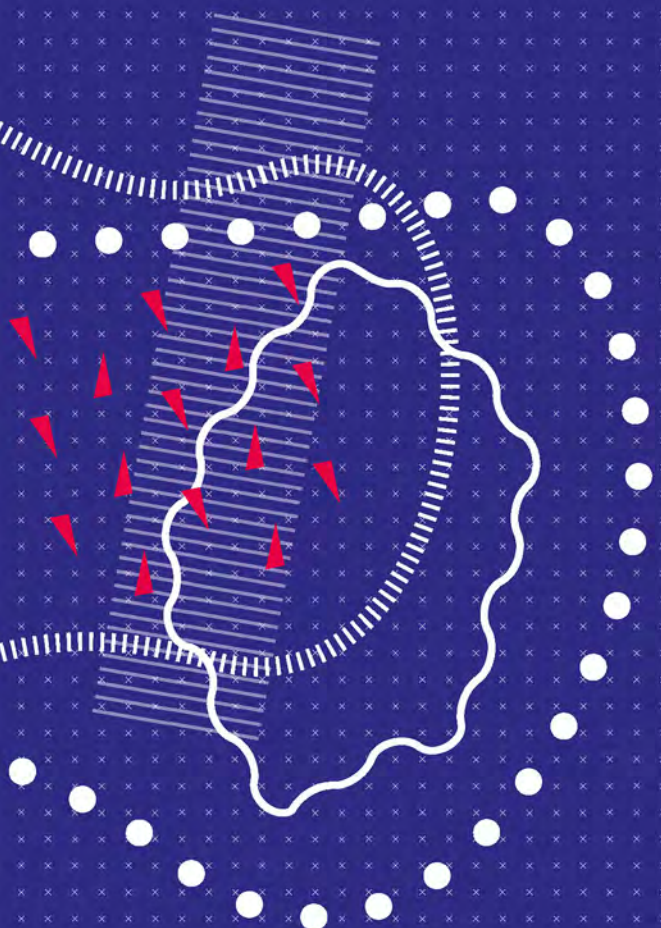
Public Interiority

Exploring Interiors in the Public Realm



Edited by
LIZ TESTON
with
KARIN TEHVE,
LADI'SASHA JONES, and
AMY CAMPOS

ROUTLEDGE

PUBLIC INTERIORITY

Public Interiority reconsiders the limits of the interior and its perceived spaces, exploring the notion that interior conditions can exist within an exterior environment, and therefore challenging the very foundations of the interior architecture field.

Public Interiority contains eight chapters and 16 visual essays that document the historical, material, and social conditions in contemporary cities, reconsidering the limits of the interior, resiliency in design, spatial perception, and territories within curated urban exteriors. Topics include the supergraphics of Black Lives Matter protests, privacy and US Supreme Court landmark cases, Instagram as a quasi-public interior, domestic simulation in Victorian curative environments, the micro-urban commons of public transit, and the timely study uncovering Jean-Michel Wilmotte's approach to "urban interior designing," among many others.

Including scholarly and visual essays by experts from a range of disciplines, including architecture, interior architecture, landscape architecture, exhibition design, craft and the visual arts, and design history and theory, this volume will be a helpful resource for all those upper-level students and scholars working in these related fields.

Liz Teston is an associate professor of interior architecture at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in the Southeast United States and a Fulbright Scholar. Teston's research explores public interiority, design politics, atmospheres, and cultures. Teston's work has been exhibited in Atlanta, Bucharest, Knoxville, New York, Lincoln, Stockholm, and Venice. Teston hosted the Public Interiority Symposium + Exhibition at the University of Tennessee–this volume is a product of that event. Her essays are found in journals such as *Interiority*, *MONU*, the *Journal of Interior Design*, and *Int/AR*, volumes such as *Interior Futures* (2019), and such Routledge volumes as *Interiors On Edge: History, Theory, Praxis* (2024), *The Interior Urbanism Theory Reader* (2024), and *The Interior Architecture Theory Reader* (2018).

Karin Tehve is a professor at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY in the United States, where she coordinates the theory curriculum in interior design. She earned her MArch at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Her own research and writing concentrates on taste, media, and identity, and their intersection with the public realm. As a member of Interior Provocations, Karin is co-editor for and contributor to *Interior Provocations: History, Theory, and Practice of Autonomous Interiors* (2020), *Appropriate(d) Interiors* (2021), and *Interiors on Edge: History, Theory, Praxis* (2024). Her book, *Taste: Media and Interior Design*, was published by Routledge in 2023. Tehve is an advisory board member for *Public Interiority*.

Ladi'Sasha Jones is a writer, curator, designer, and a member of *Public Interiority*'s advisory board. Pursuing a PhD in the History and Theory of Architecture at Princeton University in the United States, her research explores Black American spatial histories of play and performance. She has written for *Aperture*, *The Avery Review*, *Arts.Black*, *e-flux Criticism*, *Gagosian Quarterly*, and *The Art Momentum*, among others. Her project, Black Interior Spatial Thought, was the recipient of a 2021 Research and Development award from the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts. Jones holds an MA in Arts Politics from NYU and a BA in African American Studies from Temple University.

Amy Campos is a professor at California College of the Arts in the United States. Her work focuses on durability and design with special interest in the impermanent, migratory potentials of the interior. Recent publications include *Interiors Beyond Architecture* (Routledge, 2018) and the chapters "Survivalism, Interiorization and Exclusivity" in *Interior Futures* and "Territory and Inhabitation" in *Interior Architecture Theory Reader* (Routledge, 2018). Campos serves as an advisory board member for *Public Interiority*. Campos is leading research in lighting design and materiality through two Donghia Grants for the Interior Design program at CCA. She was the recipient of the 2013 IIDA Teacher of the Year award and the 2014 ASID Design Luminary Award. She received degrees from Columbia University and Cal Poly, SLO.

PUBLIC INTERIORITY

Exploring Interiors in the Public Realm

Edited by Liz Teston, Karin Tehve, Ladi'Sasha Jones, and Amy Campos

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

Designed cover image: Liz Teston and Elliott Teston.

First published 2025
by Routledge
4 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
605 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A catalog record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data
Names: Teston, Liz, editor. | Jones, Ladi'Sasha, editor. | Tehve, Karin, editor. | Campos, Amy, editor.
Title: Public interiority : exploring interiors in the public realm / edited by Liz Teston, Ladi'Sasha Jones, Karin Tehve, and Amy Campos.
Description: Abingdon, Oxon : Routledge, 2025. | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2024014109 | ISBN 9781032797151 (hardback) | ISBN 9781032797144 (paperback) | ISBN 9781003493501 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: Public spaces--Psychological aspects. | Social ecology.
Classification: LCC NA9053.S6 P797 2025 | DDC 711/.13--dc23/eng/20240620
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2024014109

ISBN: 978-1-032-79715-1 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-032-79714-4 (pbk)
ISBN: 978-1-003-49350-1 (ebk)

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501

For Matthew and Elliott

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

CONTENTS

CONTRIBUTORS

Rana Abudayyeh is an associate professor and Robin Klehr Avia Professor of Interior Architecture at the University of Tennessee's College of Architecture + Design in the United States. Her work amplifies design as a mechanism of placemaking and societal transformation, gauging trajectories at the intersection of advanced digital making, representation, and social justice. Abudayyeh is a licensed architect in her native country, Jordan, where she is researching interiority and displacement. Her teaching is recognized through several awards, including the IDEC Teaching Excellence Award, and her research has been published in several book chapters and journals, including the *Journal of Interior Design* and *Interiors: Design/Architecture/Culture*.

Suzie Attiwill is professor of interior design, School of Architecture & Urban Design, RMIT University, Australia. She holds a PhD (Architecture & Design), a Master of Arts (Design), and bachelor's degrees in interior design and art history. Since joining RMIT in 2000, Suzie has regularly taught undergraduate and postgraduate interior design students and supervises practice research PhD Interior Design candidates in Australia, Europe, and Asia. She has published widely on the provocation of urban interior and urban interiority and has been invited to give keynotes and lead international workshops exploring the potential of interior design as a practice in the urban milieu.

Emanuela Bonini Lessing is an associate professor at Università Iuav di Venezia in Italy. She obtained an MS in architecture at the Politecnico di Milano and was awarded a PhD in Design Sciences at Iuav. She was recipient of international research grants, visiting professor and lecturer at universities in Europe and in Latin America. As a member of the board of the School of Doctoral Studies of Iuav, she serves as associate editor of the journal *InfoDesign* and as a referee of papers at Italian and international design journals, as well as at international research institutions. Her research interests are communication design theory, environmental graphic design, enhancement of cultural heritage, and public and civic design.

Ria Bravo is an assistant professor of interior design The University of Texas, Austin School of Architecture in the United States. She is an interior and architectural designer with experience in academia and at world-renowned architecture firms, Gensler and Morphosis Architects. Her research interests are rooted in the space between interiors and architecture, questioning the boundaries, spaces, and politics that define these territories. Bravo recently collaborated with students on a children's pavilion for The University of Texas Wildlife Research Center's annual Fortlandia exhibition, designing the structure and overseeing its construction on-site.

Stefani Byrd is an assistant professor of art at the University of North Carolina Wilmington in the United States. Byrd's (she/they) art practice includes video, new media, and interactive technologies. Her current work focuses on creating psychologically charged immersive media environments. Their work has been exhibited at the CICA Museum (South Korea), the Museum of Contemporary Art Alicante (Spain), the SONIC MATTER Festival (Switzerland), and the Athens Digital Arts Festival (Greece). Byrd's work is held in the permanent collections of the Museum of Contemporary Art of Georgia and the Columbus Museum of American Art. She is an assistant professor of film studies at the University of North Carolina Wilmington and holds an MFA in Visual Art from UC San Diego.

Lucilla Calogero is a research fellow at Università Iuav di Venezia in Italy. She obtained a PhD in Design Sciences at the Università Iuav di Venezia with a thesis entitled "Interactive Documentary. Design and Space of Expanded Reality." Since then, she has carried out research at the Università Iuav di Venezia on topics concerning the design of interactive digital systems in the field of visual and multimodal communication, with particular attention to areas of information design and data visualization. She was a professor of graphics and design for multimedia (University of Verona) and is currently a professor of interaction design (Iuav).

Amy Campos is a professor at California College of the Arts in the United States. Her work focuses on durability and design with special interest in the impermanent, migratory potentials of the interior. Recent publications include *Interiors Beyond Architecture* (Routledge, 2018) and the chapters "Survivalism, Interiorization and Exclusivity" in *Interior Futures* and "Territory and Inhabitation" in *Interior Architecture Theory Reader* (Routledge, 2018). Campos serves as an advisory board member for *Public Interiority*. Campos is leading research in lighting design and materiality through two Donghia Grants for the Interior Design program at CCA. She was the recipient of the 2013 IIDA Teacher of the Year award and the 2014 ASID Design Luminary Award. She received degrees from Columbia University and Cal Poly, SLO.

Felicia Francine Dean is an artist and designer in the United States. She is an assistant professor in the College of Architecture + Design's School of Interior Architecture at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Dean earned her MFA degree in Interior Architecture from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. She received a BA in Studio Art from Florida State University. Dean's scholarship investigates layered connections between identity, culture, materiality, the history of interiors, analog and digital craft, space, and place. Her work uncovers new material narratives referred to as Material Identities and examines the human experience of identity vs. identification.

Dan Feinberg is an associate professor of design and sculpture at Berea College in the United States. He completed an MFA in Sculpture and Intermedia, an MA in Philosophy at the University of Iowa, and a BA in Neuroscience at Vassar College. Dan's recent installations include collaborative projects with the Museum of the White Mountains and the Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library. Currently, Feinberg coordinates *Plants in Pavement*, a cross-institution experimental study and public art project where people across the arts and sciences work with plants to address the socio-ecological failings of built-environment infrastructure. He resides in the village of Paint Lick, Kentucky.

Nerea Feliz is an associate professor at The University of Texas at Austin in the United States and the founder of Nerea Feliz Studio. Her research encompasses both scholarly and creative activities with a sustained focus on public space and an emphasis on inclusivity. Nerea was born in Spain and holds master's and bachelor's degrees in architecture from the Politecnica University of Madrid. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally. Her projects and writing have been featured in publications including *Architect Magazine*, *Ground Up*, *Platform*, *Interiors: Design/Architecture/Culture*, *The Architect's Newspaper*, and *urbanNext*. She is part of the design collaborative Double Happiness with Joyce Hwang.

Will Fu is a designer based in Vancouver, Canada. Will holds a Master of Architecture from Princeton University and a Bachelor of Architectural Studies from the University of Waterloo. He has previously worked for Johnston Marklee, MPdL Studio, and Bjarke Ingels Group. His writings have been published by *Pidgin*, *POOL*, *Scroope*, *Trans Magazin*, and *PLAT*, and animations and drawings have been exhibited at the AA, the Sao Paulo Biennale, and the Arch + Gallery in Berlin. Will's research revolves around the relationship between social spaces and media technologies in residential architecture.

Lysa Janssen is the founder of Lysa Janssen Design, a creative practice focused on design research and developing architectural, interior, and artistic experiences. Her practice is rooted in a sensitivity to place, function, and an understanding of construction explored through form, color, light, texture, pattern, and atmospheres. She has taught at The University of Texas at Austin, SOA and at Harvard GSD, and has practiced architecture and interior design internationally at award-winning Foster + Partners, London. She studied fine art at Dartmouth College and holds an MFA from the University of Pennsylvania and a MArch from Harvard.

Najia Javaid is an architect and interior designer who graduated from the Master of Interior Design program at Thomas Jefferson University, Philadelphia, United States where her research was in public interiority with a focus on movement, flow, and space appropriation. Originally from Pakistan, she acquired her undergraduate degree in architecture from the National College of Arts in Lahore, where she closely studied subcontinental architecture and construction techniques. Professionally, she is working as an architectural designer at KCBA Architects in Hatfield, PA. Her interests include multidisciplinary design, historic preservation, passive design, lighting design, and South Asian history, culture, and architecture.

Ladi'Sasha Jones is a writer, curator, designer, and a member of *Public Interiority's* advisory board. Pursuing a PhD in the History and Theory of Architecture at Princeton University in the United States, her research explores Black American spatial histories of play and performance. She has written for *Aperture, The Avery Review, Arts.Black, e-flux Criticism, Gagosian Quarterly*, and *The Art Momentum*, among others. Her project, Black Interior Spatial Thought, was the recipient of a 2021 Research and Development award from the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts. Jones holds an MA in Arts Politics from NYU and a BA in African American Studies from Temple University.

Marcin Kędzior is a founding editor of the journal *Scapegoat: Architecture | Landscape | Political Economy*. He has taught art, architecture, and interior design courses at the University of Waterloo, OCAD University, the University of Guelph, Humber College, the Creative School at Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU), and the University of Toronto, where he is a senior fellow at Massey College in Canada. His design work includes digital sets for online theater productions and community-engaged public spaces. He worked for Adrian Blackwell on the revitalization of Nathan Phillips Square in Toronto, which received the Governor General's Award, the National Urban Design Award, and the Canadian Architect Award.

Lindsey Krug is a designer and educator based between Chicago and Milwaukee United States, where she is an assistant professor of architecture at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She holds a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Pennsylvania and a Master of Architecture from the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Her work explores the architectural manifestations and myths that shape relationships between people and institutions born of American democracy and capitalism. Krug's research, design, and teaching have been recognized most recently with a 2024 New Faculty Teaching Award from the ACSA and AIAS, the 2024 Rotch Travelling Scholarship, and the 2023 Architectural League Prize for Young Architects and Designers from the Architectural League of New York.

Kendra Locklear Ordia is an assistant professor of interior design at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in the United States. She focused on healthcare and workplace design throughout her career at firms like Perkins & Will, Gensler, and CallisonRTKL. Her teaching and research explore human behavior and the built environment expressed in themes of biophilic design, health and wellbeing, environmental quality, and spatial ecologies. Ordia's writing has been featured in *Interiors: Design/Architecture/Culture*, and her nature-inspired work has been exhibited at several national and international exhibitions including Public Interiority, DesignLAB Next Nest Exhibition and Curtains: The Center for American Architecture and Design Symposium.

Grace Ong Yan is an architectural historian, theorist, designer, and associate professor of interior design at Thomas Jefferson University in the United States. Her scholarship examines modernism's interdisciplinary connections with spatial practices, graphic design, and media, as well as expands the canon with non-Western perspectives and histories. She is the author of *Building Brands: Corporations and Modern Architecture* and co-editor of *Architect: The Pritzker Prize Laureates in their own Words*, 1st and 2nd editions. Her

writing has been published in Interiors: Design/Architecture/Culture, Design and Culture, and Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians. Ong Yan is part of Collective, a community design collaborative with Andrew Hart. She holds a BArch from University of Texas at Austin, a MArch from Yale University and a PhD from University of Pennsylvania.

Amy Roehl currently works as a design educator and interior design program head at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas in the United States. She earned an MFA in Interior Architecture from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Before launching her academic career, she spent a decade in Chicago working as a project designer for a multidisciplinary firm. Her research interests include the investigation of cultural forces impacting the design of the built environment and perception of the profession, the application of embodied practices to traditionally cerebral | analytical design processes, and community engagement projects.

Zahra Safaverdi is the founder of "St. Sa.", current director of the MASKS initiative, practicing architect, faculty affiliate at WashU's Center for the Study of Race, Ethnicity, and Equity, and assistant professor of architecture at Washington University in St. Louis in the United States. Her disciplinary work explores methods of using architecture as a proxy for collective cultural memory to bring different historical and geographical points to closer proximity. Her award-winning work and design contributions have been featured and exhibited globally in Boston, Cambridge, Chicago, Houston, Kent, Knoxville, Locarno, Los Angeles, London, Lubbock, Madrid, New York, Saint Louis, San Louis Obispo, Vancouver, Venice, and Wuppertal.

Igor Siddiqui is an architect, associate professor with tenure, and program director for interior design at The University of Texas at Austin in the United States, where he holds the Gene Edward Mikeska Endowed Chair. He currently serves as co-editor of the journal *Interiors: Design/Architecture/Culture* (Taylor & Francis) and served as an advisory board member for *Public Interiority*. His work has been widely disseminated in a range of formats, including publications, exhibitions, lectures, and workshops. Siddiqui studied architecture at Yale and Tulane.

Nathan Smith is an architect and assistant professor of interior design at the Hite Institute of Art & Design at the University of Louisville, in the United States. His work focuses on how design at various scales indexes process and landscape, with a particular interest in sustainability as considered through subjectivity and materiality. Smith has previously taught at the Universidad Francisco Marroquin, the University of Puerto Rico, and the University of Kentucky. Smith studied architecture at the University of Kentucky and earned his Master of Architecture from Rice University. As the founder of PART Studio, he is an AIA member and a licensed architect in Kentucky and New Mexico.

Penny Sparke is a professor of design history and the director of the Modern Interiors Research Centre (MIRC) at Kingston University in London, United Kingdom. Her main research interest is modern interiors and their relationship with gender and identity. Her publications include *As Long as It's Pink: The Sexual Politics of Taste* (2010 [1995]), *The Modern Interior* (2008), and *Nature Inside: Plants and Flowers in the Modern Interior*

(2021) As an advisory board member for *Public Interiority*, Sparke provides project advice and acts as a peer reviewer.

Jered Sprecher uses painting to investigate images of the natural environment mediated through technology. He is a recipient of the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation Fellowship and residencies at the Marie Walsh Sharpe Space Program, the Irish Museum of Modern Art, the American Academy in Rome, and the Chinati Foundation. He has exhibited at Espai d'art Contemporani de Castelló, The Drawing Center, Brooklyn Academy of Music, Urban Institute for Contemporary Arts, Nerman Museum, Des Moines Art Center, Asheville Art Museum, Knoxville Museum of Art, and Hunter Museum. Sprecher is a professor of art at the University of Tennessee in the United States.

Karin Tehve is a professor at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY in the United States, where she coordinates the theory curriculum in interior design. She earned her MArch at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Her own research and writing concentrates on taste, media and identity, and their intersection with the public realm. As a member of Interior Provocations, Karin is co-editor for and contributor to *Interior Provocations: History, Theory, and Practice of Autonomous Interiors* (2020), *Appropriate(d) Interiors* (2021), and *Interiors on Edge: History Theory, Praxis* (2024). Her book, *Taste: Media and Interior Design*, was published by Routledge in 2023. Tehve is an advisory board member for *Public Interiority*.

Liz Teston is an associate professor of interior architecture at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville in the Southeast United States and a Fulbright Scholar. Teston's research explores public interiority, design politics, atmospheres, and cultures. Teston's work has been exhibited in Atlanta, Bucharest, Knoxville, New York, Lincoln, Stockholm, and Venice. Teston hosted the Public Interiority Symposium + Exhibition at the University of Tennessee–this volume is a product of that event. Her essays are found in journals such as *Interiority*, *MONU*, the *Journal of Interior Design*, and *Int/AR*, volumes such as *Interior Futures* (2019), and such Routledge volumes as *Interiors On Edge: History Theory, Praxis* (2024), *The Interior Urbanism Theory Reader* (2024), and *The Interior Architecture Theory Reader* (2018).

William T. Willoughby is an architect, design educator, essayist, and tenured associate professor at Kent State University in the United States. He has taught architecture and interior design for 28 years at institutions such as Louisiana Tech University and the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. He served for a span of 15 years as a university administrator and coordinator of programs at two universities. He has been a registered architect for over 30 years and has authored over 45 publications on such topics as design methodology, cultural studies, and design education. He has attended over 50 conferences throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe.

Shai Yeshayahu, is an associate professor of interior design in the Creative School at Toronto Metropolitan University TMU in Canada. He co-founded VerS+, an international research and design collaborative responsive to how data from ancient, emerging, and local knowledge informs the making of objects and spaces. The collaborative has designed, fabricated, and built several projects encompassing the disciplines of architecture, interior design, landscape architecture, and curatorial praxes.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This volume represents a multi-year collective effort initiated within the School of Interior Architecture in the College of Architecture + Design at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. I express my gratitude to many colleagues, students, friends, and family members who, over the years, have listened as I shape the ideas surrounding public interiority, especially as I began planning the 2023 *Public Interiority Symposium + Exhibition*—the event that prompted this publication. The exhibition was held in the Ewing Gallery of Art + Architecture from January to February 2023, with exhibitors from multiple countries and disciplines and over 900 visitors. The symposium was held that February at the Art + Architecture Building. Suzie Attiwill was the keynote, and Rana Abudayyeh, Najia Javaid, Marcin Kędzior, Lindsey Krug, Grace Ong Yang, and Amy Roehl were presenters.

This project would not have been possible without the support and encouragement of College of Architecture + Design Dean Jason Young, Associate Dean Katherine Ambroziak, and School of Interior Architecture Director Milagros Zingoni Phielipp. I am deeply indebted to the symposium's advisory board, which includes Karin Tehve, Penny Sparke, Igor Siddiqui, Ladi'Sasha Jones, and Amy Campos. I have been in awe of your expertise and expansive thinking on interiority as we co-developed the symposium and exhibition. Additionally, Karin, Ladi'Sasha, and Amy's contributions as section editors to the volume have provided invaluable guidance and forever altered my thinking on interiors. Thank you. I would also like to thank the contributing authors whose works explore the nature of interiority using a wide variety of approaches to urbanism, art, architecture, and design theory. Many thanks to Lydia Kessell and Jake Millicheap at Routledge for supporting this book.

While many colleagues have supported this effort, I want to especially recognize Marie Saldaña, Hojung Kim, and Jenny Flatford for their work on the symposium and exhibition. I also value the support of colleagues and friends who have contributed to or inspired the project in various ways: Rana Abudayyeh, Jennifer Akerman, Emily Bivens, Jessica Bocángel, Jennifer Bonner, Ria Bravo, Cheryl Burchett, Eric Cagley, Bruce Cole, Ashley Coon, Marleen Davis, Felicia Dean, Oana Diaconescu, Tim Dolan, Julie Kress, Julie Lohnes, Carl Lostritto, Sarah Lowe, David Matthews, Scottie McDaniel, Sarah McFalls, Tracy Moir-McClean,

Lisa Mullikin, Misri Patel, Rebekah Radtke, James Rose, Micah Rutenberg, Avigail Sachs, Hannah Schmidt, Deborah Schneiderman, Mark Stanley, Pamela Treacy, Paige Travis, Germán Valenzuela, and Kathy Wheeler, and anyone else I have unintentionally overlooked.

Over time, many students have contributed to *Public Interiority* as researchers, volunteers, and collaborators, including Talia Armoza, Kate Bishop, Maddie Boaz, Allie Bosarge, Campbell Black, Morgan Chapin, Abbie Coleman, Erin Collins, Sarah Dunn, Katie Gilstorf, Amber Godfrey, Gracie Hill, Olivia Hussey, Melanie Jimenez, Aubrey Kidd, Maya Markowicz, Katie Olinger, Shelby Parsons, Anna Shoemaker, Kate Stähli, Acacia Uechi, Kathryn Webb, and Bethany Wright. Many thanks go to my research assistant, Emmie Barnett, who has been an invaluable collaborator and colleague on this project.

The project was supported by research funding from the AIA NY Center for Architecture Arnold W. Brunner Grant and several grants from the University of Tennessee, including the James Musgraves Research Award, the Hal and Alma Reagan Research Award, the College of Architecture + Design Dean's Symposium Fund, the Office of Research Innovation + Economic Development Scholarly Projects Fund and the Exhibit, Performance, and Publication Expense Fund, the Division of Diversity and Engagement Mini-Grant, and the Division of Student Success Departmental Research Assistant and Faculty Research Assistant Funds. Funding for open access to this research was provided by the University of Tennessee's Open Publishing Support Fund. The project was initiated during my Faculty Development Leave, funded by the University of Tennessee's Provost Office. The book would not have been possible without this funding and dedicated time provided by the University of Tennessee.

—Liz Teston

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

1

AN INTRODUCTION TO PUBLIC INTERIORITY

Liz Teston

Settling In

Public Interiority reflects limits, borders, boundaries, and territories. When does the interior begin, and when does it end? Rather than considering the interior's limits as a hard edge, this book questions interiority and exteriority as gradients. When does the interior experience become recognizable within that gradient? What might this mean for interior architecture and the ways we engage with other disciplines? Paired together, interiority and urbanity instrumentalize a profusion of publics, intensities, and relational networks; they suggest a radical inversion of the hegemonic power of place—flipping the standard longevity-centered architectural construct on its head and advocating for interiority, its participants, and inhabitations.

Public Interiority refers to the experience of boundedness with less reliance on physically constructed enclosures and more consideration of extra-architectural phenomena. Prior design scholars have asserted that built forms—from the urban scale to the scale of the interior nook—represented the foundational criteria for any interior experience.[1] This text recognizes the fleeting experience of an outdoor interior condition frequently relies on an inhabitant's immaterial context, as well as one's atmospheric, programmatic, political, psychological, and virtual settings. This understanding decouples "interiorist" practices and places from physical enclosures and private realms; it acknowledges inhabitants as co-creators of reciprocal interior experiences.[2] *Public Interiority* comes from my long-standing attempt to make sense of our field: to interrogate the limits of the interior and ask where and how interiors transpire (Figure 1.1).

Origin

Public Interiority is a collection of scholarly and visual essays by experts from a range of disciplines, including architecture, interior architecture, landscape architecture, exhibition design, craft and the visual arts, and design history and theory, as well as contributions by working designers operating at the intersection of the interior and urban territories. This

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-1

FIGURE 1.1 Public Interiority Exhibit at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, installation by Liz Teston and Hojung Kim (2023), photo by © Bruce Cole.

project is the result of conversations and research into *Public Interiority* over the course of several years. After observing a merging of disciplinary thought in perceptual interiority and interiorist practices, I organized the *Public Interiority Symposium + Exhibition* at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK). In February 2023, the symposium's advisory board consisted of Karin Tehve, Penny Sparke, Igor Siddiqui, Ladi'Sasha Jones, Amy Campos, and me, with support from UTK College of Architecture and Design Dean Jason Young, School of Interior Architecture (SoIA) Director Milagros Zingoni. SoIA faculty Marie Saldaña and Hojung Kim contributed curatorial efforts to the symposium and exhibition, respectively. The symposium and exhibition had an international engagement with over 150 symposium attendees from across North America and 900 exhibition visitors. This volume continues to be a joint endeavor, with symposium organizers, speakers, and exhibitors contributing to the authorship and organization of the collection (Figure 1.2).

Organization

Public Interiority contains eight chapters and 16 visual essays that document the historical, material, and social conditions in contemporary cities; they reflect our uncanny, post-pandemic, and increasingly fragmented world. This project reconsiders the limits of the interior, resiliency in design, spatial perception, and territories within curated urban exteriors—aspects encouraging material and social sustainability within our urban environments.

FIGURE 1.2 Public Interiority Exhibit at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, view of *8.25 Minutes* by Jered Sprecher (2017), photo by © Bruce Cole.

Organized into three main themes, *Politics + Programs*, *Virtual + Psychologies*, and *Atmospheres + Forms*, this edited volume continues conversations initiated at the symposium and exhibition. It expands contemporary public interiority discourse within interiors but also outside our allied fields. With chapters and visual essays, *Public Interiority* creates a platform for new ideas that challenge conventions relating to interiority in art, design, architecture, urbanism, and interiors—and human-centered design itself. Offering both long-form scholarly essays and explorations of creative scholarship exposes a progressive equal-balanced value of theory and practice in interiors.

Taxonomy

Interiority is a paradox: something fleeting, a material thing, an affectation, a flow, or a social condition. It is something we can experience within the urban outdoor realm—especially when bound by non-tangible stimuli like activities, atmospheres, attitudes, and affairs of the State.[3] These stimulants manifest interiority in us and reorient toward meaningful and authentic situations, distinct from the habitual situations where we perform and mask our internal selves, collective, individual, or otherwise.

Politics + Programs

Design is not neutral. Politics mediate all design via communication, agencies, and authorities.[4] Regulations privilege institutional views and logistical territories—the metaphorical geography of politically generated public interiority could be mapped with these

influences. But the most potent aspect of politically-driven public interiority is that it is also an invitation to reconsider the status of agency, occupation, and co-creation. This kind of public interiority operates outside of conventional hierarchies and government decisions. This is an opposing phenomenon when compared to Jefferey Nebsit and Charles Waldheim's *Technical Lands*, which covers territories of vigilant management, hypervisibility, and neoliberal political acts in exteriorizing contexts.[5] While just as exceptional, political, and complex as technical lands, public interiorities are their obverse. Public interiorities flourish with acts of co-production and differentiation from the general milieu. This capacity determines whether we are operating within public interiority or through urban exteriority.

This topic is timely and critical, as the border between the commons and the individual remains a divisive concept in contemporary society and in the public realm. Consider the 2023 Tennessee state law, which contributing author Igor Siddiqui voiced in his essay on Jean-Michel Wilmotte. The Tennessee Senate bill (currently under appeal) prohibits drag performances on public property (TN SB3, TN Code § 39-13-517) and causes us to question where the public realm ends and private property begins.[6] This law is conditioned by economic and social interests and its ties to urban planning schemes and is carried out by governmental groups and commercial organizations.[7] Using contributing author Lindsay Krug's conception of public interiority as a publicly afforded fundamental right to freedom and privacy, "...TN SB3 converts territories of adaptable and interactive "public interiorities" into rhetorical and delimited "technical lands" via hypervisibility and vigilance that dampens co-production of interiorizing public places. The law impacts individual agency and experience and, thus, public interiority. Politics manifest aesthetics. Therefore, material and visual cultures also shape public interiority. Every design "either serves or subverts the status quo."[8] The places we inhabit (and how) are shaped by our materials, politics, and society.[9] This boils down to the political act as being a symbol of influence, dependence, control, agency, and ideology.[10] TN SB3 reveals a timely and shadowy territory in terms of interiority and exteriority—at stake here (and globally) are urgent questions about the collective's shared humanity and the individual's autonomous agency. With essays on simulated spaces, mobile interiors, and experiential spheres ranging from the micro-urban to the planetary scale, this collection offers an unmatched entry into thinking and praxes beyond the limitations of the building façade, its entanglements, and its associations.

Public interiority can be driven by program and shaped by inhabitations and activities conventionally understood as interior-like but transferred to exterior settings—alfresco dining, outdoor shopping, or public intimacy, for example.[11] As such, we can claim that the accoutrements of those programs—outdoor screens, furniture arrangements, and other mobile or temporary assemblages are interiorist in nature. Until recently, scholars have viewed interiority and exteriority as a duality, suggesting a beginning and an end.[12] Recent scholarship emphasizes interiority's gradient status, forever unfolding, shifting, and evolving into the next action or experience. As such, it could be argued that leisure itself can devise conditions of programmatic public interiority and attend to the interiorist experience in the urban outdoors—resting, reading, contemplation, friendly interactions, etc. Public interiority is an environment tempered for inhabitation and interaction, with routines commonly understood as being private or semi-private. To illustrate, let's look at the leisure activities and spectacles of the 1939 Circus Ball at Elsie de Wolfe's Villa Trianon in Versailles, France. With the Nazi invasion of Paris looming, de Wolfe hosted an absurdly lavish outdoor gala and circus at her estate adjacent to the Palace of Versailles. Screened by

FIGURE 1.3 Elsie de Wolfe's Gala and Circus Ball at Villa Trianon in Versailles, France, photo by Roger Schall (1939), © Schall Collection. Photo by Roger Schall.

a candy-striped tent, guests enjoyed ballroom dancing *en plein air*. Bejeweled ponies and hounds performing circus maneuvers within the ring. Partygoers perch at the wall's edge while they interact with the show. Guests chat under the bar tent, cantilevered from a massive oak tree. Loosely arranged rugs underfoot distinguish revelry from turf. Dancing, performance, and congregation spectacularize the close environs of Villa Trianon (Figure 1.3). The festivities, within the shadow of a looming war, compose the interior.[13]

The section on *Politics + Programs* covers these activity gradients and institutional networks. Specifically, in her introductory chapter, "From Interior Supergraphics to Participation in the Public Sphere," Grace Ong Yan draws connections between the environmental graphics by Postmodern designers at Yale and the grass-roots street writing of the Black Lives Matter movement. In the second chapter, "In Plain Sight: Civic Assemblages and Co-producing the Micro-Urban Common," Rana Abudayyeh uses the sites of public

transit, urban parking garage elevators, and city sidewalks to construct a series of publicly engaged participatory interventions for the common good. As a pair, these chapters by Ong Yan and Abudayyeh help us understand interiors and interiority as grass-roots political and programmatic territories.

This section includes five visual essays and investigations using project-based research. Flowing from seasonal territories (Feinberg) to pedagogies (Bonini-Lessing and Calogero) to the material identity investigations (Dean)—each essay increasingly becomes tangible and spatial. Dan Feinberg's visual essay, "Growing Through Greyfields," contains vivid, large-format photography documenting abandoned asphalt pavement in rural Appalachian Kentucky and resilient root vegetables that, when carefully curated and arranged, array in response to historic wallcovering patterns. Conceptual territories of difference, exclusion, and in-betweenness—a metaphorical interior—are relevant introductions to programmatically-influenced public interiority.

"Museums and Public Interiority," by Emanuela Bonini-Lessing and Lucilla Calogero, positions a Northeastern Italian exhibition design studio within the realm of public interiority by proposing outdoor interventions as an extension of the museum programming as well as emphasizing the interactions between the beholder, the displays, and the community—as a form of "empathy with" and "engagement with" the museum's content.

"Dug by the Devil," by Felicia Francine Dean, records Dean's Blue Hole in Long Island, Bahamas—the world's second deepest marine sinkhole. The images, text, and sculpture untangle tensions between Bahamian culture and tourism, where economic sustenance simultaneously starves the regional culture, thus creating a dichotomy of competing material and cultural identities.

In "Almost Paradise," Zahra Safaverdi analyzes Clevland, Ohio's "interiorized outdoor public spaces." These places result from the economic collapse common to many Midwestern American Rust Belt cities. The resultant displacements and new micro-urban conditions provide an opportunity for Safaverdi and her team to construct a large-scale installation—a cabinet of curiosities that comments on Cleveland as a resilient political condition.

"Play Ground," by Amy Roehl, covers the socio-political territories of interiority generated by children's spaces in Berlin's residential neighborhoods. It analyzes the grounds, surfaces, and material experiences of urban play. The essay advocates for design to support a child's autonomous interior life dispersed within an urban exterior network.

Virtual + Psychologies

At once experienced and tangible, public interiority can be conceived as something eluding a strict, unified definition. This "almost," "both-and," nebulous network of understandings points us toward a virtual public interiority.[14] It is almost an architectural assemblage, without and within. It is both the proxemic relationship between two people and the interdependence between people and an assembled architectural form.[15] It is experience-centered design. It is where space is not defined by the tangible but by resonance and mutual affinity within a responsive, ever-changing bounded interior territory. It is uncertain for certain. Public interiority, shaped by virtual stimuli, can occur within gaming, social media, and architectural modeling simulations.[16] The virtual nature of public interiority is intrinsic to interiors, which has been negatively positioned by architectural theorists as impermanent, scenographic, and sensorial.

Concepts within environmental psychology or systems of territorial influence can inform public interiority. Thinkers like Simmel, de Certeau, Benjamin, Ahmed, hooks, Sloterdijk, and Foucault have written about spatial experience, reminding their readers that those experiences vary significantly, changing depending on day, season, and person.[17] In *Art on My Mind*, bell hooks writes, "Documentation of a cultural genealogy of resistance invites the making of theory that highlights the cultural practices which transform ways of looking and being in a manner that resists reinscription by prevailing structures of domination."[18] Only by acknowledging a variety of psychological experiences and orientations to exterior-interiors can we begin to address the psychology of public interiority.

FIGURE 1.4 Berom Village on the Jos Plateau in Nigeria. Image by author. A previous version of this image was published in *African Traditional Architecture* by Susan Denyer.

Consider the experiential and ever-changing spatial arrangements of traditional Berom villages on the Nigerian Jos Plateau. Loosely arranged homesteads. Seasonally rotating cultivated lands. Shifting centers of village authority and movable doorways, always pointing to the village leader. Tunnels of euphorbia cacti encircle these collections of highly specialized mud, stone, and thatch structures; the maze-like defensive hedges have acidic, carcinogenic sap that blinds intruders who become ensnared in their walls. Within the euphorbia borders, grouped homesteads contain tailored structures for sleeping, food storage, and specialized work. Special care is given to the gaps between structures, with stone walls creating shade and privacy and winding entries protecting passage within each homestead.[19] The Berom villages, with their mutable orientation to exteriors, authority, and seasons, manifest virtual and psychological forms of public interiority. Each entry into these conditional interiors is as varied as the lived experience of the participants—the cacti tunnels, for some, foster a boundary of interior-like protection, for others, the cacti tunnels expose and harm (Figure 1.4).

Contributing authors Lindsey Krug, Marcin Kędzior, and Will Fu lead us through public interiorities in their most friable and unstable forms. In her chapter, "Supreme Privacy: Seven Public Interiorities," Lindsey Krug bridges between the political and the virtual, interrogating the nature of our personal and privacy rights within seven landmark US Supreme Court cases. Krug proposes a critical and timely commentary on the opacity of legal procedures by creating images that dismantle the facades of building interiors where these events occurred. The drawings and models challenge the relationship between public and interior, virtual and political. Marcin Kędzior and Will Fu, in "Digital Enclosures Project," analyze the spatial qualities of social media frameworks and other virtual settings in drawings that reproduce and reshape the sense of place, culture, and interaction within these facsimile realities.

