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RE-APPROPRIATING REPRESENTATION

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Online versions of this article can be found at:
https://drawingon.org/Issue-04-PL-Re-Appropriating-Representation
https://doi.org/10.2218/8fmpba89

ABSTRACT

This article revisits, re-appropriates and re-presents ideas first devised during co-teaching in 1996 and 1997, published in the proceedings of a symposium on L'Enseignant, L'Etudiant et le Projet Architectural, Laboratoire de Recherché en Architecture, ENSAIS, 1998, developed again and presented at the VI Conference on European Culture, Pamplona, October, 2000, and explored in even greater detail at the European Forum of Philosophy – Provocations Lecture Series, London School of Economics, 2008. At a moment of change in both architectural practice and education, when the positivism of AI and the rise of BIM as a tool for design development appear set to become dominant in schools of architecture, the re-presentation of this article intends to capture and make apparent a cycling of architectural thought and concerns. At the beginnings of this nascent third 'digital turn' our attention is drawn, once again, to the 'dynamism of.... process[es] of enquiry' fundamental to architectural education, to the 'dynamics of recurrence' in design practice, and to the capacity of re-appropriation for 'making new realities'. These processes are recommended to cut through all techniques of representation, analogue and digital.

BIOGRAPHIES

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Christopher Pierce is an academic leader and administrator, educator, writer, curator, designer and creative advisor specialising in global networks. He lectures internationally on education, research and practice. Christopher completed his architecture studies at Virginia Tech and gained a PhD in architectural history at the University of Edinburgh. He has been teaching at the Architectural Association since 2007 as an Intermediate Unit Master, Lecturer in architectural history and theory and as Director of the AA's Visiting School programme. He has published widely on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century drawings as well as writing critiques that cover a disparate range of contemporary architects and buildings, from Léon Krier to Ron Arad.

Publications and presentations which have informed the development of this article include:

Wiszniewski, D., Pierce, C., (1998) 'Re-appropriation and Re-presentation', proc. symposium on L'Enseignant, L'Etudiant et le Projet Architectural, Laboratoire de Recherché en Architecture, *ENSAIS (École nationale supérieure des arts et industries de strasbourg), Strasbourg, France, pp 155-170.*

Wiszniewski, D., Pierce, C., (2002), 'The Fourth Wall', VI Conference on European Culture, *Pamplona, October 2000, Centre for European Studies of the University of Navarre, Pamplona, Spain, pp. 1051-1059.*

Wiszniewski, D., 'Paul Ricoeur on Mimesis: futurity in the distention of [architectural] intention,' London School of Economics and the European Forum of Philosophy – Provocations Lecture Series, Thursday 20th March 2008, Institut Francais, London.

Published on 14th October, 2024.

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INTRODUCTION: THE ARCHITECTURAL PROJECT

There is a conventional manner of architectural investigation that determines the primacy of building over all other aspects of architecture. This is not always a problem. However, it can exacerbate tendencies presumed to be demanded by professional accreditation systems for reductive types of thinking and practice. In this approach, the studio project simulates the design of buildings and the professional office. Practice is practising the design of buildings and the role of a professional Architect. The presentations arising from this practice are simulacra, that is, representations of the would-be building. Some of the problems with this approach will be clarified through the discourse on representation below, but there is one obvious difficulty discernible from the outset: there is a limitation imposed on the investigative process by only considering the internal laws of making buildings and professional accreditation. This tendency to interiorise determines an exterior without questioning, foreshortening the investigative process.

For us, an investigative process has an ideality that is characterised by the absence of a pre-conceived impenetrable boundary to the enquiry. This ideality, in the consideration of architectural investigation, informs us the paths of enquiry lie as much outside the territory of building as within it. This investigative process we feel should be properly called the architectural project. Consistent within the polysemy of the term project is the dynamic of projection, that is, movement and action. Architecture is the consideration of all that can be constructed: buildings and even the language which is used to describe, regulate and help make it. We throw ourselves and our projections forward from one place to come to another. We gather ourselves in that new place, reflecting on what we have come through and come to and attune our language accordingly.

Our approach suggests the de-territorialisation of architecture, distention and extension of the investigative process, and the re-formation of representation into something more than an imitation of a pre-conceived personal, bureaucratic or other normative ideal. Our project moves architectural enquiry into a 'field of play'.

