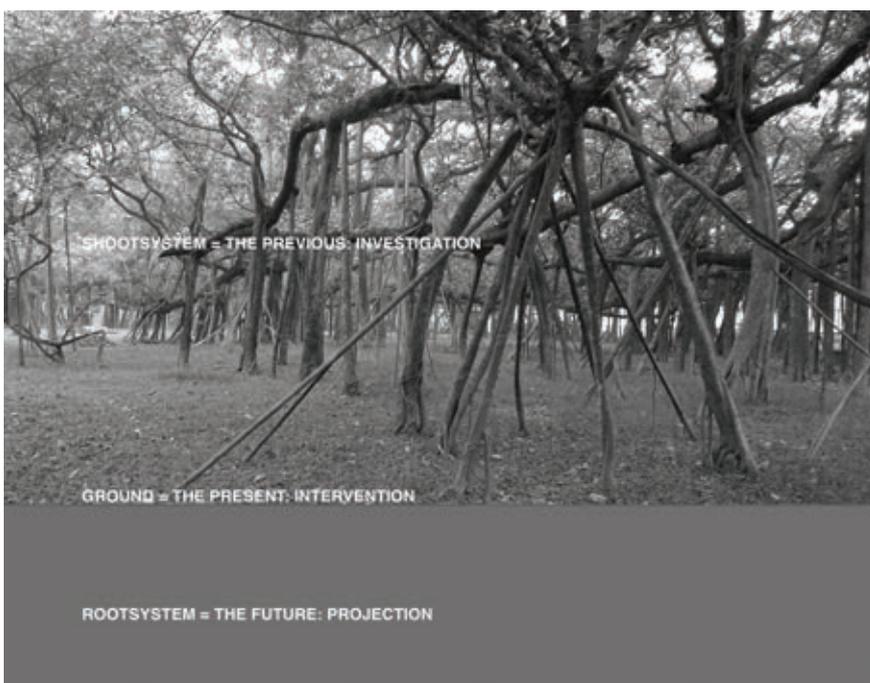


Figure 1: Horizontalni plezalec. Vir: Gitte Juul.　　Figure 2: The Horizontal Climber[1]. Source: Gitte Juul.

intervention, in scale 1:1 and built directly at places where people are, because interventions make it possible to dissolve the autonomous singularity of architecture via adjustment, expansion and opening to the outside environment.

## 3. The State and The Nomad

As an inspiration for how to operate with an open-ended process, I will point to Museum der Dinge [2015] in Berlin and how it in different ways tries to create a museum that avoids becoming a machine of representation, reproducing the stories and knowledge of the State Apparatus. It seeks to manifest itself as a museum, supported by the State, while at the same time constantly reinventing itself. By questioning how to exhibit things, how to value things, how to represent things and how to tell stories, Museum der Dinge reminds us that there is not only one history, but history is something we produce and interpret ourselves. To be involved in the State Apparatus simultaneously with questioning the foundation of the State is a challenge that I work with in my own practice. I run the project space The Office for Art in Town, [Kontoret for Kunst i Byen, 2015] which seeks new knowledge by constantly reinventing itself in relation to its surroundings. It is initiated by The Municipality and the local Art Council in order to create a space for self-reflection. It questions the conventional rules and systems of the authorities, aiming at disturbing its foundation in search of alternative ways of thinking about city planning. The challenge is how to be involved with the municipality parallel with producing critical actions on the streets belonging to the very same municipality. The actions of The Office balances the fine line between being dismissed and excluded by the authorities or absorbed in their system as an accepted part of the administration. Neither position is motivating, since The Office for Art in Town would loose it´s progressive and dynamic energy, if institutionalized. The exercise is to keep a healthy distance to the municipality and at the same time get permission to act critically in public. By working with art and architecture in scale 1:1, directly among and in collaboration with citizens, The Office seeks to lift the discussion out in public space, which enables a practice parallel to the usual planning strategies of the Municipality. Physically The Office for Art in Town is moving around in the city centre of Ballerup occupying empty shops, streets and squares in a progressive manner, in order to initiate a dialogue and produce new types of situations and spaces. The overall aim is to push the boundaries for what is conventionally accepted in the public realm and to empower citizens to challenge the authorities when it comes to planning of our common living environment. The gesture of The Office for Art in Town is not a verification of art as an individual creative expression contradictory to the municipality, but rather a way to present art as something concerning the common living environment. To point to the crossroad where authorities and artistic practice intersect in a productive manner.