The visual essays of the *Virtual + Psychologies* section use computational design, physical and biological ecologies, and transportation networks to explain technology, the sublime, oversharing, and interspecies design. "Post-photographic Domesticity" by Stefani Byrd questions standard photographic representation and the everyday through novel 3D scanning technologies. These images of pandemic-era domestic realities rupture our understanding of the virtual, the real, and the public by making a faithful, but not visually analogous, representation of home. "Exploring Interiority," by Ria Bravo, presents representations of intimate spatial experiences in public realms. Through a combination of drawing methods and iterative processes, her design studio constructs narratives on human experience and the commons.

"Wonder + Dread," by Jered Sprecher, explores the nature of interiority as described by aesthetic philosophy on the sublime, paradox, and the uncanny. Sprecher's images evoke the vulnerabilities of intimacy and contemplative spaces within the public sphere. "Moving Interiors," by Lysa Janssen, exists in the interstitial zone between psychology, the virtual, and the indefinite. Her videos and photographs consider resolution—both the resolution of a virtual image and the psychological resolution we undertake when traveling on long or difficult journeys. "Outdoor Interiority," by Nerea Feliz, explores a design proposal for MoMA PS1. The design supports insect and human life through interiorist interventions and temporal lighting effects, proposing public interiority as a species-inclusive, urban, and transdisciplinary event.

Atmospheres + Forms

The intersection of our bodies and our climates conspire to generate conditions of atmospheric public interiority. Meteorological conditions inform exterior-interiors, generated by weather and homeostatic sensorial bodies.[20] Interiority is experienced by our senses first. Our somatosensory perceptions (deeply embodied sensations of temperature, discomfort, and spatial orientation) work with our other senses—sound, touch, taste, smell, and proprioception in response to heat, humidity, and wind.[21] Our bodies have an astounding power to modulate environmental stimuli—tempering and tuning radiation, mist, and breeze to support steady-state interiority and comfort.[22] Through these processes, the delineation of inside and out is generated at the limits of the body as a membrane.[23] Climatic architectures can register socially-complex and experientially-rich conditions from atmospheric material systems, territories, and moods. An often-used example of meteorological interiority is Diller Scofidio + Renfro's Blur Building at the 2002 Swiss Expo.[24] Since its opening, projects by contemporary designers have manipulated hyperlocal material and climate systems to construct bounded conditions.[25] Designers like Philippe Rahm advocate for hyperlocal microclimates. This advocacy appears in his text, *Climatic Architecture*, where mist-generated conditions of public interiority are generated through convective thermodynamic design interventions in the outdoors. Rahm also advocates for thermally-regulated "decorative style" in conventional indoor environments that layer "the layering of airtight films on walls as new, superficial, decorative elements…"[26] These atmospheric public interiorities are made possible through meteorological, biological, and agricultural processes that reveal the place-specific experience—an entangled and precipitated interiority.

We can visualize atmospheres and their resultant forms by investigating the Bedouin black goat hair tents. Black materials absorb the sun's heat. Yet, the thickness of the hides provides respite from the wind and airborne grains of sand and dust. Tensioned poles and ropes stretch the overhead panels into a taut and aerodynamic arrangement. Loosely pinned side panels create a three-sided enclosure, shifting as they block gusts of wind.[27] This is not unlike the bent grass Orkney Island Chair from Scotland. These chairs are often loosely woven with local grasses and form a hooded canopy near the sitter's head—with the twofold job of partially blocking drafty air and shielding the sun's rays.[28] Similarly, artist Molly Dilworth's Times Square New York installation, "Cool Water, Hot Island," responds to the urban heat island effect, a phenomenon in which metaphorical and meteorological interiority is revealed by elevated outdoor urban temperatures.[29] The moods and microclimates of Times Square—the density of bodies and their convective heat, asphalt's thermal radiation, the luminance of the billboards, and the spectacular atmosphere of place within this occupiable room compound generate an atmospheric and formal public interiority within the urban outdoors (Figure 1.5). Architecture and urbanism firm OFICINAA, led by Silvia Benedito and Alexander Häusler, explores atmospheres as a thermal and spatial generator in projects, where interstitial radiant or cooling landscapes create inside-outside conditions. Their project, "Danube Clearing," for example, encourages air movement at the riparian edge and reduces radiation, creating a condition of atmospheric public interiority along the river.[30] All four of these cases—at the scale of the domestic enclosure, the chair, the city, and the landscape—demonstrate how material, form, and climate are interwoven (Figure 1.6).

FIGURE 1.5 Installation view at Times Square. *Cool Water, Hot Island*, Molly Dilworth (2010), photo by Molly Dilworth CC BY-ND 2.0. Image and Installation by Molly Dilworth, Creative Commons.

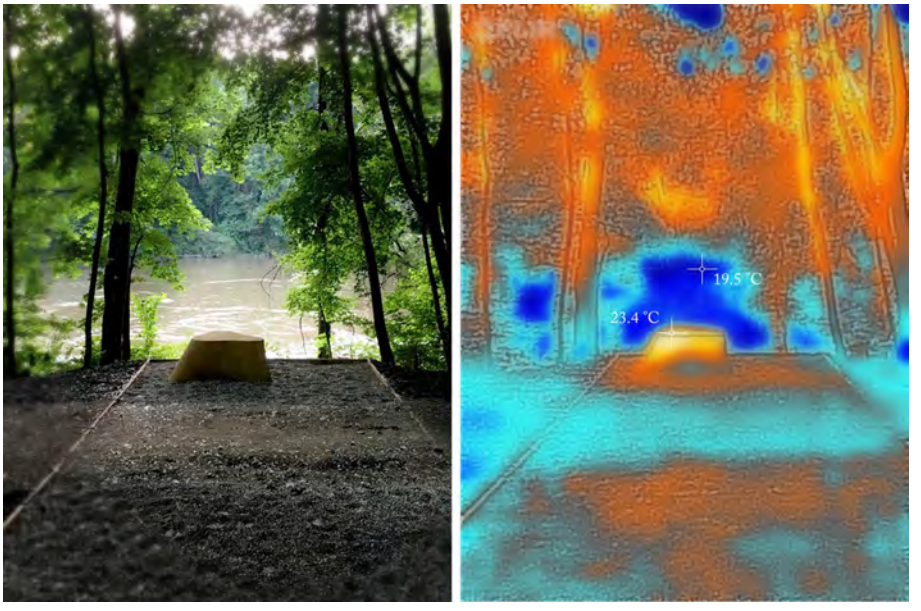


FIGURE 1.6 Spatial Comparison with Thermal Information, Spring 2015 at 3:00 pm on the Danube River in Ingolstadt, Germany. Danube Clearing, OFICINAA (2013-2015), photo by © OFICINAA.

The first two chapters in the *Atmospheres + Forms* section represent a historical focus. In "Jean-Michel Wilmotte's Interior Urban Design as a Model of Public Interior Practice," Igor Siddiqui traces the lineage of public interiority through the work of Jean-Michel Wilmotte, the French interior designer who, in the 1990s and at the height of landscape urbanism, proposed that the conceptual approach to urban design should begin with the tenets of interior design, illuminating a previously unexamined connection between French Postmodernism and interiority in an expansive practice, rooted in the human scale and experienced within urban form. "(Semi-) Public Interiority in British Curative Environments, 1840–1914," by design historian Penny Sparke, explores the restorative power of nature within simulated domestic spaces of Victorian and Edwardian homeopathic hotels, convalescent homes, and asylums. This essay recognizes the roots of biophilia and atmospheric design in recovery spaces and how medical professionals, guests, patients, and designers curated and arranged transitional interiors to promote a feeling of interiority and a representation of home.

This section's visual essays cover specific sites (speculative and real) where materiality shapes territory and form-based interiority. In "Movement, Flow, + Materiality at Shahi Qila," Najia Javaid defines public interiority through the residuals of architectural form rather than the form itself—movement and circulation of occupants within the fort, as well as the haptic effects of interior finishes, and the experiential characteristics of the form's luminant surfaces. Javaid maintains that within historic Pakistani architecture, interiority has always existed without or adjacent to building enclosures and is shaped primarily by surface materials in interiorist interventions.

"Interiors within Interiors," by Shai Yeshayahu, explores Giorgio Vasari's orientation to human-scaled urban design in Renaissance Florence. This essay observes that Vasari was developing conditional interiors without the benefits of panoramic satellite views two centuries prior to the canonical figure-ground maps created by Giovanni Battista Nolli.

"Studies of Study," by William T. Willoughby, is a representation and analysis of the study as a condition of public interiority. By re-interpreting interiorist spaces in art (both eminent examples and his own), Willoughby makes a case for public interiority rooted in aesthetics, craft, and form. Marcin Kędzior also uses interpretation for "Pillows/Planets/Piazzas," a poetic exploration at astronomical, architectonic, and anatomical scales. By exploding scalar territories of interiority, Kędzior demonstrates the interconnectedness between planetary and human existence and the performance of the public interior.

In "Rewild," Kendra Locklear Ordia posits that public interiority is a life-centric framework for urban ecosystem remediation. These exterior-interiors attend to varied life forms and "interior" spatial territories generated from dissimilarity in the broader urban context. This urban nature interiority, as Ordia describes it, "take[s] urgent and significant action to reduce the degradation of natural habitats." Nathan Smith's "Rift Table," explores regionally sourced renewable materials as a manifestation of interior territories where contemporary Hempwood, like Thonet's beech wood, expresses the region in which it was harvested.

For the closing chapter, Suzie Attiwill synthesizes and recontextualizes the book's theories and practices via a scholarly analysis of her practice that she has coined "interior designing." In her essay titled "Interiority in the Urban Environment—a refrain," Attiwill explores sustainable design and professional considerations within our intersectional working domain.

Approach

Herein, we invite you to join an important conversation on the global conditions of interiority. What would it take to move past our conventional understanding of "interiors within" and recognize interiors as an orientation "without"—without architecture and within the outdoors, inside cities, and without boundaries? What are the societal consequences if the interior architecture field remains indoors? What might interiorist experiences feel like if we collectively expand our orientation to buildings?

This assemblage of essays, images, and projects challenges the limitations of the literal interior, expanding the domain of interiority to include exterior and liminal refuges. They describe in-between cultural, urban, and collective places—the public-private curative environment, the landmark Supreme Court case, the city bus and commercial jet, and the architecture of social media—where simulation, exposition, privacy, and interpersonal affinity disclose our collective perceptions of interiority and enclosure. The volume's contributing authors bring forth unparalleled, timely ideas about the nature of the contemporary interiors, from the space-bending supergraphics of protests to the collective re-orientation of ecological territories to the scalar ruptures of publicly engaged urban designing—all in concert with visual essays of built works and materials explorations. Section introductions likewise complicate and contextualize concepts about interiority. Through political and programmatic structures, virtual and psychological frameworks, and atmospheric and formal settings, *Public Interiority* is a call to designers and scholars to challenge conventions about human-centered interiority and its resilient frontiers.

Conclusion

These essays position interiors and interiority in unconventional ways, and without and within architecture; they expand the limits of the interior and its perceived spaces by prioritizing experience, simulation, and surroundings over built form, shifting the field beyond and into the city and for the publics. Further exploration of public interiority demands a paradigm shift in the interior architecture field, one that understands the lived experience as being essential to defining space, fleeting enclosures, and their greater territories of influence. A place's exteriority—its position and orientation to the outside world—has an intrinsic bearing on its interiority—its relationship to the inward experience. By escaping into the exterior, and being without architecture while within, we find that interiority is an unfolding action, urban and political.

Notes

1 Bruno Zevi, *Architecture as Space: How to Look at Architecture* (New York: Horizon Press, 1957), 22–32.

2 Suzie Attiwill, "Urban and Interior: Techniques for an Urban Interiorist," in *Urban Interior: Informal Explorations, Interventions, and Occupations*, ed. Rochus Urban Hinkel (Baunach, Germany: Spurbuchverlag, 2011), 11–26. Attiwill describes the techniques of the "interiorist" concept here. Like public interiority, these practices and techniques occur in the urban outdoors. Here, I add to the term "interiorist" by also considering public interiority's individual and group experiences that feel insular or separate from the extroverted urban experience. An exterior place can "feel" like an interior or be designed using interior architecture tactics—therefore, it is "interiorist."

3 Related essays can be found here:

Gernot Böhme, *Atmospheric Architectures*, ed. and trans. Tina Engels-Schwarzpaul (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), 43.
Penny Sparke, "Introduction," in *Flow: Interior, Landscape, and Architecture in the Era of Liquid Modernity*, eds. Penny Sparke, Pat Brown, Patricia Lara-Betancourt, Gini Lee, and Mark Taylor (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), xvii.
Mark Taylor, "Public Interaction," in *Interior Design & Architecture: Critical & Primary Sources*. Volume 4. Public Interaction, ed. Mark Taylor (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), ix–xix.
Andrew Filmer and Juliet Rufford, "Introduction: Performing Architectures," in *Performing Architectures: Projects, Practices, Pedagogies*, eds. Andrew Filmer and Julier Rufford (London: Methuen Drama, 2020), 9.
Jan Gehl, "Many Good Reasons: Studying Activities and Excuses for Being in Public Space," in *How to Study Public Life, eds. Jan Gehl and Birgitte Svarre* (Washington DC: Island Press, 2013), 90.
Kiel Moe, "Construction Ecology," in *Unless* (New York, Actar, 2021), 98.

4 Bernard Tschumi, "Disjunction," in *Architecture and Revolution: Contemporary Perspectives on Central and Eastern Europe*, ed. Neil Leach (New York: Routledge, 1999), 146–149.
5 Jeffrey S. Nesbit and Charles Waldheim, *Technical Lands*: A Critical Primer (Berlin: JOVIS, 2023).
6 Rick Rojas, Emily Cochrane, Ava Sasani, and Michael Paulson, "Tennessee Law Limiting 'Cabaret' Shows Raises Uncertainty About Drag Events," *New York Times* (New York, NY), March 5, 2023. https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/05/us/tennessee-law-drag-shows.html "See also TN Code § 39-13-517 (2021) at https://capitol.tn.gov."
7 Richard Sennett, Ricky Burdett, Saskia Sassen, and Joan Clos, "Forces Shaping 21st Century Urbanization," in *The Quito Papers and the New Urban Agenda*, eds. UN Habitat, Richard Sennett, Ricky Burdett, Saskia Sassen, Joan Clos (New York: Routledge, 2018), 21.
8 Tony Fry, "Book Review: The Archeworks Papers," *Design Issues* 23, no. 3, (2007): 88.
9 Doina Petrescu and Kim Trogal, "Introduction: The Social (Re)Production of Architecture in 'Crisis-Riddled' Times," in *The Social (Re)Production of Architecture: Politics, Values and Actions in Contemporary Practice*, eds. Doina Petrescu and Kim Trogal (London: Routledge, 2017), 3.
10 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 44.
11 Liz Teston, "Transient Interiorities: Space, Gender, and Bucharest Street Culture," in *Interior Urbanism Reader*, ed. Gregory Marinic (New York: Routledge, 2023), 303–312.
12 Charles Rice, *The Emergence of the Interior* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 2.
13 Charles Scheips, *Elsie de Wolfe's Paris: Frivolity Before the Storm* (New York: Abrams, 2014) 41–103.
14 Sara Ahmed, "Orientations: Toward a Queer Phenomenology," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 12, no. 4, (2006): 543–74. https://doi.org/10.1215/10642684-2006-002
15 Hall describes this as fixed-feature, semifixed, and informal space. Edward T. Hall, *The Hidden Dimension* (New York: Anchor Books, 1990), 103–112.
16 Adam Nash, Kate Geck, and Andy Miller, "Virtual Interiorities," *Interiority* 4, no. 2 (2021): 207–222.
17 Related essays can be found here:

Georg Simmel, "Rome," *Theory, Culture & Society* 24, no. 7–8 (2007): 30–37.
Michel de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven F. Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 91–110.
Walter Benjamin, Walter, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Rolf Tiedemann (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press, 1999), 541.
Sara Ahmed, *Queer Phenomenology: Orientations, Objects, Others* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 162.
bell hooks, *Art on My Mind: Visual Politics* (New York: New Press, 1995), 145–162.
Peter Sloterdijk, *Spheres: Plural Spherology, Volume 3. Foams*, trans. Wieland Hoban (South Pasadena, CA: Semiotext(e), 2016), 564.
Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1977), 148.
Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Brian Massumi (New York: Continuum Books, 1987), 302.

18 bell hooks, *Art on My Mind: Visual Politics*, 145–151.

19 Susan Denyer, *African Traditional Architecture* (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1978), 6–9.
20 Silvia Benedito and Iwan Baan, *Atmosphere Anatomies: On Design Weather and Sensation* (Zurich: Lars Müller, 2021), 13–16.
21 Fiona Macpherson, "Taxonomising the Senses," *Philosophical Studies* 153, no. 1 (2011): 123–142.
22 Fergus Nicol, "The Shapes of Thermal Comfort and Resistance," in *Routledge Handbook of Resilient Thermal Comfort*, eds. Fergus Nicol, Hom Bahadur Rijal, and Susan Roaf (New York: Routledge, 2022), 4.
23 Ebeling Siegfried and Spyros Papapetros, *Space as Membrane* (London: Actar and Architectural Association, 2010).
24 Thousands of references could be provided for this example. Here are a few:

Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio, *Blur: The Making of Nothing* (New York: Abrams, 2002).
Peter Sloterdijk, *Spheres: Plural Spherology, Volume 3. Foams*, 623.
Rachel Hann, "Blurred Architecture: Duration and Performance in the Work of Diller Scofidio + Renfro," *Performance Research* 17, no. 5 (2012): 9–18.

25 Philippe Rahm, "Pour une architecture météorologique," *Espace* 128, Spring-Summer 2021, 76–81.
26 Philippe Rahm, *Climatic Architecture* (New York: Actar Publishers, 2023), 26.
27 John May and Anthony Reid, *Buildings Without Architects: A Global Guide to Everyday Architecture* (New York: Rizzoli, 2010), 76–77.
28 Annette Carruthers, "The Social Rise of the Orkney Chair," *Journal of Design History* 22, no. 1 (2009): 27–45.
29 Molly Dilworth, "Cool Water, Hot Island," Times Square Arts, *The Times Square Alliance*, accessed October 25, 2023, http://arts.timessquarenyc.org/times-square-arts/projects/at-the-crossroads/cool-water-hot-island-/index.aspx
30 "Danube Clearing," OFICINAA, accessed February 29, 2024, www.oficinaa.net/work/clearing

PART I

Politics + Programs

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

2

AN INTRODUCTION TO POLITICS + PROGRAMS

Ladi'Sasha Jones

FIGURE 2.1 Children escape the heat of the East Side by using fire hydrant as a shower bath, Roger Smith (June 1943), © Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, Farm Security Administration/Office of War Information Black-and-White Negatives.

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-3

Central to the function of public interiority is an invested interest in conscripting new spatial subjects through the commons.[1] Challenging epistemological conventions around public space, the texts in this section are reframing our understanding of the outside. They conceptualize the outside as both a place and a set of relational sociopolitical conditions that can be reimagined through design. Asking the reader to consider who we are in the public sphere, alongside who we can become in relation to one another, and to place. In a letter to architect R. Buckminster Fuller, feminist writer June Jordan writes about her belief in the role of architecture to advance the daily qualities of urban life, "I also believe that the architecture of experience deeply determines an incalculable number and variety of habits—i.e., the nature of quotidian experience."[2] She continues by connecting this idea of an *architecture of experience* to well-being,

> I would wish to indicate the determining relationship between architectonic reality and physical well-being. … This requires the redevelopment of an idea or theory of place in terms of human being… of space cherishing as it amplifies the experience of being alive, the capability of endless beginnings…[3]

Jordan's vision of designing a place that centers our aliveness presents a new set of questions around the spatiality of our being. How does urbanity facilitate or constrict the ways in which we come into being? How are our public lives as individuals and a collective civic body formulated through the built environment?

Through the attempts to address these questions, public interiority is not merely formulated as the intersection of material binaries—the interior and exterior, or the inside and outside—but engages the interventions that are possible when those realms are synced together, creating new spatial encounters. Evidenced in stretching the operative boundaries of familiar quotidian sites like the bus stop, the playground, and the parking lot, this collection of essays invites us to explore the design possibilities of our spatial desire. Their proposals shift emphasis away from the assumed authority and determined forms of the public sphere toward the imaginary. Wherein spatial desire pushes against inherited urban planning orders as it reconsiders social relations between residents and sites of erasure, economic collapse, racial inequity, tourism, etc. The two scholarly essays attend to this sociality of change within public interiority, while the visual essays trace how the public orders of urbanity are alive and imbued with a plasticity that designers, and residents alike, can disrupt through intervention. Together, these works call attention to the impulse to develop alternative forms of civic action. Posing the question: What design histories and ideas can emerge from this call to conscript new spatial subjects?

What spatial practices can emerge from the textuality of supergraphics? Grace Ong Yan's essay tackles how early modernist production of 2-D experiments is in circulation today across political actions and social art. Understanding paint as spatial media instead of decorative ornamentation or wayfinding, Ong Yan's research into the history and criticism of supergraphics reveals its ongoing affective power and aesthetics through the scaled patterning of text, geometry, and color. Culling case studies that reflect how this spatial media incites rippling environmental transformations from the hyperlocal scale of an urban block to the political thought of a global public. Similar to Ong Yan's discussion of paint and geometry, Dan Feinberg's visual essay addresses the eco-social impact of deploying similar graphic devices to produce plant-based microclimates from concrete.

Forging new green paradigms within the city, the public project, *Plants in Pavement*, pulls interior design strategies from the living floor into the quiet neglected cement grounds of greyfields.

Capturing the visitor experience surrounding entering a building, crossing thresholds between the outside and a spatial interior, Emanuela Bonini Lessing and Lucilla Calogero propose how museums can develop new relations with their public through institutional design. Bonini Lessing and Calogero expound on the plural design functions and strategies that can help advance how museums embed into their urban contexts. A line can be drawn between the interactive design turn toward the museum visitor and Rana Kamal Abudayyeh's focus on connectivity within micro-urban commons. Abudayyeh puts forth the concept of interiority as commoning as she examines the spatiality of the bus stop as an untapped resource to city residents due to its ability to generate daily civic collaboration and imagining using contemporary design principles. Her essay, like that of Zahra Safaverdi's design project, delves into the shift from formalist aesthetics to the social. Contributions from Felicia Francine Dean and Amy Roehl behold the ways in which spatial knowledge is organized, mythologized, and remixed. Dean's cultural text narrates the tension between local Bahamian aquatic myths and the global tourism engines that is propelled by it. Humanist geographer, Yi-fu Tuan, describes one of the principles of mythical space as, "…the spatial component of a world view, a conception of localized values within which people carry on their practical activities."[4] Expanding on this concept world view, Tuan explores its cosmology around nature, "World view is a people's more or less systematic attempt to make sense of environment. To be livable, nature and society must show order and fitness in their environment…"[5] This concept of environmental livability is engaged through a child's spatial awareness in Roehl's photo documentation of a little girl turning the streets of Berlin into her very own playground. This spatial measure of urban play is reified in Roger Smith's photograph of children turning an active street corridor into an open poolside with the reuse of a fire hydrant (Figure 2.1).

Using public interiority as a framework to rethink urban pasts and futures, the thematic topic of politics and programs helps to expand methods around technical and cultural land reuse. All the texts illustrate complementary modalities concerning the spatial values and tensions that flow between urban planning, architecture, and interior design. Rethinking what makes our homeplaces more than inhabitable, but socially livable. Can we position these interventions as acts of protest, or are they pointing to the future of spatial awareness and design?

Notes

1 This is an expansion of Martin Heidegger's concept of how inner worlds are always in relation to space, thus making us spatial beings. See Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1996).
2 June Jordan, "Letter to R. Buckminster Fuller (1964)," in *Civil Wars* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1981), 26.
3 Jordan, *Civil Wars*, 28.
4 Yi-fu Tuan, *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1977), 86.
5 Tuan, *Space and Place*, 88.

3

FROM INTERIOR SUPERGRAPHICS TO PARTICIPATION IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE

Grace Ong Yan

Energized by activism and protest, the social context of the 1960s is analogous to our current condition in many ways. In this essay, I explore public interiority through the dynamic relationship between the private interior and public space in cities, supported by the design medium of graphics and in the context of social activism. To study this topic, I investigate late 1960s interior Supergraphics experiments and compare them with public murals created at the same historic moment alongside recent projects. This comparison highlights important shifts from interior to exterior and from private to public, with a focus on increasing human engagement in the public sphere. These Supergraphic projects connect interior space to the city and suggest a state of public interiority. Discussion of these connections is considered through the theoretical lenses of philosophers Michel Foucault and Jürgen Habermas, and architect Charles Moore in their respective writings on heterotopias, the public sphere, and communication technology in cities. The similarities of the late 1960s to our current milieu of urban graphics suggest a fruitful connection between past and present. This includes the street writing and murals of the Black Lives Matter movement, an opportunity of visual and text-based expression to advocate for underrepresented communities of color.

By linking interiors and urbanism through the media of graphics, I offer a unique study of image, communication, and theories of modernity and Postmodernism, and I also suggest the transformative potential of human participation in urban space. I offer new perspectives on public interiority within the context of graphics and social activism. In the essay, I address the following questions: How does Supergraphics inform public interiority at the intersection of interior design and urban space? How can we understand the framework of flatness at a transitional moment of Modernism? What insights can the historical Supergraphics moment offer for the future of design and activism in the public realm?

Interior Supergraphics

During the brief but audacious interior Supergraphics experiments of the late 1960s, tensions had been building—from political issues including the Civil Rights Movement and

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-4

the Vietnam War—exploded with force. The moment was chronicled in the 1967 and 1968 issues of the journal *Progressive Architecture* by editor Jan C. Rowan and associate editor of features and interior design C. Ray Smith.[1] They had seen the new designs as early as 1965, calling it a "counterrevolution in interior design" and "the phenomenon as a new breed for the electric age."[2] "The new decoration," wrote Smith, "manifests attitudes of perverse trickery (both optical and intellectual), devices of explosive scale, (transparency, reflectiveness, and simultaneity) and permissive superimposition of chaos onto existing "tasteful" spaces."[3] The editors pointed out a dramatic break with Modernism in which pure, clean, rectilinear, and tasteful interiors gave way to a bold, energized new look[4] (Figure 3.1).

Designers of the Supergraphics experiments, including Doug Michels, Chip Lord, Richard Oliver, and William Grover, were recent graduates and students of Charles Moore.[5] They focused on "ready-made" tactics—that of re-contextualizing the language of large-scale urban signs into human-scaled interior spaces. This generated radical new experiences in society and culture. Out of this context, an important interior aspect of Supergraphics emerged in which the dramatic effect of inserting the language of billboards within residential interior spaces was realized. Supergraphics' techniques included discordant scale, fragmentation, abstraction, and spatial effects.

Champion of the Supergraphics moment, C. Ray Smith, wrote about "the most electrifying manifestations" that were "graphics made from highway billboards" and resulted in "… super murals."[6] "By bringing the freeway indoors," wrote Smith, "with three-dimensional elements from our popular human experience, Supergraphics made the inhabitants feel large."[7] He described the specific Supergraphics technique as two-fold: 1) architectural surfaces painted or applied with such gigantic form as two-dimensional typefaces and signs or flat outlines of geometric solids that produce abstract effects; and 2) fragmented graphics implying a form that the viewer completes by gestalt. The aim in using such graphic devices, he explained, is to produce optical effects that destroy architectural planes, distort corners, and explode the rectangular boxes that we construct as rooms—all toward the goal of instigating social change.[8] Supergraphics experiments offered a new attitude of involvement and participation in space.[9] The most important contribution of Supergraphics, pointed out by Smith, was the sophisticated awareness of the physical and psychological needs of the inhabitants. The designers sought to expand the Modern design vocabulary to include speed and motion in addition to monumental stillness. Smith referenced the specific geometry of the diagonal line "that permissively cuts across to explode their traditions and to explode the architecture of squares."[10]

Paint was the medium of choice for Supergraphic designers. Because of its experimental nature, it was an ideal medium that was quick, affordable, and easy to use. Painting on surfaces resulted in the concept of flatness, a theory put forth by art historian Clement Greenberg that referred to the unique quality of Modern painting in which the two-dimensional flat surface of the canvas was re-established over traditional illusionistic depth.[11] Cubist art was held up by Greenberg as the defining moment of flatness because of the expressed spatial ambiguity. This can be seen in an analogous relationship to the flatness of Supergraphics in interiors and urban spaces, that also affected its inhabitants in impactful ways.

The flatness of Supergraphics was, however, controversial as interior and architectural design because, at the time, paint was "shunned" as "unnatural cosmetic decoration."[12]

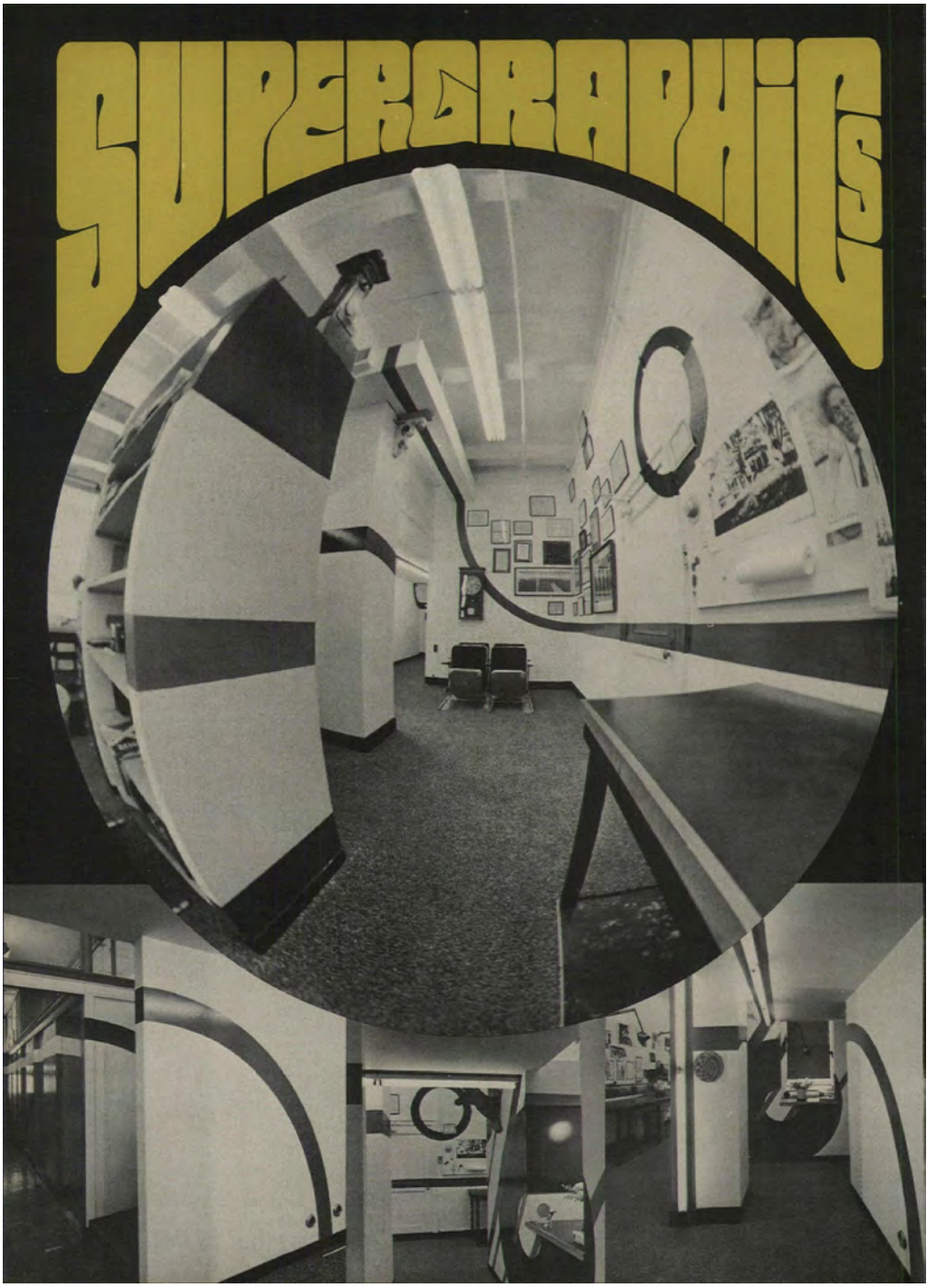


FIGURE 3.1 C. Ray Smith illustrated his "Supergraphics" article with this collage of Hugh Hardy's dynamic surface experiments in his office interiors. In *Progressive Architecture* (November 1967). Photo by Louis Reens

For decades preceding the Supergraphics experiments, Modern design dictated the elimination of decoration and ornament. But for Supergraphics designers, paint was "hailed primarily as an expander of space and scale."[13] Smith explained the issues as follows, "decoration deals more with sensory responses and less with physical needs because it is the 'superfluous' part of a building."[14] Yet it was precisely the sensory responses that made Supergraphics powerful. Interestingly, Smith's first sentence of his feature of Supergraphics was clarifying: "Not a decorative device—repeat—*not* a decorative device, the Supermannerist's use of bold stripes, geometric forms, and three-dimensional images at a super scale is, emphatically, a spatial experimentation."[15]

Irrational Space

In late Modernism, designers became interested in the concept of interior space and its effects on the human subject. Bruno Zevi's 1957 writing, *Architecture as Space*, was current at the time Moore and his collaborators began to challenge modern design and also discussed by C. Ray Smith in Supergraphics writings.[16] We can see similarities between interior Supergraphics and what Zevi called "organic space."[17] For Zevi, organic space addressed the human quality of the "irrational," which uncovered "individual and social problems of the unconscious."[18] His concept of "organic space" was "rich with movement, directional invitations, and illusions of perspective." The dynamism of interior Supergraphics experiments seemed to realize just what Zevi described, a "resulting drama of volumetrics has an audacity and richness." Infusing human spirit into space gave "a sense of interchange" and "a human relationship between architecture and man," Zevi's theory of organic space gives context to the interior Supergraphics experiments. They can be seen as infusing human life into space at a time of great social change, including the radical reconsideration of Modern design.

Charles Moore, leader of the Supergraphic experiments, considered the designs as "a choreography of the familiar and the unfamiliar."[19] He explained how designed spaces should offer a balance of both familiarity and surprise to inhabitants. While people need familiarity to get involved in a place, it can also elicit boredom. At the same time, inhabitants need the excitement of surprise to keep them engaged. His conceptualization emphasized the dynamic interaction and participation that was sparked and sustained between Supergraphics and the inhabitants. The spatial and psychological effects of Supergraphics on the occupant can be considered heterotopias, as defined by philosopher Michel Foucault in the 1960s as a single space that juxtaposes several spaces. He called them "discursive spaces that are somehow 'other': disturbing, intense, contradictory, or transforming. Heterotopias are worlds within worlds, mirroring, yet upsetting, what is outside. They affirm difference but also are a means of escape from authoritarianism."[20]

In considering Supergraphic experiments as heterotopias, we can understand them as the revolutionary impulse that leads to social change. The activism of students experimenting with Supergraphics was described by Olindo Grossi, Dean of Pratt Institute, as "energized by the chaos and urgency of the urban scene, mass needs, and low incomes… They believed the typical urban environment to be inhumane, and they want to do something about it."[21] Smith described the students' desire to design housing for urban enclaves as well as getting actively involved in civil rights.

Instead of regarding Supergraphics as a Postmodern experiment, I suggest viewing it as a rupture of/within modernity. By emphatically declaring that Supergraphics was not a decorative device but instead a spatial one, C. Ray Smith placed it firmly within modernity.[22] Chaotic, disruptive, and even destructive in nature, Supergraphics aimed to rupture the postwar modernity that no longer served issues of the time. That rupture is theorized by anthropologist Arjun Appadurai, as a necessary space of contestation in which individuals and groups seek to annex the global into their own practices of the modern. Design in this space of rupture encompasses everyday cultural practices achieved as a work of human imagination. For Appadurai, imagination involves images of global media that are moved into local repertoires of irony, anger, humor, and resistance–strategies that Supergraphics experiments certainly embraced.[23]

Beyond Wayfinding

In the spring of 1968, Charles Moore invited graphic designer Barbara Stauffacher Solomon to teach a second-year architecture studio. Students were given the assignment of creating visual impact through redesigning, modifying, and enlivening two elevator interiors in the Paul Rudolph-designed Art and Architecture Building using only paint as a medium. The one-week design problem demonstrated a "very nearly complete exposition of the new decorative design, almost literally in capsule form."[24] Stauffacher Solomon challenged students to modify and enliven the drab interiors of the two elevators. The jury, composed of graphics architecture faculty, chose fourteen schemes to install that met the criteria of impact, development of a theme, and effectiveness in modifying the boxlike enclosure. The designs, according to C. Ray Smith, "involved the perception of a space and ways of altering the controlling a spatial experience" (Figure 3.2).

Stauffacher Solomon approached Supergraphics from the functional point of view of wayfinding, which was new in the 1960s. Kevin Lynch first used the term "wayfinding" in his treatise, *The Image of the City*, in which he referenced maps, street numbers, directional signs as wayfinding devices. "Supergraphics are different from the old, two-dimensional graphics," said Stauffacher Solomon, "and they're more helpful to architects. I don't do them to create cute chaos. They are a reinforcement of architecture: You reinforce traffic patterns; it's an aid to circulation."[25] By defining Supergraphics design as wayfinding, Stauffacher Solomon firmly casts her designs as functionalist, not decorative. She denied the Postmodern nature of Supergraphics, which aligned with her Swiss Modernist graphic design education.

C. Ray Smith argues that Supergraphics were one of the first manifestations of Postmodernism, with its designers seeking a more human-focused interior while moving away from universality. He casts Supergraphics experiments as an anti-Modernist strategy, yet Yale professor Felix Drury, who also taught at the time, offered a different point of view,

> Some people thought Pop and Supergraphics were a means of identifying and voicing some triumph over science and Madison Ave. No soap. There was a stronger movement and interest on the part of younger architects, a concern and an involvement in social and political issues, which has nothing to do with formal or nonformal design or aesthetics. At least half the educators commenting believe that this concern with

FIGURE 3.2 Interior Supergraphics of elevators in Yale School of Architecture, designed and installed by architecture students taught by Barbara Stauffacher Solomon, (1968). Photos by James Righter.

> "environmental issues," social issues, behavioral patterns, greater social consciousness, and the human condition is the strongest movement in architecture today.[26]

I would argue that, to some extent, both perspectives are true. The postwar 1960s was a moment of change in which Modernism evolved, and at the same time, Supergraphic designers sought to address urgent social issues through their spatial experiments. The complexities of this moment could also be seen in the urbanism of the time.

Experiential Urbanism

As the interior Supergraphic experiments began as billboards brought indoors, I propose that the urban, outdoor environment offers more public exposure for graphic media and potential for social change. This would effectively, as Poot, De Vos, and Van Acker have argued, "break out of the confines of domestic and private interior space and inner life to an urban setting."[27] In this way, we can connect individual experiences of interior space with the complexities of urban society and posit a theory of public interiority. This aligns with the theories of urban planner, Kevin Lynch who, in 1966, challenged urban design's fixation on a limited set of formal typologies, instead arguing for an urban discipline more attuned to the city's complex ecologies. This meant allowing the city to achieve its primary social objective as the setting for variegated human activities.