THE CONTEXT OF REPRESENTATION

Paul Ricœur tries to "extricate representation from the impasse to which it has been relegated, to return it to its field of play."[01] For him, the impasse in the discourse on representation is between two philosophical pre-dispositions. First, there is the position which states that mental and physical processes are separate activities. This position renders the physical image an imitation of the mental image. The second, counter-philosophical position, attempts a dialectical synthesis, conflating the mental and physical images as a single 'presence'. This position suggests the mental image is fully realised in the physical image.

What our project encounters is not so much an impasse between these two philosophical positions, but rather the estranged conditions of presentation and investigation brought about by an enforced separation the first position

determines and either an illusion or conceit the second position promotes. Both positions are undermined by the illusory aspects of their respective suppositions that search for truth.

In the first philosophical position, a physical presentation alludes to a mental image. The interpretation of precisely what mental image is being alluded to will vary according to the subjectivity of an individual: there is no objective truth to a mental image; what is represented is collectively unverifiable, therefore, illusory. In the second philosophical position, the illusory condition is intrinsic to the process of synthesis. The process of synthesis does not make evident, in a series of verifiable steps, how the mental image and physical image conjoin. Hence, there can be no proof of a truth to this process and consequently no proof of the truth that a 'presence' re-presents the conflation between the mental and physical images.[02] There is no possibility for authenticity in either position.

Our project neither determines absolute truths nor eradicates illusion. Illusion is only considered pejoratively if one is searching for absolute truths. There is no search for the authentic. Illusions are tricky and playful. These are productive modalities. Illusion is a characteristic of 'play'; therefore, in the 'field of play' illusion is to be entertained or dismissed depending on the rules of the game. Value is neither placed totally in a mental ideal nor in the product of the architectural project; neither is emboldened as holding some truth over all else. What we promote is that value lies only in the truth, if there is truth at all, in the architectural project as 'playful enquiry'.

THE STUDIO AND CRIT ROOM IN THE FIELD OF PLAY

Paul Ricœur illustrates a model for escaping the 'impasse' surrounding representation. He breaks representation down into three components, Mimesis1 | Mimesis2 | Mimesis3. Mimesis1 might be understood as the theory of representation promoted by the first philosophical position, the separation between the mental and physical images. Mimesis3 is the theory of representation promoted by the second philosophical position, the conflation of the physical and mental images. Mimesis2 affords a breach in the stand-off; it brings play into its modalities; Mimesis2 reverberates in a space between the other two philosophical positions.

Traditionally, in schools of architecture, enquiry and presentation are separate acts reinforced by the spatial practices of studios and crit spaces. Our project takes some impetus from questioning the spatial corollary of the philosophical conditions of estrangement reinforced by this separation: students are required to take their work from room to room, the presumption being that the work from the studio should now be presentable. This can cause students great anxiety. However, we see that the condition of separation infers there could be a productive space between or at least that there is evident liminality between enquiry and presentation. It is our suggestion that we move into this space to give a vantage point to the differences but also the reciprocity between these two practices.

The act of moving from one space to the other can be considered playfully. The to-ing and fro-ing between each room alludes to the to-ing and fro-ing of play. A characteristic of the condition of liminality is this oscillatory mode of kinesis. The kinesis of play, in its to-and-fro, vitalises the connectivity between the activities of the two rooms. Our project amplifies the discourse of this movement of play between investigation and re-presentation.

It is the playfulness of play that brings its own operations between positions, to temporarily don the characteristics of threshold, medium and interlocutor. It distorts, subverts, and upsets any stasis by providing an entry to or exit from a seemingly closed position.

PLAYFUL ENQUIRY: A THEORY OF SUBJECTIVITY

Appropriation is playful enquiry. Playful enquiry has the character of investigation protracted along the paths of play. In play we take or leave things, making of them what play wants them to be.

Appropriation is a theory of subjectivity that illuminates how the individual sits in relation to the 'ideality of enquiry'. Following Ricouer, subjectivity should be understood differently from traditional philosophical consideration. Traditionally, the subject and object are not interchangeable: the subject regarding an object under investigation attempts to find an 'objective' view by re-affirming what seems obvious, that the subject is outside of the object and vice versa, coming to terms

with the object-building from a range of 'external' positions, for example: an understanding of the "socio-cultural condition of its genesis"; from what 'users' are supposed to do in it; or, through the idiom that seems to give it meaning.[03] A skilled traditional reader/viewer might attempt to bridge this separation by placing themselves temporarily inside of that which it would normally stand outside. However, one needs to be careful of simply carrying the hackneyed voices/views of others into such an engagement.