I use the concept of Nomadology by Gilles Deleuze & Felix Guattari [1988] to elaborate on the relation between authorities and artistic practice. They describe the State Apparatus as a static space where it is difficult to create new knowledge, since it just reproduces its own stories and knowledge again and again in order to legitimize itself. The Nomad refuses to repeat these stories, but thinks and moves across the norms of the State Apparatus, seeking alternatives. Deleuze & Guattari use the Rhizome to describe the characteristics of the Nomad. The Rhizome is a root system that respects no borders and

Slika 1: Mestna pisarna za umetnostno ustvarjanje. Slika: Gitte Juul.
Figure 3: The Office for Art in Town. Photo: Gitte Juul.

does not grow from the bottom up, but horizontally from the centre out. It has no clear demarcation, no beginning and no end. Everything is connected in a way that makes everything lead to everything and all forms of movement affect each other. The rhizome operates beneath the surface, while it challenges the principles and systems above ground level. The long and branched rhizomes of the root system retain their survivability, even in tiny pieces.

In my practice I seek to work with the unknown state of a project. Sometimes a project starts by chance and I improvise along the way. I let the project develop while I am doing it and this way the process might be able to tell about our behaviour, our gathering and our outlook towards the world.

This was the case with Stadium NOWHERE, [2015] – a project that began by chance and got developed while being an ADAPT-r fellow at the University of Ljubljana, School of Architecture. [ADAPT-r, 2015] The project dealt with unfolding the story of the Bežigrad Stadium by Slovene architect Jože Plečnik, which is a place having difficulties in adapting to new circumstances. A current dispute around the redevelopment of the Stadium exposed general questions about the collective behaviour, rationales and ideals of society and Stadium NOWHERE can be seen as a response no one has asked for, produced by an outsider in order to learn about a society and its mechanisms. Behind this process there is a system for investigation, collecting, collaborating, building,

recording, editing and exhibiting. In order to explore history making as a participatory experience, I invited students from the Faculty of Architecture to contribute. We searched for material in the local community, institutions, libraries, on-line, museums, archives, books, films and TV broadcasts. We discussed with people who work politically and critically with urbanity in Ljubljana and with people directly involved in the conflict: the citizens, the investor, the Municipality and the Institute for Heritage Protection. When you don't understand a situation you can try to understand the logic behind the aspects of the conflict. So we decided to unfold the story of how Bežigrad Stadium got made and un-made by visualizing history as a dynamic series of situations, where history was portrayed as an observation of both "historical moments" and everyday occurrences. "Historical moments" with architectural visions, religious ceremonies, military ceremonies, sporting events, commercialization, cultural heritage issues and environmental/ neighbourhood issues, built as seven, nomadic, physical structures, manifesting the passage of time. The structures were walked around among Joze Plecniks buildings in the city centre of Ljubljana, aiming at questioning social and legal norms in dialogue with everyday urban life. It was an interaction between materials, physical urban space and people using the space, in order to create a dynamic and open-ended presentation of the future for people to discuss.