By the 1960s, the urban design discipline had evolved from designing grand Modernist schemes to taking on a more humanist and interdisciplinary nature. In the late 1960s Charles Moore led Yale University's architecture department to expand beyond the strict discipline of architecture, offering new courses in urban research, experiments with film, video, and communications technology, and building projects in impoverished parts of rural Appalachia.[28] It was in this context that Moore and students Doug Michels and David Sellers, among others, designed Supergraphics as experimentations. This moment at Yale, as architectural historian Eve Blau has pointed out, signaled a larger shift in art and design when the critique of Modernism developed from questioning established codes of practice to focusing on signs and other two-dimensional media as generators of radical new forms of society, culture, and subjectivity.[29] Yale faculty members, Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown explored these new directions with their radical proclamation of two-dimensional signs over three-dimensional space.[30] Their view championed a direct means of communication between design and its audience, whether the environment was urban or interior.

The theory of place was the focus of Moore's teaching, writing, and practice. He believed that the designer's single most important task was to make place in an increasingly "aspatial electronic world."[31] Here, Moore referenced flat technological screens, or early computers, of the late 1960s. The developing technologies powered the Cold War military-industrial complex, which Moore positioned himself against as part of the counterculture. In making place, which implied humanistic three-dimensional interior space, Moore's interior Supergraphic experiments offered dynamic spaces framed by exactly the phenomena he was trying to counteract, flat images. The paradoxical strategy was based in a proposition that flat media could define space which challenged Modernist strategies of volumetric space. Strong concerns that image would take over or replace space were unwarranted, considering the historicist Postmodern design that would be realized in the

subsequent years. Moore explained that the Supergraphic experiments were "not just image, but place," thereby connecting flatness and urban space.[32]

Voids + Empty Space

As Moore explored interior space through image and place in his Supergraphic experiments, I argue that in his urban design theories, he conceived of spaces at the scale of interiors. He rejected the monumentality of grand vistas for more everyday place-driven spaces, calling his urbanism a "collector's approach" instead of one that was "single-minded." In his writings on urbanism, Moore often used spatial descriptions evocative of those describing interiors. For example, he uses the term "voids," which infers interiors. Those voids, he writes, are a result of a "high-spirited explosion of classical or other borrowed forums, which break apart to leave voids."[33] The resultant voids are dynamic interior spaces within cities, which the Supergraphics experiments exemplified.

Another example of Moore's interior approach to urbanism is his discussion of "architectural nuance."[34] In *The Place of Houses*, he writes about Santa Barbara's paseos (or sidewalks), arcades, and patios that "form a public realm filled with architectural nuance." One gets a strong sense of the paseo's spaces in Moore's descriptive prose: "soft lights play at night," and "by day the sun filters down among the leaves."[35] With his writing, he shows a perspectival view of the paseo's stone-paved street and white walls tempered with strong contrasts of light from the sun and shade cast by fabric awnings and trees overhead. It reads as outdoor interior space and establishes the paseo as a "place." Urban voids, for Moore, comprise a "network of familiar emblems of domesticity," thus juxtaposing urbanism and interior space.[36]

Moore's 1964 essay, "You have to Pay for the Public Life," shifted the focus of urbanism to political space as the traditional city was disappearing. The city of Los Angeles, the topic of his essay, was the future toward which American urbanism was moving in the 1960s. Moore referenced Jose Ortega y Gasset on the definition of urbanity. "The urbs or polis," writes Ortega y Gasset "starts by being an empty space, the *forum*, the *agora*, and all the rest is just a means of fixing that empty space, of limiting its outlines."[37] The empty space is the fundamental unit of urbanity. This urban unit is based on the Mediterranean open square, "a politically as well as physically comprehensible unit that people used to be willing to die for."[38] Moore quoted Ortega y Gasset to make the point that historically, citizens had a passionate stake in open public space. Analogously, Moore argued, in an emphasis on community life, that individuals must give up private space for the public realm to be enhanced.[39] With this in mind, he lamented that in Los Angeles, "hardly anybody gave anything to the public realm."[40] In seeking the public sphere in California, he finds it not in empty spaces or open squares, but at Disneyland and in the freeways. The essay by Moore was one of the first scholarly attempts to reckon with the social and architectural dimensions of theme parks.[41] Ironically, he found the public realm not in real cities, but at artificially constructed theme parks.

Social theorist Jürgen Habermas also explored what he termed "the public sphere."[42] As contemporaries who theorized about postwar cities, Moore and Habermas shared the opinion of the loss of public space, yet on other aspects of the topic, their formulations diverged. While Moore embraced artifice and public space in the form of theme parks, Habermas contended that the public sphere had become nothing more than staged

displays aimed at persuading the masses. He lamented the depoliticization of the public sphere and its degeneration into a body of manipulation by the mass media.[43] Habermas firmly believed in a democratic public sphere in which "society engaged in critical public debate."[44]

We can consider Habermas' socially engaged public sphere in looking at urban mural projects of the 1960s–80s that were intended to empower communities and transform public spaces. Utilizing graphic art as a medium to instigate social change can be understood as encouraging, in the spirit of Habermas' public sphere, a critical public debate. New York's City Walls project in the 1960s and later Philadelphia's Mural Arts project in the 1980s created new forms of public art on blank building facades. For example, Jason Crum's 1969 mural, *Project for a Painted Wall*, on the side of a four-story wall on the Lower East Side of Manhattan featured bold diagonal abstractions in blue, red, and white. In his 1978 essay, "Supergraphics, Animated Walls," architect, Klaus Herdeg pointed out that urban Supergraphics could "not only bring a drab wall to life, but by the gigantic scale and uncommon colorfulness, provide a psychological and perceptual unity to an otherwise disturbed urban fabric. Hence, the huge mural, by quasi architectural means, renders an eminently social service."[45] This implies that urban Supergraphic murals brought social engagement by creating visually energizing loci that could instigate debate, a key aspect of public interiority on its viewers and in the community.

In recent history, formulations to improve cities have centered on placemaking and in turn, public interiority, in open spaces where local communities are involved and emotionally connected. Since the summer of 2020, a wave of civil protests in the US invoked activism, featuring the "Black Lives Matter" movement. Activists, artists, volunteers, and in the case of Washington D.C., city workers, organized to paint the supersized letters of "Black Lives Matter" directly on surfaces of city streets across the country.[46] The events were a form of visual protest against racial inequality and police brutality highlighted by the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and several other African Americans by police officers. No longer needing architecture to explode nor interior surfaces to paint on, protesters painted directly on the streets for a collective public experience that could be defined as engaging Habermas' public sphere and sparking critical debate. The outsized letters were painted at 40-foot lengths, offering a super-scaled expression that was analogous to the large billboards in interior spaces of the 1960s Supergraphics experiments (Figure 3.3).

The Philly Painting Mural Arts project is another contemporary project that utilized strategies similar to the 1960s Supergraphics experiments on an urban scale. In 2012, the Mural Arts program commissioned Dutch artists Jeroen Koolhaas and Dre Urhahn, known as Haas and Hahn, to create *Philly Painting*. Haas & Hahn reshaped and scaled painted abstractions of community-specific color to transcend the architecture of the individual buildings. The result of this community process featured, like the 1960s Supergraphics experiments, bold, fragmented, and abstracted graphics but at the urban scale of an entire neighborhood. *Philly Painting* created sensory effects on the inhabitants, thus creating a connection with interiority (Figure 3.4).

By motivating the community to engage in the uplift of their commercial corridor, *Philly Painting* embodied Habermas' socially engaged public sphere, and a more recent theory by geographer, Brandi T. Summers who argues that public space is layered, contested, and a space of conflict and collective engagement.[47] *Philly Painting* also illustrated an emphasis on community life in which individuals would give up private space for the

FIGURE 3.3 Black Lives Matter mural being painted in Oak Park, Illinois, (June 25, 2020). Photo by Brian Crawford

FIGURE 3.4 Mural Arts' *Philly Painting* project by Haas & Hahn. Their goal was to rejuvenate a North Philadelphia community through a process of open communication and collaboration with property owners and community youth to execute the painting. Photo by Muhammed Ali Khalid (2012)

public realm to be enhanced. "In reality," commented Urhahn, pointing to cracks in one store's facade, "these buildings need a lot of attention. But this project is the first step to more businesses coming in, and more money moving around."[48]

In conclusion, this essay offers insights into politically generated public interiority by studying historical Supergraphic interior experiments and their legacies in cities with respect to relevant theories that expand the politics of public space and connect interiority to urbanism. The shifts from interior to exterior, from private to public, greatly expands the potential for activism through exposure, scale, and context.[49] Interior Supergraphics offered a potent, contained excitement, whereas urban graphic murals seized and transformed that excitement to create critical public engagement and social change in real communities. It is the paradoxical spatial experimentation of flat Supergraphics, as both decoration and wayfinding and as both image and place, that reveals a rupture. Supergraphics and their social context of turmoil and protest mirror the urban protests of today. Today, our disciplines are undergoing a major reckoning of racial inequity professionally and in academia. With the Supergraphic experiments nestled in the liminal space as a rupture of modernity, I would argue that we, too, are in a suspended transitional moment in which modernity is, again, intensely questioned. My hope is that the outcome is toward critical public engagement and social change for a more just world.

Notes

1 *Progressive Architecture* was the first architecture journal to report on interior design, devoting an entire issue to the discipline in October of 1962.
2 C. Ray Smith, "The Revolution in Interior Design: The Bold New Poly-Expanded Mega Decoration," *Progressive Architecture* 10 (October 1968): 149.
3 Smith, "The Revolution in Interior Design: The Bold New Poly-Expanded Mega Decoration,"149.
4 Smith, "The Revolution in Interior Design: The Bold New Poly-Expanded Mega Decoration,"149.
5 Most were current or recent graduates of Yale University's School of Architecture. Some had been students of Moore's at UC Berkeley and had become academics themselves at The University of Texas at Austin, University of Houston, and Tulane University. Smith, "The Revolution in Interior Design: The Bold New Poly-Expanded Mega Decoration."
6 C. Ray Smith, "Supergraphics," *Progressive Architecture* 11 (October 1967): 133.
7 Smith, "Supergraphics," 133.
8 Smith, "Supergraphics," 133.
9 Smith, "Supergraphics," 133.
10 Smith, "Supergraphics," 133.
11 Clement Greenberg, "Modernist Painting," in *Voice of America Forum Lecture: Visual Arts* (Washington, DC: Voice of America, 1959), 14.
12 C. Ray Smith, "Table of Contents," *Progressive Architecture*, 10 (October 1968): 2.
13 C. Ray Smith, "Table of Contents," 2.
14 C. Ray Smith, "Supergraphics" *Progressive Architecture* (November 1967): 133.
15 Smith, "Supergraphics," 133.
16 Michelangelo Sabatino, "The Poetics of the Ordinary: The American Places of Charles W. Moore," *Places Journal* 19, no. 2 (2007): 62.
17 Bruno, Zevi, and Joseph A. Barry *Architecture as Space: How to Look at Architecture* (New York: Horizon Press, 1957), 158.
18 Zevi, *Architecture as Space: How to Look at Architecture*, 162.
19 Charles Moore and Barbaralee Diamonstein-Spielvogel, "American Architecture Now, 1980," *David M. Rubenstein Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Duke University*, 1980, Youtube video, 56:50, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zd5YjS2aI5A
20 Michel Foucault and Jay Miskowiec. "Of Other Spaces." *Diacritics* 16, no. 1 (1986): 26.
21 C. Ray Smith, "The Revolution in Interior Design: The Bold New Poly-Expanded Mega Decoration," *Progressive Architecture*, 10 (October 1968): 150.

22 To be clear, Smith also refers to Supergraphics as Postmodern phenomenon in other parts of his writing.
23 Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996): 7.
24 Gilbert E.B. Hoffman was Stauffacher Solomon's studio assistant, as discussed in C. Ray Smith, "The New Interiors," *Progressive Architecture* (October 1968): 155.
25 C. Ray Smith, "The New Interiors," *Progressive Architecture* (October 1968): 155.
26 Smith, "The New Interiors," 155.
27 Tine Poot, Els De Vos, and Maarten Van Acker. "Thinking Beyond Dualities in Public Space: The Unfolding of Urban Interiority as a Set of Interdisciplinary Lenses." *Interiors: Design/Architecture/Culture* 9, no. 3 (2018): 324–345.
28 Smith references these projects in *Supermannerism: New Attitudes in Postmodern Architecture*, and it is also discussed in Eve Blau's Log article.
29 Eve Blau, "This Work is Going somewhere: Pedagogy and Politics at Yale in the Late 1960s," *Log* No. 38 (Fall 2016): 132.
30 Venturi's March 1968 essay in *Architectural Forum* with Denise Scott Brown entitled, "A Significance for A&P Parking Lots, or Learning from Las Vegas." This was followed in the fall semester with a traveling Yale studio course and research project entitled "Learning from Las Vegas, or Form Analysis as Design Research."
31 Charles Moore, "Plug it in Ramses, and see if it lights up, because we aren't going to keep it unless it works," *Perspecta* 11 (November 1967): 34.
32 Charles Moore and Kevin P. Keim, *You have to Pay for the Public Life: Selected Essays of Charles W. Moore*. (Cambridge: Mass: MIT Press, 2001) 111. Originally published as Charles Moore, *Perspecta* 9–10 (September–October 1965): 57–97.
33 Moore, *You Have to Pay for the Public Life*, 112.
34 Moore, *You have to Pay for the Public Life*, 124.
35 Moore, *You have to Pay for the Public Life*, 124.
36 Charles Willard Moore, Gerald Allen, and Donlyn Lyndon, *The Place of Houses* (1st Owl Book ed. New York: H. Holt, 1979) 32.
37 Ortega y Gasset's *The Revolt of the Masses*. Charles Moore, "You Have to Pay for the Public Life." *Perspecta* 9–10 (1965): 57–97.
38 Moore, *You Have to Pay for the Public Life*.
39 Moore credits Charles Eames for the statement, in Moore, *You Have to Pay for the Public Life*.
40 Moore, *You Have to Pay for the Public Life*.
41 Herbert Muschamp, "Obituary for Charles Moore," New York Times (New York, NY), Dec. 17, 1993.
42 Jürgen Habermas and Thomas Burger, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1989) 3.
43 Craig Calhoun. *Habermas and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1992) 39.
44 Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society, 24*.
45 Klaus Herdeg, "Supergraphics, Animated Walls," in *Archigraphia: Architectural and Environmental Graphics*, ed. Walter Herdeg (Zurich: The Graphic Press, 1978), 162. As cited in John McMorrough, "Blowing the Lid off Paint," *Hunch* 11 (November 2007): 71.
46 Rebecca Zorach describes the community processes that surround murals, pointing out that artistic creation cannot be separated from the meetings, etc. that happen along the way. Rebecca Zorach, "African American Artists and the Community Mural Movement," in *The Routledge Companion to African American Art History*, ed. Eddie Chambers (New York, Routledge, 2019), 228.
47 Brandi T. Summers, "Black Insurgent Aesthetics and the Public Imaginary," *Urban Geography* 43, no. 6 (2022): 846.
48 Sue Spolan, "Philly Painting: Money Follows Art as Haas & Hahn Transform Germantown Ave," *Flying Kite Media*, May 17, 2012, https://www.flyingkitemedia.com/devnews/phillypainting0517.aspx
49 Art Historian, Rebecca Zorach notes that before 1967, all African American murals were located indoors in public buildings, and after that they were brought outside onto city walls. In Rebecca Zorach, "African American Artists and the Community Mural Movement," in *The Routledge Companion to African American Art History*, ed. Eddie Chambers (New York, Routledge, 2019): 221–230.

4

IN PLAIN SIGHT

Civic Assemblages and Co-producing the Micro-Urban Commons

Rana Abudayyeh

Introduction

Public interiority is an active agent of place and, by extension, placemaking, which foregrounds belonging and cultural identities. It is situated at the intersection between urbanism, interior architecture, and human perception.[1] Hence, it contributes to constructing sentimental and tangible associations with collectives and settings by providing the substrate on which communities are built, literally and figuratively. By the same token, public interiors can be deliberately indifferent or highly exclusionary of specific populations and individuals. Historically and within the present day, urban environments have operated through interior cues as tools for segregation and assimilation at both the individual and the collective scales.[2] These processes often manifest in the racialization of built environments, perpetuating spatial disparities and disfranchisement that can be traced through various societal constructs such as the micro-urban commons. The micro-urban commons are small-scale, community-managed, or shared spaces within urban environments that serve various purposes and support the community's social, cultural, and environmental well-being. While they relate to individual habits and frameworks, they are characterized by their emphasis on collective ownership, inclusivity, and sustainability.[3]

The micro-urban commons can be understood as "places of interconnectivity."[4] They are public interior settings that are infrastructural in nature (Figure 4.1), linking various segments of the city physically through mobile and transitionary micro spaces such as buses, subways, public elevators, and walkways, and abstractly, as collective resources for the common good. Concurrently, the commons are dense cultural zones where the city's diverse occupants converge, forming the fabric of everyday relations that foreground generational narratives built and rebuilt, negotiated and renegotiated over time and through shared settings.[5] By accommodating the relationships between communities and their shared resources, the micro-urban commons seed belonging[6] and promote constructive civic interactions and assemblages that create vibrant, inclusive communities. While they are collective amenities and activities catering to shared needs and narratives of various societal groups, they identify with the interior personal scale. As such, they

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-5

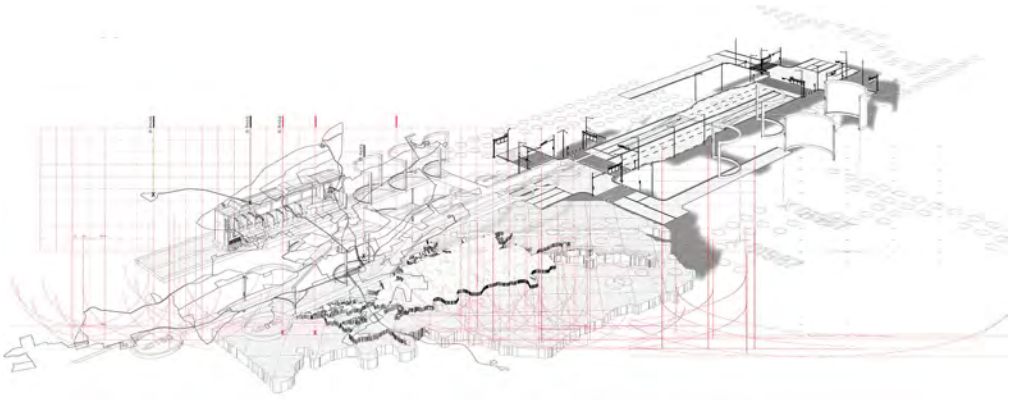


FIGURE 4.1 A conceptual diagram highlighting Knoxville's micro-commons as connective networks and spatial nodes of engagement. Image by author. (2023).

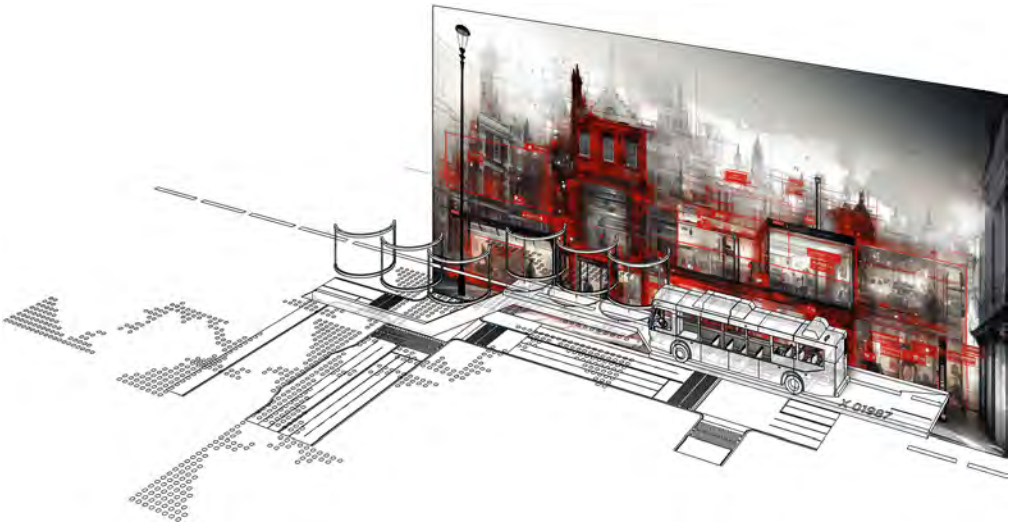


FIGURE 4.2 A conceptual image showing the bus as a mobile interior space traversing a diverse array of urban and suburban settings; buses are multivalent commons operating as mobile rooms and billboards concurrently. The bus's interior and exterior promote robust exchanges between commuters. Image by author. (2023).

operate as public interiors[7] that draw their valence from both the individual and civic bodies and the nuances that develop from merging these scales (Figure 4.2). This chapter elucidates the micro-urban commons and their function as public interior spaces and, in turn, their civic registers that chronicle everyday narratives and archive urban accounts. Moreover, by understanding micro-urbanity, the chapter rethinks design practices that have overlooked or undervalued the potential of interstitial entities in urban spaces.

Shifting focus toward the intentional design and utilization of these spaces enhances the social fabric of communities, promotes daily interactions, and creates more inclusive and vibrant cities.

The Liminality and Interstitial Nature of The Micro-Urban Commons

As liminal spaces within the urban fabric,[8] the micro-urban commons formulate civic and social networks (Figure 4.3) that consist of "shared settings such as verges, alleys, sidewalks, and bus stops, and objects such as buses (Figure 4.2), benches, canopies, and signage catering to the users' mobility, respite, and overall presence in the city."[9] Originally introduced by anthropologist Arnold van Gennep, the concept of "liminality" refers to a state of transition or ambiguity, often characterized by a sense of being "in-between" or on the threshold of something new.[10] Later, British cultural anthropologist Victor Turner, through his seminal work on symbolic and interpretive anthropology, popularized the term and applied it to various aspects of social and cultural life, including urban contexts.[11] The liminality of the micro-urban commons stems from their transactional and transitional functions that operate between contemporary developments and events and layers of deposited histories. This literal and figural liminality often creates a sense of historical continuity and ruptures in the urban fabric, simultaneously positioning the micro-urban commons at the center of spatial politics and civic negotiations. Hence, while they are nominal spaces, they remain essential to the city's functions and character, playing a vital role in empowering placemaking, enhancing urban resilience, and promoting sustainable and inclusive development and resource management in cities.[12]

The micro-urban commons are typically small in scale compared to large, iconic landmarks or major infrastructure projects within a city. Despite their small scale and often

FIGURE 4.3 A conceptual collage showing the multivalent and unassuming nature of the micro-urban commons. Image by research assistants Lydia Russell and Briley Houston (2022).

unassuming appearance, they profoundly impact urban life.[13] This paradoxical nature of being seemingly trivial yet integral to the city lies in their ability to serve as hubs for community engagement and interaction, providing gathering spaces and fostering a sense of social cohesion. They contribute to the quality of life of residents by offering opportunities for recreation, relaxation, cultural activities, and social engagement.[14] The micro-urban commons have the ability to punch above their weight in terms of impact. While they may seem small and insignificant in isolation, their cumulative presence and role in the daily lives of urban residents make them integral components of the city's social, cultural, environmental, and economic fabric. Recognizing their importance and investing in their development can lead to more vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable urban environments. Several efforts have been geared toward community-driven activation of nominal public spaces. In 2010, the Better Block Project launched an initiative to regenerate blighted blocks and vacant properties in Dallas. In a community-led effort, it converted them into lively hubs for community interactions.[15] These walkable districts temporarily housed pop-up businesses, bike lanes, café seating, and landscaping, transforming deserted urban lots into communal places.[16] The success of this effort expanded to become a movement implemented in many cities across the globe and, over the years, developed into an open web resource where anyone can access toolkits for placemaking.[17]

The micro-urban commons inherently formulates robust civic and social networks across the city, directly involving and impacting the localities they serve. Within neighborhoods, they create spaces where everyone can participate and feel welcome. These spaces directly and immediately impact the communities where they are located, contributing to access and accessibility of local segments of the city.[18] Just as the availability and conditions of micro-urban spaces enhance accessibility, they can also be used as a means to deter access. An illustration of these realities is expressed through a case study our research team conducted surveying the micro-urban commons in Knoxville, Tennessee. Lessons learned from this case can be applied to other mid-size American cities, especially as today, an awareness of environmental disparities is heightened, and many cities are coming to terms with their spatial inequities that contribute to racialized settings.

Untold Narratives: The Micro-Urban Commons, Access, and Othering

The urban fabric of the American city "consists of visible and invisible parameters that tether delicate narratives of present amiability to abrasive pasts."[19] In Knoxville, Tennessee (as with many other cities), these tensions and complexities were exacerbated by urban renewal projects that continually displaced and dispersed structurally marginalized communities.[20] Tracing the micro-urban commons within Knoxville's fabric reflects an asymmetry in urban settings and their furbished access, a stratification along the lines of race and class. To better understand and assess these conditions and correlations, we comparatively examined four select areas/neighborhoods in Knoxville, highlighting the quantity and qualities of their micro-urban commons; these include spaces, networks, and cultural and civic events shown in Figure 4.4. The four areas are:

1. Sequoyah Hills: one of Knoxville's first suburbs and is among its most affluent neighborhoods. While it borders the University of Tennessee, Knoxville (UTK) campus and is minutes from downtown, it stands in stark contrast to its more urban surroundings with picturesque rolling hills and expansive manicured lawns buffering mansions from

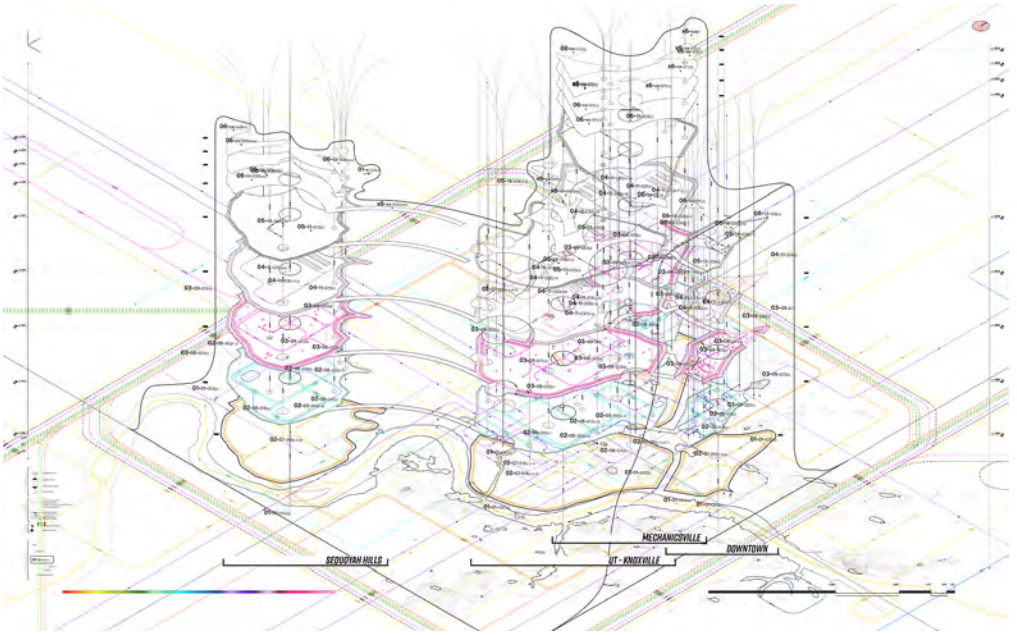


FIGURE 4.4 A detailed analysis of the various layers of the four study sites in Knoxville, tracing various parameters and events in the four locations and the common networks that engage the sites and weave through them. Sequoyah Hills to the left is disconnected from the other sites. The UT campus (middle), while physically adjacent to the downtown area (right) and Mechanicsville (top right), remains disengaged. Image by research assistant Brendan Wallace. (2022).

public view. While the area has several public parks and open spaces, a public library, and a public elementary school, they remain detached from the communal infrastructure of the city. A single bus route offers access to the peninsula and its small commercial center.

2. Downtown: the center of the city, downtown Knoxville is characterized by an abundance of urban spaces and furniture that convey an "old-world" charm. Yet, the systems deployed in this setting are dismissive of the complex history of the place and can be highly exclusive at times. The downtown district has substantially more public commons than any other part of the city. While those spaces have positively impacted the overall function and appeal of the area, they primarily cater to consumers and tourists, excluding a large segment of users.
3. UTK campus: the flagship campus of the University of Tennessee. It is an open campus setting with a distinctive Collegiate Gothic style and multiple open spaces that differentiate the area from other urban contexts in the city. The campus engages the public in various events throughout the year and many accessible venues. Nonetheless, access and accessibility are directed by forces from within and without the campus grounds that can be traced to stark disparities that exist in the larger Knoxville community.
4. Mechanicsville: a neighborhood located northwest of Knoxville's downtown area, established in the late 1860s. It is one of the city's oldest neighborhoods, originally set

to house laborers working in the many factories along Knoxville's periphery. The neighborhood is one of the most racially diverse in the city. Over the past decades, it has undergone waves of prosperity and decay reflected in its built environment.

The analysis demarked natural, civic, economic, and political parameters and attributes of the four locations, tracing common micro networks that engage the sites; it revealed palpable disparities. The survey, as illustrated in the mappings and diagrams in Figure 4.4, highlights the intentionally disconnected nature of Sequoyah Hills and, to a lesser degree, the UTK campus. The disengagement of those two areas from the larger context of the city contrasts the urban porosity of Downtown and Mechanicsville. These findings are not unique to Knoxville and can be found in many other cities. Such a case study expounds on the micro-urban commons' entanglement with spatial politics and civic policies. It suggests that the use, governance, and management of these communal resources are not separate from the political and social contexts in which they exist. Moreover, it proves that vibrant micro-urban commons bridge established boundaries and mend urban rifts. Similarly, dismantling micro-urban common resources deepens disparities and contributes to segregating our cities.

Interiority as Spatial Commoning

In Knoxville, mobilizing micro-urban spaces is critical, especially as redistricting and zoning practices continue to operate in an exclusionary manner, disproportionately affecting marginalized communities and splitting minority neighborhoods between several districts politically.[21] Concurrently, establishing urban infrastructural projects (such as Interstate 40 and James White Parkway) through underserved and marginalized neighborhoods[22] has physically segmented communities and uprooted individuals and households in favor of urban development projects. This segmentation and resulting displacement carried generational effects that can be seen to this day. Seventy percent of the communities in Knoxville that got uprooted to facilitate urban development were Black.[23] The dismantlement of Knoxville's Black communities between 1959 and 1974 had long-lasting effects that are still felt today, where "at least one in five Black families in Knoxville live in poverty."[24]

Just as such projects deeply impacted residents and dispersed communities, retrofitting them today is a good place to initiate productive exchanges and rebuild social connectivity. Within the segregating networks of districts and mobility infrastructure, activating itinerant micro-urban commons that traverse the city and bypass the dividing physical and abstract hurdles presents a space that literally and figuratively can stitch the city back together. Historically, mobility has been deeply intertwined with freedom of movement and access, making it central to civic agency. Hence, the act of commoning public transport systems in Knoxville facilitates connections to neighboring communities and commercial centers on one level and creates an itinerant shared resource that transcends the locational dogma of static public spaces. What is needed here is not merely increasing bus routes and operating hours or better designing bus stops, but rather reinventing those micro spaces with community-building in mind, a task where interiority, not urbanity, is the modus operandi.

Interiority, as commoning, opens up space to a multiplicity of readings and engagements, defying singular classifications and static location. Oscillating between individual

applications and collective stewardship in response to occupancy flows, it empowers a networked social sphere where participation is inclusionary by virtue of shared experiences, and participants are active partakers of the place as opposed to its passive readers or consumers. What does this approach entail for Knoxville's transportation network and the four districts highlighted above? The dynamic and multifaceted nature of buses and bus stops within the urban environment can promote interactions, connectivity, and adaptability to the changing rhythms of urban life. These utilitarian spaces can be transformed through interior thinking into multivalent commons operating as mobile rooms and billboards concurrently, traversing the city, and amalgamating communities. The bus and bus stops can promote robust exchanges between commuters and residents of the four districts. Think of buses as mobile working spaces, social hubs, or living archives that collect narratives from their itinerant locations and reflect them as digital billboards on the bus exterior. Can bus stops become small micro-urban parks or community gardens? Can they be furnished with comfortable seating, a little free library (a free book-sharing box), vending machines, a small community pantry, and equipped with technology to share information about the city and its events, becoming a makeshift café? Through such rescaling and retooling of public settings, interiority can enable people to occupy, appropriate, and continually transform space, thus co-producing a different city, an interior city.

Spatial Politics and the Micro-Urban Commons

The micro-urban commons' entanglement with spatial politics expounds the relationship between small-scale communal resources and spaces in urban environments and the dynamics surrounding their use, control, and access. As public interiors, the micro-urban commons' deep involvement with spatial politics stems from their inherent dichotomies. Both external and internal, individual and collective, they are urban constructs that play an integral yet often overlooked role in formulating cultural experiences and social identities. Across their shared interior platforms, the micro-urban commons possess the potential for activating interactions and transactions within the built environment.[25] As they relate simultaneously to the individual and collective civic bodies, they yield and wield tags and classifications on everyday places while patterning activities and relationships within them.[26] For example, when exiting and entering common thresholds, we often wait for those departing before advancing to enter. Adhering to such urban flows is as much about safety as it is about spatial politics. Yielding access is both pragmatic and symbolic of an acknowledgment of the other's right to place.

Spatial politics within the micro-urban commons can be further seen in the nature of communal amenities and settings during racial segregation and the Civil Rights era. Spaces within public transportation systems, urban amenities, and shared commons were used as tools of exclusion and othering, systematically blocking equal claim to place.[27,28] This sinister employment of the micro-urban commons not only impacted the immediate occupancy of marginalized individuals and communities in cities but also directly affected their livelihoods by controlling access to employment, education, healthcare, and other indispensable necessities. Many acts of peaceful resistance and protest are also often positioned in the urban fabric and utilize the micro-urban commons. One example of such actions is the 1905 Nashville Streetcar Boycott, which became one of the most successful of its generation, contesting a statewide segregation law by deploying an alternate

streetcar company owned and operated by Black Nashvillians.[29] Fifty years later, from the interior of a Montgomery city bus, Rosa Parks challenged entrenched racism and helped usher in the Civil Rights Movement.[30] From the sit-in campaigns of the 1960s that peacefully protested segregation to the more recent claiming of public space by the Occupy Wall Street Movement and the use of street closures to provide outdoor space for cultural, religious, or civic gatherings during the COVID-19 pandemic, we see the establishment of civic agency through activating public spaces as shared fluid interior entities. Public interiority contrasts long-standing inequity that thrives in rigid spatial boundaries and societal disengagement.

Co-producing Civic Assemblages through Public Interiority in the Micro-Urban Commons

The boundaries that exist in the urban fabric of cities are not new. They are remnants of old policies and urban legacies that persist today. Recognizing the historical roots of urban inequalities is crucial for addressing contemporary urban challenges. At the same time, organizing community spaces based on the same obsolete design principles will always create disparities in the urban setting. Dismantling these barriers requires a multilevel action plan that operates—through public interiority—at the scale of the occupant, the community, and the city, allowing for the co-production of the city's narratives and correspondingly their spatial manifestations. Co-production is a community-engaged form of civic practice that involves collaboration between various stakeholders. Intrinsically, it encompasses agile design practices that allow for continuous adaptation. This collaborative approach challenges exclusionary tendencies and promotes diversity in urban development. It offers a paradigm shift that prioritizes inclusivity, diversity, and collective action. Co-production challenges the exclusions of past civic doctrine, empowering communities to play an active role in creating urban environments that reflect their values, aspirations, and needs. Not only does design co-production transform physical spaces, but it also fosters stronger, more resilient, and more equitable communities within cities. Co-production can unlock innovative solutions and possibilities that may not have been considered within traditional, top-down design approaches, tapping into the collective intelligence of the community and allowing for fresh perspectives and creative solutions.[31] When design processes prioritize top-down approaches, they may fail to consider the diverse and complex realities of urban life. This results in disconnected urban spaces severed from the communities they are meant to serve. Some design practices, intentionally or unintentionally, exclude certain participants, particularly marginalized or underrepresented groups. This exclusion can perpetuate social and economic inequalities within cities. Retooling design with co-production in mind embraces the city's ongoing transformation and actively responds to shifting demographics, cultural changes, and emerging needs. It recognizes that cities are dynamic and constantly changing. Design has the potential to contribute to social, economic, and environmental reparations, rectifying historical injustices and addressing inequalities.[32]

Co-producing space and, accordingly, spatial narratives depend on tangible grassroots mechanisms for participation and fluid domains for action that are reciprocally municipal and social. This approach hinges on collaborative efforts by diverse groups of people to shape and adapt their physical surroundings, urban policies, and social dynamics. When

people have a say in how their urban spaces are developed and managed, they are empowered to take ownership of their environments. This sense of ownership leads to stronger communities capable of developing democratic and trusted urban settings.[33] Cultural activist Roberto Bedoya acknowledges the need for coupling community-powered co-production and cultural policy as an engine for civic practice and creative placemaking.[34] He stresses that in the cultural sphere, belonging, not the place, is the driver of ground-up development of inclusive environments.[35] This shift in emphasis from place to belonging finds parallel relevance and application in public interiority, where the users' private and subjective experiences within public spaces are prioritized and mobilized toward urban design and action. Public interiority propagates a sense of belonging by implementing interior experiences that shape the identity of a place. As such, it operates as a spatial medium for dialogue and deliberation, finding shared individual values and narratives so as to co-produce civic assemblages. Civic assemblages refer to both tangible spatial constructs and abstract societal structures. While not interchangeable, they are dependent on one another. Societal structures are fostered within spatial constructs, and spatial constructs stem from societal structures. This interplay foregrounds co-production and elucidates its organic, dynamic, and experimental nature.

Today, co-production as a spatial strategy and design development approach remains, to a large degree, aspirational. It is held back by political and power dimensions that deliberately or inadvertently limit diverse participation in environmental governance and knowledge production.[36] Opponents of participatory co-production invoke the risks it invites as a result of the participation of untrained individuals in the process.[37] A rebuttal to this thinking can be traced in the writings of many contemporary theorists, including French philosopher, anthropologist, and sociologist Bruno Latour, who indicates that waiting for absolute certainty as a precursor for action is implausible and risks an end to creativity.[38] Latour's sentiments and statements hold true, especially when it comes to design. Not only does shunning open participation when it comes to designing shared spaces pose a risk to creative solutions, but also such thinking is inherently discriminatory and reductive. It perpetuates divisions that have consistently separated users from actively partaking in the design and creation of their environments. The production of space is fundamentally a social act involving active engagement with everyday experiences and tangible interactions.[39] Co-producing participatory authorship thrives in experiential design and through experimental processes led and conducted by society.[40] The nature of experimentation and shared experiences that are needed for co-producing civic assemblages find a rich realm of practice and implementation in the micro-urban commons through public interior approaches.