Ricoeur tells us that in "any discourse fixed by writing," writing can be considered to take on the characteristics of speech.[04] For writing we can easily also say drawing or building. Writing, speech, drawing and building, as discourse, have the manner of conversation and discussion. There is a presumed listener as much as there is a presumed author. More than this, we can say that they are in dialogue. The fixity of writing/drawing/building refers to the fixing of speech as writing, and, as with speech, there is an expected reciprocity. In fact, the fixity is less of a fixing and more of a temporary holding, awaiting a response. We might say that text assumes a subjectivity and speaks for itself as an autonomous being; " ... the Letters of Saint Paul are no less addressed to me than to the Romans, the Galatians, the Corinthians, etc."[05] Any building throughout history is no less addressed to me than its first users.

Through opening ourselves to the possibilities propelled by Ricouer's Mimesis2, an object can take on the voice of the subject. It might even take on a voice if its own. In other words, an intersubjectivity takes place, between the subject and an imagined author of an object or the object as something that can speak for itself. Willingness to participate in this exchange opens the door to the architectural project's revelatory potential. During playful enquiry, the architectural project assumes the conditions of subjectivity and speaks to the architect. The ability of the architect to listen to the project is contingent on the architect's willingness to relinquish any previously constructed prejudices, stases delimited by either a super- or "narcissistic ego," and enter into open conversation.[06] The architectural project is like a ball, "...freely mobile in every direction, appearing to do surprising things of its own accord."[07] In the to-ing and fro-ing of this enquiry the oscillation between relinquishment and appropriation, the giving-up previous possessions and making for "one's own what was initially 'alien'," the architect extends horizons of understanding.[08] Architectural enquiry does not need to be limited by the impositions of objectivity and can freely play with the multiplicity of interpretative potential.

Socio-cultural practices which give authority to objectivity and promote a juridical approach to investigation impose a similar authority over architectural language. There are two identifiable consequences: architecture made by rules determined as a prerequisite to enquiry; and architecture made as object.

In architecture made by rules, priority is placed on an objective examination process, which governs and predetermines the extent and nature of the investigative process. The apparently objective rules of this foreshortened process offer justification for the student or practitioner to divest themselves of responsibility for their action. This is either a preconceived or unwitting subjugation to a would-be authority. It may originate from either an outside influence, for example, what the student thinks the tutor requires of him or, it may originate from an internal influence, for example, the idea imagined by a narcissistic ego presumed great from the outset in the blind hope of it being the inexplicable inspiration of genius.

Architecture promoted as object is a denial of the transference of subjectivity and makes the object unavailable for discourse. It is a fixing of a limited discourse and says very little.

In playful enquiry, the architect interchanges subject and object and actively facilitates "the power of a work to disclose a world."[09] The architect, emancipated by the interplay of appropriation and relinquishment, can take possession of this newly disclosed world.

THE IDEALITY OF MEANING AND THE ARCHITECTURAL PROJECT

"... logos... The primary meaning of this word is language."[10] What is shared among all languages is a 'sense of reason'. In its operation, architectural language displays the verifiable 'sense' of reason that constitutes it. In the Pantheon, for example, the patterns, colours, proportions, Pentelic marble, Egyptian granite, bronze, Corinthian octastyle portico and rotunda can all be verified as being within a language of architecture. However, architectural

language also displays the unverifiable 'sense' of reason. The various characteristics act as signs, conspire, and make suggestions of narrative, within an 'ideality of reason': who knows who says what to which gods when they stand on shaky ground, arms upstretched to the dome and gaze drawn along its many coffers through the oculus and beyond to the sky, and who knows how they reply?

From the deterministic position 'reason' constructs language rather than language constructing 'reason'. Therefore, language's ideality is foreclosed by an assumed idealism. It seeks to verify the meaning of these signs by the imposition of a narrative, perhaps belonging to a historical ideal, constructed around the socio-cultural conditions contemporaneous to the work or to which it was directed.

In playful enquiry, rather than giving 'reason' to these signs, 'reason' is found in them. There is a "transference of discourse to a sphere of ideality which permits an indefinite expansion of the sphere of communication."[11] The nature of this ideality appeals to a multiplicity of interpretative potential, a nonfixity of meaning, and resonates with the characteristics of play, delighting in the possibilities of meaning within language.