According to the French scientist and philosopher Bruno Latour and architectural theorist Albena Yaneva, [Latour & Yaneva, 2008] a building cannot be reduced to what it is and what it means. They claim that buildings should be understood in terms of process, movement and transformation, which can´t be represented in Euclidian space. Buildings are continuously influenced by and "lived" through dynamic relationships with their inhabitants and surroundings. Latour and Yaneva also claim that non-living things are able to act and respond to different situations. Buildings unconsciously resist or submit to climatic conditions, unforeseen events and diverse shifts in use. With this conception of buildings

Slika 2: Prostorska instalacija NOWHERE. Slika: Gitte Juul.
Figure 4: Stadium NOWHERE². Photo: Gitte Juul.

in mind, Stadium NOWHERE tried to reveal the existence of the Stadium by exposing its disputes and performances over time: how it had resisted attempts of transformation, challenged city authorities and mobilized different communities of actors. The project was brought out to the public through action in motion and time rather than through static image production. We wanted to visualize the democratic exercise of power, the legal system and its administration, language and execution and to move these things from a distanced bureaucratic space to an open space in direct relation to people. Being presented by seven physical structures walking in a row and a chronological timeline showing historical facts, Stadium NOWHERE crossed the border between abstraction and reality. It opened questions more than providing any solutions to the Stadium conflict. The unsettled present could be seen as a motion from the events of the past to the hope for the future. While revealing the boundaries between language and action, administration and construction, institution and public, it related to the specific history of the Plečnik Stadium in Bežigrad, but also to the Stadium as a type in general; a space which is neither here nor there and which have more layers of meaning and relationships to other places than immediately tangible. The intervention revealed the difficulties in working with a situation in an on-going conflict, where the involved parties are afraid of speak up in public. Earlier, political systems and strong ideologies made dialogue difficult because of polarization and the determinate solutions embedded in these ideologies. With today's complex reality, a dialogue that comes before political decisions is fundamental.

Often art and architecture are thought of differently in relation to the term "function". Conventionally, I believe, architecture predominantly works with functions while art often works with dysfunctions. My practice seeks possibilities for working between these two categories. Running a practice mainly working with things I can build myself, puts me in a position that allows me to work in-between art and architecture and reflect on what I build and the



Slika 3: Durga Puja, množično obiskan letni hindujski festival. Slika: Gitte Juul.
Figure 5: Durga Puja, the large annual Hindu festival. Photo: Gitte Juul.



Slika 4: Odprta kuhinja na ulici. Slika: Gitte Juul.        Figure 6: Street Kitchen. Photo: Gitte Juul.

surroundings relationship to it. The goal of the work is to communicate the relations between people and things in a conscious way for us to reflect on and understand ordinary everyday activities as specific cultural actions.

## 4. Critical Spatial Practice

Professor of Architecture and Art, Jane Rendell [2016] has suggested the term "critical spatial practice", describing work that transgresses the limits of art and architecture and engages with the social and the aesthetic as well as the public and the private. This term draws attention not only to the importance of the critical, but also to the spatial, indicating the interest in exploring the specifically spatial aspects of interdisciplinary processes or practices that operate between art and architecture. Rendell points out, that boundaries drawn around notions of private and public are not neutral lines, but contours that are culturally constructed and which indicate specific value systems. Public and private, and the variations between these two terms, can mean different things to different people – protected isolation or unwelcome restraint, intrusion or invitation, exclusion or separation.

Anthropologist Mark Vacher has critically examined boundaries and categories separating public and private spheres in some of my projects in the Copenhagen suburbs of Herlev and Ballerup.

"The artworks, then, provide no direct answer for how we can deossify the suburbs. But by blurring the borders, we reveal the true character of the urban space, especially the way the ossified elements have become ingrained in its fixtures, its vegetation, its traffic regulations, its laws and its ordinances. Indirectly, the works suggest where, and how, we can improve things in the future. The potential would appear to be at the border, because it is here that things can go from being one thing to being something else." [Vacher, 2015:32]

To really understand the public realm and what we can do with it in the future, we need to discuss what the public realm is, and for whom it exists. In my practice I work with different conditions and situations dealing with local, regional, national as well as global matters, which makes Rendell's point of cultural constructions important.