Nimble and characteristically interconnected and connective, the micro-urban commons are ideal settings for co-production as they can serve as experimental and subversive spaces where communities can challenge traditional monolithic urban standards and reimagine their settings. Unbound by the need to conform to the constructed civic image or the established norms of urban design because of their inconspicuous nature, the micro-commons can be more flexible, adaptable, and experimental in their layout and usage, reflecting unfiltered expressions of the community's identity and values. In this way, they serve as astute registries of place, recording the history, culture, and social dynamics of the communities they serve and embodying the lived experiences of residents.

Hence, design interventions within the micro-urban commons can be more experimental and subversive, formulating a rich domain where communities can challenge traditional urban norms, reimagine their environment, and host unconventional activities or cultural expressions. Ultimately, empowering design interventions within micro-urban settings stimulates civic intelligence and social patterns that can catalyze scaled-up responses that impart meaningful change in our cities.[41] Co-producing the micro-commons is one way to address the broken legacies of design and aspire to a shift in position, focusing not on what exists in the single mind's eye of the designer but rather on what lies in plain sight. Moreover, design interventions within micro-urban settings that promote people's interactions and meet their individual needs while working for the common good.

Conclusion

Integral systems within the larger societal construct of a city, the micro-urban commons are not isolated entities but rather interconnected with the diverse spectrum of interactions that occur within urban communities. Undoubtedly, they are central to the city's present and future. Concurrently, they tell of past practices that established and perpetuated power hierarchies, maintaining control over marginalized groups. Understanding these dense and multifaceted histories traceable through current micro-urban spatial realities is quintessential to an urban narrative that resists erasure and begins a pertinent and sorely overdue discussion of urban reparations in American cities. In the face of urban segregation and disparities, the micro-commons can serve as unifying elements, bridging the divides created by zoning, land use practices, and historical legacies, promoting greater inclusivity and social connection.

By providing a counterpoint to the larger, more visible public spaces in cities, the micro-urban commons operate outside the conventional urban design expectations, offering alternative perspectives on civic space and fostering a sense of place and community ownership that can be deeply meaningful to those who inhabit or visit them. Correspondingly, design interventions within the commons transcend dogma. They can deliver long-term change through small-scale action by drawing their impact from collective participation. Here, therein, the micro-commons can empower a networked public sphere for all where participation is inclusive by virtue of locational being and participants are active partakers of the place as opposed to its passive subjects.

Acknowledgments

The author would like to acknowledge the efforts of her research assistants, Brendan Wallace, Lydia Russell, Briley Houston, Grace Ann Altenburn, and Carson Fischer, who significantly contributed to the work and graphics. The research about Knoxville's micro-urban commons featured in this chapter has been supported by funds from an Interior Design Educator Council Foundation Special Projects Grant.

Notes

1 Liz Teston, "On the Nature of Public Interiority," *Interiority* 3, no. 1 (January 24, 2020): 61–82, https://doi.org/10.7454/in.v3i1.72, 61.

2 Sarah Schindler, "Architectural Exclusion: Discrimination and Segregation through Physical Design of the Built Environment," *The Yale Law Journal* 124, no. 6 (2015): 1934–2024, 1973.
3 Neeraj Bhatia and Antje Steinmuller, "Spatial Models for the Domestic Commons: Communes, Co-living and Cooperatives," *Architectural Design* 88, no. 4 (July 2018): 120–27, https://doi.org/10.1002/ad.2329, 127.
4 Deborah Schneiderman, "Infrastructural Interiors," in *Interiors Beyond Architecture*, ed. Deborah Schneiderman and Amy Campos (London: Routledge, 2018), 96.
5 Dougald Hine, "Friendship is a Commons," in *Build the City: Perspectives on Commons and Culture*, eds. The European Cultural Foundation and Krytyka Polityczna (Łódź, Poland: Read Me Publishing House, 2015), https://culturalfoundation.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Build-the-City_eBook-1.pdf, 34.
6 Bokolo Anthony, "The Role of Community Engagement in Urban Innovation towards the Co-Creation of Smart Sustainable Cities," *Journal of the Knowledge Economy*, March 10, 2023, https://doi.org/10.1007/s13132-023-01176-1, 15.
7 Rana Abudayyeh, "Understanding the Micro-Urban Commons as a Shared Public Interior Framework," *Journal of Interior Design* 48, no. 2 (May 4, 2023): 101–18, https://doi.org/10.1177/10717641231152737, 101.
8 Abudayyeh, 101.
9 Abudayyeh, 101.
10 Gennep van Arnold, *The Rites of Passage* (London: Routledge, 2004), 190.
11 Victor W. Turner, "Liminality and Communitas," in *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Ithaca New York: Cornell Paperbacks, 1979), 94–130, 125.
12 Arthur Feinberg, Amineh Ghorbani, and Paulien Herder, "Diversity and Challenges of the Urban Commons: A Comprehensive Review," *International Journal of the Commons* 15, no. 1 (2021): 1, https://doi.org/10.5334/ijc.1033, 8.
13 Erkin Erdoğan et al., *The Politics of the Commons: From Theory to Struggle* (İstanbul: Sivil ve Ekolojik Haklar Derneği, 2018), 14.
14 Sheila R. Foster and Christian Iaione, "The City as a Commons," *Yale Law & Policy Review* 34, no. 2 (2016): 281–349. http://www.jstor.org/stable/43920369, 347.
15 "Placemaking: Better Block: Dallas," *The Better Block*. Accessed January 21, 2024. https://www.betterblock.org.
16 "Placemaking: Better Block: Dallas."
17 "Placemaking: Better Block: Dallas."
18 Foster and Iaione, 309.
19 Abudayyeh, 102.
20 Comer L. Taylor, "A Case Study of the Consequences of Displacement Caused by Urban Renewal and Highway Construction on Minority Businesses in the City of Knoxville, Tennessee" master's thesis, University of Tennessee, 1974).
21 Georgiana Vines, "Tennessee Redistricting Bill Leads to Complaints of Gerrymandering," *The Knoxville News Sentinel*, January 22, 2022.
22 Allie Clouse, "The Reality of Knoxville's Urban Removal: Historians, Community Members Answer Questions," *The Knoxville News Sentinel* (Knoxville, TN), December 11, 2020.
23 WUOT, "Losing Home: When Urban Renewal Came to Knoxville," 91.9 FM WUOT, Your Public Radio Station, Knoxville, TN: WUOT, December 1, 2022 https://www.wuot.org/news/2021-05-13/losing-home-when-urban-renewal-came-to-knoxville.
24 WUOT, "Losing Home: When Urban Renewal Came to Knoxville."
25 Abudayyeh, 101.
26 Lyn H. Lofland, "Characteristics of the Public Realm," *The Public Realm*, 1989, 23–98, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315134352-2, 460.
27 Christof Spieler, "Racism Has Shaped Public Transit, and It's Riddled with Inequities: Kinder Institute for Urban Research," Kinder Institute for Urban Research | Rice University, 2020, https://kinder.rice.edu/urbanedge/racism-has-shaped-public-transit-and-its-riddled-inequities.
28 Schindler,1934-2024, 1960.
29 Nina Cardona, "50 Years before Rosa Parks, a Bold Nashville Streetcar Protest Defied Segregation," *WPLN News*, July 10, 2023, https://wpln.org/post/50-years-before-rosa-parks-a-bold-nashville-streetcar-protest-defied-segregation.
30 Abudayyeh, 101.

31 Josephine M. Chambers et al., "Co-Productive Agility and Four Collaborative Pathways to Sustainability Transformations," *Global Environmental Change* 72 (January 2022): 102422, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2021.102422, 3.
32 Neil Brenner, "Is 'Tactical Urbanism' An Alternative to Neoliberal Urbanism? Reflections on an Exhibition at the MoMA," in *The Social (Re)Production of Architecture: Politics, Values and Actions in Contemporary Practice* (London: Routledge, 2017), 113–28, 127.
33 Anthony, "The Role of Community Engagement in Urban Innovation towards the Co-Creation of Smart Sustainable Cities"
34 Roberto Bedoya, "Placemaking and the Politics of Belonging and Dis-Belonging," Grantmakers in the Arts, 2013, https://www.giarts.org/article/placemaking-and-politics-belonging-and-dis-belonging.
35 Bedoya, "Placemaking and the Politics of Belonging and Dis-Belonging."
36 Esther Turnhout et al., "The Politics of Coproduction: Participation, Power, and Transformation," *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* 42 (February 2020): 15–21, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cosust.2019.11.009, 15.
37 Kathryn Oliver, Anita Kothari, and Nicholas Mays, "The Dark Side of Coproduction: Do the Costs Outweigh the Benefits for Health Research?," *Health Research Policy and Systems* 17, no. 1 (March 28, 2019), https://doi.org/10.1186/s12961-019-0432-3, 3.
38 Bruno Latour, "From Multiculturalism to Multinaturalism: What Rules of Method for the New Socio-Scientific Experiments?," *Nature and Culture* 6, no. 1 (March 1, 2011): 1–17, https://doi.org/10.3167/nc.2011.060101, 12.
39 Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1998), 26, 404, 410.
40 Matthias Gross and Nona Schulte-Römer, "Remaking Participatory Democracy Through Experimental Design," *Science, Technology, & Human Values* 44, no. 4 (September 11, 2018): 707–18, https://doi.org/10.1177/0162243918799172, 708.
41 Noel Hatch, "From Lamp Posts to Phone Booths: Using Technology to Create Civic Spaces," Build the City: Perspectives on Commons and Culture, 2015, https://culturalfoundation.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/Build-the-City_eBook-1.pdf.

5

GROWING THROUGH GREYFIELDS

A Pattern for Broken Promises

Dan Feinberg

After the fifth or sixth time someone assumed a photograph of vegetables growing in asphalt was entirely a digital construction, it began to feel like less of a quirk and more revealing of a tension between what one sees and what one expects in the world (Figure 5.1).

FIGURE 5.1 Aerial view of Alpine radish growth of The Radish Project: Greenhouse Parking Lot Experimental Site on the grounds of the Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library. Photo courtesy of Plants in Pavement (2022).

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-6

One photograph depicts radishes filling the corner of a parking lot at the Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library, reproducing lines of a parquet flooring arrangement in the museum. Another photo, a close-up, shows root vegetables emerging from circles of reds and pinks. The asphalt-paint-plant combination produces an optical effect: shadows cast across the colors translate as almost having a lower pixel count than the plants themselves, the angular edges of the leaves projecting against the bright colors in 8-bit. The scenes in both photographs display elements we typically associate with interiors, but in contexts and at scales we do not regularly encounter. While the parquet pattern is far larger than what we travel atop as wood tiles, the circles—painted to cool the asphalt and reflect light waves that may support growth—give each plant its own thermal and chromatic microclimate. Its own interiority (Figure 5.2).

These photos were taken at different experimental sites of the *Plants in Pavement* project. Influenced initially by the resiliency of plants growing through cracks in a parking lot in the rural village of Paint Lick, Kentucky—a tightknit community built in a floodplain that has a history of being over-paved—this effort strives to develop methods for encouraging plants to grow in inhospitable impervious environments to strategically break up the surface and allow water drainage, greening, and establishment of healthier soil systems.

FIGURE 5.2 Various root vegetables early in growth cycle at the Berea College test site. © Dan Feinberg, courtesy of Plants in Pavement (2023).

While interventions exist to address the problems of over-paved areas, we ask, what happens when common approaches are undesirable or inaccessible to many communities—at least for now?

Much happens in the time between an asphalted area becoming underutilized or abandoned—often referred to as a greyfield—and the implementation of an intervention. During this indeterminate period, the many detrimental environmental effects of asphalt compound include heating, flooding, and runoff. *Plants in Pavement* exist at the location of the present asphalt within this unknown timeframe (Figure 5.3).

The responses to photographs of the project gesture to a dissonance felt as organic arrangements inhabit artificial spaces in ways that conflict with our expectations for them. Many environmental remediation efforts tend to mask their role as a recent and urgent intervention, seamlessly incorporating a rain garden design or rewilding an area so that it *feels like* it could have been there all along. Meanwhile, plants growing out of cracks in asphalt are typically interpreted as a sign of neglect or indifference. In this project, we seek a path forward that aids the ecological health of these sites while refusing to hide the enduring effects of each site's petroleum-blanketed history.

Our aesthetic approaches grow far more complex as we consider the social circumstances of these spaces. Often, greyfields are sites of broken promises—from the promise of the (now shuttered) big-box store to provide resources to a community to even the modest promise of a single parking space whose paving would be justified by being regularly canopied by an automobile. We became sensitive to not only what aesthetic choices can endow but also what they might unfairly promise. If our processes do not deliver a park, for example, we should not aim for our sites to appear to fit park-like conventions.

These concerns have guided the project, including plant selection, fracturing approaches, and site layout. Thus far, we have focused on root vegetables to break up asphalt—with an early emphasis on strains of daikon radishes—because of their strength and unobtrusive low leaf profile and what their very presence may imply. Foresting an area with trees could carry a suggestion of permanence, which can also suggest the jobs, access to resources, and centers of social life that the parking lot represented may now never come back. The annual or biennial root-vegetable instead suggests a feeling that it is just visiting and that its growth does not preclude future possibilities for the locations.

When developing site-specific approaches, rather than focusing solely on other outdoor contexts for influence, we were drawn to the histories of patterns within interior spaces. In outdoor spaces, it seems all too common that a pattern that holds the potential for infinite expansion tries to fulfill this prophecy as rows of industrial agricultural crops, leafy lattice points of tree farms, or grids of parking spaces. (Figure 5.4).

However, it is through the repeatable patterns found in interior architecture that we encounter possibilities for how an infinitely expansive logic can respond to conditions of enclosure: that is, through restraint and deference. Emerging from a study of these interior circumstances, with a particular focus on historic wallpapering, we reframe asphalted spaces as hyper-local sites of engagement and sensitivity rather than of socio-ecological indifference. It is through this interaction between pattern and place where we aim to not only transfer physical features of interiors, but to translate a broader experience of interiority.

FIGURE 5.3 The Radish Project: Dairy Barn Road Experimental Site with tillage radish pattern based on historic rugs found inside the museum. © Chase Markee, courtesy of Plants in Pavement (2022).

FIGURE 5.4 (Left) Detail of corner in Glass Alcove in Winterthur Museum. The wallpaper pattern's faux-framed paintings draw attention to the room's architecture, as the facsimile of a more two-dimensional experience bends onto the adjacent plane. (Right) Detail of Imlay Room wallpaper in Winterthur Museum. The floral pattern is painted atop an electrical cover to encourage the illusion of the wallpaper being uninterrupted by the architectural feature. By meticulously continuing the pattern, the wall plate, an element that is commonly overlooked in interior spaces, becomes accentuated and more prominent. © Dan Feinberg and Chase Markee, courtesy of Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library (2023).

There is still much to learn about these practices before recommending their implementation more broadly. But with each growth cycle, we are encouraged by how people develop their relationship with the location, the plant, and their patterns. Sometimes, this may be the person watering a site lingering even after the task is done, and other times, it may be a community member returning repeatedly over several weeks to check on the plants. It may even be seen in the realization that this photograph of a plant growing in pavement is not merely manipulated pixels on a screen, but rather the result of months of daily watering by a small and committed team. Here, we find possibility and power in promoting fundamentally different relations: where we tend to sites rather than excavate them, where we exchange the imaginary of infinite expansion for the intimate connection to place embodied in restraint, and how we practice care where demolition has been default (Figure 5.5).

FIGURE 5.5 The Radish Project: Greenhouse Experimental Site with a caretaker standing amongst radishes after watering. © Chase Markee, courtesy of Plants in Pavement (2022).

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Meg Wilson, Chase Markee, and Erica Blair for their contributions to previous drafts of this essay, and to recognize the collective effort of over eighty people that have shaped *Plants in Pavement*. Additional support has also been provided by Berea College, Winterthur Museum, Garden & Library, and the Museum of the White Mountains at Plymouth State University.

6

MUSEUMS AND PUBLIC INTERIORITY

Contributions from Interaction and Exhibit Design

Emanuela Bonini Lessing and Lucilla Calogero

We address the topic of public interiority from the disciplinary perspective of "interior design as a pluralistic practice"[1] with different dimensions of focus on construction, interior design, communication design, and interaction design. From our perspective, museums are pluralistic spaces in which exhibits amplify human-object interactions and where interior-exterior extensions that reinforce the museum's role as an urban activator, and dynamic social hubs cultivate communal sensibilities. Museums are both physical and virtual; they are places where communication design, interaction design, and exhibit design operate in unison, offering the visitor an expanded experience based on the observations of physical artifacts and acquiring knowledge through digital technologies. Conversely, museums imply an interior-exterior extension in their multifaceted public dimensions. At the physical level, they should include installations in the surrounding public space; at the narrative level, the territorial and socioeconomic criticalities of the "outside" of museums should be integrated by interior design proposals. As a result, museums can become dynamic and multifunctional places that operate as cultural and social hubs, fostering a sense of community.

In addition to their physical/narrative, and interior/exterior features, the overall quality of the visitor's experience can increase by enhancing effective interrelations within the designed spaces. By surpassing function, museums offer various activities that cater to different dimensions and scales, ensuring inclusivity and diversity.[2]

Exhibit and interactive designs play a crucial role in achieving these goals. Exhibit design curates and presents artifacts and information to guide visitors through thematic journeys, enhancing their understanding and emotional connection. Interaction design facilitates engagement among visitors, objects, and technology, creating immersive experiences. Together, they enable the connection between a museum's inner and outer spheres at the physical and social-spatial levels.

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-7

Therefore, interventions within museums have three primary aims:

1) Reinforcing a feeling of public interiority through installations in the museums' outer public spaces, thus involving a wider audience consisting of interested visitors as well as local residents and passersby.
2) Blurring threshold interior-exterior creates a seamless programmatic transition for enriching the quality of the museum visitor's experience.
3) Offering participatory co-creation activities using cultural content available in the museums by facilitating interactive workshops, collaborative projects, and opportunities for visitor contributions, museums can draw diverse perspectives and experiences, that will enrich the cultural content and strengthen community bonds.[3]

Museums transcend their role and, instead, as heritage preservation institutions, become dynamic spaces that foster shared public engagement.

The arguments outlined so far are necessary for the reactivation of territories where small museums that are dense with local heritage (consisting of both physical artifacts and peculiar know-how) are located (Figure 6.1).

This type of museum in Italy is widespread: there are thousands all over the suburban areas, far from the main tourist routes.

FIGURE 6.1 The project sites are mountain territories characterized by depopulation and isolation because of their particular geographical morphology. Places rich in history and traditions where the sense of community is at risk of being lost. In the picture: glimpses of the village of Pesariis, Italy. Image by Lucilla Calogero. In the picture: glimpses of the village of Pesariis (2022).

Our three-year-long study focused on a network of civic regional galleries spread throughout several small towns in Carnia, a mountainous region in Northern Italy, in the province of Udine, which display heritages of local and regional relevance despite being characterized by social and economic difficulties (Figure 6.2).

The following section shows how it was possible to address these topics in design studios offered to interior design students at Università Iuav di Venezia.

Interaction and exhibit design provided new perspectives on heritage displays as well as the socioeconomic impacts of renewed local museums. The aim was to base interventions on two museums conceived as "hub" spatial-relational, capable of offering alternative spatial layouts, but also, beyond functional interactions, to explore multiple dimensions and scales of application to enable "public interiorities or interior-feeling places."[4] The outcomes show how communication, interaction, and exhibit design concepts and tools can provide new perspectives on public interiority (Figure 6.3).

A Multidisciplinary Design Studio

From 2020–2022, 120 students Integrating multidisciplinary approaches into their design studios—communication, exhibit, and interior design. Addressing territorial renovation

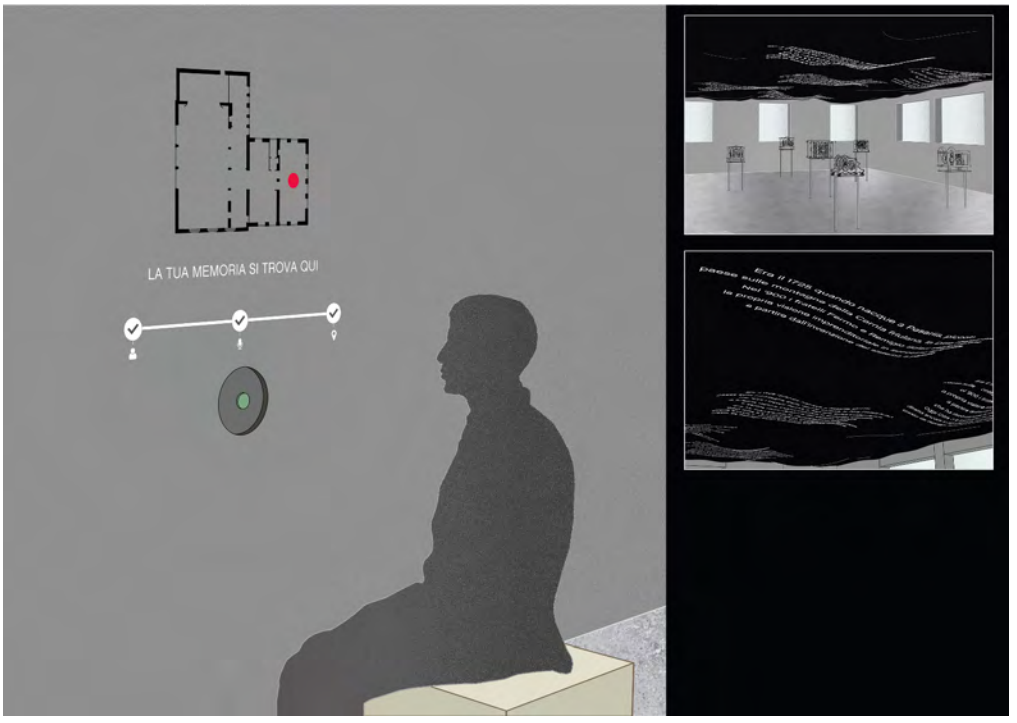


FIGURE 6.2 Concept of a collective memory archive shared between inhabitants and museum visitors. The interactive installation becomes a device for transmitting knowledge and know-how, fostering a common and affective sense of belonging to the area. Participatory storytelling enables the transmission of individual and collective memories between generations. Image by Fernando Marius Cojocaru, Arianna Minguzzi, Federico Scaglione, Virginia Pianca, Allison Zarotti (2022).

FIGURE 6.3 Concept of a museum that provides spaces for the village community's everyday life, open to the public: a restaurant serving local food, a panoramic terrace, and a bed & breakfast. Giada Caglioni, Lucia Kohlschitter, Lara Migliori, Alice Pasetto, Sofia Zanin (2022).

projects through museum design interventions, the first studio was based on the Archaeological Museum of Zuglio, while the second explored the Clockmaking Museum in Pesariis. In both cases, the studio methodology and the timeline consisted of meetings with the community stakeholders who shared publications on village history and its area, plans, fact sheets on the museum's contents, and various existing documentation. Students and stakeholders took part in museum-guided tours, allowing them to share first impressions on existing issues. During the project's development, the students interacted with local figures to gain the necessary knowledge about the village.

The final result consisted of several design proposals generated by theoretical principles and design tools, considering different levels of intervention, ranging from construction details to communication outputs, within a multidisciplinary vision. The proposals were presented to the stakeholders, and a final publication[5] was funded by the local government to enhance the local community's awareness of the potential impact of these studies (Figure 6.4).

In our view, museums are pluralistic spaces in which interior, communication, and interaction design contribute to enhancing public interiority actions. Museums become hubs, hybrid spaces resulting from pulling together mixed functions and providing suitable space for each of them, places completely integrated within the territory and their daily activities. They are places for displaying local heritage as well as responsive membranes facilitating multiple relationships, active in promoting dynamics of public interiority by bringing the peculiarities of the place into their public space (Figure 6.5).

FIGURE 6.4 Concept of a dynamic, multifunctional museum, a cultural and social hub that creates a sense of community by providing space for craft workshops, local food tasting, sale of handcrafted products, and urban beekeeping on the roof of the building. Francesca De Paoli, Chiara Lievore, Matthew Saporetti, Sofia Pascolo, Emma Vincenti (2022).

FIGURE 6.5 Concept that highlights the relationship between the museum building and the excavations of the Roman forum, located at the outside. The scope was to bring to light the importance of the village for the commercial exchanges during the Roman period. The goal was achieved by retracing the steps of a wine merchant, allowing the visitor to put himself in the shoes of this character. The drawing is characterized by line art, transparency of materials, and a play on points of view. Elena Arnoldi, Elena Bortoletto, Matilde Da Dalt, Matilde Piovan, Alessandro Vazzoler (2022).

Notes

1 Richard Buchanan, "Surroundings and Environments in Fourth Order Design," *Design Issues* 35, no. 1 (2019): 4.
2 Eleonora Lupo, "Design and Innovation for the Cultural Heritage, Phygital Connections for a Heritage of Proximity," *AGATHÓN International Journal of Architecture, Art and Design* 10 (2021): 190.
3 Alessandra Bosco, Silvia Gasparotto, & Margot Lengua, "Participatory Flows: A Comparative Analysis of Co-design Processes in the Field of Cultural Heritage," *Strategic Design Research Journal* 15, 2 (2022): 100.
4 Liz Teston, "On the Nature of Public Interiority," *Interiority*, 3 (2020): 61.
5 Emanuela Bonini Lessing, Lucilla Calogero, Francesca Castellani, and Gabriele Toneguzzi: *Patrimonio, Territorio, Design*. *Progetti per la Rete Museale della Carnia* (Vicenza, Italy: Ronzani Editore, 2023).

7

DUG BY THE DEVIL

Space, Culture, + Material Identity

Felicia Francine Dean

Dug by the Devil synthesizes divergent cultural narratives to uncover a *material identity* hidden in cohabitating fields of spatial conception, communicating the results through sculptural form. In the work, art's emphasis on emotional expression combines with design site research, visually manifesting merged hand-sewn form explorations with digital fabrication. The rise in access to technological methods of making has connected art, design, and craft together, dismantling and converging the definitions of artist, designer, and craftsperson. *Dug by the Devil* explores the combined methods through its visual abstraction of spatial cultural clashes between local islanders and the international freediving community at Dean's Blue Hole in Long Island, Bahamas. The work responds to the question, "What happens when the water's window into Bahamian identity becomes veiled by an extreme sport's use of the land?" (Figures 7.1 and 7.2)

The Bahamas consists of numerous islands and waterholes. Purportedly, one thousand offshore and inland blue holes exist.[1] Vertical Blue Freediving conducts globally acclaimed freediving competitions at Dean's Blue Hole. The organization recognizes the site for holding the worldwide record for the deepest blue water hole at 663 ft deep.[2] Viewing from above, the depth obscures the void with a deeply saturated blue origin point before the break in the ocean's surface. The erosion of limestone creates the natural wonder that draws in freedivers from around the world (Figure 7.3).

Culturally, Dean's Blue Hole contrasts the internalized perspectives of Bahamians, from enslaved African and possibly Lucayan ancestries, with freediving outsiders. For many Long Island local inhabitants with deep-rooted family connections to the area, the unnatural and ungodly narratives of Dean's Blue Hole provoke fear. They describe the blue hole as being *Dug by the Devil* and steer clear of its water because of its association with death.[3] Bahamians sometimes interpret the blue holes as "blowing" or "boiling," stemming from the folkloric octopus and shark-like sea monster, Lusca.[4,5] The descriptors represent the rush of a tide into a sea floor cavity, which unleashes a strong whirlpool at the surface capable of pulling swimmers into the depths of its lair.[6]

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-8

FIGURE 7.1 Photograph of the sculptural object, Dug by the Devil. Material: Bianco Piatra Marina marble, Dimensions: 31½ × 13 × 15¾ inches, Felicia Francine Dean (2015) photo by Felicia Francine Dean.

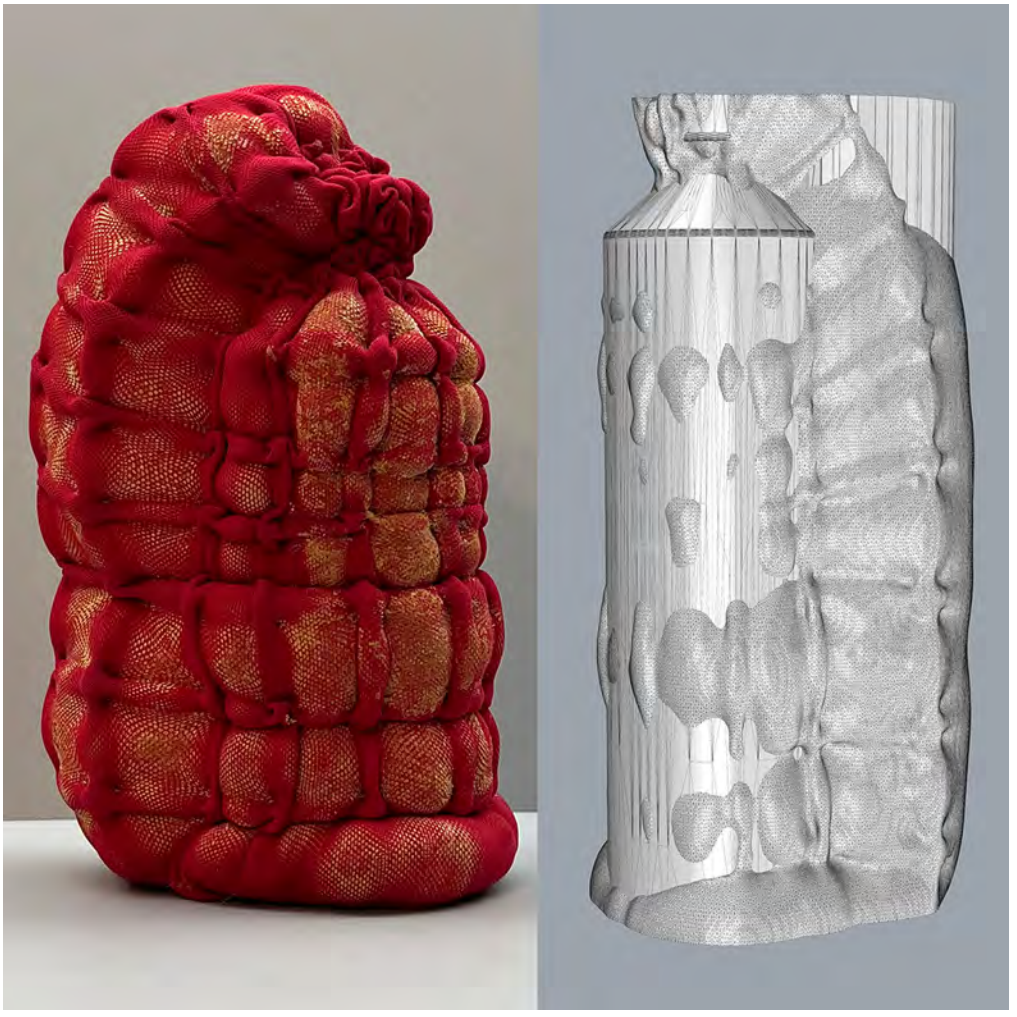


FIGURE 7.2 Three-dimensional hand-sewn model materializing an illusion of Dean's Blue Hole interior surface design (left), digital model of the final sculptural form used for robotic milling and hand and machine finishing (right), Felicia Francine Dean (2015), photo and image by Felicia Francine Dean.

Free divers gather to explore the mystery of the Dean's Blue Hole by attending training courses and competitions held by the company Vertical Blue Freediving. Renowned athlete Alessia Zecchini of Italy participated in their 2021 challenge.[7] She expresses experiencing a blue hole as darkness and a feeling of confinement when diving.[8] Competitors use the blue hole as an underwater field for their sport. In contrast, generations of Bahamians pass on cautionary messages to save lives while the divers travel through the concealed space of the interior, embracing the unknown, and gambling with death.

The creative scholarly approach of *Dug by the Devil* responds to the associated identities locals and tourists assign to the blue hole's experiential perceptions of its space. The

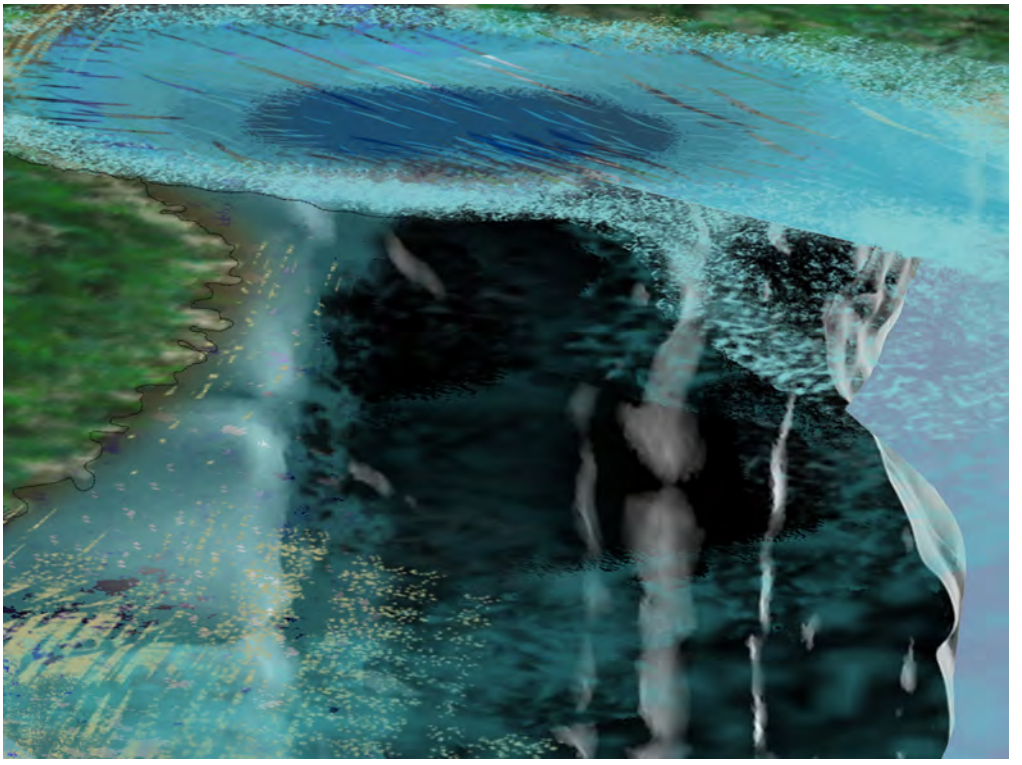


FIGURE 7.3 Digital illustration depicting a section cut through the site Dean's Blue Hole, with an enveloped surface design and form derived from the sculptural object Dug by the Devil., image by Felicia Francine Dean (2023).

work translates and manipulates the characteristics of the Bianco Piatra Marina Italian marble to investigate the stone's *material identity* within the cultural context of Dean's Blue Hole. *Dug by the Devil* portrays the interior cavern as a capsule preserving the hidden histories, fears, and stories of the land and deceased indigenous Lucayans of the Bahamas. Andrew Todhunter's article in National Geographic reinforces this vision of Dean's Blue Hole by describing another Bahamian water cave as a "…scientific equivalent to Tut's tomb."[9] Some blue holes preserved the skeletal remains of Bahamian Lucayan ancestors, either as part of a burial site or due to brutal outcomes.[10] Marble's historical and present-day association as grave markers aligns with Todhunter's analogy of a blue hole as a tomb. There's a saying: underground is where things go to die or are laid to rest. Dean's Blue Hole is 110.5 times the depth of a 6-foot-deep human coffin burial. Understandably, the locals could perceive what lies below 6 feet as the depths of hell, *Dug by the Devil* (Figure 7.4).

Dug by the Devil engages three stone textures, resulting from fabrication techniques, to communicate Bahamian cultural narratives and free divers' perspectives of Dean's Blue Hole. An undulated fabric surface design applied to the form communicates a passage of time and how the outsiders' wonderous awe of the landscape cloaks the historical narratives and remains of the interior. The illusion of a satin-like surface renders the

FIGURE 7.4 An artistic photograph of Dug by the Devil, detailing the undulated fabric- like marble surface portraying Dean's Blue Hole's funnel- like spout with a narrow transition into the 663 ft depth of the vessel., Felicia Francine Dean (2015), photo by Felicia Francine Dean.

interpretation of the tourists' perceptions like water continually coming into contact with the stone walls of the blue hole to reshape them. The slightly concealed machine marks remaining from the carving by a robot allude to the resurrection of the Long Islanders' folklore as it pushes against the liquid volume of time and outsiders' perspectives. The ideals of beauty and mystery consumed by many free divers of Dean's Blue Hole manifest as the "classical" marble material. It is not until freedivers continue to push deeper and deeper into the darkness, testing the validity of Bahamian ancestral stories, that the cultural legends become a reality for some (Figure 7.5).

What forms from the opposing cultural perceptions is a new *material identity* of Dean's Blue Hole's spatial interiority. Generations of stories of death passed on among Long Island Bahamian families fuel the international freediving tourists' need for adventure. The existence of the two lived experiences compounds into one outcome. The blue hole that once took the lives of Bahamians now does not discriminate. It can potentially take the lives of all, globally expanding its reputation for being known as *Dug by the Devil*.

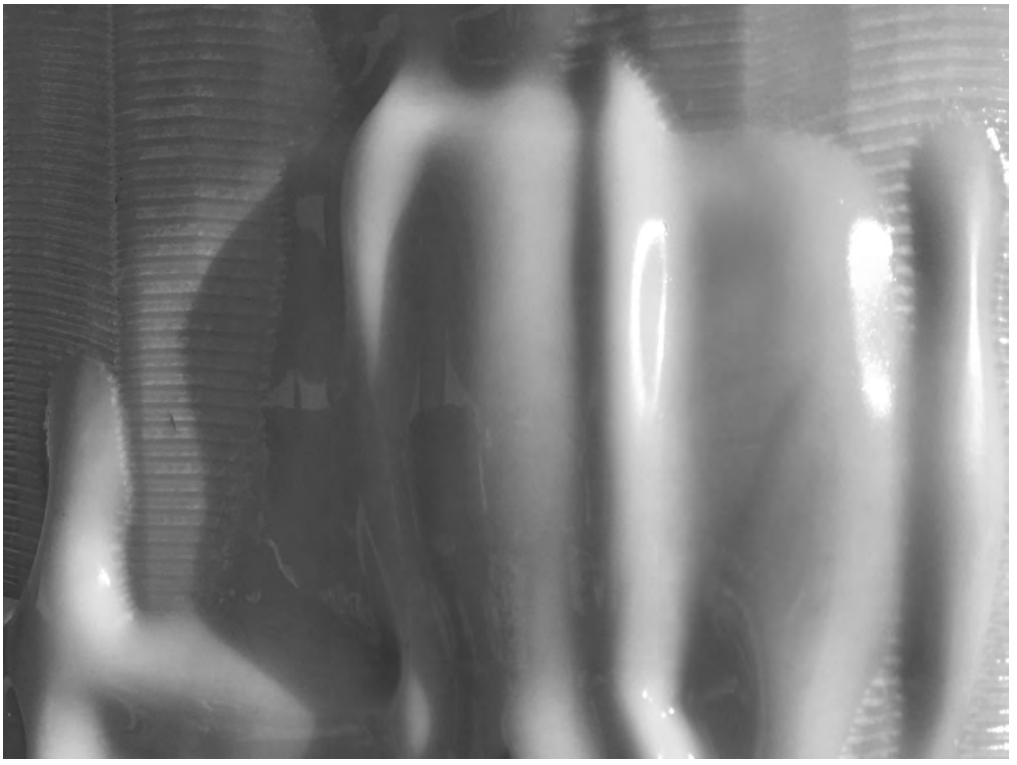


FIGURE 7.5 A detailed photograph of Dug by the Devil's lightly obscured machine relief marks left by the robotic milling of the marble and of the satin- smooth hand and machine finishing of the stone's undulated fabric- like surface., Felicia Francine Dean (2015), photo by Felicia Francine Dean.