Edmund Husserl illumines the nature of the 'ideality of meaning'. For Husserl, meaning is derived from a combination of physical and mental processes, invigorated through enquiry, by conditions that are "in part real, in part ideal."[12] Real involves a physical situatedness in experience, whereas Ideal has two sorts of conditions, " ... either noetic conditions which have their grounds, a priori, in the Idea of Knowledge ... or they are purely logical conditions, i.e. they are grounded purely in the 'content' of our knowledge."[13]

Husserl links the two parts of the ideal into a unity and suggests that there is "no intrinsic connection between the ideal unities which in fact operate as meanings, and the signs to which they are tied, i.e. through which they become real in human mental life."[14]

Although the real that Husserl speaks of gives a socio-cultural specificity to the conditions of experiencing meaning, meanings have autonomy. This characterises their ideality and alludes to "countless meanings which, in the common, relational sense, are merely possible ones, since they are never expressed, and since they can, owing to the limits of man's cognitive powers, never be expressed."[15]

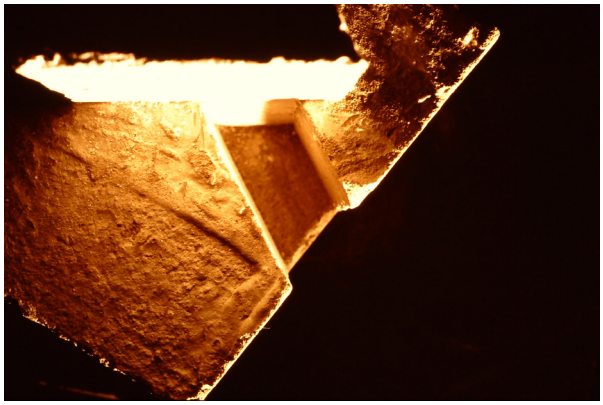
In Plato's model, reality is a sort of impoverished version of that which exists in the Ideal Realm. Plato makes a direct connection between the real and the Ideal, whereas Husserl's Ideal is completely distinct from the real. "Husserl's phenomenology does not so much stand beyond the opposition of realism and idealism as on the side of it... it is more a transcendental idealism rather than a metaphysical idealism."[16]

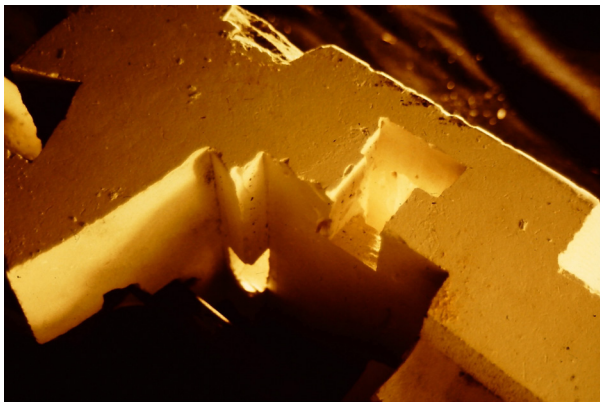
Husserl's ideality seems to embody a to-and-fro between the real and ideal, but even in the ideal there is a to-and-fro between possible meaning and experienced meaning. This creates exciting prospects for playful enquiry. Signs say something; and the nature of this ideality invites the architectural project to form new concepts from them and "see how meaning becomes realised that was previously unrealised."[17]

With an understanding of the ideality of meaning, tectonics can be liberated from the fetters which restrain it within the territory of building. De-territorialised, tectonics can be properly called the language of architecture.

However rich tectonics is as the logic of construction, it is not, as Kenneth Frampton suggests, "first and foremost a construction and only later an abstract discourse based on surface, volume and plan."[18] Tectonics is a language not restricted to the construction of things. It has the capacity to construct logic. Tectonics can be the overarching rationale which orders the inter-relationships of other logics, for example, those of building, politics, gender, food, science, text or structure. The Pantheon can be described in terms of logics, for example: the Egyptian granite and Corinthian octastyle portico, speak of the logics of granite, typology, porticoes, column orders, Egyptian culture, Hellenic Greece, Rome, politics, entrances, earth, sky, gods and mortals.

While making the architectural project, architectural enquiry decides at which intersections of logic to operate. The logical articulations are rewritten as new serialities, in the language of tectonics, in whatever media (for example, film, drawing, building, or text) the logic chooses to re-present itself through. As with all languages, tectonics has its own semiotics. These signs are fixed within the





overarching logic by the media. Consequently, they operate at three levels, at the level of the logic of the media, at the level of the logic they represent and at the level of ideality (all held by a further complex series of relationships between subjectivity and intersubjectivity).