## 5. Public Spaces and Private Acts

Different societies understand the distinction between public and private spaces in different ways. Shuddhabrata Sengupta [2012] from Raqs Media Collective in Delhi talks about the street as a place where the public act and the private motive can get to know each other. He describes how the European planning model, with its public squares, public institutional buildings, public parks, public streets and private homesteads is a binary arrangement, while other societies and cultures have found other ways of articulating the public-private relationship. For example in Asia where courtyards, kitchens, terraces, pavements, encroachments and annexes are more entangled. In this situation the boundary line that separates public and private life and allows provisional but permanent in-between zones is constantly re-positioned. Sengupta describes how for instance Indian city planners often are thinking of the old colonial cities in the same way they think of European cities; - formal, ordered, stable and predictable with architectural objects as the spectacle, although the formal city was surrounded by the informal city where architecture has always been less significant. The informal city is defined by the rhythms of the day and temporal spectacles provided by the seasons.

Professor at MIT, Rahul Mehrotra, [2008] argues that Indian megacities no longer can be understood as a dichotomy between the formal city and the informal city. As the cities are becoming megacities, this dichotomy has blurred in reality, but at the same time, the binary perception of the formal city versus the informal city has grown stronger. Mehrotra explains that the middle classes don't always live and work in the formal sector, and the poor don't always live and work in the informal sector. Today informal residents are often employed in the formal sector and vice versa, and the informal economy does also contribute financially to the formal sector through bribes and other payments to various formal authorities. According to Mehrotra, the authorities hope to copy the condition of city-states such as Singapore and Hong Kong, where architectural 'objects' represent the city. Mehrotra argues that these types of city images are far from the reality and the spirit of the Indian megacities, and not only do they marginalise the poor, but they also misunderstand the behaviour of the middle class and the rich. Mehrotra suggests that authorities should appreciate how streets and spaces are used from hour to hour, day to day and throughout the year, and try to understand how the poor, the middle class as well as the rich adapt their living patterns to the density of the city. Mehrotra proposes an understanding of a city where events and changes in time are more important than monuments and physical places. He calls it The Kinetic City - a city about activity, not architecture. The Kinetic City sees its dense streets as social and commercial interaction, patterns of socioeconomic behaviour that must be allowed to develop, instead of seeing it as crowding and poverty to eliminate. The interactions that take place on the streets are all enterprising activities, economic opportunities being created and developed by residents of the city. According to Mehrotra, city planning should work out how to plan and design streets, spaces and new areas in such a way that these patterns of activity can flourish in greater comfort for all residents. In this way The Kinetic City could become a commercial city - not only in image but also in action.

For places to become commercial in action and not in image, I believe architecture needs to shift position from form to action – from what a thing looks like to what it is able to do. By intervening in real space in scale 1:1, in real time and in everyday realities, architecture is able to empower communities and allow interaction. The interventions have the possibilities to record movements and behaviours, as well as stimulate aspirations for future arrangements of public spaces.

According to political scientist, Chantal Mouffe [2000] it is important to accept the public realm as a conflict space and a battle zone and that it always involve a separation between

"us" and "them", since it is necessary with a reference to a clear outside for the creation of an inside identity. To create a democracy that acknowledges the existence of an opposition and at the same time is able to establish a pluralist space where these forces can meet in a non-violent manner, Mouffe proposes a theory, which she calls "agonistic pluralism"; - a situation where the opposing parties recognize each other without seeking consensus. Mouffe talks about public space as a "constitutive plurality"; - a constantly challenged, non-symmetric space and a battleground tense with all the insecurities that result from struggles for hegemony. She sees a role to play for artistic interventions in public space, where "site specificity" empowers the site with a disruptive energy and expose hidden contradictions of the site. In this sense the public realm can be seen as an on-going experimental construction.

In the same line the French philosopher Jacques Ranciére [2004] argues that the political sphere has been drained from disagreements and disputes by the force of neo-liberal consensus. Rancière suggests a way of working that constantly crosses the borders between art and everyday life in order to be able to have a necessary discussion about the politics of aesthetics. He connects aesthetics to politics by their common characteristics: the demarcation between the visible and the invisible, the audible and the inaudible, the thinkable and the unthinkable, the possible and the impossible.