Notes

1 Andrew Todhunter, "Deep Dark Secrets," *National Geographic*, August 2010, 45.
2 Vertical Blue Freediving, Vertical Blue, accessed February 3, 2024, www.www.verticalblue.net
3 60 Minutes Staff, "Exploring the Depths of Dean's Blue Hole," 60 Minutes Overtime, 18 August 2013, http://www.cbsnews.com/news/exploring-the-depths-of-deans-blue-hole/
4 Stephanie Schwabe and James Carew, "Blue Holes: An Inappropriate Moniker for Scientific Discussion of Water-Filled Caves in the Bahamas." In: *Proceedings of the 12th Symposium on the Geology of the Bahamas and Other Carbonate Regions* (Concord, New Hampshire: Wallace Press, 2006), 12:180.
5 Robert Palmer, "In the Lair of the Lusca," *Natural History* (New York: Natural History Magazine, Inc, 1987), 96:42.
6 Palmer, "Lair of the Lusca," 42
7 Vertical Blue Freediving, Vertical Blue.
8 *The Deepest Breath*, directed by Laura McGann (Netflix, 2023). Netflix streaming.
9 Todhunter, "Deep Dark Secrets," 40.
10 Todhunter, "Deep Dark Secrets," 52.

8

ALMOST PARADISE

Zahra Safaverdi

Can we produce an architecture that allows us to pass through layers of fabulation to leave behind narratives of a troubled past and work toward restorative strategies for the future?

Tales are told and retold to set up and conventionalize behaviors within an existing societal system. This installation is a tale that envisions the city of Cleveland as a stage and acts as a catalyst for questioning the established storyline already in place. *Almost Paradise* offers potential futures for the rehabilitation of Cleveland by making an interactive installation that invites the audience to engage with a three-layered project. I would like you to join me as I delaminate the layers of this representation in a repeating visual pattern to re-represent the said installation.

Layer One: Parallel Clevelands

This work addresses a city marked by the downfall of its main industry, shocked by an almost billion-dollar debt, vast empty and unused infrastructure, and a budding new character leaving its tumultuous past behind. With this rapidly evolving identity, the unkempt vacant lots, unused infrastructures, and abandoned buildings appear as missing teeth in a smile on a face aiming to reconstruct itself.

This work started as a design research project. In an outward to inward to outward process, the project has studied the existing infrastructure, documented each neighborhood to the point of exhaustion, and reproduced many partial versions of Cleveland approximated to the real but ever slightly skewed from it. With an interest in notions of community in the territory of unproductive time, the project gave a prompt to different designers: utilize the unkempt vacant lots and abandoned buildings to design interiorized public spaces for leisurely activities, and construct commons for communities within these many fictitious and partially reconstructed Clevelands.

Two urban microcosms, in the form of image sets, were chosen for the installation described below (Figure 8.1).

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-9

FIGURE 8.1 *Almost Paradise* Installation. Image by Zahra Safaverdi (2022).

Layer Two: Paradise, in a Box

From these representational versions of reconstructed Cleveland, two sets of individualized and interiorized urban insertions were selected to be incorporated in the installation: both sets are assemblages based on materials of varied natures that address cultural practices in place. They test the non-conventional processes of displacement through simple geometrical maneuvering and create a new common for the public (Figures 8.2 and 8.4).

Both proposed interventions represent interiorized public spaces encompassing leisurely outdoor activities in the form of interventions inserted within the urban tissue. The first set proposes five interiorized additions to the already existing outdoor cultural gardens. The second set proposes five exterior skate parks for a fully interiorized Cleveland. Although opposite in their design approach, the final locations selected for insertion of both interventions fit the categories of currently unused, partially eroded structures or envelopes, and places with signs of encroaching nature.

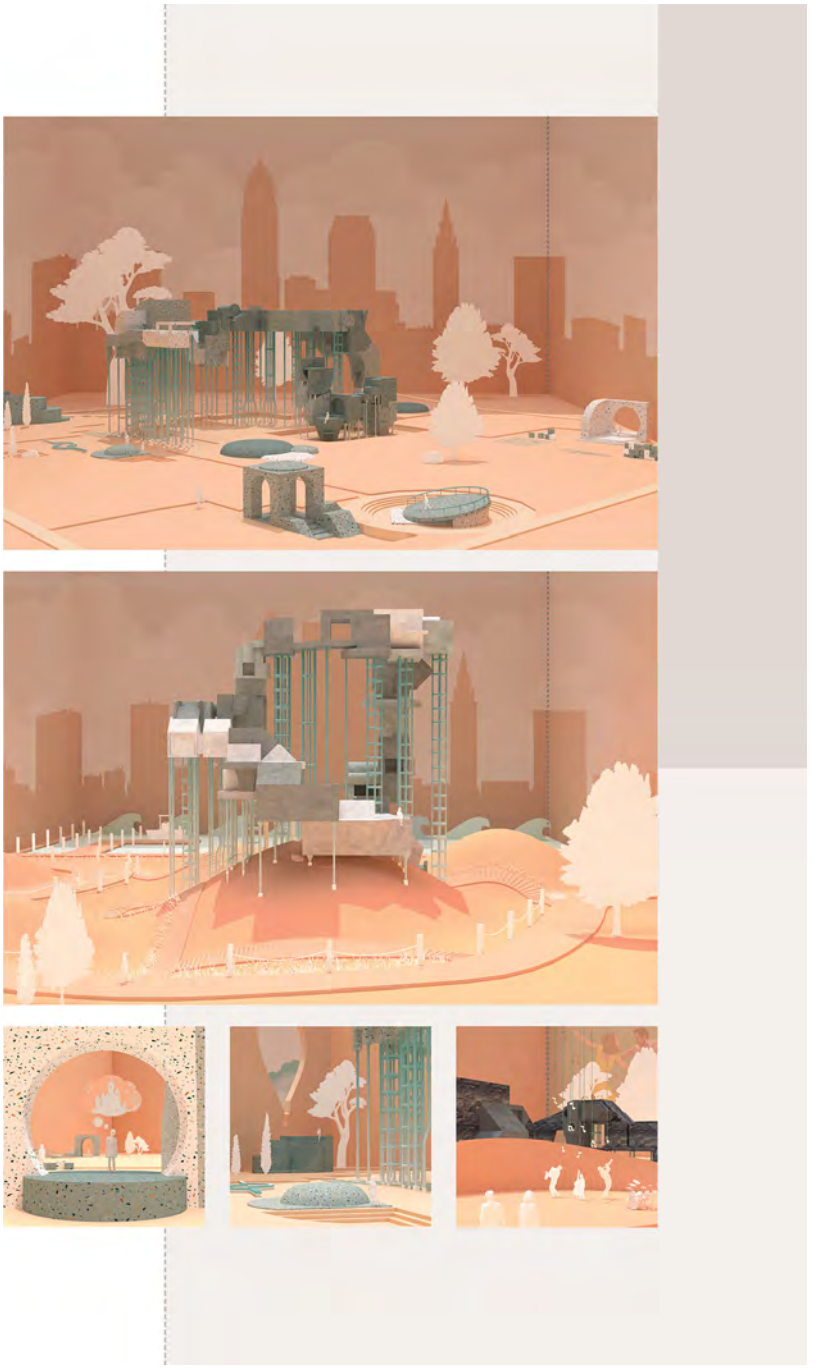


FIGURE 8.2 Featured image in *Almost Paradise*, Box one, Drawer 1 to 5. Image by Zahra Safaverdi with design pieces from Regina Gonano (2022).

FIGURE 8.3 *Almost Paradise* installation in detail. Image by Zahra Safaverdi (2022).

Almost Paradise captures the birth of these fantastical interiorized spaces, which are connected to their surroundings but wildly divergent from them. These public spaces are peculiar in nature. They try to provide an adequate congregation space for the human and non-human actors alike. The goal is to work with modes of publicness in an era where previous forms of public leisure have been substantially altered by vivid latent futures, where we are together apart.

The installation creates a small area for the two interventions: The main wooden box contains two compartments, each designated to hold one of the depiction sets. The audience could take each depiction out of the box and interact with it. The main depiction box contains a smaller twin box, holding logistical drawings of each urban microcosm residing within the main box. Each logistical drawing could be taken out and placed on the translucent grid on top of the twin box for in-depth viewership and more intimate interaction.

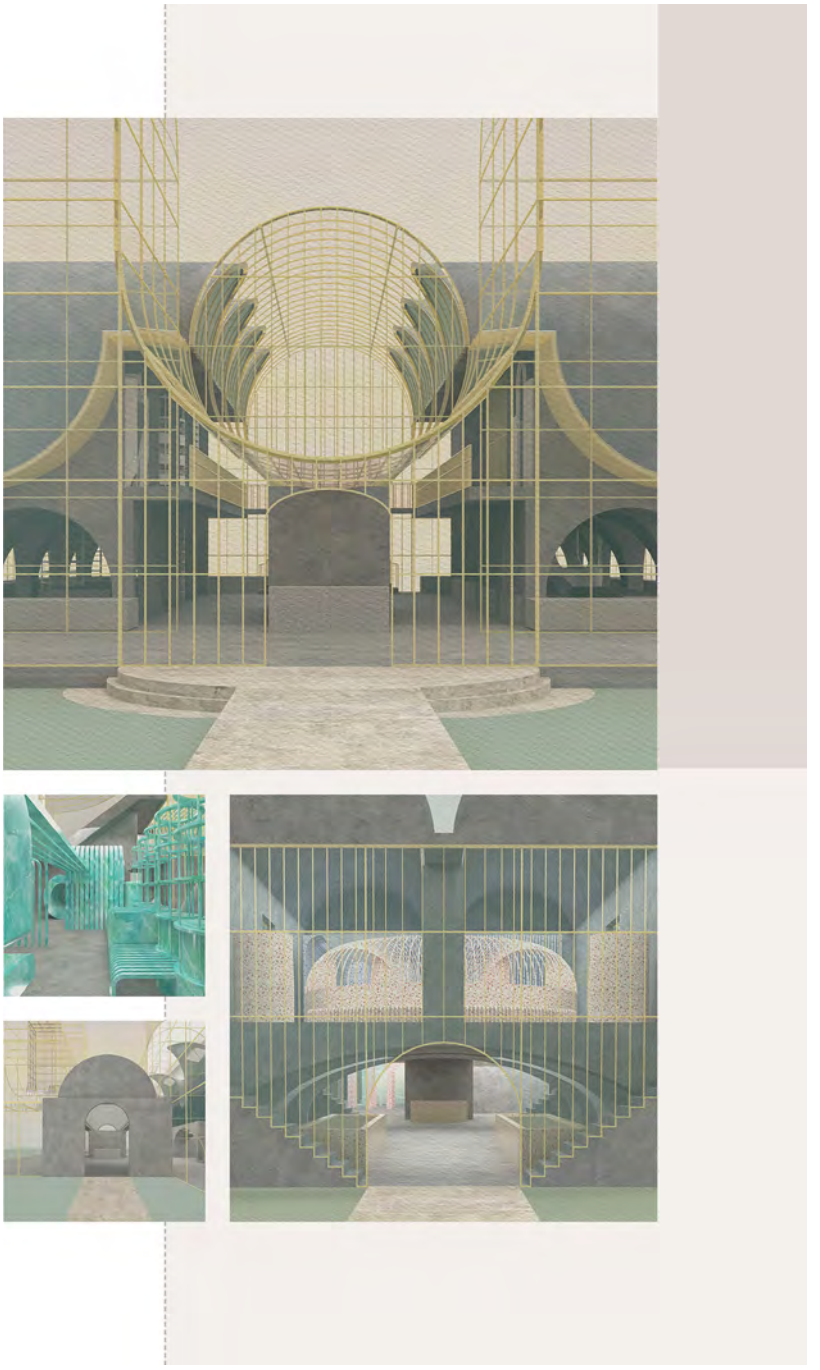


FIGURE 8.4 Featured image in *Almost Paradise*, Box one, Drawer 6 to 10. Image by Zahra Safaverdi with design pieces from Feyza Mutlu (2022).

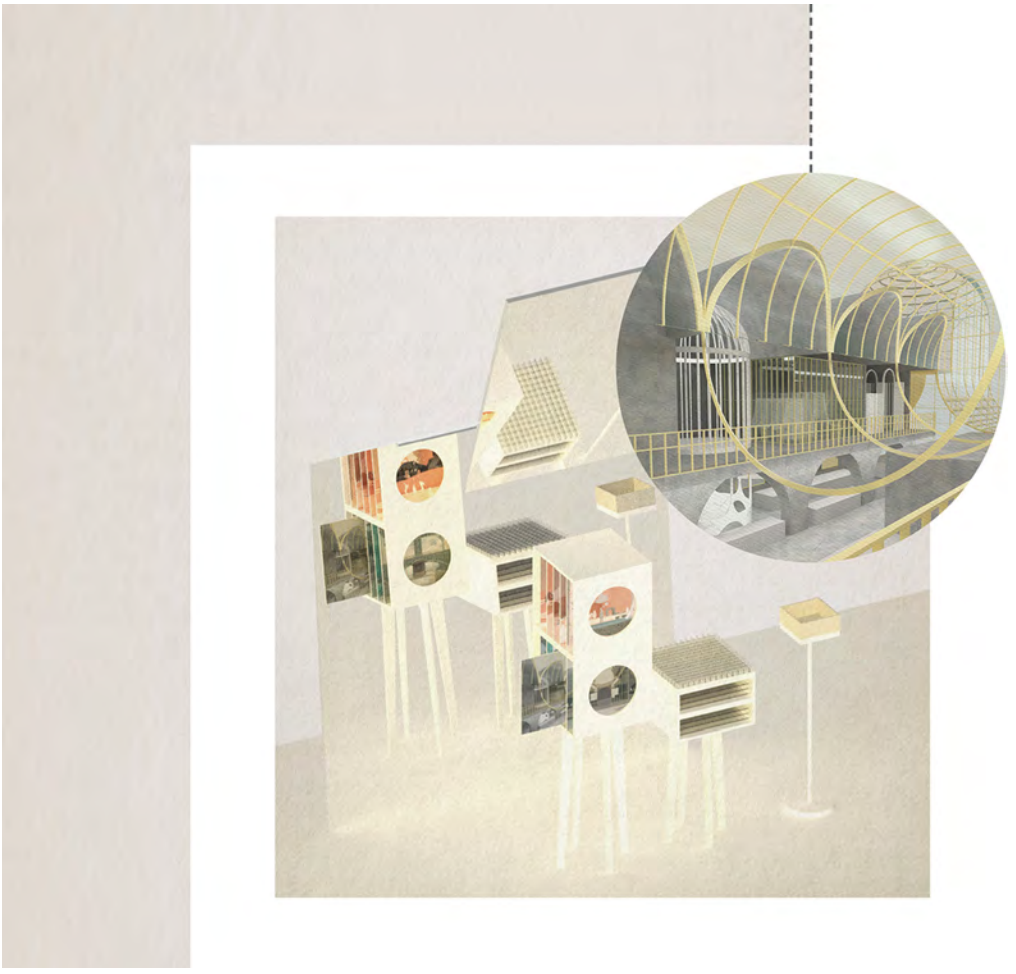


FIGURE 8.5 *Almost Paradise* installation in detail. Image by Zahra Safaverdi (2022).

Though separated and encased within the defined physical boundaries of the box, these two urban microcosms are in constant dialogue with each other through two opposing interpretations of interiorized public spaces as actors in a healing urban setting. The dialogue between the two microcosms and the interior spaces with the surrounding urban environment, though uneasy and not fully articulated at times, inspire new spaces for public intimacy… if only in a fantastical version of Cleveland, or even if only at the footprint of the physical installation (Figures 8.3 and 8.5).

Layer Three: Interiorized Imagination

The main wooden box and its smaller counterpart, in combination with the two reflective surfaces behind them, act as rhetorical apparatus, connecting the drawings of fictitious Clevelands to the installations on the one hand, and internalized imagination of the

audience on the other. This work exists between a real scene and its alternative, as these remnants of the past Cleveland set the stage for plausible futures.

Almost Paradise creates an interiorized visual schema for the participants, gliding between the gallery's interior space, to the exterior spaces of each image inside the wooden boxes, and the interior space each imaginary exterior depicts. This installation and the two depiction sets it attempts to re-represent, aims to act as a medium that both divides and connects. Through the separation of the sets from each other and the separation of the imagery from their logistical counterparts, *Almost Paradise* connects these possible futures in installation. It recasts and mixes ideas to provide a link to other new worlds that are contained inside, letting the audience shift between these contained worlds seamlessly (Figures 8.2 and 8.5).

Acknowledgments

The design research project, which this installation captures two proposals from, desires to free itself from the confines of exclusive authorship and single creator. Both interventions featured in the installation were done by my former students and from the same large data sets, design direction, and prompt provided to them. The first image set is designed by Regina Gonano (The University of Pennsylvania). The second image set is designed by Feyza Mutlu (Rice University). *Almost Paradise* is designed, created, and curated by Zahra Safaverdi. Amber Hodge has assisted with the fabrication of this installation.

9

PLAY GROUND

Empowering the Child in the City

Amy Roehl

Play Ground explores public interiority by witnessing a child's play throughout the city. Urban play as a form of public interiority is proposed, adding to the taxonomy established by Teston in her essay *On the Nature of Public Interiority*.[1] Public and at the same time intimate, play in the city offers opportunities to observe moments of interiority developing within the child in relation to the built environment. Urban play relies upon bodily interaction with the surfaces and materials of the city and is simultaneously characterized by a psychic transformation beyond the limits of architectural space. Fully immersed in play, the child experiences a temporary suspension from the "real world," allowing interior-feeling sensations to surface. This psychological phenomenon is referred to as "deep play." It is proposed that three conditions come together for this transformation to occur: the child's agency to navigate the built environment, a cultural value for play, and the child's desire to play within their neighborhood's public spaces. It is argued that public interiority experienced through play transforms the entire city into *play ground*, bending the structural order of urban planning to the whim of the imagination (Figure 9.1).

Play is mysterious and elusive. Researchers and theoreticians impart that children innately understand play and adults intrinsically identify play. Still, experts debate possible meanings and purposes of play and cannot agree upon a formal definition of play.[2] Public interiority through urban play is framed by two scholarly positions: Huizinga's definition of play as a cultural phenomenon[3] partnered with Dargan and Zeitlin's urban play typologies of "Integration, Transformation, and Control."[4]

In *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture*, historian Johan Huizinga posits play as a cultural phenomenon,[5] which differs from other theories, including scientific explanations for play. Huizinga writes, "All of these hypotheses have one thing in common: they all start from the assumption that play must serve something that is not play, that it must have some kind of biological purpose... They attach play directly with the quantitative methods of experimental science without first paying attention to its profoundly aesthetic quality."[6] The aesthetics of play temporarily highlight the importance of experiencing the present moment (Figure 9.2). Furthermore, Huizinga states that play is

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-10

FIGURE 9.1 With an instinctive sense for self-preservation, the child chooses a safe space to make her snow angel. *In and Between*, Amy Roehl (2015).

FIGURE 9.2 The child and her friend paint the street by running their scooters through a puddle. Visual aesthetics are temporary, vanishing when the sun comes out. *Improvisation*, Amy Roehl (2023).

always by choice. He emphasizes the quality of freedom in play, going so far as to assert that play is synonymous with freedom itself.[7] In play, the empowered child enters what Huizinga describes as an extraordinary experience occurring outside of "real life."[8] This experience reflects play scholar Stuart Brown's hypothesis that play is not defined by activity but rather is a state of the mind.[9] Naturalist Diane Ackerman refers to this suspension from reality as part of the "deep play" experience.[10] Amanda Dargan and Steven Zeitlin's research on play is considered in partnership with Huizinga's theory and assertions around the role of culture and freedom of choice.

In their book *City Play*, Dargan and Zeitlin study the evolution of children's play in New York City. Through their analysis of play spanning over a century, the authors categorize children's urban play into three distinct areas: Integration, Transformation, and Control.[11] Children integrate play into the existing urban space where surfaces, objects, and materials are transformed to suit the purposes of their play. The child's autonomy to control shared public space is an important factor enabling integration and transformation. As documented in *City Play*, children are driven by curiosity and pleasure, intrinsically engaging with urban materials, surfaces, and objects such as concrete, walls, and metal. Children test their bodies and minds against the physicality of the world, seeing opportunity where adults merely engage with its utility (Figure 9.3).

FIGURE 9.3 The movement of the subway car challenges the child as she attempts suspension and balance while en route. *Suspension*, Amy Roehl (2022).

FIGURE 9.4 The child contemplates her route before she begins a morning ride through her neighborhood. *Open Road,* Amy Roehl (2016).

This case study's "field of play" includes the networked corridors of a child's neighborhood in Berlin, Germany. For the child, home is the point of origin from which she maps her world in a gradually increasing diameter. The neighborhood routes embedded into the child's body, free her to move independently, no longer requiring adult supervision (Figure 9.4). The freedom to move marks the first step toward experiencing play beyond the boundaries of the playground.

Boasting over 1,900 playgrounds,[12] the city of Berlin manifests the German cultural value of play, making it an ideal site for studying play in the urban environment. While the formal playground serves important purposes within the neighborhood, it is play along the transit corridors, including the subway and sidewalks that allows one to consider transforming the entire city into *play ground*. Play along these routes is distinctly different from that on the formal playground, where objects and materials specifically designed for play sit within the clearly marked boundaries. Alternatively, the structures, objects, surfaces, and materials along the transit pathway were designed for purposes other than play, requiring the child to integrate and transform the physicality of the space as they move. Children assert control as they independently negotiate the physical spaces of the corridor with adults and other children. The child eagerly anticipates daily encounters with the same low walls, fences, and patterns made by the paving blocks of the sidewalk. These objects offer challenges to engage in different ways whether faster, a different stepping pattern, or synchronizing movements with a friend (Figure 9.5).

FIGURE 9.5 The children do not see the fence as its intended purpose as a barrier, rather an object to engage with as they play along their way. *Opportunity*, Amy Roehl (2018).

In her writing on phenomenology and the senses in interiors, Christine Cantwell poignantly describes the inevitable inability of a designer to predict how humans ultimately use the spaces designers create. Cantwell writes, "even in advance of conceptualizing a project, the designer knows that every decision made in the execution of a constructed work has a trajectory that eventually engages another person's subjective response to space."[13] This statement perhaps sums up the phenomenon of children's choices as they engage with the city in their play, allowing for subjective meanings of the playground to continuously shift. Empowerment of the child lives in these moments of freedom to play and freedom in play. Here lies the intersection between the built environment and transcendent sensory experiences of play, making possible the transformation of the entire city into *play ground*.

Notes

1 Liz Teston, "On the Nature of Public Interiority," *Interiority* 3, no. 1 (2020): 63.
2 Peter K. Smith and Ralph Vollstedt, "On Defining Play: An Empirical Study of the Relationship Between Play and Various Play Criteria," *Child Development* 56, no. 4 (1985): 1042.
3 Johan Huizinga, *Homo Ludens: A Study of the Play Element in Culture* (London: Routledge, 1949), 1–26.
4 Amanda Dargan and Steven Zeitlin, *City Play* (Canada: Rutgers University Press, 1990), 39–162.
5 Huizinga, 1–26.
6 Huizinga, 2.
7 Huizinga, 8.
8 Huizinga, 8.
9 Stuart Brown and Christopher Vaughn, *Play: How It Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul* (New York: Penguin Group Inc., 2009), 60.
10 Ackerman, 3.
11 Dargan and Zeitlin, 39–162.
12 "City of Berlin Senate Department for Urban Mobility, Transport, Climate Action and the Environment: Children's Playgrounds," Berlin.de, City of Berlin, Accessed September 29, 2023. https://www.berlin.de/sen/uvk/en/nature-and-green/urban-green-space/data-and-facts/playgrounds/
13 Christine Cantwell, "Phenomenology and the Senses in Interiors," in *The Handbook of Interior Architecture and Design*, eds. Graeme Brooker and Lois Weinthal (New York and London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 544.

PART 2

Virtual + Psychologies

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

10

AN INTRODUCTION TO VIRTUAL + PSYCHOLOGIES

Karin Tehve

FIGURE 10.1 A listening station for Frieze Sounds (2015). Photo courtesy of Marco Scozzaro/Frieze.

The essays found in *Virtual + Psychologies* provide a variety of possible definitions concerning *public interiority*, each part of our evolving understanding of that concept.[1] The definitions offered here are complex, multi-valent, and sometimes contradictory. Like the urban conditions that are both context for and constructed from these phenomena, they are (like Baudelaire's modernity) transient, fleeting, and contingent. These interior

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-12

conditions are unstable and immaterial, yet enable the sense of both belonging to and possessing our constructed environments (Figure 10.1).

Read together, the following essays reinforce the position that interiors are irreducible to the existing insides of architecture.[2] Interior conditions examined here do involve constructed conditions, whether physically present or virtually experienced: social media platforms (Kedzior and Fu), designer-defined zones of programming (Feliz), and views from interiors of cars, trains, or planes (Janssen). Interiors are also exposed (Byrd), excavated (Krug), or envisioned (Bravo) through representations. All of these examples, however, require the perception and engagement of those within its condition to manifest. It is this aspect of spatial experience that is fundamental to interior urbanism (or the experience of a city as an interior), casting its inhabitants as co-creators.

Public interiorities are urban at their core, whether their physical contexts are constructed or ostensibly natural. Together or as groups, the occupants of these domains construct territories interdependent with a larger perceptual context and make it possible to imagine other neighboring territories. To occupy such a condition is to occupy a Sloterdijk bubble, with the caveat that the walls of these bubbles may overlap and reinforce those of its neighbors.

Public interiorities may form as inversions of private and public conditions. In her book *The Modern Interior*, the historian Penny Sparke identifies one such condition: that the more commonplace it becomes to see published images of interior environments, the more public in nature those spaces themselves become. Spaces previously conceived as respite and refuge from the public realm, in being publicized become accessible to others.[3] Sparke identifies a condition through which no physical change may occur, but through representation, that space is recast in the minds of its occupants. Sparke goes on to identify evidence that the then-nascent profession of interior design responded to that ambiguously public condition. It needn't be the case that one's own home was exposed through publication for that die to be cast—the potential for public viewing and assessment was enough to change what *home* might be: from a private enclave to details of one's public, social identity.

Public interiorities may become recognizable in attempts to reconcile the apparent oppositions of private and public, tensions implicit in Immanuel Kant's descriptions of aesthetic assessment. An aesthetic response, for Kant, is felt—it is individual and emotional, definitively subjective.[4] In this way, Kant describes a private response. That said, the legitimacy of that response had to be confirmed in being shared by others. Kant referred to this state as *sensus communis*, a kind of aesthetic common sense. In this way, an individual's most private and personal reactions could bind them to a larger public.

Kant's proposal, however elegant in its simplicity, was predicated on an exclusive understanding of that society, leaving women and people of color outside its definition. In that, Kant fell well short of his goal: a universally applicable understanding of aesthetic experience. A revision to promote a more inclusive model might focus on circumstance rather than inherent sensibility. Those excluded from Kant's schema may have lacked, in the eighteenth century, not the emotional or intellectual capacity to generate a pure gaze but access to the public sphere necessary to support any form of common experience, in form or content.

The *Public Interiority* exhibition and essays suggest a new lens through which to consider these conditions. In his essay, Jered Sprecher describes an aesthetic experience

inspired by the contemplation of a series of paintings installed in the University of Tennessee's Ewing Gallery of Art + Architecture, evoking the sublime with its associated sense of awe. As Kant would have it, this experience is subjective and makes a fleeting virtual space, emerging from the relationship of an object of contemplation and the psychology of its viewer. This object, the painting, is installed in a space-in-common, a public space.[5] In this space shared with others, any of us may make our *own* space through engaging with its exhibits, however fleeting. The viewers of these paintings need not have values or histories in common; they are bound together by sharing the chance to have *an* experience, not (as Kant would have it) through having *the same* experience. In other words, if we were to decouple the individual aesthetic response from the conformance required of Kant's *sensus communis*, a domain forms in concert with neighboring sensibilities without the need that they conform, a domain made richer and stranger by that non-conformity.

In public realms, in the co-presence of others, we have access to objects and environments in common, things and spaces we can see, hear, sense, or feel in *communis*. Our reactions may overlap and reinforce one another, but they needn't. Each essay in this section represents spaces created through personal experience or perception; each, in turn, engenders a consciousness of the diversity of experience made possible in the spaces we co-inhabit, whether physical or virtual. Now as part of a book, these essays enter the public realm; even the most intimate of the spaces represented within it are now available to its readers. Any reading might inspire the understanding of public interiority as rich and strange.

Notes

1 This definition is adapted from Deleuze and Guattari's description, in *What is Philosophy?* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1994).
2 This is the position described in *Interiors Beyond Architecture* (editors: Amy Campos and Deborah Schneiderman, New York: Routledge, 2018) and *Interior Provocations: History, Theory, And Practice of Autonomous Interiors* (editors: Anca I. Lasc et al., New York: Routledge, 2021).
3 This concept of the modern interior references Walter Benjamin's work: a refuge from the modern city.
4 For Kant, this response could only be the result of pure free will: a legitimate aesthetic response formed independent of need, desire, or other coercive influences.
5 Caveats include that this gallery is an enclosed space on a campus with its own rules about access to the public.

11

SUPREME PRIVACY

Seven Public Interiorities

Lindsey Krug

Introduction

This chapter focuses on two layers of American infrastructure—case law and the built environment—to explore evolving delineations between privacy and publicness and related delineations between interiority and exteriority. Using three-dimensional digital modeling and imaging tools to assemble and excavate material from a lineage of seven Supreme Court cases from 1965 to 2022, a set of public interiorities is constructed to reveal how law and architecture together have shaped the spaces we inhabit and, in turn, the bodily autonomy these spaces may or may not afford. Reframing interiority as something generated by sociopolitical contexts rather than by architectural enclosure enables studying an otherwise disparate collection of architectural spaces as a curated set, unbound by typological silos or geographic proximity. As interiors are brought out into public view, and the exterior world is brought in, both sanguine and cautionary dimensions of public interiority are revealed.

Following World War II, as America grappled with the Cultural Revolution of the 1950s and 60s and the task of defining its identity domestically and on the world stage, a core tenet of American life bubbled to the surface of political, social, and aesthetic discourse: privacy. Once the revelry of the Allies' victory cooled into the precarity of the Cold War, American democracy and the culture it afforded its citizens were positioned and advertised in opposition to the totalitarian government and culture of the Soviet Union. In her book *Pursuing Privacy in Cold War America*, literature scholar Deborah Nelson attributes the eulogizing of privacy that emerged in Cold War America to a heightened national security discourse and the accompanying fear of the Eastern Bloc. She writes:

> The potency of American democracy in cold war rhetoric was not its cultivation of a vibrant and free public discourse but its vigilant protection of private autonomy. The stakes of this conviction were typically apocalyptic: either we preserved the integrity of private spaces and thus the free world, or we tolerated their penetration and took the first step toward totalitarian oppression. The very starkness of this choice manufactured

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-13

> the cold war's governing paradox: in the interests of preserving the space of privacy, privacy would have to be penetrated.[1]

The notion of privacy—a shapeshifting term so commonplace it evades precise definition—would begin to take on different meanings and manifestations. In many ways, privacy is conflated with choice, something not readily afforded in Soviet society. Protecting privacy, then, translated to new initiatives for removing governmental intervention in the choices made in one's personal life. As rights related to bodily autonomy expanded during this era through novel constitutional interpretations, the emergence of national discourse around conceptions of privacy would forever shape the trajectory of American life.

The Constitutional and Juridical Emergence and Evolution of Privacy

The word *privacy* never appears in the United States Constitution and thus has not always been considered fundamental or guaranteed. Its absence is often found to be a surprising omission as the *right to privacy* is widely considered a core protection in American society.[2] In the absence of codified federal protections, privacy had to wait for "juridical invention" through the US common law system, which has resulted in legal readings of an *implied* right to privacy in either the First, Third, Fourth, Ninth, or Fourteenth Amendments, or some combination therein, depending on constitutional interpretation.[3] The US Supreme Court first took up privacy as a constitutional issue, pitting an individual against the state in the wiretapping case of *Olmstead v. United States* (1928).[4] Ultimately, the Court would not rule that the petitioner's rights (specifically, any latent implications of privacy in the Fourth and Fifth Amendments) had been violated.[5] The provenance of edifying judicial rulings in favor of privacy came only during the Cold War era, correlating with the emergence of intelligence-gathering technology that would make it possible for the state to intrude on one's private affairs.[6] Questions surrounding the precedent set by *Olmstead*, in its refusal to establish privacy rights, would resurface thirty years later in a series of SCOTUS cases between 1958 and 1965. In *NAACP v. Patterson* (1958), the Court conceded that the NAACP and other private organizations were entitled to protect the privacy of their members and membership lists.[7] *Poe v. Ullman* (1961), though it was ultimately dismissed by the Court, "began to articulate the rationale for protecting the home as a private "zone" in its petition of Connecticut's Comstock Law, which criminalized the use of contraception, among other things deemed "immoral" or "indecent."[8]

A few years later, the Court would recognize privacy as a right bestowed in America's founding documents in the case of *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965), which once again took on Connecticut's Comstock Law. The outcome of the case granted married couples the right to use contraception on the grounds that this was a choice within the confines of their private lives and not to be meddled in by the government. Justice William Douglas wrote for the Court's majority: "Specific guarantees in the Bill of Rights have penumbras, formed by emanations from those guarantees that help give them life and substance. Various guarantees create zones of privacy."[9] Though exceedingly spatial in this description, questions remain: where do these shadowy zones of privacy exist in the physical world, how are they enacted, and how are they made distinct from zones of publicness? In his concurring opinion, Justice Arthur Goldberg maintained that the Comstock Law's

barring of contraception violated liberties granted in the Ninth and Fourteenth Amendments as it "'unconstitutionally intrudes upon the right of marital privacy.'"[10] Marital privacy is spatialized in only one other instance in the justices' final opinions: in the bedroom. In the majority opinion, Justice Douglas asks, rhetorically: "Would we allow the police to search the sacred precincts of marital bedrooms for telltale signs of the use of contraceptives? The very idea is repulsive to the notions of privacy surrounding the marriage relationship."[11]

Though focused on privacy within a marriage, these rulings would serve as a foundational precedent as US common law evolved over the next half-century. In particular, five subsequent high-profile cases concerning the legality of private actions occurring in private environments built on *Griswold*. *Eisenstadt v. Baird* (1972) granted unmarried people the right to birth control; *Roe v. Wade* (1973) granted the right to abortion for any woman; *Carey v. Population Services International* (1977) granted anyone at least sixteen years of age the right to contraception; *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003) granted the right to consensual, non-procreative sexual relations; and *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015) granted the right to marriage regardless of sex or sexual orientation. This lineage of rights rooted in privacy guarantees was destabilized in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* (2022), where the Court struck down a 49-year-old precedent set by *Roe*.

With federal protections around privacy in flux, an ecosystem of more granular local and state definitions is emerging, suggesting a growing urgency to interrogate and understand what privacy means and how it is constructed and occupied.[12] If building for human inhabitation involves uniting, separating, delineating, and articulating zones of occupiable space, what role did the architectural spaces play in the contested events central to each of the seven cases? A marriage clinic, a lecture hall, an adoption office, a post office, an apartment building, a private jet, and a women's clinic, all ordinary spaces where ordinary people do ordinary (and private) things, were juridically elevated to the nation's highest Court, becoming stage sets on which public discourse and debate were played out. Each instance extracts the private into the public realm; each constitutes an act of constructing public interiority. However, even as these private interiors opened to the public gaze (rendered in judicial jargon and legal frameworks), the physical qualities of these spaces are overlooked and often lost to history. By examining interiority in these cases, the incremental evolution of legal definitions—and the corresponding liberties bestowed—allows us to trace the architectural and spatial evolution of our public and private lives.

Spaces of Privacy: Seven Cases, Seven Public Interiorities

The body of work presented here, titled *Supreme Privacy*, depicts the seven legal-turned-architectural case studies as explored through contemporaneous written and photographic evidence. The 57-year period between *Griswold* and *Dobbs* brackets the following investigation of the physical sites where interiority oscillates between public and private. The content of original SCOTUS rulings, historical press coverage, and open-access information available on Google Earth have been synthesized to re-create digital mock-ups of the cases' real architectural settings. In most cases, the exact building or structure where contested events occurred is known (*Griswold*, *Eisenstadt, Lawrence, Obergefell*, and *Dobbs*); in others, a typological placeholder is created (*Roe* and *Carey*). From each architectural set, a cylindrical slice is carved out to allow an unrestricted view deep into private

spaces. This unifying gesture joins these seven spaces not by typological or aesthetic architectural qualities but by the spatial privacy precedent they establish together. These public interiorities are not remarkable, but they are relatable and familiar. They reveal the utterly ordinary architectural arrangements that have become historically significant via legal proceedings in the nation's highest Court.

Alongside three of the digital renderings—*Griswold*, *Obergefell*, and *Dobbs*—historical photographs are used as context and evidence to support images that are decisively authored. In her book *Regarding the Pain of Others*, Susan Sontag explores the differences between photographic image-taking and artistic image-making through an analysis of Francisco Goya's series of 83 etchings titled *Los Desastres de la Guerra (The Disasters of War)*, made between 1810 and 1820 to depict the bloody encounters between Spain and Napoleon's French Empire.[13] In particular, she comments on Goya's decision to dematerialize the physical spaces and environments staging the action through mark-making and his curious use of text in his image captions. "All the trappings of the spectacular have been eliminated…[and] the cumulative effect is devastating…While the image, like every image, is an invitation to look, the caption, more often than not, insists on the difficulty of doing just that."[14] One may read a similar effort in *Supreme Privacy*, to remove anything spectacular from the depictions of the physical environments. Here, the images depict crisp architectural settings with all human figures removed; the case summaries lay bare details from the average lives of each case's appellants in deadpan language stripped of inaccessible legal jargon. Ideally, through the use of disciplinary tools and more familiar language, an uncanny balance of anonymity and intimacy is produced that enables reading these legal cases as architectural references or precedents. The cases proceed chronologically through written vignettes that read as short stories but summarize the real narratives at the center of each case.