THE RE OF RE-APPROPRIATION

In the field of play, the architect appropriates from one or a combination of these three levels of signification "and the interpretation is complete when the reading releases something like an event, an event of discourse, an event in the present time."[19] In the process of the architectural project as playful enquiry, appropriation is a dynamic and recurring compulsion. It recurs at every critical point when the project is fixed in chosen media. This is the special nature of the architectural project.

In the process of appropriation the architect is constantly taking possession of newly found meaning and relinquishing any stases in previous understanding. Ricœur's theory of appropriation becomes a theory of Re-appropriation for the architectural project. Re-appropriation underlines the dynamism of its process of enquiry, promoting the dynamic of recurrence in the shifting asymmetrical relationship between appropriation and relinquishment (or expropriation). Re-appropriation is the making of new realities.

THE PLAY BETWEEN RE-PRESENTATION AND RE-APPROPRIATION

We have already outlined, in broad terms, Ricœur's three components of representation, Mimesis1 | Mimesis2 | Mimesis3. His theorisation and our architectural project share an interest in 'plurivocity'— the perceived phenomena in a single object of many voices, transversality and multiple interpretative potential.

The enquiry into the overarching logic of the architectural project requires a play between re-presentation and re-appropriation. In the architectural project, Mimesis2 acts with appropriation to generate Mimesis3. However, Mimesis3 is not only the re-presencing of the conflation of the physical and the mental images; in the architectural project it is also the re-presentation of that which has been re-presenced. In Mimesis3, what is represenced is the world disclosed by the architectural project as it intersects with (subjectively and transversally judged) significant conditions-of-life.

As further elaboration of how '...Mimesis2 acts with appropriation to generate Mimesis3...', the architectural project's logic is understood as "emplotment... an operation about which we may say equivalently either it draws an intelligible story from the various events or incidents... or that it makes these events or incidents into a story."[20]

The architectural project has a narrative quality of experience, which we can call its logic or sense of emplotment and has five codes of understanding. The first three are already active in entering an architectural project: (i) the nature of tectonic expressions and their relationship to a logic; (ii) the readability of a logic as having some form of narrative; (iii) the experience of an architectural project, like a literary text, has its own sense of 'narrative time'; the emplotment's narrative quality of time is as the experience of time when involved in any activity where that activity suspends any appreciation of time—"the inner stretching out of the present."[21]

Mimesis1 and Mimesis2 share the first three codes as a "figuring operation". Mimesis2 sees them though as merely a "pre-figuring operation" and employs two further codes: (iv) the semiotics of tectonics; and (v) the semiotic ideality of meaning. As the mediator between Mimesis1 and Mimesis3, Mimesis2 acts with appropriation to configure the codes of Mimesis1 alongside its own codes to bring about a transfiguration into Mimesis3.

The 'readers' of the new project are those willing to perform a new 'writing' of the initial project by 'playing' in the space created by Mimesis2. These 'readers' will understand through Mimesis1 the intelligibility of the initial project's emplotment. Mimesis2 opens interpretative potential, not as literal messages but as codes apprehended as significant. The signs are not comprehended only as meaning something presumed but are also open for new meanings to be posited against them.

It is worth looking more deeply into Mimesis3. To reiterate, '... Mimesis3 is not only the re-presencing of the conflation of the physical and the mental images; in the architectural project it is also the re-presentation of that which has been re-presenced. In Mimesis3, what is re-presenced

is the world disclosed by the architectural project as it intersects with (subjectively and transversally judged) significant conditions-of-life'.

In the architectural project, Mimesis3 comes into play at the intersections of potential meanings and conditions-of-life. The relationship to the subjective conditions-of-life as something recognised is what sets the new meanings into relief, presenting themselves as a possibility for "transfigured" emplotment. The architectural project re-presents this transfigured emplotment, in the tectonic language, as the next stage of enquiry. In the process of enquiry there is every likelihood of a semiotic transfer by a reactivation of the mimetic process between the three levels of tectonic signification in each and every subsequent recasting of the project. Mimesis3 is not an event that occurs only on the singular presentation of the architectural project, Mimesis3 occurs at every point in its inquiry. How re-presentation plays in this field of semiotic abundance is exciting for those interested in making new worlds.