An example from my own practice, dealing with the tension of the public realm is the intervention Street Kitchen, [2013], which partly took place in Kolkata, India. Public spaces and private acts battle in Kolkata and the aim of the intervention was "to combine the streets formal and informal systems into a symbiotic relationship by opening an installation between a cake shop and two street vendors. Built like a mobile teahouse, the installation was a hybrid of a house and a street vendor stall. It was also a latent garden, offering

the possibility of creating a garden with edible plants at the base of the adjacent banyan tree. Through the teahouse, the project was able to explore traditional handicraft, materials, botany, artefacts, the city, the political, social and economic systems, and not least the people and actions behind them. The idea was to investigate how organised shops and disorganised vendors can coexist, and how the foreign interacts with the familiar, and vice versa. The cake shop delivered cakes to the teahouse, which in turn served tea in the porcelain cups. The clay cups were thrown at the foot of the Banyan tree, while the porcelain was washed by the neighbouring vendor, from whom the teahouse also bought its tea". [Juul, 2015:25]

The boundaries, limitations and paradoxes were made visible and hierarchies disturbed in a situation where it was not legal to put up things. In this situation the tangible boundaries were on the level of infrastructure, law and corruption. The intangible boundaries were located in peoples thinking, supporting the hierarchies of society. The aim of the intervention was to blur the boundaries in a way that made it unclear what the limits were and what was accepted in order for people to think for themselves and start a dialogue.
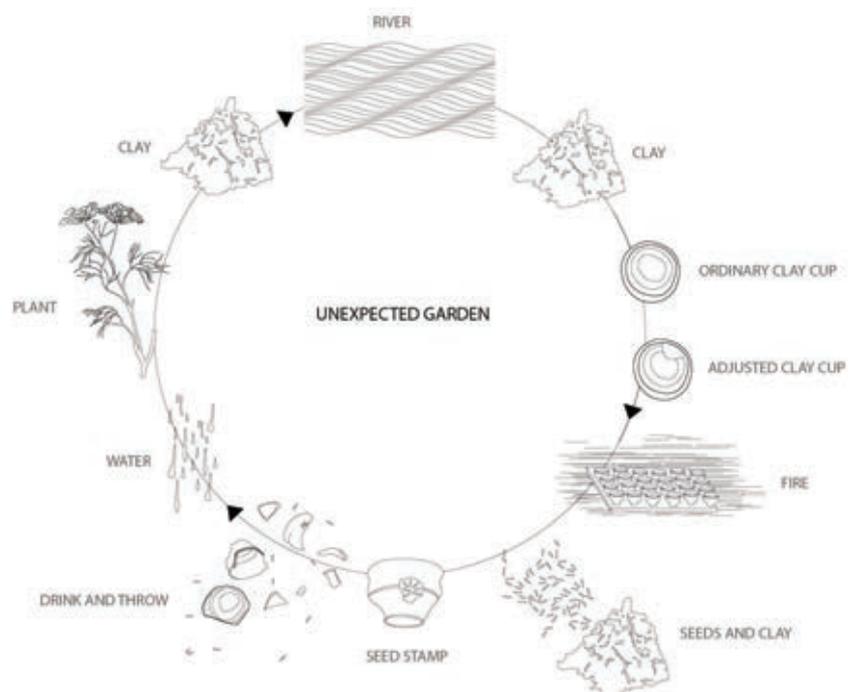
Slika 5: Življenjski ciklus glinene posode. Risba: Michael Lynge Jensen.
Figure 7: Clay Cup diagram. Drawing: Michael Lynge Jensen.

For Bruno Latour [2005], a central question is what is brought into the public. What are the issues and contents that should become matters of public concern? Understood as a space for making things visible and accessible, it becomes important to notice all that is not visible in public. In his "actor-network theory", Latour speaks towards new collaborative constructions, where people as well as non-human "co-actors" can be included in the creation of the environment. The idea of "actor" signals movement, event and action and the idea of "network" indicate accumulation of resources, transformation and translation of different approaches.