Case 1

Griswold v. Connecticut, 381 US 479 (1965) is sited at 406 Orange Street, New Haven, Connecticut (Figure 11.1). This wood-framed, traditional New England two-story residence-turned-clinic is where Estelle Griswold and Charles Buxton ran a reproductive health and fertility clinic, the Planned Parenthood League of Connecticut (PPLC).[15] Griswold was the Executive Director, while Buxton was the Medical Director and the Department Chair of Obstetrics & Gynecology at Yale University. Buxton and Griswold organized border runs to New York and Rhode Island to help married couples obtain contraceptives that were illegal in Connecticut under the Comstock Law. Eventually, they began distributing contraceptives directly from the clinic and were arrested after just nine days in 1961.[16]

Case 2

Eisenstadt v. Baird, 405 US 438 (1972) is sited at Hayden Hall, 685 Commonwealth Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts (Figure 11.2). Described as an "architectural monument to higher education,"[17] this modern-Gothic masonry structure on the Boston University campus is one of the school's oldest auditorium spaces; it is where activist William Baird was invited to speak to students about reproductive health and justice in

FIGURE 11.1 Case 1 (Left) Estelle Griswold standing outside the Planned Parenthood League of Connecticut in New Haven. *Lee Lockwood* (1963), copyright Getty Images/Lee Lockwood. (Right) The *Griswold Clinic*, Lindsey Krug (2022), 24 × 24 in. (Left) Photo by Lee Lockwood (Copyright: Getty Images/Lee Lockwood). (Right) Rendering by author.

1967. Following his speech, he gave a 19-year-old, unwed student a condom and contraceptive foam and was immediately handcuffed for violating Massachusetts' "Crimes Against Chastity, Morality, Decency, and Good Order" laws.[18]

Case 3

Roe v. Wade, 410 US 113 (1973) is sited at a typological placeholder: an adoption agency in Dallas, Texas (Figure 11.2). This generic office space is where attorney Henry McCluskey would have met with Norma McCorvey (the previously anonymous plaintiff Jane Roe) to organize the adoption of her second and third children from unplanned pregnancies.[19] Though she became the face of abortion rights, McCorvey never had an abortion herself but sought one out during her third unplanned pregnancy in 1969.

Case 4

Carey v. Population Services International, 431 US 678 (1977) is sited at a typological placeholder: a post office in North Carolina (Figure 11.2). This generic shipping, sorting, and receiving facility is where mail-order contraceptives would have passed through in the 1970s once sent from the North Carolina-based corporation Population Planning Association to recipients in New York state, violating New York's "Education Law."[20]

Case 5

Lawrence v. Texas, 539 US 558 (2003) is sited at the Colorado Club Apartments, 794 Normandy Street, Houston, Texas (Figure 11.2). This triplex-style apartment complex in East Houston is where John Lawrence lived and was visited by his friends Robert Eubanks and Tyron Garner, who had been dating on and off.[21] Following a drunken disagreement in 1998, Eubanks called the police with false accusations against the other two men, resulting in four deputies showing up, entering Lawrence's residence, and allegedly discovering Lawrence and Garner engaging in a sexual act violating Texas's "Homosexual Conduct" law. Lawrence and Garner were arrested.[22]

FIGURE 11.2 (Clockwise from upper left) Case 2 *The Baird Auditorium*, Lindsey Krug (2022), 24 × 24 in; Case 3 *The Roe Adoption Office*, Lindsey Krug (2022), 24 × 24 in; Case 5 *The Lawrence Apartment*, Lindsey Krug (2022), 24 × 24 in; Case 4 *The Carey Post Office*, Lindsey Krug (2022), 24 × 24 in. Renderings by author.

Case 6

Obergefell v. Hodges, 576 US 644 (2015) is sited inside a Learjet 3535 airplane parked on a runway in Baltimore, Maryland (Figure 11.3). This is the type of plane flown by Ohio residents John Arthur and Jim Obergefell to be legally married on the tarmac of Baltimore/Washington International Thurgood Marshall Airport (BWI) in Maryland. Ohio did not allow same-sex marriage at the time, so the two men flew in the donated rental jet to be married in Maryland in July of 2013. Arthur was terminally ill with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) disease. By obtaining an out-of-state marriage license, the men could then petition the state of Ohio for recognition of Obergefell as Arthur's surviving spouse on his death certificate when he passed away just months later in October of 2013.[23]

Case 7

Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization, 597 US 215 (2022) is sited at the Jackson Women's Health Organization (JWHO), located at 2903 North State Street, Jackson, Mississippi (Figure 11.4). This pink stucco building, known colloquially as the Pink House, is surrounded by wrought-iron fencing covered in a black-out fabric privacy screen. JWHO was the last women's health clinic offering legal abortion procedures in the state of Mississippi. It closed its doors on July 6, 2022, one day before Mississippi's near-total abortion ban took effect[24]

Digital Construction Techniques, Image Authorship, and Representation

In the renderings, the excavation of a five-foot-wide cylindrical core from each architectural set invites the public into private space. The layering of enclosure, furnishings, signage, and other architectural detailing reveals itself in sequence, making slippery any binary distinctions between private and public, interior, and exterior. Gordon Matta-Clark's site-specific "building cuts" utilized similar techniques to those deployed digitally in *Supreme Privacy*. Regarding Matta-Clark's 1974 work titled *Splitting*—a house cut vertically down the middle in Englewood, New Jersey—Mark Wigley writes: "A simple house…had been transformed into an image of dense internal complexity."[25] After the shock value wears off, Wigley posits:

> What really holds everybody in its grip is not the house itself. Despite the polemical physicality of the surgical operation, the work of *Splitting* is not in the object itself but in the wide array of forensic documentation. After all, the goal of an autopsy is never the body on the table but the explanations extracted from it.[26]

Though perhaps less an autopsy and more a vivisection on the ever-changing relationship between case law and the spaces we occupy, Wigley's emphasis on extracting material information to form new conjectures is an apt reading of *Supreme Privacy*.[27] Wherein something like a soil boring test would take a cylindrical core and remove it from its context for study, the digital reconstructions of each case emphasize the inverse, discarding the cored-out sample in favor of viewing the larger context.

Boring digitally through these seven architectural environments exposes a sequence of spaces moving from the exterior and most "public" to the interior and most "private." The

FIGURE 11.3 Case 6 (Top) Jim Obergefell, John Arthur, and their officiant Paulette Roberts conducting their wedding ceremony on the tarmac at BWI airport. Glenn Hartong (2013), copyright USA Today Network/Glenn Hartong. (Bottom) *The Obergefell Airplane*, Lindsey Krug (2022), 24 × 24 in.

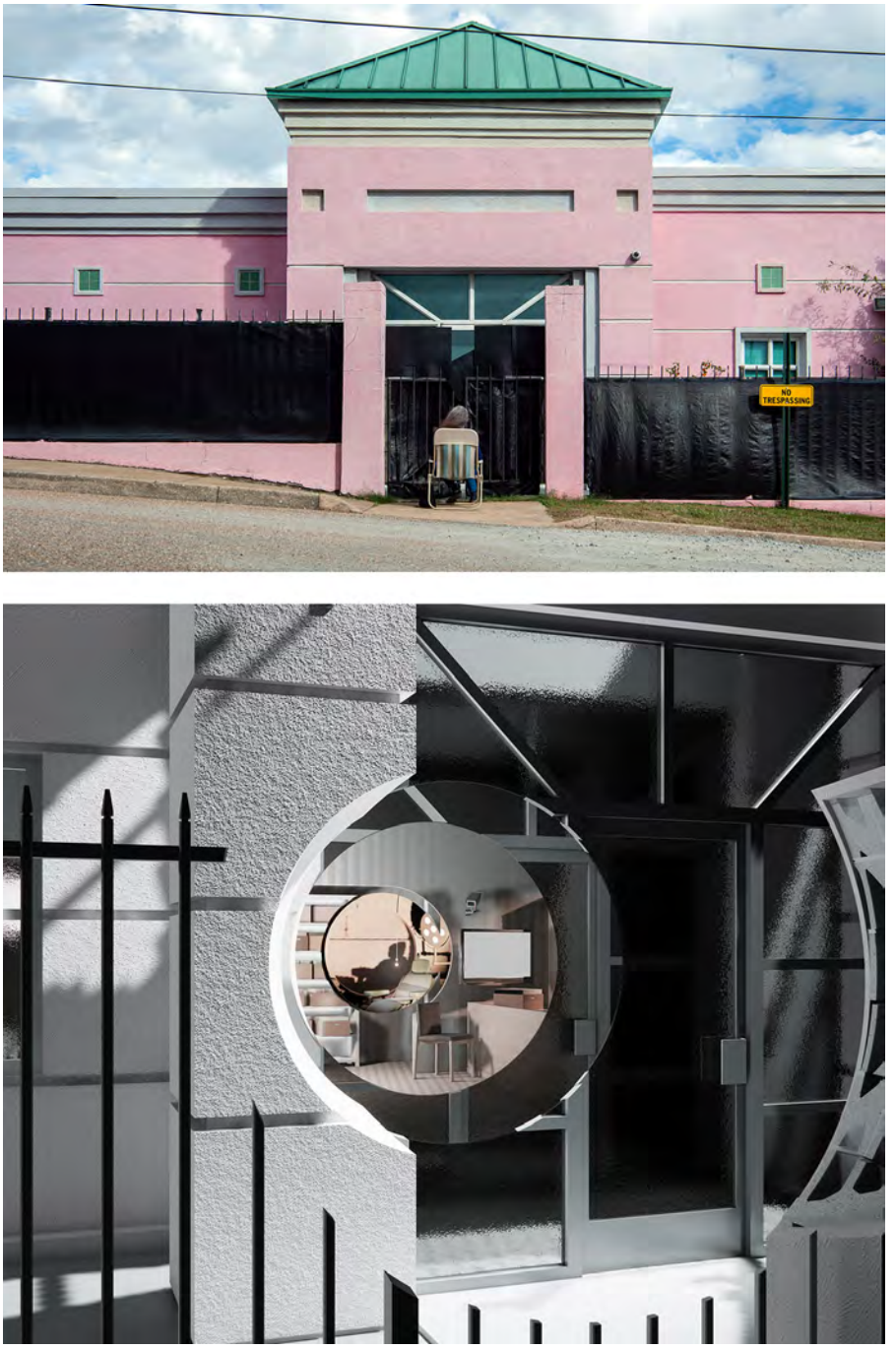


FIGURE 11.4 Case 7 (Top) A lone protester, Regina Chandler, sits outside the gate of the Jackson Women's Health Organization, (2021). (Bottom) *The Dobbs Clinic*, (2022), 24 x 24 in. (Top) Photo by Rory Doyle (Copyright: Reuters/Rory Doyle). (Bottom) Rendering by author.

terminal space in each view is the site of private affairs central to the corresponding SCOTUS case. In some scenes, the exterior enclosure is pierced to reveal a single interior room. In others, peeling back the architectural envelope enables a deep view into three, four, or five rooms. In every image, perspectival distortion and material thicknesses exposed by the cylindrical cut work to thicken the boundary between interior and exterior and, similarly, between public and private. It is ambiguous whether the resulting porosity suggests that interiority is working its way out, revealing itself to the public, or that exteriority is encroaching inward to consume that which is private.

In *Regarding the Pain of Others*, Sontag discusses images that document suffering and points out the two-fold, contradictory cultural currency they possess. On one hand, Sontag writes, "public attention is steered by the attentions of the media." Her analysis of public responses to wars since the nineteenth century illustrates "the determining influence of photographs in shaping what catastrophes and crises we pay attention to, what we care about, and ultimately what evaluations are attached to these conflicts." On the other hand, she challenges her readers to consider the inverse, pointing out that "in a world hyper-saturated with images, those that should matter have a diminishing effect: we become callous. In the end, such images just make us a little less able to feel."[28] Sontag's incisive articulation of the inherent responsibility associated with capturing, curating, producing, and disseminating imagery related to difficult topics or events is a productively critical lens for viewing the images contained in this chapter. Though not images of war, the violent removal of architectural enclosures signals the suffering that occurs when the personal affairs of people become painfully public, even when final outcomes may warrant celebration.

Viewers of *Supreme Privacy* may find the stories and accompanying images to "matter" emotionally, culturally, and spatially. Sontag points out that:

> The suffering most often deemed worthy of representation are those understood to be the product of wrath, divine or human. Suffering from natural causes, such as illness or childbirth, is scantily represented in the history of art; that caused by accident, virtually not at all—as if there were no such thing as suffering by inadvertence or misadventure.[29]

The disruptive, public voyeurism that appellants face being involved in a landmark Supreme Court case means there are moments of wrath, natural causes, and accidents across the seven cases. The equalizing rendering technique affords the consideration of intersections between these forms of hardship.

Conclusion: 57 Years of Public Interiority; Sanguine or Cautionary Tale?

In reviewing the content of these seven SCOTUS cases, it must be noted that one is decidedly different from the others. *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* is the only case in which a pre-established federal right premised on privacy is revoked rather than granted. If *Griswold* initiated an era of expanding personal rights, *Dobbs* might indicate its conclusion and the commencement of a new period yet to be defined. While *Dobbs* did not undermine the 57-year-old precedent of *Griswold*, it did reverse the 49-year-old precedent of *Roe* in a sufficiently ominous and unprecedented move by the Court.

Notably, this lineage begins and ends in a health clinic. The New Haven clinic's domestic vernacular contrasts significantly with the institutional sterility of the Jackson clinic, bracketing the evolution of a programmatic and typological relationship that corresponds with a significant change in civil liberties.[30] The first six case renderings communicate an optimistic reading of public interiority, showing interior spaces made public through judicial procedures that expanded citizens' rights. However, one might speculate about potential unintended consequences associated with public interiority as *Dobbs* marks a reversal of this trajectory. If *Dobbs* serves as a cautionary tale, it is worth speculating whether the collection of rights outlined could be rooted in something other than privacy. As it mediates conditions of privacy and publicity, does architecture have some agency in considering how some of these civil liberties might be better protected? In this chapter, privacy has largely been framed as a positive: something everyone ought to be entitled to. However, it is worth pointing out that privacy can be a double-edged sword, and in this way, we should look critically at our surroundings and the American built environment to consider what else—good and bad—privacy has helped shape throughout history.[31]

In the polarized landscape of contemporary American politics and culture, it is difficult to concede that it is counterintuitive, and there is hypocrisy, even, in defining when and where the rights of the private individual outweigh the importance of the collective, public good. Even more challenging is finding a satisfying balance for governmental prioritization of one over the other. Nonetheless, most can agree on the value and the necessity for public discourse and the construction of spaces where it can occur. Hannah Arendt believed that:

> .... representative opinions could arise only when citizens confronted one another in a public space so that they could examine an issue from a number of different perspectives, modify their views, and enlarge their standpoint to incorporate that of others. Political opinions, she claimed, can never be formed in private; rather, they are formed, tested, and enlarged only within a public context.[32]

In this spirit, the techniques at work in *Supreme Privacy*—assembling then boring through a three-dimensional digital model—might offer an architectural method for facilitating this kind of public engagement, bringing that which is interior out into public view to form a public interiority. From the front steps of a wood-framed residence-turned-fertility clinic in New Haven to the nameless adoption office Norma McCorvey visited to the interior of the plane where John Arthur and Jim Obergefell were married, this exercise constructs and synthesizes legal-turned-architectural case studies as a first step in preparation for moving forward in the uncertain and piecemeal landscape of privacy rights in America.

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my student research assistants from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee who have helped contribute to this project and related work over the past couple years, including Alana Dunne, Elisabet Jatmiko, Evan Johnson, Sarah Lunow, Nathan Magee, and Jacob Rohan. Their efforts and contributions were made possible with

funding support from the UWM Office of Undergraduate Research SURF program and a Mellowes Masters Research Assistantship grant from the Department of Architecture. I would like to acknowledge the time, space, and mentorship provided to me this year as a faculty fellow at the Center for 21st Century Studies; and I thank the other fellows in the 2023–24 cohort who offered their generous and thoughtful feedback on the project and previous drafts.

Notes

1 Deborah Nelson, *Pursuing Privacy in Cold War America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), xiii.

2 Russ Castronovo, *Necro Citizenship: Death, Eroticism, and the Public Sphere in the Nineteenth-Century United States* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), 3. In his book on the evolution of subjecthood under 19th-century American frameworks of democracy, Russ Castronovo writes: "Guaranteed formal equality and cultural autonomy, the citizen encounters politics as a near-death experience: he or she thus prefers privacy to public life, passivity to active engagement, and forgetting to memory."

3 Castronovo, 16. Castronovo uses the phrasing "juridical invention" to describe the evolution of the Court's understanding of privacy; Joseph Dainow, "The Civil Law and the Common Law: Some Points of Comparison," *The American Journal of Comparative Law* 15, no. 3 (1966-1967): 421–425, https://doi.org/10.2307/838275. The US legal system is a common law system. Common law (or, case law) relies on judicial decisions and the creation of judicial precedent, rather than a set of codified legislative statutes. There is no comprehensive collection of legal rules and statutes, as might be the case in other legal models, like a civil law system; Griswold v. Connecticut, 381 U.S. 479 (1965). In the majority opinion, Justice Douglas elaborated on implied privacy rights within the Bill of Rights, stating: "The right of association contained in the penumbra of the First Amendment is one, as we have seen. The Third Amendment, in its prohibition against the quartering of soldiers 'in any house' in time of peace without the consent of the owner, is another facet of that privacy. The Fourth Amendment explicitly affirms the 'right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures.' The Fifth Amendment, in its Self-Incrimination Clause, enables the citizen to create a zone of privacy which the government may not force him to surrender to his detriment. The Ninth Amendment provides: 'The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.' The Fourth and Fifth Amendments were described in Boyd v. United States …as protection against all governmental invasions 'of the sanctity of a man's home and the privacies of life.'" The Comstock law's infringement upon the Fourteenth amendment faced more nuanced interpretation across the four concurring opinions. One such opinion, authored by Justice Byron White, stated: "In my view, this Connecticut law, as applied to married couples, deprives them of 'liberty' without due process of law, as that concept is used in the Fourteenth Amendment…Suffice it to say that this is not the first time this Court has had occasion to articulate that the liberty entitled to protection under the Fourteenth Amendment includes the right 'to marry, establish a home and bring up children.'"

4 Deborah Nelson, "Beyond Privacy: Confessions between a Woman and Her Doctor," *Feminist Studies* 25, no. 2 (Summer 1999): 280, https://doi.org/10.2307/3178680

5 "Olmstead v. United States," *Oyez*, accessed October 8, 2023, https://www.oyez.org/cases/1900-1940/277us438

6 Nelson, "Beyond Privacy," 280.

7 "National Association for the Advancement of Colored People v. Patterson," *Oyez*, accessed September 17, 2023, https://www.oyez.org/cases/1957/91.

8 "Poe v. Ullman," *Oyez*, accessed September 17, 2023, https://www.oyez.org/cases/1960/60. *Poe v. Ullman* was ultimately dismissed because the Court determined the case presented only hypothetical applications of laws; Nelson, "Beyond Privacy," 281. Nelson explains that Poe

introduced the rationale for the protecting the home as a private space; Ellen Wexler, "The 150-Year-Old Comstock Act Could Transform the Abortion Debate," *Smithsonian Magazine*, June15,2023,https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/comstock-act-transform-abortion-debate-180982363/. In 1873, Congress passed the Comstock Act, the outcome of successful lobbying by Christian activist and anti-vice crusader Anthony Comstock. The law broadly criminalized sending 'lewd, obscene, or morally corrupt' materials through the mail. This included anything considered sexual, erotic, or pornographic, including contraception. The 1873 decision spurred many state legislatures to pass their own versions of the law, extending well beyond the scope of the postal service. In Connecticut, the strictest version was passed, which criminalized using contraception altogether.

9 *Griswold v. Connecticut*, 381 U.S. 479 (1965), 484.
10 *Griswold v. Connecticut*, 381 U.S. 479 (1965), 486.
11 *Griswold v. Connecticut*, 381 U.S. 479 (1965), 485.
12 Allison McCann, Amy Schoenfeld Walker, Ava Sasani, Taylor Johnston, Larry Buchanan and Jon Huang, "Tracking Abortion Bans Across the Country," *New York Times*, January 8, 2023, https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/us/abortion-laws-roe-v-wade.html
13 Susan Sontag, *Regarding the Pain of Others* (New York: Picador, 2003), 36.
14 Sontag, 36-37. Sontag's analysis of Goya continues: "All the trappings of the spectacular have been eliminated: the landscape is an atmosphere, a darkness, barely sketched in. War is not a spectacle. And Goya's print series is not a narrative: each image, captioned with a brief phrase lamenting the wickedness of the invaders and the monstrousness of the suffering they inflicted, stands independently of the others…A voice, presumably the artist's, badgers the viewer: can you bear to look at this?…Ordinary language fixes the difference between handmade images like Goya's and photographs by the convention that artists 'make' drawings and paintings while photographers 'take' photographs. But the photographic image…cannot be simply a transparency of something that happened…To photograph is to frame, and to frame is to exclude…A painting or drawing is judged a fake when it turns out not to be by the artist to whom it had been attributed. A photograph…is judged a fake when it turns out to be deceiving the viewer about the scene it purports to depict."
15 "Griswold v. Connecticut," *Oyez*, Accessed October 5, 2022. https://www.oyez.org/cases/1964/496
16 Nancy Finlay, "Taking on the State: Griswold v. Connecticut," *Connecticut History*, November 9, 2021, https://connecticuthistory.org/taking-on-the-state-griswold-v-connecticut
17 "B.U. to Dedicate Hayden Memorial," *New York Times*, September 17, 1939, https://timesmachine.nytimes.com/timesmachine/1939/09/17/94710665.html?pageNumber=57
18 Nick Kolev, "50 Years Later: Revisiting the Moment in BU History That Helped Shape the Abortion Rights Battle," *BU Today*, July 11, 2022, https://www.bu.edu/articles/2022/activist-bill-baird-abortion-rights-bu-lecture.
19 Joshua Prager, "The Roe Baby," *Atlantic*, September 9, 2021, https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2021/09/jane-roe-v-wade-baby-norma-mccorvey/620009.
20 *Carey v. Population Svcs. Int'l*, 431 U.S. 678 (1977), 678.
21 Brandon Wolf, "The Rest of the Story," *Out Smart Magazine*, April 1, 2012, http://www.outsmartmagazine.com/2012/04/the-rest-of-the-story
22 Sanford Levinson, "The Gay Case," review of *Flagrant Conduct*, by Dale Carpenter, *Texas Monthly*, March 2012, https://www.texasmonthly.com/articles/the-gay-case/
23 Timothy M. Phelps, "At Center of Supreme Court Gay Marriage Case, A Story of Love Amid Crippling Disease," *Los Angeles Times*, April 14, 2015, https://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-gay-marriage-plaintiffs-20150414-story.html
24 Abigail Abrams, "Inside Mississippi's Last Abortion Clinic—and the Biggest Fight for Abortion Rights in a Generation," *TIME*, November 11, 2021, https://time.com/6116072/mississippi-abortion-supreme-court-jackson-womens-health
25 Mark Wigley, "Anarchitectures: The Forensics of Explanation," *Log* 15 (Winter 2009): 125, https://www.jstor.org/stable/41765268
26 Wigley, 125.
27 Paul Preciado, *Pornotopia: An Essay on Playboy`s Architecture and Biopolitics* (Brooklyn: Zone Books, 2014), 215. The language of architectural "vivisection" is borrowed from Preciado's writing about Playboy and a distinction between how historians and cultural critics read spaces. "What you have read up until now has been an autopsy of Playboy pornotopia. While the

historian makes dissections of those objects already dead (or approaches them as if they were), the cultural critic is an instigator of the vivisection of semiotechnical systems. Where the historian looks to unearth corpses and assign dates to archaeological traces, the cultural critic seeks out the signs of life of even those systems that appear to have ceased breathing long ago."

28 Sontag, 81.

29 Sontag, 33.

30 Barbara Penner, "Rehearsing Domesticity: Post-War Pocono Honeymoon Resorts," in *Negotiating Domesticity: Spatial Productions of Gender in Modern Architecture*, eds. Hilde Heynen and Gülsüm Baydar (New York and London: Routledge, 2005), 107. Penner proffers insight into the ramifications of transforming the domestic into the institutional. Dominant social frameworks in the 1950s and 60s "believed that single-family detached homes alone could provide the spatial privacy necessary to maintain the order and health of the family."

31 Saidiya Hartman, *Scenes of Subjection: Terror, Slavery, and Self-Making in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 161. Hartman describes how "the mutable boundaries of the private were employed to restrict Black mobility and freedom of association by designating much of public space as the private and exclusive realm of whites" in antebellum, postbellum, and present-day America; Castronovo, 229. [Original citation: Elizabeth Schneider, "The Violence of Privacy," *Connecticut Law Review* 23, no. 4 (Summer 1991), 974.] Echoing legal theorist Elizabeth Schneider, Castronovo writes: "Privacy is a privilege of full citizenship deployed against those who claim only partial citizenship. In fact, men accused of marital rape have invoked *Griswold's* right to marital privacy as a courtroom defense. While this legal maneuver has not convinced the courts, privacy has sanctioned an experience of national citizenship that, in intimate and domestic settings, looks the other way at violence against women."

32 Tatjana Tömmel and Maurizio Passerin d'Entreves, "Hannah Arendt," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, eds. Edward N. Zalta and Uri Nodelman (Spring 2024 Edition), February 12, 2024, https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/arendt/#CitPubSph

12

DIGITAL ENCLOSURES PROJECT

Marcin Kędzior and Will Fu

Logging In

If you live on planet Earth, you are likely to spend around seven hours online, in a digital interior, each day.[1] If digital spaces were physical, this would make them the most *inhabited* spaces in the world. Portals to digital spaces are tactile or auditory. Millions of pockets vibrate as if cicadas have inexplicably crawled inside them with their mating calls. A *ding* summons you like a traveler at a shiny hotel counter. You *swipe* as if unlocking a medieval barrel bolt latch or use fingerprints, facial recognition, and passwords as if entering a top-secret, blue-lit facility on a space station. The two terms of entering digital environments, *logging on* and *logging in*, speak directly to *public* and *interiority*, respectively. Logging *on* is joining to be part of a public, on a platform, stage, or common surface, just as we go on the train or sit on the couch, whereas logging *in* is more specifically the moment of entering credentials to access a personal, enclosed, digital interior such as email, like going in a car or sitting in a chair. Digital spaces are at once public and interior. Additionally, they are superimposed over and above all the spaces we physically inhabit as another surreal tab that is open, splintering a subject, changing sociality, and, in some cases, altering physical spaces.

No existing online environments can be considered *public spaces* in terms of common ownership, but they change the meaning of publicness itself. The welcoming vision statements of both X and Facebook position their platforms as "global town squares," a quaint development of media theorist Marshall McLuhan's "global village."[2] Facebook *grounds* this public space in a *metaverse*, conceived as a smooth space of cultural, economic, informational, and social transaction, an all-encompassing interior. Hovering above these descriptions is the idea of a *noosphere*, a global consciousness, an over-arching entity that spans and supposedly unifies the globe.[3] These visions are akin to the grand unifying gesture of the *Tower of Babel*, albeit it is a horizontal, sprawling, silky vesture of a *Network*

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-14

of Babel in this century, and as a monument to unification, it is already disintegrating, partly due to a confusion of languages.

It is important to note online spaces are not a monolith but an assortment of spaces with their own characteristics, use of language, and social relations. This *Digital Enclosures Project* is a close reading of architectural designer Will Fu's experimental spatial notation of online platforms. In his drawings, Wikipedia, Instagram, Facebook, and MMORPGs are coupled with present spatial typologies of the factory, library, mall, café, and biosphere. In each case, a different understanding of *public interiority* arises.

Individuation

The first experimental drawing by Will Fu (Figure 12.1) is an aggregation of multiple online platforms. It contains the figure of an astronaut in a bubble (helmet), which quotes Caspar David Friedrich's *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog*—an archetypical *Sublime* painting in which a figure overlooks an untamable nature. The more terrifying, treacherous, and uncontrollable the background is, the world is (and the Internet is), the more strongly the position of the subject emerges as autonomous, a rock, an anchor, alone, apprehending the wretched, disorienting world that has formed it. The isolation of the figure recalls the philosopher Gilbert Simondon's *individuating* technologies, where he suggests that instead of starting with the individual, we should analyze the conditions and processes of individuation that give rise to the individual in the first place. He writes, "The living individual does possess a genuine interiority because individuation does indeed take place within it."[4] Here, interiority is defined as a space for individuation. Apps, applications, appliances all share an etymology of *ad* (toward) + *plicare* (fold) and could be understood as processes of enfolding the world, and enfolding publics, interiors-in-construction. Social media apps are folds in space and time, creating proximity between inter-individual subjectivities. To imagine a pre-interior, pre-individual, or pre-fold, consider a sprawling landscape or a collective unconscious spreading in all directions. Both *interiors* and *ego-forming consciousness* are provisional enclosures, foldings, and temporary stabilizations of a vast landscape and a roaming unconscious that might, at any moment, unfold and flow back into this field.

Space as Medium

What we are starkly encountering here is *space as medium*, in the sense of being in the middle, or that which mediates, and because the medium constructs the landscape. In the case of oil painting, some of the pigments don't just represent *a landscape*, but they also enact *landscape*—burnt sienna or yellow ochre minerals *taken from* the soil *become an image* of the soil. Some materials such as lead, copper, zinc, and gold can be transformed to make both oil paints and smartphones. They are mined from landscapes and configured into a technology that, subsequently, as images or satellite aerial maps, change our notion of that very landscape. This material analysis is what the activist and professor Ursula Franklin calls an "Anatomy of Technology."[5] Franklin insists that to establish proper relations with technology, its structure needs to be made visible. Part of the fragmentation

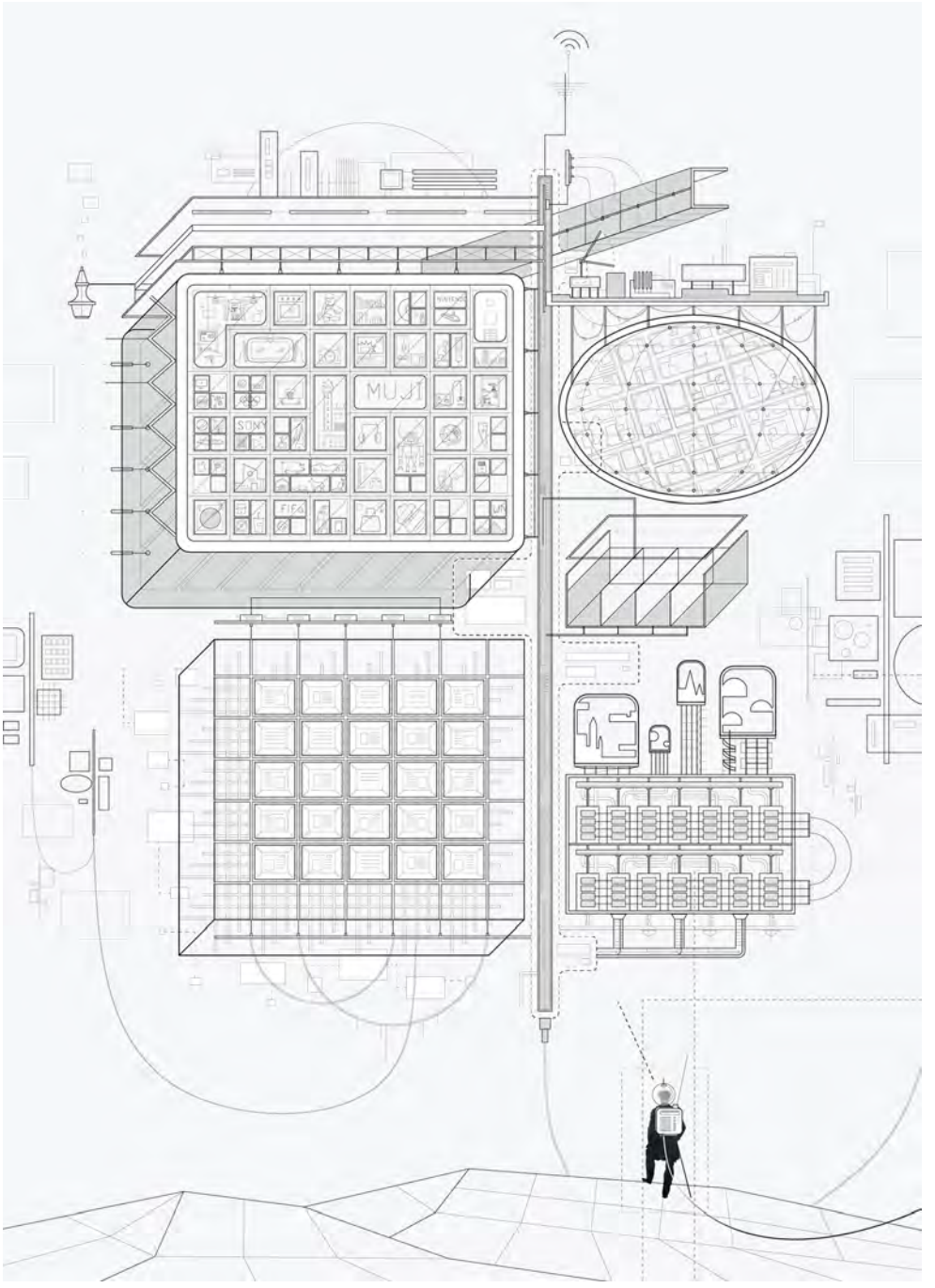


FIGURE 12.1 *A Digital Landscape of Multiple Online Platforms*, Will Fu (2018).

we are discussing is that each space or *mediation* constitutes a different sociality, nature, and sense of self. To take a simple example, a river is different if we are:

fishing,
mining,
mapping,
damming,
scuba diving,
canoeing
swimming,
skipping stones,
painting,
or photographing it with our smartphones.[6]

As the philosopher Karen Barad argues, these technological relations not only produce a different nature but a different subject, in a process called intra-action.[7] In other words, there is no overall or universal *nature*, but only countless technological relations to nature, and each relation produces a different nature and a different sense of self and one's role. The relation here could be a tool, technology, or the space itself, and each extends an evolutionarily-forged meaning-creating perception apparatus; therefore, space might be a medium that changes both the self and the object of study. In this case, there is nothing *neutral* about technology as a tool, but instead, social media and design are, broadly, in a position to perpetually redesign, rearrange, reconfigure, recode, and recreate the *conditions of existence* in an ongoing and iterative process. In other words, a body does not need to evolve or adapt if the space or environment—in this case, the online public interior—can change recursively as algorithms incessantly refresh and re-curate based on viewing and lingering habits. Evolutionary landscape psychologists argue that the most comforting environments provide a sense of interiority in terms of enclosure and a connection to possibly approaching publics in terms of views to the outside, *seeing without being seen*.[8,9] One way of understanding public interiority in this context is the domestication of the public realm, making it apprehendable and available, with degrees of publicness controlled by the individual *users*.

Wikipedia

Will Fu depicts Wikipedia as bookshelves arranged in a grid, as a virtual public library, constantly growing and being remade (Figure 12.2). How public is www.wikipedia.org? It is more public than most other platforms since it is owned by The Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a nonprofit organization registered as a charitable foundation.[10] This status allows Wikipedia to remain ad-free and not focused on making profits, expanding beyond its core mission, or collecting user data. But the publicness of Wikipedia, more precisely, is the process of building together, a horizontal power structure, and the sense that it is commonly owned. Through Fu's drawing, we also glimpse that a library, its bookshelves, and catalog, are structured like an encyclopedia in the form of an alphabetical grid. The grid as a structure has efficiency, redundancy, flexibility, and a lack of hierarchy since it

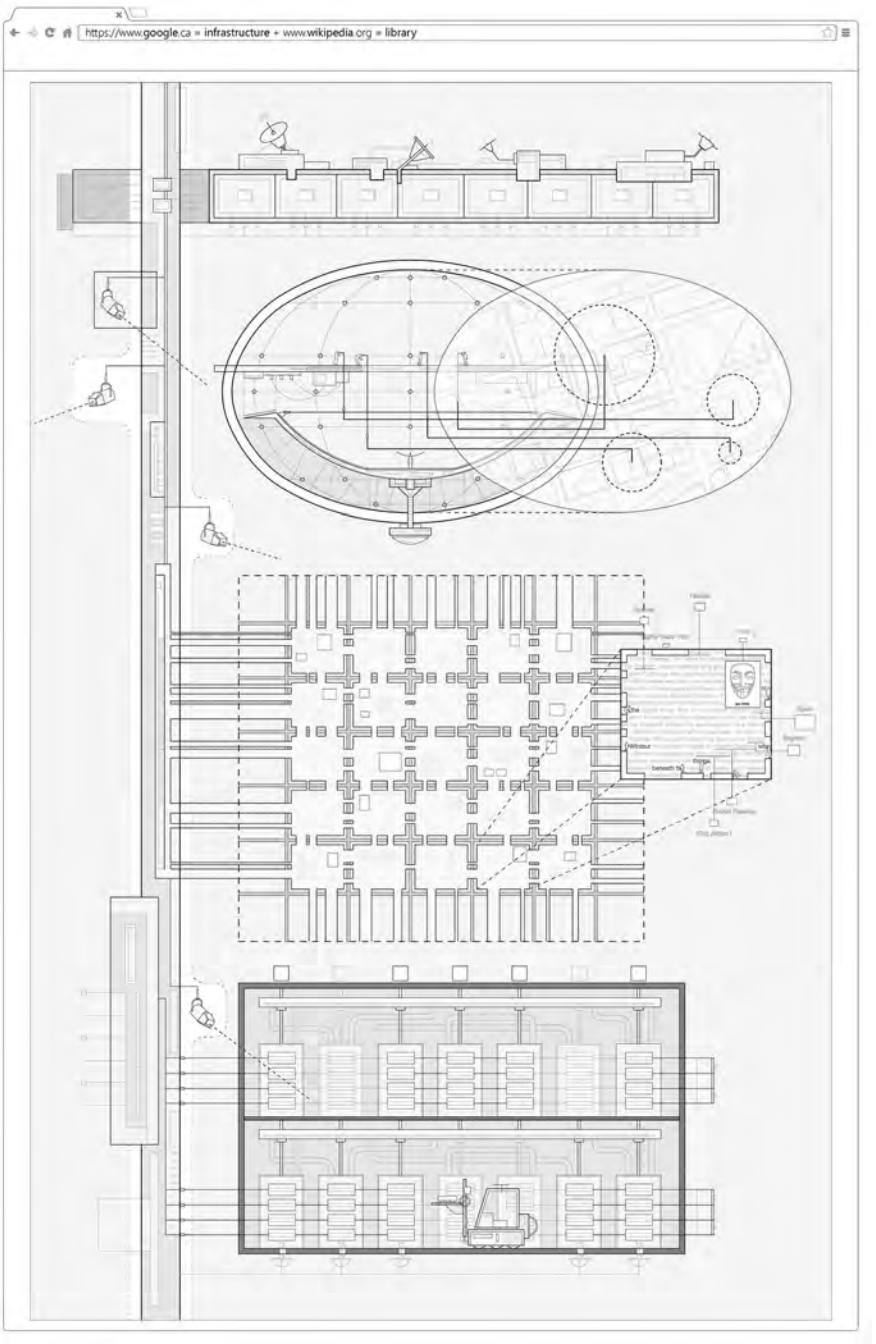


FIGURE 12.2 *Experimental Notation for Wikipedia*, Will Fu (2018).

has no center, or any point could become the center. Although a grid can be homogenous, it could also be a framework for difference. In the case of the encyclopedia, the alphabetical series does not elevate any single entry, treating all entries the same. Sociologist Richard Sennett argues that the historical encyclopedia was a critique of traditional privilege, placing *roi* next to *rôtisseur* or, in the English version, *knit* following *king*.[11] This delicious juxtaposition (reminiscent of Surrealist *exquisite corpse* poetry, from *royalty* to *rug*) moves us from the vertical axis of divine right to the horizontal, ostensibly democratic axis of what is under our feet, belonging to *the people*, and of equal status. Both the encyclopedia and Wikipedia are structured as a grid or library, but in Fu's drawing, we experience a pleasurable dismantling of these orders via hyperlinks or intertextual teleportation from one space to another. These forms of circulation are akin to secret portals in library halls, activated by candle-stick-levers. Suddenly, a bookshelf becomes a door, and we enter the library *in-depth*. We see the blue glow and underline below the word, like suspicious, recessed lighting under a bookshelf—the word flickers bright orange, and we jump to another realm. These hyperlinks appear as nested interiors in an interior, entries linked and arranged by a public of 50 million editors, each one a mason, building the grand public library of this digital world. The process of debating, verifying sources, adding citations, disambiguating, editing, collectively re-arranging, and carving out subterranean passages creates an encyclopedic interior arrived at by gradual public consensus. The entries of the encyclopedia become a common ground or a *datum* on which the public can converse. Datum is the singular of data, and is used in medieval scholasticism as a shared, accepted interpretation of a biblical passage, or as the *given* in mathematics. Via Wikipedia, we turn data into datum by bringing back its interpretation as a shared set of assumptions from which to work, collectively developing public knowledge.