THE FOURTH WALL: THE IDEALITY OF PLAY

The architectural project presents a new world. The 'audience of play', architects and users, experience a new world as participants. The architectural project is the 'theatre' in the field of play, presenting the various characters of emplotment encountered in playful enquiry. When the project reaches an audience, at any stage of its enquiry, "...it is precisely this fourth wall of the audience that closes the play world...," and creates the conditions for the architectural project to be its most playful.[22]

The conventional manner of architectural education, which prioritises the making of buildings rather than a more expansive enquiry into architecture, makes an absolute separation between the activities of the studio and crit room: the crit room is seen finitely as the place of presentation of a building. Consequently, there are three divisions experienced in this representational methodology: between (i) student and work, (ii) audience and work, and (iii) audience and student. The crit room is a reception room for an engagement of simulacra: (i) the student presents the work as a representation of a would-be building; (ii) the work is intended for an audience, who, as would-be experts, are a body of criticism simulating the user, client or otherwise; and (iii) in any process of making there is a presumed exchange between the work and the maker, therefore, the work in some way, represents the maker. To criticise the work is to criticise the maker as a presumed authority of either the profession or what the profession stands for ("to protect the users and potential users of architects' services" ARB's primary purpose).

The idealist and juridical tendencies of this conventional practice, encourage the student to either appeal to the system or his/her own ego. In the course of presentation, the student is allied with the work and the presentation becomes a contest. The crit room is a rarefied world where subjectivity is marginalised and its simulacra constantly reiterate a separation between a real and unreal. Restraining the architectural language within its conventional territory, the rarefied crit room limits the opportunity to engage with other languages whilst reinforcing its own. The constant replay of Mimesis1 is a reduced engagement with reality, an increased process of abstraction promoting discourse only at a level of codification: the work is unreal, it represents a would-be real building; the audience is unreal, they represent a would-be real user; and the student is unreal, s/he represents a would-be real architect.

Playful presentation challenges the divisiveness of this representational methodology, the juridical nature of the critique which sets the audience in polarity to the student and the work and the abstraction of the real. It re-forms the relationships between the student, work and audience as participants in representation.

In our project, these simulacra are not entertained as endgames; the crit room, architectural project, student, and audience are all real. They represent no more than themselves; and the architectural project as play, invites intersubjectivity and transversality into its own movement.

The studio and crit room are sites of play. The studio is metaphorically allied to the laboratory for its associative qualities of experimentation. The crit room is allied to the operating theatre, where experimentation reaches a new phase. The metaphorical nature of 'theatre', in its hyperbolical sense of presentation or performance, amplifies the dynamic connectivity between the sites of playful enquiry and playful presentation. The metaphorical nature of 'operating' theatre emphasises the dynamic of its own operations as theatre, intersected

by the surgical metaphors of incision and precision. 'Theatre' speaks of a place for playful analysis.

Experimentation, as playful enquiry, creates a discourse between the project and the student; they speak to each other, and in the playful interchange between subject and object, the project and the student alternatively extend the transversal communicants to don the mantle of the fourth wall making presentations to each other. However, the fourth wall has another characteristic in the studio: that of immanence. There is no endgame, only the playing out which necessarily needs an audience whether they are there or not. The project is always addressed to someone. In architectural education the project is presented. The crit room is the reminder throughout every stage of the process of the necessary role of the audience. "Openness toward the spectator is part of the closedness of play. The audience only completes what the play as such is."[23] The architectural project assumes its most hyperbolical condition, as theatrical presentation, on being opened to an audience.

When the fourth wall is active, play is underway. If the architectural project has not been exposed to the fourth wall the movement of play has been restricted. The crit room stands as a 'presence' of the immanent interpretability of the play by the variability of an audience while the enquiry is in play elsewhere. The crit room offers a constant invitation to open the process of enquiry beyond the subject and subjectivity. The project can bring the extended understanding of audience, past, present and yet to be present, into the field of play at any time, not only at the presumed conclusion of the work.

On entering the crit room, the game enters a new phase and the relationships between student, project and audience are 'changed'. In the studio and crit room (i) student and project, (ii) audience and project and (iii) audience and student are all interchangeable. Play is transferred between them, and they all become the players. However, in the crit room the audience transforms from being principally immanent through the work and the subject to being active as an audience. This amplified condition of play and playing excites the enquiry even further for the project to enter a new stage of appropriation. The play of intersubjectivity and transversality even extends into the very emplotment of the project, stirring empathies and discords, adopting some characteristics and discarding others, to bring new logics to play. The architectural project as play in the theatre appeals to the fourth wall.