With the idea of Latour´s "co-actors" in mind, it becomes possible to understand people, things and places within a simultaneous framework of form and relation. Things in themselves become less important. The importance lies in what role things can play in a situation and what they reveal when people are using them. The things become tools for revealing the unseen. They do not refer to future possibilities because of the way they look, but because of their properties and the knowledge behind the things.

During the Street Kitchen project, mentioned earlier, the Flora Indica Clay Cups [2015] was designed. The cups are a modification of the traditional handmade clay cup to be found on every street corner in Kolkata, where small stalls use them for serving tea. Once the tea has been drunk, the cups are smashed on the ground and when the rain comes, they are turned back into the clay from where they originated. The Florica Indica Clay Cups are created in collaboration with local potters and are a tribute to the founder of Indian botany, William Roxburgh, and his 1824 book Florica Indica, and also a reference to the exclusive Danish tea set Flora Danica. The seeds from the Indian flora are embedded in the clay cups, so when thrown and smashed after use, the seeds are dispersed and given a chance to grow when the rain comes [Juul, 2015]. The knowledge

Slika 6: Izdelava glinenih prosodic v okviru Flora Indica Clay Cup. Foto: Desislava Minchea.
Figure 8: Production on Flora Indica Clay Cup. Photo: Desislava Minchea.

behind the making of the Indian clay cup and the Danish porcelain goes back in generations. With Ranciére in mind, "architecture intervenes in the general distribution of ways of doing and making" [Rancière, 2004]. By infusing the clay cup and the porcelain with the ritual and symbolic significance as well as the social, political, and economic significance, people could gain insight into the processes of making from raw material to finished object and into the arranging of materials in relation to their aesthetic qualities and their power to signify.

## 6. Disorder and Order

The art theoretician Jean Fisher [2002] argues that disorder – and not order – is the norm of the reality of humanity and that hegemonic structures of power are having difficulties in controlling chaos, since it sustains a latent kind of resistance. Fisher discusses the role of artistic intervention together with the figure of trickster - introduced not in order to dissolve conflicts, but rather as a way to open up the complexity of a situation. Trickster is a boundary crosser, which disrupts and reshapes the world around him. Lewis Hyde [1998] describes how Trickster is the "mythic embodiment of ambiguity and ambivalence, doubleness and duplicity, contradiction and paradox". The trickster can "bring to the surface

a distinction previously hidden from sight". Trickster appears in folk tales, passed through generations by word of mouth, where he crosses class divisions and connects the local to the universal. He slips away from domination and control, shaping and determining his own route. As a boundary crosser he is a marginal figure, able to disrupt status quo of a situation and having the ability to create new ways of seeing the world to different members of society.

As Fisher explicates, the trickster activities are concerned with acts of mind rather than with objects of visuality. The activities offer no explanation in themselves and no definitive meaning, but something for others to reflect upon.

"If our understanding of the world is largely through mediated representations and ideologies, then the first criterion of a tricky practice is the acknowledgement that we operate in a world not of self-evident "truths" but of institutional fictions revealed as grotesque monsters, where art is not a reflection of an authentic "reality" but a simulation that intensifies our experiences and interpretations of its effects. It demands a performative use of language: a direct address in collaboration with the viewer. It insists on putting back into circulation excess expenditure

- the remainder, the debt, the discarded, or repressed, and works through a mobile opportunistic re-appropriation and manipulation of hegemonic codes…. It provides an internationally understood matrix, which can be filled with different contents, from different cultural time-space: since different cultures experience differing rates of change, the installation can incorporate multiple spatial/geographical and historical/temporal dimensions". [Fisher, 2002:68].