Instagram

Fu's drawing of Instagram is a series of escalators whizzing by brands, robots, appliances, joysticks, iconography, and cameras, recognizable as the interior of a mall (Figure 12.3). It also evokes a Times-Square-like absorption into an atmosphere of images. The sequence is disjointed, like a physical walk through a mall or commercial city—although here, the *stroll* becomes the *scroll* in a digital *Arcades Project*.[12] The architect and theorist Rem Koolhaas argues that the frictionless ground plane, air conditioning, escalators, and lack of windows to the outside account for the success of the mall in capturing attention, leading to both interior urbanism and junk space.[13] He goes on to say that this space is *lubricated* by advertising. Giving and receiving attention is the actual currency on Instagram, and we are increasingly trained to consider *attention* the most valuable thing we have, that advertising is after. If attention is equated with self-worth, it begins altering how someone sees and presents themselves, making their life more bubbly, colorful, and intense, and this vibrant waterfall of pixels creates adulation and envy, fueling and perpetuating Instagram itself.

In Fu's drawing, the informational-nutritional value of the Instagram *feed* is analogous to visual sugar and candy (instantly gratifying). Advertising is there to hijack a perceptual apparatus that has been fine-tuned to pay attention to light, color, news, and the rhythms of public life, making perception something that is inherently public, active, and fully part

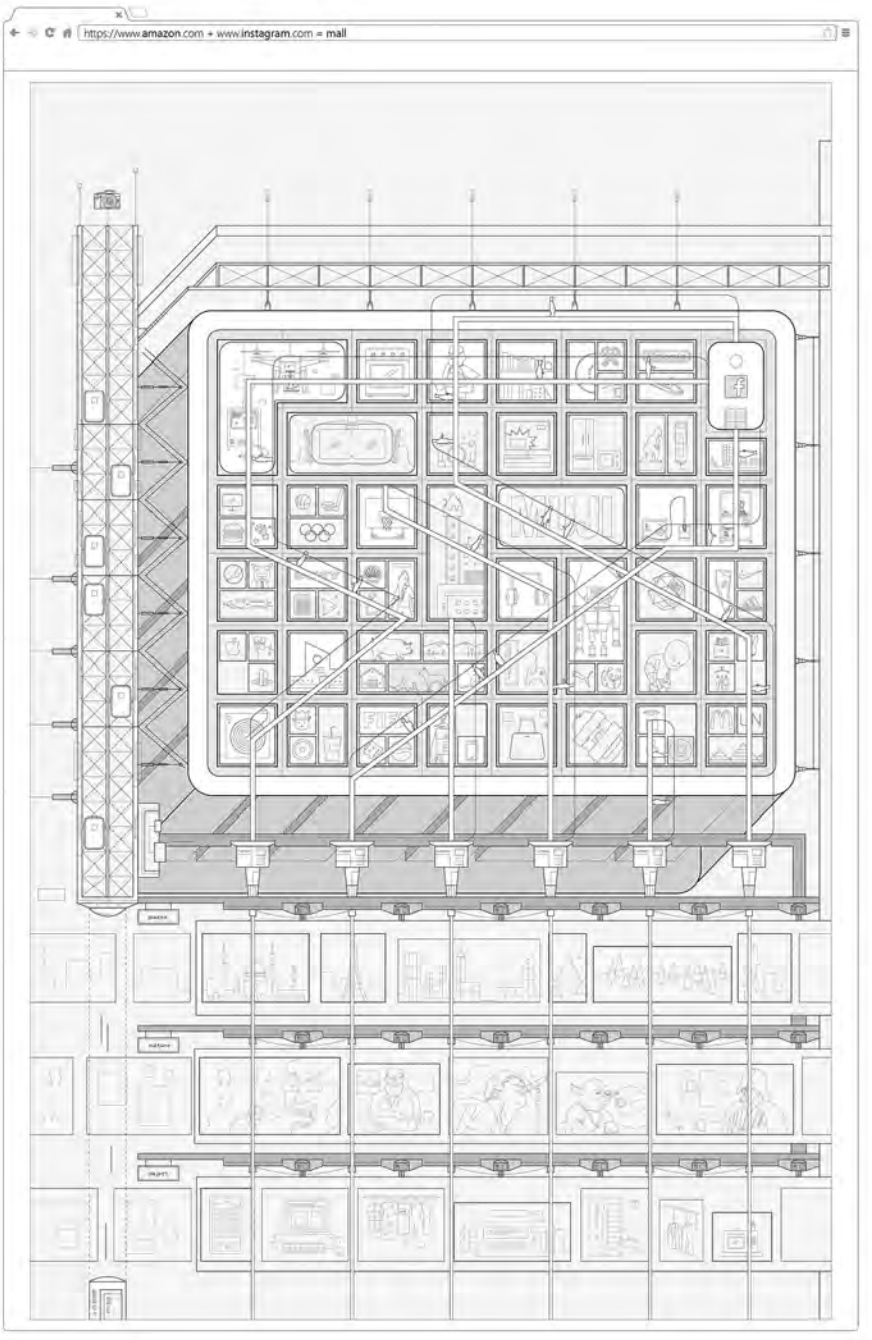


FIGURE 12.3 *Experimental Notation for Instagram*, Will Fu (2018).

of meaning and world creation. Instagram uses interest-driven (not social-driven) algorithms, meaning that content surfaces based on interests and past viewing habits, not on what your social circle posts. It allows for a pleasurable dissolution of the ego into the public subconscious of the feed, seeing and thinking what millions of others are thinking and posting. The de facto position on Instagram is to be a *follower*, including adulating fans and stans, with proximity to stars. *Live broadcasts* are especially intense because celebrities informally create continuities between their own interiors and yours, enhancing a feeling of connection and making extra-ordinarily intimate versions of a concert or sports game. These visceral connections and desires are mapped and stored so your data can be used to predict what you want to see, knowing your rhythms, habits, and dispositions. It might know you better than you know yourself, as an *autocomplete* for the soul or a digital *Oracle of Delphi*.

Although users photograph their environments and then post them, Instagram also has a reciprocal effect on the physical environment with the rise of Instagrammable place designs. One notable example in public spaces is the rise of giant 3-D text as the name of a city or neighborhood. These Instagram-era sans serif letter-monuments leave no ambiguity of where someone is, has arrived, IRL. The extrusion of these letters in different tones and colors maintains their 3-D effect after the space has been flattened to an image. In Japan, bubbly, colorful mascots represent prefectures, as walking emoji 絵文字, a word that itself derives from the Japanese *e* (絵 picture) + *moji* (文字 character).[14] As friendly, inviting, and animated bodies, names, mascots, and Instagram stars create new micropolitical units, playfully and effectively constituting publics that *vibe* with what they see.

Facebook

Fu represents a spatial analog to Facebook using an elevation oblique view: you see the plan and elevation simultaneously (Figure 12.4). In Fu's drawing, curvy walls and carpets suggest public living room spaces such as lounges and cafés. Facebook prioritizes your social graph: content arises based on what your social circle posts. Through over 10 million groups—including neighborhood, buy and sell, niche interest, or hobby groups—an assortment of publics is consolidated. Any of these can become social bubbles, echo chambers, or online gated communities. A Jorge Luis Borges story, *The Aleph*, describes an unexpected floating sphere found in a basement, a point that impossibly contains all other points, a figure encapsulating the entire universe.[15] Like Facebook, that bubble reflects and inverts the world. Each bubble might actually see the world differently, defined as it is by domains of values, interests, and beliefs. For example, nature is *pure* in some bubbles, something that requires *caring-for* in others, and on the verge of apocalypse in others. The moral superiority or soap-sheen of bubbles is based on a *caustic lye*, the sense that one's own bubble is *good*, while the motivations of other bubbles cannot be trusted. The bubble is a shared inhabitable retina for collective-looking, for habit-formation, and is the site of invention for bubble-specific neologisms.

In Fu's drawing, users post on the central wall and even move through it. This wall frames adjacent spaces in a supple way, forming GROUPS (Greatly Reducing Our Understanding of the Public Sphere). The groups interpenetrate with one another, and there is a possibility of being in multiple groups at once, each with a particular sensibility or sub-genre. But the longer one spends in a group, the more shared beliefs calcify, and a

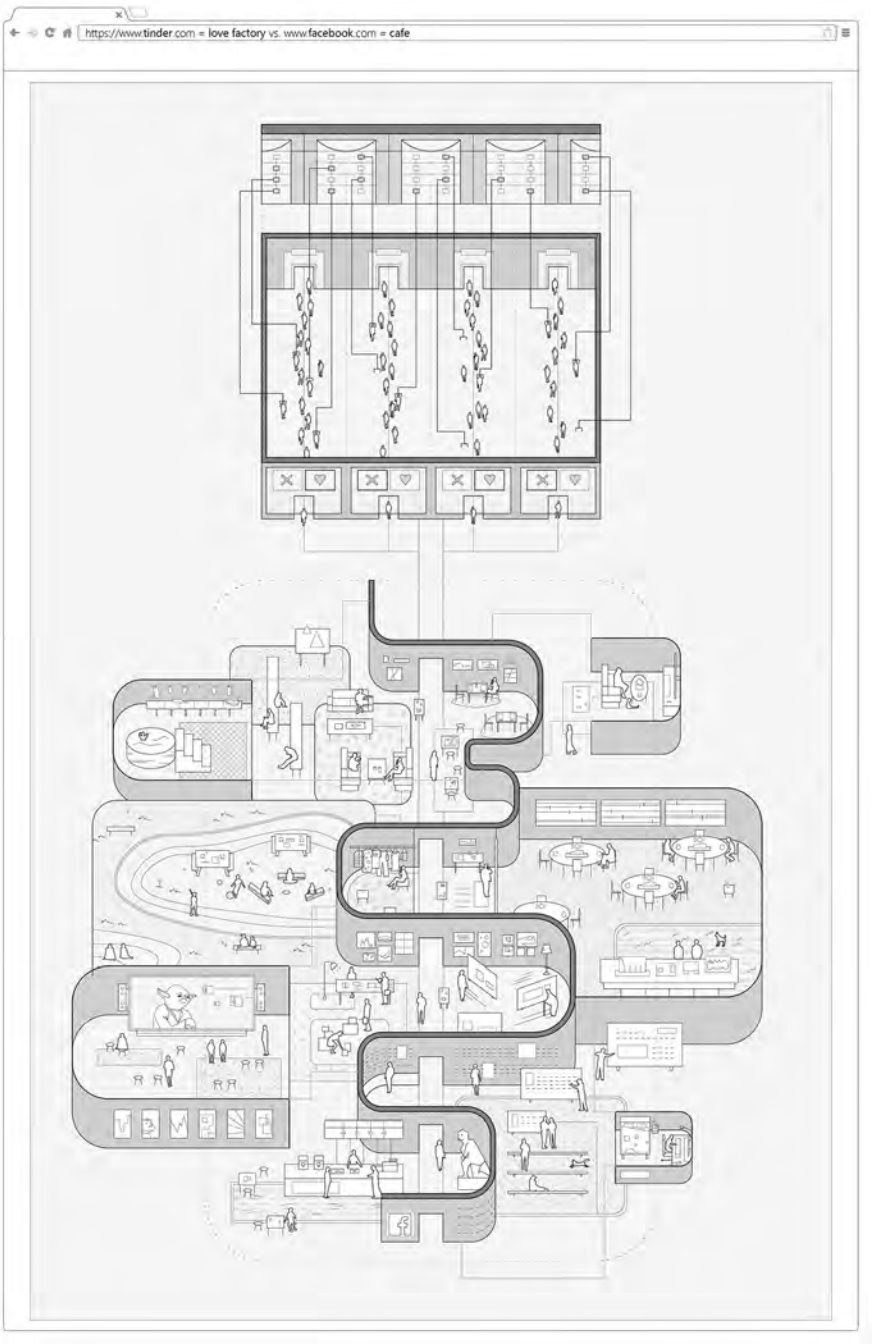


FIGURE 12.4 *Experimental Notation for Facebook*, Will Fu (2018).

language and humor particular to the group develops through processes of acculturation. The setup is inviting and disarming. Fu shows a variety of stabilizing information in Facebook pockets: charts, models, images, text, and figures we can rally around. A new language usage can function to animate and consolidate a community or group. Facebook is a fertile zone for the proliferation of new languages, a creativity that partially compensates for the dematerialization of online bodies. In this process, users are ostensibly *abstracted* to eyeballs and fingertips when inhabiting a digital environment and can no longer rely on facial expressions, body language, or spatial contexts to convey meaning. On Facebook, users move beyond words to pictographs in the form of emoji and emoticons, winking at new semantic questions about image-text-face relationships, a triangular pinball machine of meaning-construction since all three signify, carry a certain affect, or fold into each other in unexpected ways. For instance, "that's hot" becomes "🔥," and this fire emoji is translated back into words again as "that's fire," with a lingering bodily charge to the flame-like rapture and enchantment of the images in question. Secondly, memes extend these semantic pinball machines to bodies, social situations, cartoons, and sitcom fragments in free-wheeling, re-coding, and appropriating visual and interpersonal intensities like a warehouse of personas to feel through and even to flatter users by association. *Memes* become archetypes for collective expression, melodies waiting for lyrics, ready to be inhabited by new sentiments and creating bonds between users through the intensity of a shared pop culture reference. Why not use a ready-made reaction from Joey from *Friends* to indicate a dumbfounded stupor that goes beyond words? What used to be called *viral* is a contagious cacophony of chuckles, linked-and-liked by manic LOL chains. Humor is what makes a group shake and expand, as a secret ingredient for the spread of memes. Laughing itself (and gasping as a temporary interruption of breathing), bursts forth as a post-linguistic excess, immediately appearing authentic because *I just can't hold it in anymore*. It can be rebellious, habit-breaking, disjunctive, free, powerful, or conspiratorial, uniting a public in the collective vibration of chuckling rhythms. The bond of laughing together makes monuments to authority crumble.[16] This includes undermining scientific, juridical, journalistic, political, educational, and familial forms of authority, leaving the platform itself that facilitates this joyful rebellion as the only authority left and itself immune from criticism. To laugh is to show that one sees through all pomp, hypocrisy, and convention. It asserts an individual agency and a feeling of superiority for the skeptical, savvy, ironic user.[17] This individual, jeering freedom is mingled with the public bonding power of shared laughter, catching on to its rhythm, being swept away, and cracking up. Humor's response to public interiority is to simultaneously assert an individual-interior rebellion and a public-vibration. Humor is beyond the decidedly unfunny truth/lie dichotomy and relishes rubbing together divergent fantastical-actual blocks. We may need to contribute a taxonomy of humor to digital anthropology, including the way online laughter is:

bitter,
resentful,
sarcastic,
cynical,
provoking,

droll-troll,
experimenting,
side-tracking,
the only non-boring thing on here,
mocking sincerity,
interrupting seriousness,
on the verge of tears because this is ridiculous,
ironically exploiting the difference between what is shown and what is said,
masking political content,
saying I can't even,
and using inside-jokes to create in-groups.

Forms of humor may be a natural extension of the medium, creating even more distance between a body and the expressed content, a mask under a mask as a second layer of anonymity and detachment of a user from their digital utterances.[18] Finally, humor is impervious to criticism, it relieves all responsibility because, *c'mon, it's just a joke. Get it?* This is why criticizing digital spaces is difficult to do, because 1) the serious tone of the criticism is brutally mocked; and 2) it has already monopolized criticism through a riotous chorus of self-mockery. Digital environments are fertile zones for the proliferation of subgenres. It is possible to identify in-groups or publics just from the humor and usage of language, acronyms, graphic styles, or what can be called *online aesthetics*.

While Role-Playing

Fu's drawing emerges as a set of sci-fi tree houses, spaceships, or castles floating in the clouds, with densely hatched atmospheres to enact imaginative, intense, controlled public worlds (Figure 12.5). Hostilities and exclusions often develop in these games akin to the politics around kids' forts or treehouses. Gaming is a graphically advanced real-time public interior that includes the construction of avatars, a degree of agency within a story, communications with other players via live audio, and discovering or making fun of digital environments together.

In gaming, players experience the invincibility of multiple lives, superhuman abilities, and some degree of anonymity, bringing them to bear on one of the last places of refuge for hero narratives and unambiguous villains. The narrative—as both a story and role—is also *inhabited* and adds a dimension to how we think about interiors that requires 1) a delineation of space; and 2) habits, protocols, schemata, and roles to take on in that space. There are two interior worlds: the visual world inhabited through an interface with an avatar and a fictional narrative world inhabited by a myth-laden-mind. Remarkably, almost all the top MMORPGs currently involve medieval warfare (World of Warcraft, Lord of the Rings Online, Final Fantasy, Guild Wars, etc.). The philosopher Michael Plato suggests that the fascination with the fantasy genre is a nostalgia for a pre-industrial world in which magic exists, in other words, anti-modernism.[19] Although, the microchips, video cards, and other technological feats making these pre-industrial worlds possible are decidedly modern. Games act on mythological, social, and evolutionary interiors, setting in motion a rehearsal of survival, offering many lives, upgrades, and intricate rewards and progressions through *levels* and *worlds*.

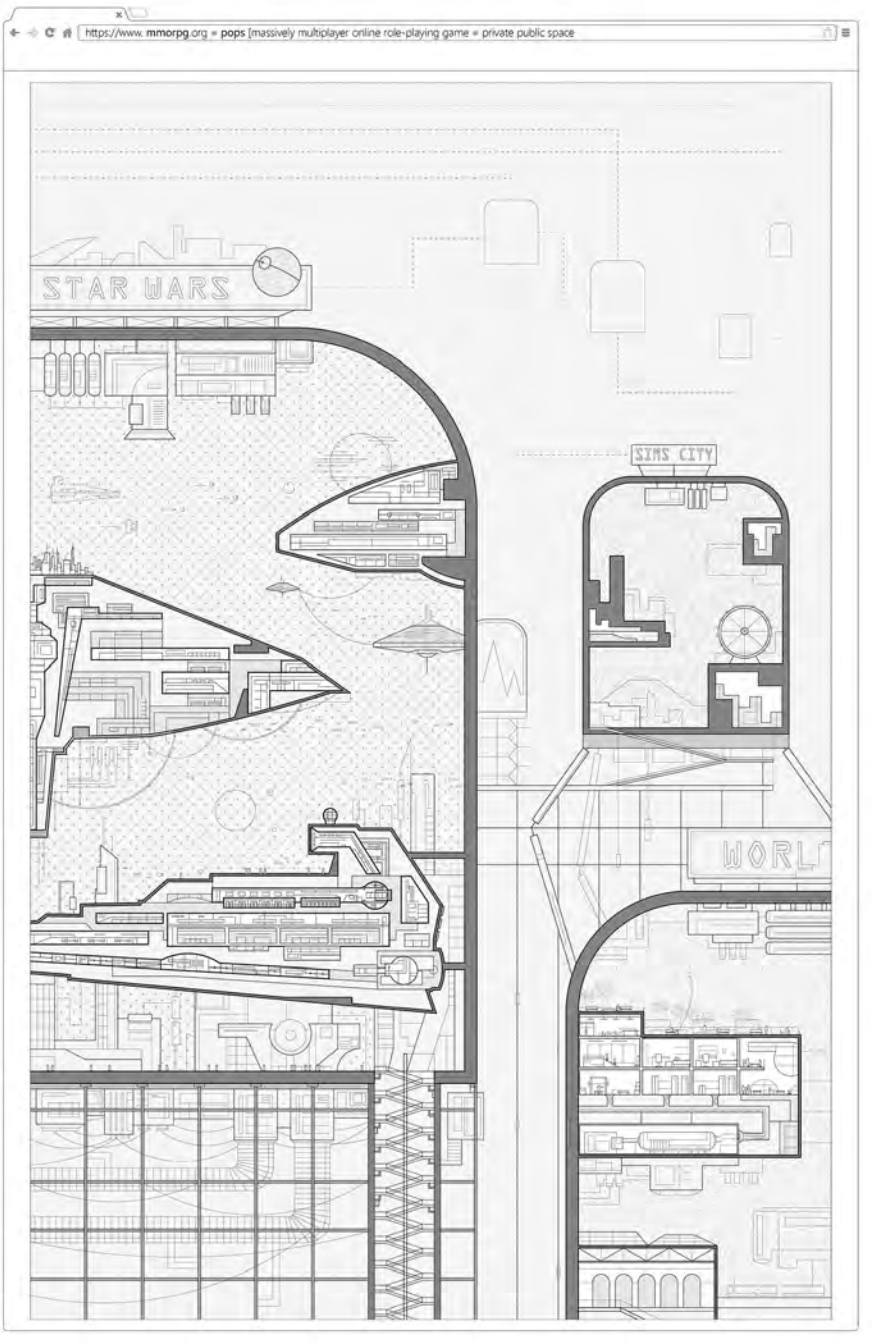


FIGURE 12.5 *Experimental Notation for MMORPGS*, Will Fu (2018).

A neglected aspect of interior public life is *role-playing*. In *Learning from Las Vegas*, the research initiated by Denise Scott Brown points out that

> essential to the imagery of pleasure-zone architecture are lightness, the quality of being an oasis in a perhaps hostile context, heightened symbolism, and the ability to engulf the visitor in a new role: for three days one may imagine oneself a centurion at Caesars Palace, a ranger at the Frontier, or a jetsetter at the Riviera.[20]

The continual shift in roles is pleasurable: a temporary, empathetic inhabitation of a position with a different history and set of capabilities. It undoes habits of the ego and entails a perpetually distracted absorption into a collective or public unconscious of roles and identities. A social media feed, at its most entertaining, is a smooth progression from one subject-position to another that we inhabit and empathize with to some degree. In *Learning from Las Vegas*, the strip is understood as something that is experienced not with a body walking down the street, but in a car—a technological augmentation increasing the power and speed of a body and affecting the shape, size, and dimensions of the signage on the streets. In the electronic boulevard of digital space, informational environments match rhythms of movement of the smart-phone-augmented-bodies. Denise Scott Brown's foregrounding of movement and role-playing unearths what really is powerful about images: their tempos, rhythms, and narratives to think, feel, and perceive through. Design, via an affective force, sets in motion a multiplicity of stories, juggling speeds, personas, and social relations.

Together

Social customs and protocols for online spaces continue to fluctuate. We learn to live with others in physical neighborhoods and shared public spaces, building up trust over time in reciprocal social indebtedness and civility born from the expectation of recurring interactions. In larger cities, interactions are more indeterminate and depersonalized, encouraging living private lives in public, avoiding eye contact on the subway, with sunglasses on eyes and headphones covering ears, and being alone in the crowd. In the hyper-density of digital environments, it is possible to further dispense with the conventional decorum of public spaces and to reconfigure relational protocols, creating different senses of what a *public* and *interior* mean in each case. On Wikipedia, a public consists of millions of worker bees, collectively expanding the geometric hive of knowledge and filling it with its interior honey. Fandom makes Instagram followers resonate together, animated by powerful emotional affects produced by images, videos, and live broadcasts that create proximity to stars as a kind of gravitational interior. Group-specific memes, acronyms, language usage, and inside-jokes constitute the social interiors of Facebook that allow the mingling of fact and fiction. Finally, gaming sets the stage for role-playing and competition in clearly delineated, fantastical, interior worlds. Structure and freedom, in Fu's experimental notation, function differently on each platform. Wikipedia's library-warehouse entails the constant moving around of knowledge-blocks via forklifts and with a search-bar elevator. Instagram is a structural framework for the hanging of screens with escalators defying gravity. Facebook prioritizes a single, undulating wall that creates

pockets of deeper, comfy, discursive interiors. And the gaming worlds are characterized by going higher, *leveling up*, into treehouse spaces that are at once landscapes, cities, and spaceships. In each case, the structure is there so we do not simply focus on images, but on the spatial curation that links bodies to images. The machinery is treated as dynamic, as if perpetually in the process of producing or suggesting new relations. Since online social customs, algorithms, and profiles are perpetually in-construction, these drawings are an index of the way languages, styles, features, and protocols fluctuate. A significant *public* dimension of social media is that it compels us to check-in with the most recent acronyms, features, or ways of interacting. Technologically savvy users are flattered or rewarded and naïve *noobs*, are vulnerable to rampant mockery. This fear propels users to continue spending time online as if it is required research.[21]

Like *The Wanderer Above the Sea of Fog*, we look for what will anchor the world and find that not just the individual but the medium itself—that destroyed other forms of authority—becomes the provisional site of stability, or at least the habit of logging on/in provides stability. The temporary solution to an unstable world is to spend more time online, where we *get more information* and are somehow immune to the disasters IRL. But alarmist and threatening content are successful in getting attention, spreading, and creating bonds online. The prominence of these messages causes us to see the world as scarier and in turmoil, in the very place and by the very habits of information-gathering that were supposed to provide stability. In addition, the proliferation of sarcastic remarks and the continual invention of acronyms make social interactions appear nastier or cryptic. This dependency on media can be defined as a malignant addiction since it causes problems (worry, anxiety, confusion, loneliness) while offering itself as the solution to those very problems.[22] Digital environments are comforting interiors because they provide information, social interaction, a sense of belonging, levity, and control. At the same time, in each new algorithmic iteration or digitally altered world, our nervous system fires differently, and an incessant social buzz stimulates and electronically tickles us, also making us want to be part of these environments. Oddly, the most seamless integration of an organism into its conditions of existence is *entertainment*: the smooth, effortless, automatic, near total absorption into a social-mythological digital environment, a *programmed space* acting on an evolutionary body, providing difference and structure, at once public and interior.

Notes

1 Josh Howarth, "Alarming Average Screen Time Statistics" *Exploding Topics*, December 4, 2023, https://explodingtopics.com/blog/screen-time-stats
2 Marshall McLuhan and Bruce R. Powers, *The Global Village: Transformations in World Life and Media in the 21st Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).
3 Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, *The Phenomenon of Man* (London: Collins, 1970).
4 Jonathan Crary and Sanford Kwinter, *Incorporations* (New York: Zone, 1992), 305.
5 Ursula M. Franklin, *The Real World of Technology* (Toronto: Anansi, 2004).
6 Inspired by a concept described in Martin Heidegger and William Lovitt, The *Question Concerning Technology* (New York: Harper & Row, 1977).
7 Karen Michelle Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007).
8 Eleanor Jack Gibson, *An Odyssey in Learning and Perception* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994).

9 Laura Menatti and Antonio Casado da Rocha, "Landscape and Health: Connecting Psychology, Aesthetics, and Philosophy through the Concept of Affordance," *Frontiers*, April 6, 2016, https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.00571/full
10 "Wikimedia Foundation," *Wikipedia*, January 31, 2024, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikimedia_Foundation.
11 Richard Sennett, *The Craftsman* (Berlin: TOC Publishing, 2023).
12 Walter Benjamin and Howard Eiland, *The Arcades Project* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Pr. of Harvard Univ. Press, 2003).
13 Rem Koolhaas, *Junk Space* (London: Notting Hill Editions, 2013).
14 "Emoji: Search Online Etymology Dictionary," Etymology. Accessed February 3, 2024. https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=emoji
15 Jorge Luis Borges, *Ficciones* (Barcelona: Lumen, 2019).
16 Gilles Deleuze, *Difference and Repetition*, trans. Paul Patton (London: Bloomsbury Publishing PLC, 2010).
17 Todd Gitlin, *Watching Television: A Pantheon Guide to Popular Culture* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1987).
18 David Foster Wallace, *A Supposedly Fun Thing I'll Never Do Again: Essays and Arguments* (London: Abacus, 2013).
19 Michael Plato, "There'll Always be and England: Anglophilia as Antimodern Leisure," *College Quarterly* 13, no. 4 (2010)
20 Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown, and Steven Izenour, *Learning from Las Vegas* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2017), 53.
21 David Foster Wallace, London: Abacus, 2013.
22 David Foster Wallace, London: Abacus, 2013.

13

POST-PHOTOGRAPHIC DOMESTICITY

Using LiDAR to Generate a Personal Archive

Stefani Byrd

Home is a destination, a refuge, a place of respite, and inviolability. Domestic spaces are some of the most familiar places we inhabit, but rarely are they deemed worthy of meticulous consideration by their inhabitants. I produced the *domicile* series during the pandemic when the need to quarantine changed our collective relationship to home, shifting it from solely a refuge to both a sanctuary and confine. I embraced the creative challenges and limitations of confinement by utilizing my domestic life as source material for an intimate visual study of form and space using 3-D scanning. Through the translational process of LiDAR scanning, my domestic space that I knew intimately was altered into a fragmented terrain of texture and volume making the familiar unrecognizable (Figures 13.1 and 13.2).

LiDAR, short for light detection and ranging, is a type of laser scanning that creates 3-D representations of surfaces or objects. Until recently, this technology was cost-prohibitive for general use and reserved for commercial applications like architectural, archaeological, or landscape surveying. LiDAR sensors have been integrated into the next generation of smartphones and tablets, putting these tools into the mainstream. During lockdown, I used 3-D scanning to investigate the commonplace and to create an archive of domesticity (Figures 13.3–13.6).

Process of Extraction and Gathering

The resulting body of work is a collection of thirteen images and a short film. Here, lens-based capture moves beyond the x and y axes and into the x, y, and z. Digital photography records visual information as pixels organized as width (x-axis) and height (y-axis). LiDAR also records depth information, which gave me the opportunity to explore the z-axis of my domestic interior. In the image, *LiDAR.v001: Tilt* (2020), (Figures 13.2) you can see these three axes are visible and pierce through the mass of the home, easily pitched on its side with the click of a mouse. The LiDAR-rendered house becomes a featherlight raw material that is pliable to inspect once imported into 4-D-capable software. These images refuse any sentimentality in that they become meshes and maps rather than ostensibly objective

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-15

FIGURE 13.1 *Texture Map.v001*, Stefani Byrd, (2020).

recordings of the "home" I had created. Each space became fractured through the translation process, only hinting at the character of the interior I shaped. They provide neither accuracy nor a sense of comfort.

The images from the set *Texture Map.v001* through.*v005* (2020), as titled, are a set of texture maps generated during the capture process. These swatches of surface details are plucked from the scanned surfaces by the software and automatically stitched onto a square black field. The aggregated textures and coordinates become mapped out into a black void in what appears a Dadaist assortment. The flat images, JPG files, are, in fact, embedded with spatial coordinates. When needed, these textures and the embedded coordinates are referenced and "wrapped" back onto the surface meshes, like a layer of skin. The texture maps are computer-generated artifacts, cast-offs referenced only by the machine. In *Texture Map.v001* (2020) (Figure 13.1), there are fragments of bedspreads, shoes resting on carpeted floors, and snippets of a shower curtain, all bound together into an autonomous collage.

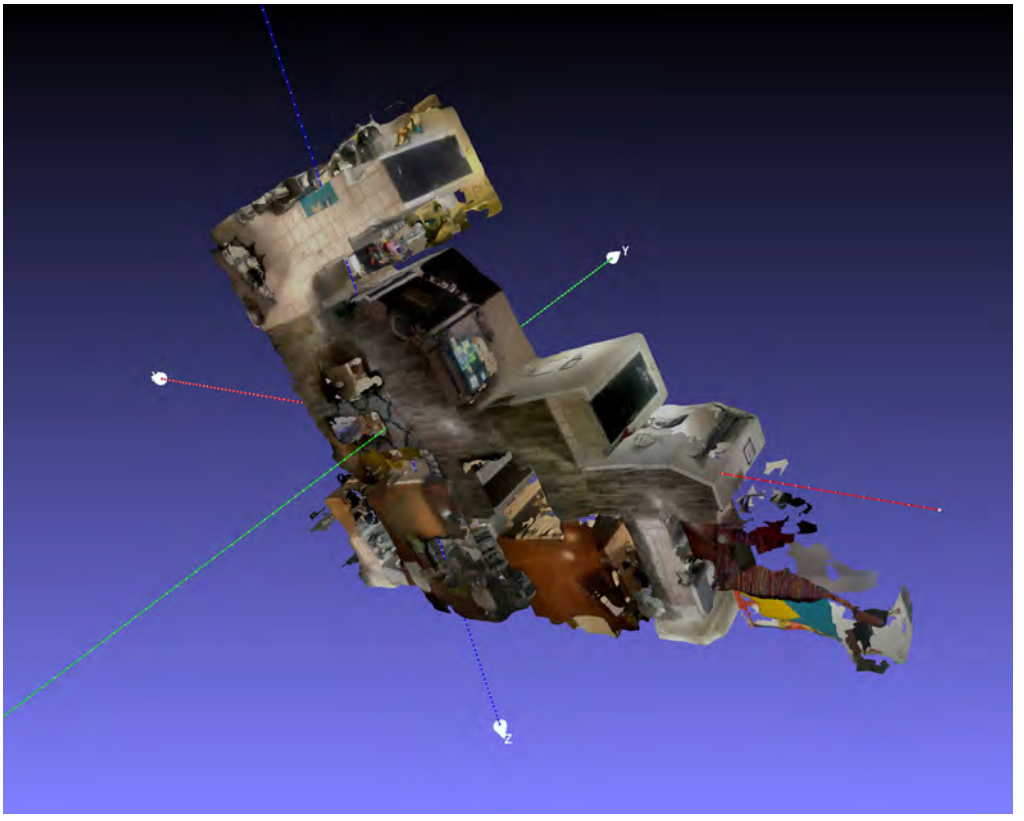


FIGURE 13.2 *Lidar.v001: Tilt*, Stefani Byrd, (2020).

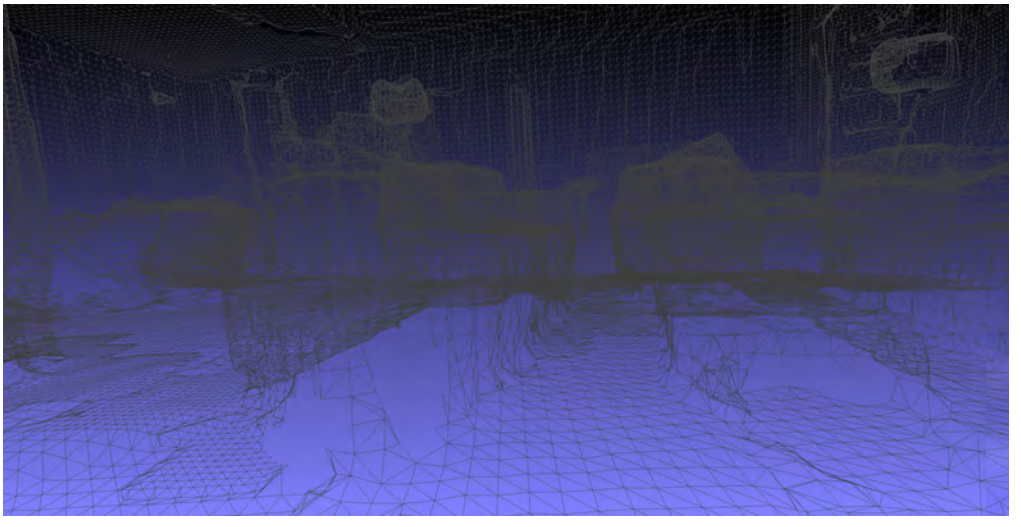


FIGURE 13.3 *Surface Triptych--Lidar.v001: Wireframe*, Stefani Byrd, (2020).

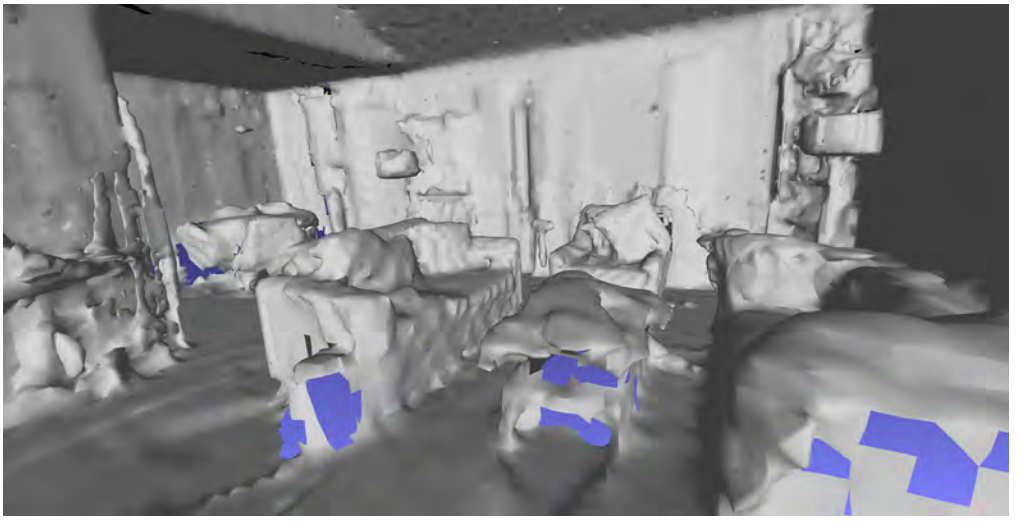


FIGURE 13.4 *Lidar.v001: Grey_Surface*, Stefani Byrd, (2020).

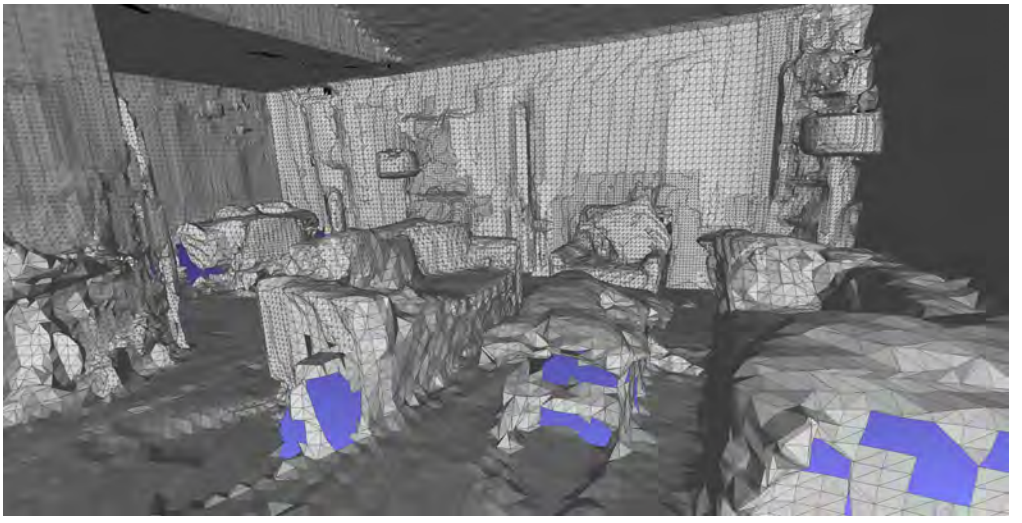


FIGURE 13.5 *LiDAR.v001:Grey_Wireframe,* Stefani Byrd, (2020).