If the architect has not played or has not gone along with the movement of play this lack of movement will be re-presented. If the process of play is objectified as some strategy to achieve an end, it defines a 'game' from the outset for an idealised audience. It is not play that is presented but the game itself and this is merely a 'show' with no invitation to play. "However much games are in essence representations and however much the players represent themselves in them, games are not presented for anyone—i.e., they are not aimed at an audience."[24]

The architectural project never comes to completion; it does not seek completion; the principal rule is change. Re-appropriation peaks on every occasion the architectural project moves from immanent to active fourth wall. In the crit room the fourth wall expands to a greater magnitude, consequently expanding the horizons of the project by the move from individual enquiry to multiple intersubjective enquiry.

When the architectural project presents itself to a larger theatre, for example, as building in use, there is a shifting scale in the fourth wall, not only in magnitude and time but also in its politic. This expansion of the discourse might begin to further amplify the movement of play set up by the project itself and might shift its orientation. If there is any intent in the architectural project at all it is to open its projections as enquiry and play to a wider audience. However, "someone who doesn't take the game seriously is a spoilsport."[25]

> "The players play their roles as in any game, and thus the play is represented, but the play itself is the whole, comprising players and spectators. In fact, it is experienced properly by, and presents itself to, one who is not acting in the play but watching it. In him the game is raised, as it were, to its ideality."26

THE ARCHITECTURAL PROJECT AS PLAY

> "New myths spring up beneath each step we take. Legend begins where man has lived, where he lives ... A mythology ravels and unravels."27

The architectural project rearticulates conditions-of-life into questions and speculations and plays. The logic of the

architectural project, in the tectonic expression of these questions, makes a proposition of reality and promotes a change. The architectural project questions reality, not as simulacra, but directly.

Architectural enquiry is a game only understood in play. The rules are not prescribed but posited and enriched during play.

It is a play between re-appropriation and re-presentation. It is the re-presentation of its own overarching rationale which playfully orders the interrelationships of other logics encountered through the course of architectural enquiry, along the movement of play, opened to the playful interventions of the fourth wall's fictive potential.

The *nature* of the architectural project is like that of literature, poetry, art or a 'play'. They share the nature of a mythology as playfully re-presenting life, free from any demands of accuracy. "It is a kind of atemporal object which has, as it were, broken from its moorings to all historical development."[28] The 'play' opens-up the reality of narrative time and, in the course of its emplotment, conveys something of an elsewhere, the suspended world of linear time. The architectural project is a 'play', a mythology, an interplay of "sedimentation and invention,"[29] an "arrangement of incidents" and intersecting logics, concerned with communicating conditions of life.[30] The architectural project is a mythology. An architectural project gets to the very heart of things.

As mythology, the architectural project makes itself available for re-appropriation. By removing itself far enough from truth it more readily gives the "perceptual content" of the emplotment "autonomous significance."[31] The playful audience joins the movement of the enquiry by playing in the conditions of liminality between narrative time and linear time to configure the emplotment in relation to significant conditions-of-life. The emplotment is thereby re-transfigured, constructing a new reality.

> "In play, subjectivity forgets itself; in seriousness, subjectivity is regained."[32]

THE ARCHITECT AS PLAYFUL FIGURE

> "What holds the player in its spell, draws him into play, and keeps him there, is the game itself."[33]

The architect represents their own emancipation through willingness to be a player and by re-presenting the processes of re-appropriation as the movement of play. They are a player only in the sense that they are played or they go along with the movement of play the game sets up. The course of its enquiry speaks its own rules. Play as "nonpurposive activity" conjoins with reason to enact a game.[34]

> "'Game' ... was the term which Paul had selected to denote that state of semi-consciousness in which children float immersed. Of this Game he was past master. Lord of space and time, dweller in the twilit fringes between light and darkness, fisher in the confluent pools of truth and fantasy, he had built himself a kingdom..."[35]

The 'terrible' children of Cocteau, remind us of that childhood game we have all played and how the rules of the game are posited. It is the game that is not 'intended.' Or, more precisely, the conditions of intent are not to be found in the purposive world but in the world created by the game. "They do not really 'intend' this or that game so much as simply the act of playing itself."[36] In play we respond to 'found' or discovered circumstances. What characterises play is configuration and transfiguration. Play makes the rules, often uncovered by chance, and translates their logic into mythology. The overarching tectonic logic is constructed through the progressive interplay of reason and "fantasy". As each mythology is transfigured traces of the previous mythology reside in the work. The tectonic expression re-presents something of "superabundant life and movement."[37]

On entering the field of play the game begins. In Cocteau's metaphor, the field of play is a pool. To play we "float immersed" in the pool, not on the surface. We are removed from the self-conscious position of being in a game; what we see of the world above the surface is re-formed through the lens of the pool. The rules of the game are posited along the currents generated by the "confluent pools of truth and fantasy" or, in other words, "nonpurposive rationality."[38] In Cocteau's pools chance is occasioned by play.