## 7. Conclusions

The quote from Fisher pretty much sums up what this paper is aiming at. To bring an extra level of understanding to the way we think and construct space in a complex world. To create a platform for experimentation and collaborative work with action-oriented interventions in public space, where the interventions can provide a means by which disorders can be addressed / discussed and maybe even turned into something positive. As this dialogue with spatial theory has indicated, we need to reveal the complexity of the public realm and expose the non-visible by creating situations that give space for what we cannot imagine ourselves. We need to pay attention to the forces of architecture and what it is capable of doing to the surroundings instead of focussing on architectural form only. We should be interested in what is incorporated in the things, more than in the things themselves, what is haptic instead of optic and what is rhizomatic instead of figurative. With the examples from my practice I hope to have demonstrated that it is not necessary to create monumental, iconic and finished projects to construct public spaces of identity. It seems to be forgotten, that spaces only need minimal interventions and modifications to be activated. The interventions can help focussing on cultural history as a network of endless complexes wherein the uncertain and incomplete are positive elements. History can - as the Atlas of Abu Warburg showed us - be an incomplete work in motion that invites everyone to co-write. It is through the shared and common experience that architecture can ask questions to the perception of the collective memory and public realm. Today's architects could avoid the homogenous and one-dimensional images of society by paying attention to the disturbing elements in a situation and by insisting on the mottled and complex character of the world, in the need of different futures to suit different places and different people. Maybe 'The dark demon', that Agamben refers to, could be what architecture needs to investigate in order to get beyond the simplified representation of the future.

**List of projects**

**The Office for Art in Town (2011- 2013)**

Project space initiated and commissioned by Ballerup Art Council and Ballerup Municipality.

**Street Kitchen (2013)**

Intervention initiated and developed by Gitte Juul and carried out in part in Kättilsmåla and in part in Kolkata in cooperation with local street vendors and craftsmen, visual artist Anja Franke, local collaborator Dev Nayak and architectural students Desislava Minchea and Michael Lynge Jensen. Street Kitchen received economic support from Dreyers Fond and Esther & Jep Finks Fond for Arkitektur og Kunsthåndværk.

**Stadium NOWHERE (2015)**

Intervention initiated, developed, executed and exhibited by Gitte Juul while an Adapt-r fellow in Ljubljana in collaboration with students from the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Architecture and MAO- Museum of Architecture and Design.

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## Notes

1. The Banyan Tree is the national tree of India. In the Gujarati language, banya means "grocer/merchant" and eventually "banyan" became the name of the tree itself - a tree under which Hindu merchants can conduct their business. The tree provides a shaded place for a village meeting or for merchants to sell their goods. It starts its life as an epiphyte (a plant growing on another plant). In Kolkata there is a specific tree, called The Great Banyan, occupying 14500 square meters with 3300 aerial prop roots reaching down to the ground. Normally every trunk is typically connected directly or indirectly to the central trunk, but The Great Banyan has lost its main trunk and become a "columnar tree" without a central core. Topologically the tree is an endless structure of interconnection due to its seemingly unending expansion in all directions.

2. Stadium NOWHERE was inspired by American architect John Hejduk, [Hejduk 1989] who had a nomadic practice and worked critically with a sensibility that actively read specific situations. He created a travelling architectural tribe of objects that followed him where he went on his travels. They acted as a memory of places and situations and invaded cities while disturbing hierarchies. They were strangers that questioned social and legal norms while constructing situations in different cities through Europe, where they explored how nomadic spaces can intersect with static spaces of established urban realms.

## Recenzije / Review

In times when individuality is an attitude that prevails in our societies and manifests itself in different aspects of life as it is the conception of our dwelling space, all efforts to reflect on and act in the public, social space are important to prevent future meaningless interventions that transform cities with character and own spirit in "no man's land".

This article explores the possibilities to approach architecture following the visions of currently leading theoreticians that point out the event, the action that "creates" architecture while not stressing so much on the form. Practice and theory in close relation to each other, provide a common ground for the creation of new insights in future architectural design. In my opinion, the most interesting aspect of this contribution is that it clearly highlights reflection on our ideological inheritance from modern architecture to these days, opening questions and generating intellectual challenges for those engaged in the limitless word of architecture.

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