If one's enquiry is limited to 'intended' purpose chance is rebuked for chance is a cause " ... that comes into play incidentally and produces effects that possibly, but not necessarily or generally follow from the purposeful action to which they are incident."[39] The outcome of chance is

emboldened in play. Chance enriches the emplotment. The game often begins with chance.

In the process of architectural enquiry, in constructing the mythology, the constant interchange between object and subject allows things previously seen inanimately to come to life. For example, the wall will argue sexual politics with the window across the street or, the Burgess text, projected onto the blocks of wood, will tell one of the blocks that it projects too far, obliterating a message, while the block of wood, as a messenger from Edinburgh, will communicate to Burgess the logic of art politics on the Wynd. They always need further conversation.

As one's experience in making is extended so is one's experience in game playing. "The game that someone begins, invents, or learns how to play, has a specificity of its own that is "intended" as such."[40] In the accumulation of playing-experience the specific circumstances which occasion play may be understood more readily and may make the nature of the game to be played clearer. However, to be sure, the only thing 'intended' is to engage in the movement of play itself.

The architect is the player par excellence who takes up the unity of Mimesis1, Mimesis2, and Mimesis3.

THE 'USER' AS PLAYFUL FIGURE

The 'user' is the player par excellence who takes up the unity of Mimesis1, Mimesis2, and Mimesis3.

What if utility enters the field of play? The architectural project expresses the question of utility in its tectonic. The transference from textual to tectonic language upsets any *stasis* in utility. Utility has conversations with other logics and takes its place in the tectonic logic, which, may even appeal for its silence; but the project may still be put to use, the players may still play. The architectural project is "the presentation of a world which is playful,"[41] where the logic of utility has been playfully transfigured.

If open to the playfulness of utility, the subject-user can enter the field of play, and becomes a participant. The invigorated logic of utility is re-presented to the user and is always available for appropriation. Utility's ideality of meaning is unlocked.

> "It is always a question of entering into an alien work, of divesting oneself of the earlier 'me' in order to receive, as in play, the self conferred by the work itself."[42]

Architectural enquiry appeals to multiple intersubjectivity. It comes to terms with play re-presented. Utility is posited by the user in response, subjectively defined. In the game of making new realities, it is only in the potential for user to become player that the architectural project reaches its ideality. Within the movement of play the user 'reads' the tectonic language of the project to themselves; in doing so, "the narrator ... the one who abstracts from his personality so that a voice other than his can be heard,"[43] tells a new story. There is an interchangeability between readership and authorship.

The ego can be relinquished in literature, and it is the same for architecture. The architectural project is always made for the believer in fiction. It is our fundamental position that the role of architecture is to create new worlds. The 'spoilsports' are the despisers of fiction.

> "Reading is the concrete act in which the destiny of the text is fulfilled. It is at the very heart of reading that explanation and interpretation are indefinitely opposed and reconciled."[44]

NOTES

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20 Ricœur, “Mimesis and Representation,” p.145.

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22 Gadamer, “The Ontology of the Work of Art and Its Hermeneutic Significance,” p.108.

23 Gadamer, “The Ontology of the Work of Art and Its Hermeneutic Significance,” p.109.

24 Gadamer, “The Ontology of the Work of Art and Its Hermeneutic Significance,” p.109.

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41 Ricœur, “Appropriation,” p.92.

42 Ricœur, “Appropriation,” p.94.

43 Ricœur, “Appropriation,” p.93.

44 Ricœur, “What Is a Text?,” p.63.

FIGURES

All of the photographs depict casting projects produced by first year students to explore crossovers between buildings, photographs and drawings. Various students, working in groups, *The Eating House*. MA(Hons), Practice of Architecture 1 (Year 1), 1996-97. Studio by Dorian Wiszniewski with contributions from Christopher Pierce.

DRAWING ON
JOURNAL OF ARCHITECTURAL RESEARCH BY DESIGN

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ISSN: 2059-9978
URL: https://drawingon.org/Issue-04-PL-Re-Appropriating-Representation
DOI: https://doi.org/10.2218/8fmpba89