Surface Triptych studies the same space, a living room, and how it is represented digitally when recorded in three dimensions. In *LiDAR.v001: Wireframe* (2020) (Figure 13.3), the room is rendered as a collection of polygons on a purple field that traces the surface of couches, lamps, and a coffee table. This perspective represents continuous smooth surfaces as a delicate geometric line drawing. The mesh is permeable–it is a record of the emptiness between the objects more so than the mass. *LiDAR.v001: Grey_Surface* (2020) (Figure 13.4) depicts the same space but focuses on the solidity of the forms, revealing the shapes as bulbous gradations of white and gray. Here, the perspective becomes more focused on volume, on presence rather than absence. The last perspective is *LiDAR.v001:*

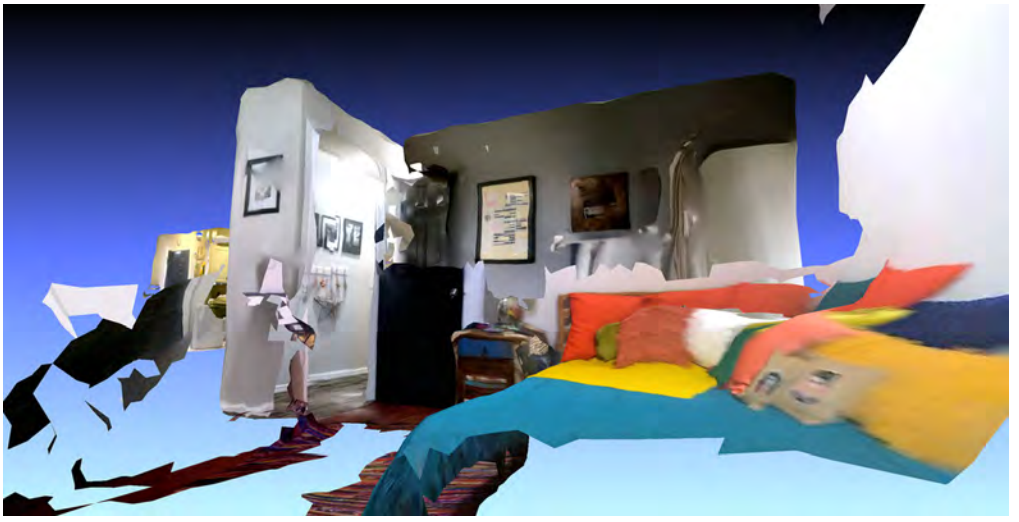


FIGURE 13.6 *Lidar.v001: Guest Bed*, Stefani Byrd, (2020).

Grey_Wireframe (2020) (Figure 13.5) merges the two perspectives, geometric lines against gray mass. The gaps and breakages in the scanning processes could have been "closed" or repaired, but accuracy was not my goal. Where commercial applications seek the highest resolution and number of subdivisions of vertices to produce greater accuracy of form, the points of intrigue for me are the failures (Figure 13.6).

Recording Form in the Post-Photographic World

These explorations drew inspiration from Rachel Whiteread's iconic cast works such as *Ghost* (1990),[1] Do Ho Suh's ethereal renderings of former dwellings like *348 West 22nd Street* (2011–15),[2] and Liza Lou's meticulously hand-beaded rendering of *Kitchen* (1991–96).[3] These works, tied so critically to their materiality, are experienced in three dimensions. I wanted instead to explore the immaterial aspects of form: how those spaces are rendered, recorded, and output when filtered through the lens of three-dimensional capture, perceived outside the body and its relation to space, and to investigate slippage in the recording process. With these images, I was interested in embracing the glitches where the images break down and fracture rather than function as architecturally accurate "digital twins." With works like *LiDAR.v001: Guest Bed* (2020) (Figure 13.6), the fragmented scan creates a room that floats freely in a graduated blue field, completely ungrounded. It is no longer a place of respite or repose but a non-space, a void.

These images were generated in the "post-photographic" mode as defined by William J. Mitchell.[4] They are either artifacts from the scanning process or retrieved from the three-dimensional viewing and modeling software. Methods such as photogrammetry, LiDAR scanning, and volumetric video capture point toward a future where most images are recorded with depth information. Virtual spaces shifting beyond the bounds of the flat rectangle have been anticipated even before William Gibson's prophecies of the cyberspace revolution. What has changed since the early 90s, though, is that ubiquitous and

highly trafficked platforms such as Meta are investing in a volumetric infrastructure versus the infinite scroll. With three-dimensional scanning capabilities integrated into mobile devices, the possibilities for broad adoption of recording our daily lives for the volumetric virtual world have arrived.

Notes

1 Rachel Whiteread. *Ghost.*, 1990, plaster on steel frame, 105 7/8 × 139 15/16 × 125 in., National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., https://www.nga.gov/collection/art-object-page.131285.html
2 Do Ho Suh, *348 West 22nd Street*, 2011–2015, translucent nylon on metal frame, 169 1/4 × 271 5/8 × 96 1/2″, LACMA, Los Angeles, https://www.lacma.org/art/exhibition/do-ho-suh-348-west-22nd-street
3 Liza Lou, *Kitchen*, 1991–1996, beads, plaster, wood and found objects, 96 × 132 × 168 in., Whitney Museum of Art, New York, https://whitney.org/collection/works/34855
4 William J. Mitchell, *The Reconfigured Eye: Visual Truth in the Post-Photographic Era*, (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1992).

14

EXPLORING INTERIORITY

Unveiling the Layers of Human Experience through Visual Representation

Ria Bravo

Every day, we find ourselves immersed in the psychological and spatial intricacies of interior conditions, a fusion of experiences that shape our perceptions of the world around us. Subtle fluctuations of temperature, sound, and smell in our environment create intangible shifts that wrap us in a sensory cocoon. Yet, interiority goes beyond how humans perceive environmental factors, objects, and physical spaces; it extends into the realm of emotions and relationships. Suzie Attiwill's essay "Outside-Interior:?Interior," building upon the work of Deleuze, challenges conventional notions of relationships "to" external entities in interior design.[1] Instead, she emphasizes the intricate production of interiority within the ongoing web of relationships "in," offering a profound perspective that intertwines psychological interiority with the fluid dynamics of environmental perception. Our connections with others, according to Attiwill's argument, create a complex network of psychological interiority, weaving relations between our inner world and outer world. For instance, emotional experiences, the result of our inner thoughts or relationships with others, allow us to become engulfed in mental turbulence or enveloped by a sense of contentment and tranquility. These experiences cultivate a notion of interiority that defies physical boundaries, immersing us within an inner dimension of existence. The images within these pages attempt to bridge the gap between the private sensations of this interdimensional reality and the public nature of representation (Figure 14.1).

Tim Ingold, in *The Perception of the Environment*, illuminates two key differences that Émile Durkheim outlines between sensations and representations.[2] Firstly, he emphasizes the fleeting nature of sensations and the enduring quality of representations. Every sensation, tied to a singular moment, gives way to representations captured within a conceptual framework, offering stability amid the ephemerality of consciousness. Secondly, Ingold, building on the work of Durkheim, underscores the private and individual nature of sensations in contrast to the public and social character of representations. As he elucidates, collective representations act as a bridge between closed individual consciousnesses, allowing for mutual understanding through shared concepts within a community. In the spirit of this interpretation between sensations and representations, the drawings

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-16

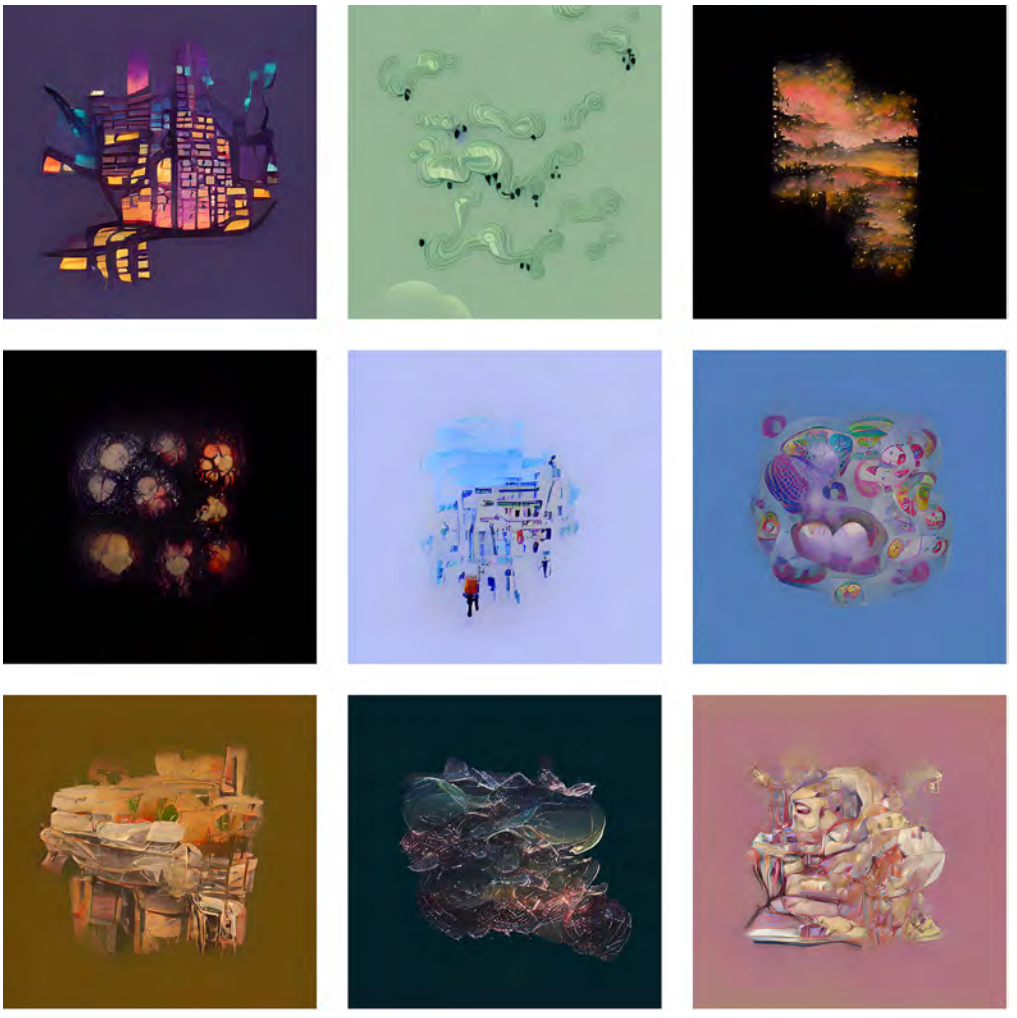


FIGURE 14.1 A series of AI-manipulated images representing different qualities of interiority, "Patterns of Interiority", Elisabeth Allbritton, Emily Jacinto, Caroline Frerichs, Jeannette Massey, Mia Ferzoco, Yu-Hsuan Hsieh, Gabi Pedraza, Ria Bravo, (2022).

form a complex meshwork, suggesting the constant process and transformation of interiority. In this kind of representation, each line and form become intricately entangled, reflecting the seamless and continuous flow of the overall experiential narrative. The images encapsulate the dynamic nature of the interior-physical, emotional, and intellectual-portraying it as an evolving and interconnected system (Figure 14.2).

My students and I produced the following images in a third-year undergraduate interior design studio at the University of Texas at Austin. These images attempt to capture the nuances of non-physical interiority through a mix of representational strategies, a blend of analog and digital sketching, along with artificially intelligent image manipulation. The first part of the assignment requires students to identify the feeling or quality of an interior experience from a non-physical lens, the next part uses diagramming to then represent

FIGURE 14.2 Student Holly Simpson delves into the concept of microclimatic conditions and the continually shifting and dynamic nature of weather-related phenomena, "Patterns of Interiority," Holly Simpson, (2022).

these phenomena in a plan or section. The students must make decisions about how to graphically demonstrate imprecise data and include or exclude the individual as an element of the drawing. After this diagramming exercise, the images are fed through an AI algorithm to produce a series of spin-off mutations. By harnessing the power of AI to visualize the nuances of non-physical interiority, we tap into the collective wisdom of crowd-sourced data, enabling a unique exploration of experiences that are deeply personal yet universally resonant. Part of the experiment challenges the students to then identify which iteration proves to be the most successful at portraying the experience. The series is most diverse and thought-provoking as a collection and collaborative endeavor wherein individuals contribute distinct threads to the narrative, coalescing into a mosaic of perspectives that collectively delineate the imperceptible, nebulous, and atmospheric strata

FIGURE 14.3 Student Eamanne Moharram explores the realm of intimacy and connection, probing the intricate and multi-dimensional sensation of being in the company of familiar individuals, "Patterns of Interiority," Eamanne Moharram, (2022).

inherent in interior experiences. The pedagogical approach is central to comprehending the series, as it strategically positions the work as a cooperative platform for the studio to engage in a purposeful exploration of visual representation, fostering critical thinking and conceptual development. The inherent diversity in individual contributions is instrumental in understanding the complexity of inner, subjective experiences, engendering a multifaceted visual dialogue between images (Figure 14.3).

Collectively, the work resides in the world of subjectivity—thoughts, emotions, and perceptions—shedding light on the uncharted territories of inner experience. Visually layered and amalgamated compositions, these images serve as metaphors for the combination of memory, emotion, and sensory input that converge within the production of interiority. Reflecting on the visual complexity of Figure 14.4, the fluid and layered

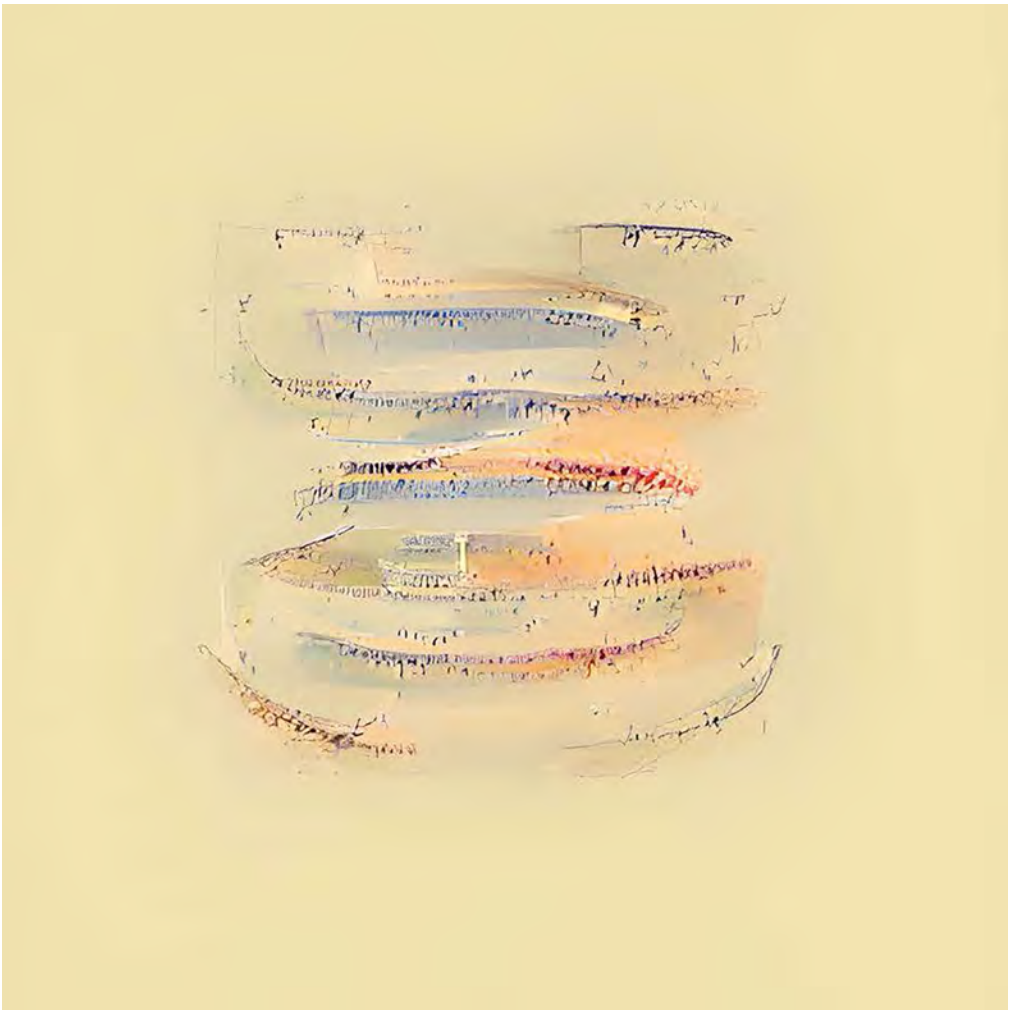


FIGURE 14.4 Student Emily Jacinto captures the nuanced exchanges that unfold within circulatory spaces. From the brush of a passing figure to the caress of a fleeting breeze, her work unveils the silent dialogues of proximity and displacement that weave through our daily interactions, "Patterns of Interiority," Emily Jacinto, (2022).

composition echoes Tim Ingold's notion of "entanglement"—a concept depicting the world as a confluence of complex life processes. This perspective diverges from traditional, more static views of interiority, which often suggest fixed and clear boundaries. Instead, Ingold proposes viewing the environment as a web of interrelations, not merely a backdrop for human actions. This insight is reflected in our studio's approach—to engage with a broader and more nuanced production of interiority and emphasize the interconnectedness of our inner experiences with the surrounding world. Graphics appearing in flux depict the temporal nature of experience, capturing fleeting elements within a static frame. From the nuanced bonds of intimacy shared between close ones to

atmospheric sensations experienced in public, this assembly of images attempts to represent the gap between personal connections and environmental forces and between tangible encounters and abstract perceptions. In this visual essay describing the notion of non-physical interiority, we discover that within us and around us is a dynamic interaction of emotions, relationships, and environmental sensations. The complex production of interiority, blending the palpable and the ephemeral, the tangible and the abstract, forms an intricate system that shapes how we perceive and interact with others. As we contemplate these visual revelations, we are invited to reexamine the boundaries constructed of our perception, finding in the relationships of color, form, and concept a mirror to the rich complexity of our own inner landscapes interacting with the world around us.

Notes

1 Suzie Attiwill, "Outside-Interior:?Interior," in *Aberrant Nuptials. Deleuze and Artistic Research 2*, ed. Paolo Giudici (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2019), 299–304.
2 Tim Ingold, "Culture, Perception, and Cognition," in *The Perception of the Environment: Essays on Livelihood, Dwelling and Skill*, ed. Tim Ingold (London: Routledge, 2000), 157–159.

15

WONDER + DREAD

Jered Sprecher

As people glide through this world, their progress may be arrested by moments of simultaneous wonder and dread, an experience of the sublime. Caspar David Friedrich's Romantic paintings that picture solitary figures at the edge of a precipice or the vast sea are illustrations of such events.[1] This feeling of wonder and dread located in the perception of a place raises questions about public interiority, understood as the conditions of interiority provisionally generated in outdoor (urban) environments. An individual may find herself at real or metaphorical heights and seized with sublime awe, sensing the grandeur of the world before them and their fragile existence within it. Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Judgement* looms large in the discourse of the sublime and the reactions provoking wonder.[2] In the twenty-first century, it is difficult to deny a sense of wonder when looking at the tiny details or the grand complexities encountered in the world without acknowledging the parallel sense of dread at one's smallness in comparison. The discoveries of the sciences, arts, religions, literature, philosophy, and medicine should invoke wonder. At the same time, these discoveries reveal apprehension, knowledge of the precarious existence in this universe, and humankind's aptitude and appetite for destruction. Each sunrise or sunset, in its brilliance over a vast range of mountains or stand of trees, may lead one to invoke the sublime in concert with the natural environment. This sublime wonder and dread can arise from the world and what we have done to it.

The painting installation entitled *8.25 Minutes* (2017) is a contemplation of the brilliance and gravity of our experience of the natural environment, mediated through the built environment and technology (Figures 15.1 and 15.2). The title, *8.25 Minutes*, refers to the time it takes light to travel from the Sun to the Earth. The artwork consists of six canvases hanging vertically from the ceiling, creating a room that appears to float within the exhibition space, a provisional architecture. When standing on the blue-gray wool carpet in its interior, the viewer is immersed in a panoramic painting of trees and leaves, silhouettes of human figures, and architecture that appear as chromatic apparitions on the surface of each canvas. The paintings fade from cyan to magenta to yellow as the color drains off the image.

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-17

FIGURE 15.1 Installation view from the exhibition Anxious Abstraction, Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Johnson County Community College, Overland Park, Kansas. *8.25 Minutes*, Jered Sprecher (2017), photo by EG Schempf.

The horizontal banding on each canvas mimics the results of a failing inkjet printer, a slow dissolution of the imagery. These banded lines rake across the surface like the lines left by a flood's receding waters or deposits of geologic strata (Figure 15.3).

The form of this installation is influenced by Philip Johnson's *Glass House*:[3] the visibility and vulnerability implicit in its transparency. The paintings sample the intoxicating beauty of nature while creating unease at the denatured color of each painting's surface. The exposed backside of each painting forms a façade around the perimeter of the installation; like the *Glass House*, inside-out. Affixed to the back of the linen paintings are small drawings, Xerox copies, postcards, and paper ephemera, talismans of a private archive made public; the private sphere is exposed at the exterior of the installation, and the interior space is filled with painted imagery of the outdoors, expansive and outward-looking (Figure 15.4).

Wonder is integral to the making of *8.25 Minutes*, a wonder that is perceived by the body as it knits our fragile existence into the immersive world. The installation places the always-perceiving body in this mediated nature. The peace or awe of *waldeinsamkeit*, the German Romantic word for being alone in the woods, is evoked by this painted simulacrum. This immersive, panoramic vista creates a confluence of outside and inside. The painted layers of foliage and the complex flicker of painted light entangle and awe the eye. The luminous cyan, magenta, and yellow create a rich layering of hues that

FIGURE 15.2 Installation view from the exhibition Anxious Abstraction, Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, Johnson County Community College, Overland Park, Kansas. *8.25 Minutes*, Jered Sprecher (2017), photo by EG Schempf.

depict the mediated landscape. The carpet under the viewer's feet delineates the installation from the standard hard surface of a gallery floor. This furthers the body's awareness as one encounters the suspended paintings creating this floating room.

The uncanny nature of *8.25 Minutes* simultaneously elicits a sense of dread. The floating structure within *8.25 Minutes* suggests an uneasy weightlessness. The image, too, is unstable: just out of focus, tilting, off-kilter. Despite the luminous CMYK color, the fading colors mimic the slow death of an inkjet cartridge as its colors are depleted one by one. There is a recurring shadow of a figure in the paintings, a viewer's shadow, a ghostly silhouette (Figure 15.5).

The paradox of wonder and dread evoked by *8.25 Minutes* is also found in instances of public interiority, where the complexities of the public sphere mingle with the necessities of an inward-oriented stance. The body is always central; it is the instrument and standard by which things are perceived. Daydreaming, listening to a pair of AirPods, or reading a book carve out an individual interior space within a city's open spaces. The body, as a perceiving entity, knows this interiority and constantly registers its relationship to the public realm. These city spaces have their own wonder and dread; they are extensions of nature with awe-inspiring immensity and precarity. I hope that this wonder and dread, a reverence, would be reason for humility toward the natural environment and the use of open space in our cities. *8.25 Minutes* forms a microcosm that, like public interiority, *works with* the contingencies of the public outdoor realm and the range of experiences an individual or group can encounter there. The reactions to those

FIGURE 15.3 Painting installation detail. *8.25 Minutes*, Jered Sprecher (2017), photo by Bruce Cole.

FIGURE 15.4 Painting installation detail. *8.25 Minutes*, Jered Sprecher (2017), photo by Bruce Cole.

FIGURE 15.5 Painting installation detail. *8.25 Minutes*, Jered Sprecher (2017), photo by Bruce Cole.

phenomena engendering wonder and dread can and should be considered recognizing each unique setting and the humanity of each individual are woven together to form something larger.

Notes

1 Caspar David Friedrich, *Wanderer above the Sea of Fog*, 1818, oil on canvas, 37.32283 in. x 29.44882 in. Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, Germany.
2 Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Judgment*, trans. James Creed Meredith, (Bedford, VA: A & D Publishing, 2018).
3 Philip Johnson, *The Glass House*. 1949, National Trust for Historic Preservation, New Canaan, CT.

16

MOVING INTERIORS

Travel, Images, Psychologies

Lysa Janssen

Why are we prone to crying on planes? The act of flying is exhilaratingly bizarre—one's body, 35,000 feet above the earth, travels hundreds of miles per hour, journeying from one destination to another in mere hours. These strange feelings mid-flight can be partially explained. Hypoxia, a condition caused by the low-pressure cabin air, causes fatigue, confusion, impaired decision-making, and an inability to handle emotions.[1] It is also known that during flights passengers have an increased propensity to order tomato juice and to confess their life's story to a stranger. Flight, quite literally, changes our bodies, senses, and spatial perspectives and blurs otherwise private (interior) and public (exterior) norms.

Perhaps we can understand our flying behaviors as rituals. Similar to weddings and funerals, there is a ceremony to our travel programs: journey to; airport arrival; check-in; luggage vs. carry-on; TSA; boarding; finding your seat; safety procedures; gate departure; lift-off; adjusting your seatbelt, seatback, air nozzle; drinks and snacks; going to the bathroom; talking to fellow passengers; land; baggage claim; journey on. These physical, spatial, and emotional customs prepare us for the supernatural experience of flying over entire continents and oceans.

When we examine notions of interiority and relationships to exteriority, our urban environment, and the city, we should consider all the interstitial spaces and experiences in between. Our bodies and psychologies thread interiors and exteriors together, whether traveling by thought, digital screen, or physically. These interstitial spaces where we travel have their own material and psychological qualities, degrees of enclosure, light, atmosphere, smells, and sounds, all allowing us to connect with each other and the physical world in specific ways (Figure 16.1).

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-18

FIGURE 16.1 Study of light through fabric while walking in nature. *Light Study, October 24, 2020*, select video stills, Lysa Janssen, (2020).

With their framed views through pane glass windows, passenger trains can be considered precursors to cinematography. Their rise allowed for traveling in comfort and a new visual awareness of interiority and exteriority. In *Metropolitan Corridor*, John Stilgoe writes,

> As a train gathers speed, passengers viewing the landscape at right angles discover that the spatial details nearest the window are the first to blur. At five miles an hour, an intent observer can discern flowers and other elements of the scene immediately adjacent to the rails, but at ten miles an hour, he must look at objects fifteen feet from the side of the car…. At ninety miles an hour, the railroad passenger intrigued by the passing scene must fix his attention only on very distant objects.[2]

The whirling, blurred views framed from the train interior (and eventually the car window) flick past the passenger, similar to a cinema theater viewer watching illuminated images flash past their eyes.[3]

Could the rise of aviation similarly have inspired a new cinematic vision and psychology? A form of global connectivity mirroring today's World Wide Web of technologies? Certainly, the distinct view through an airplane's porthole of ephemeral clouds, model-sized houses, and pixelated cities offers a new spatial experience of our environment. *Window Series*, taken from an airplane window seat, eye level with sun, sky, and mountaintops, reflects the ubiquity in our seeking to capture these wondrous perspectives, another nod to our travel ceremonies. The images are buoyant, some out of focus, some drawing attention to the layered panes and thinness between the human-scaled window and the vast atmosphere beyond. This moving interior object is defined clearly in the air yet phenomenologically nebulous (Figure 16.2).

If the train and the plane are part of our expanded interiors, certainly too is the automobile. The road trip, perhaps the most symbolic and grand vehicular experience, implies both a physical and psychological journey of significance. *Moab, Dad, Remembrance* is part of a series of videos taken along a scenic Utah byway. Here, the vehicle links our urban and rural landscapes, offering a physical interior where wheels connect our bodies with earth and sky and an emotional atmosphere to wander in thoughts. The window and corresponding screen exaggerate the changing foreground, middle ground, and background, which shift with the topography below. Textures and colors are blurred, interiors and exteriors commingle, cinematic and emotional landscapes meld, and the journey is documented for repeat viewing (Figures 16.3 and 16.4).

Our understanding of travel shifted in 2020, along with our comfort with sharing interior spaces with others. No longer carefree in our interiors or moving enclosures, engaging in outdoor activities took on new meaning and significance. *Light Study Video + Stills* is part of a series of photographs and videos capturing movement and light while walking in public parks and nature trails. The series captures the layers placed on our bodies and our physical and emotional boundaries of the time: the rooms in which we were isolated, enclosures that defined our homes, the masks we wore on our faces, and the freedom offered by fresh air. The photographs and images are hazy and veiled, a blurred boundary showing the changing relationships of the body to the landscape through movement,

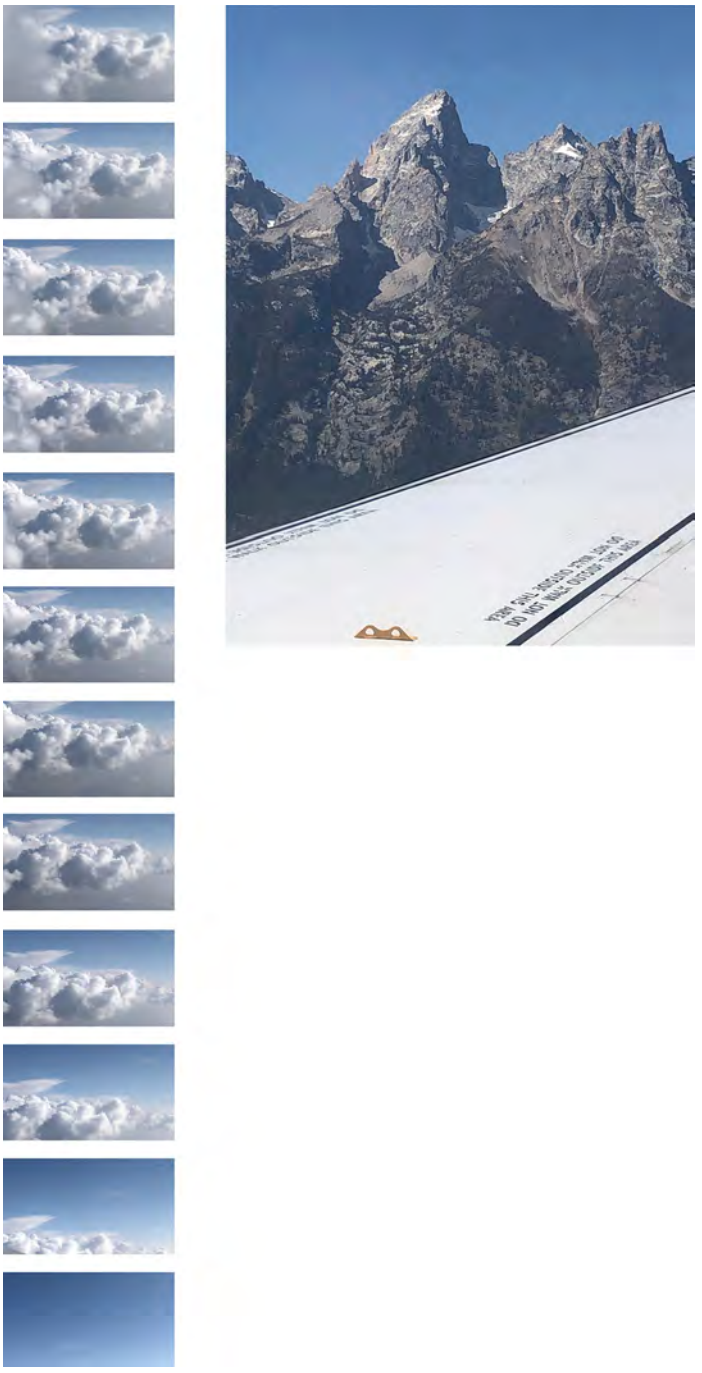


FIGURE 16.2 Digital photographs of mountains and clouds taken during flight. *Window Series 2, September 24, 2021* and *Window Series 3, September 28, 2021*, image compilation, Lysa Janssen, (2021).

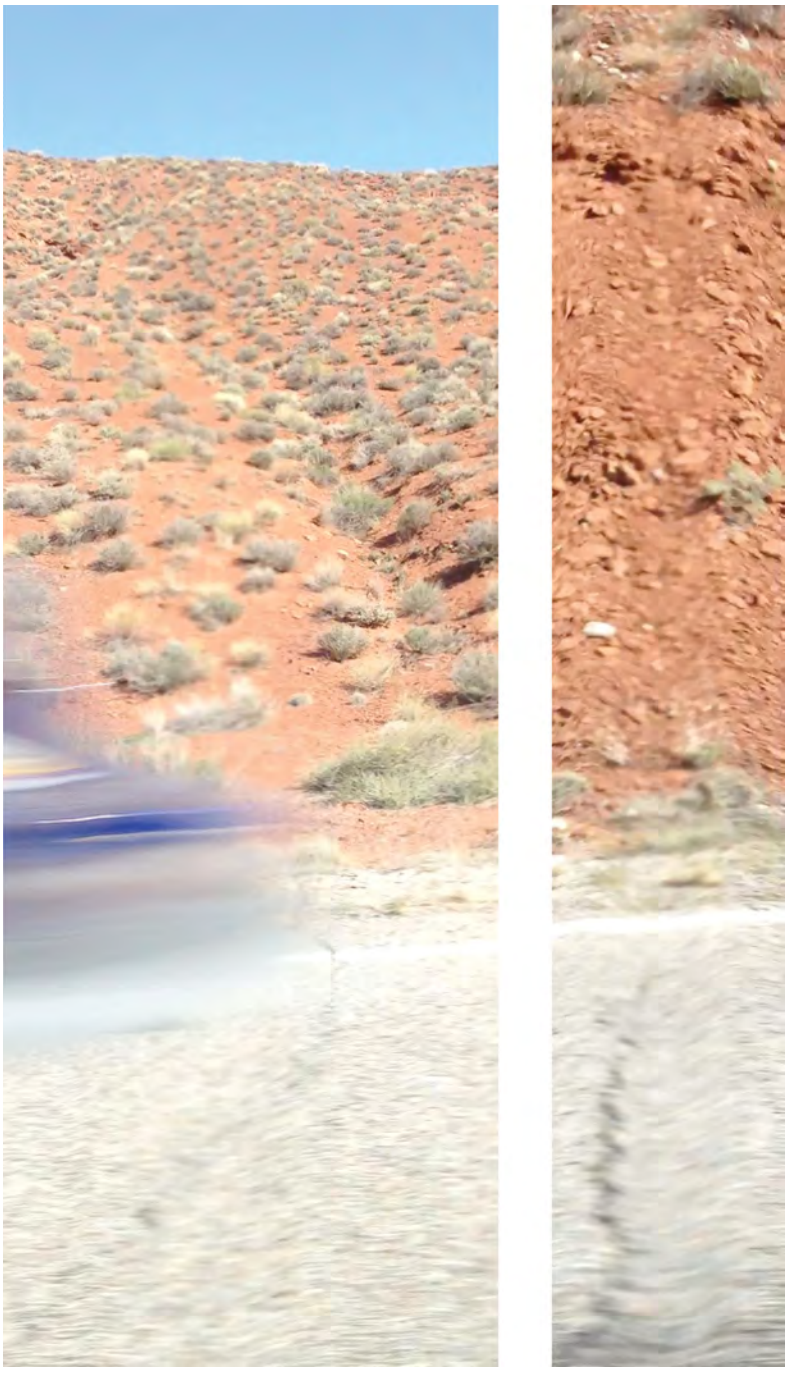


FIGURE 16.3 Select video stills exploring movement, atmosphere, memory and the role of the vehicle in connecting urban and rural landscapes, interiors, and experiences. *Moab, Dad, Remembrance, April 26, 2013*, Lysa Janssen, (2013).

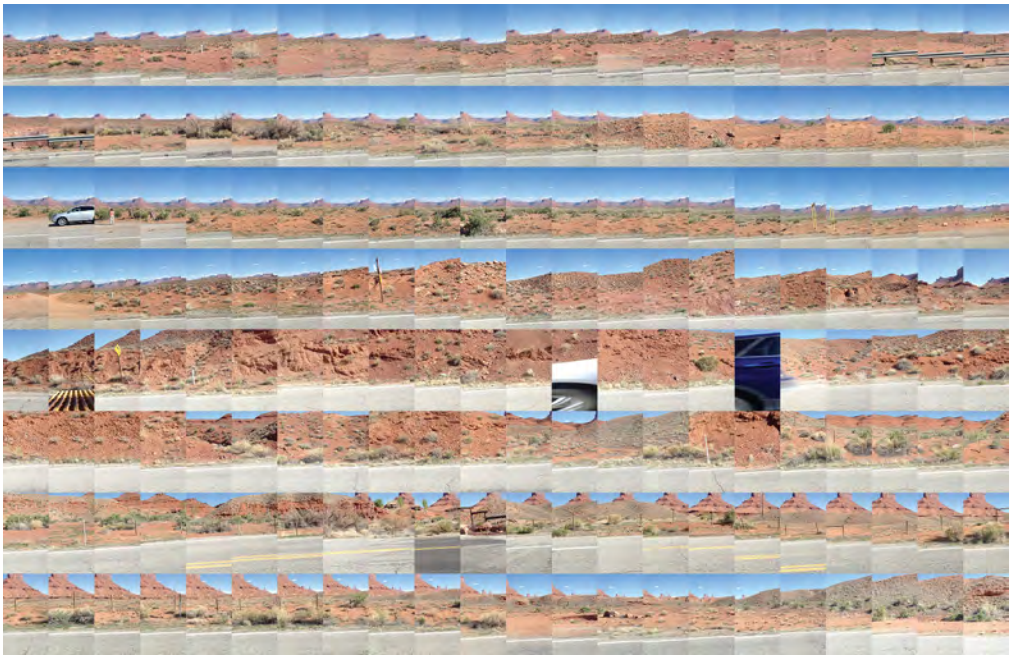


FIGURE 16.4 *Moab, Dad, Remembrance, April 26, 2013*, video stills compilation, Lysa Janssen, (2013).

light, shadow, and color. As we consider questions of public interiority, the works offer a physiological space—they lack focus and can be disorienting—a reflection of the time, yet also offer the opportunity to view our environments through an aesthetic lens of abstraction and effect (Figure 16.5).

Yet one minute, two hours, or three days later, these spaces will have shifted. Like blurred, dissolved surfaces, the out-of-focus, glitchy image, screen capture, and video reflect the transmissibility of our moving interiors and experienced experiences.

Extending the realm of the interior beyond its traditional definition into the fixed and indeterminate in-betweens reveals a new type of spatial construct that is malleable, atmospheric, programmed, psychological, and continuous. It has structure, feeling, color, texture, light, space, enclosure. Our bodies and thoughts travel between and within these spaces, both physical and psychological interiors interfacing with our environment.

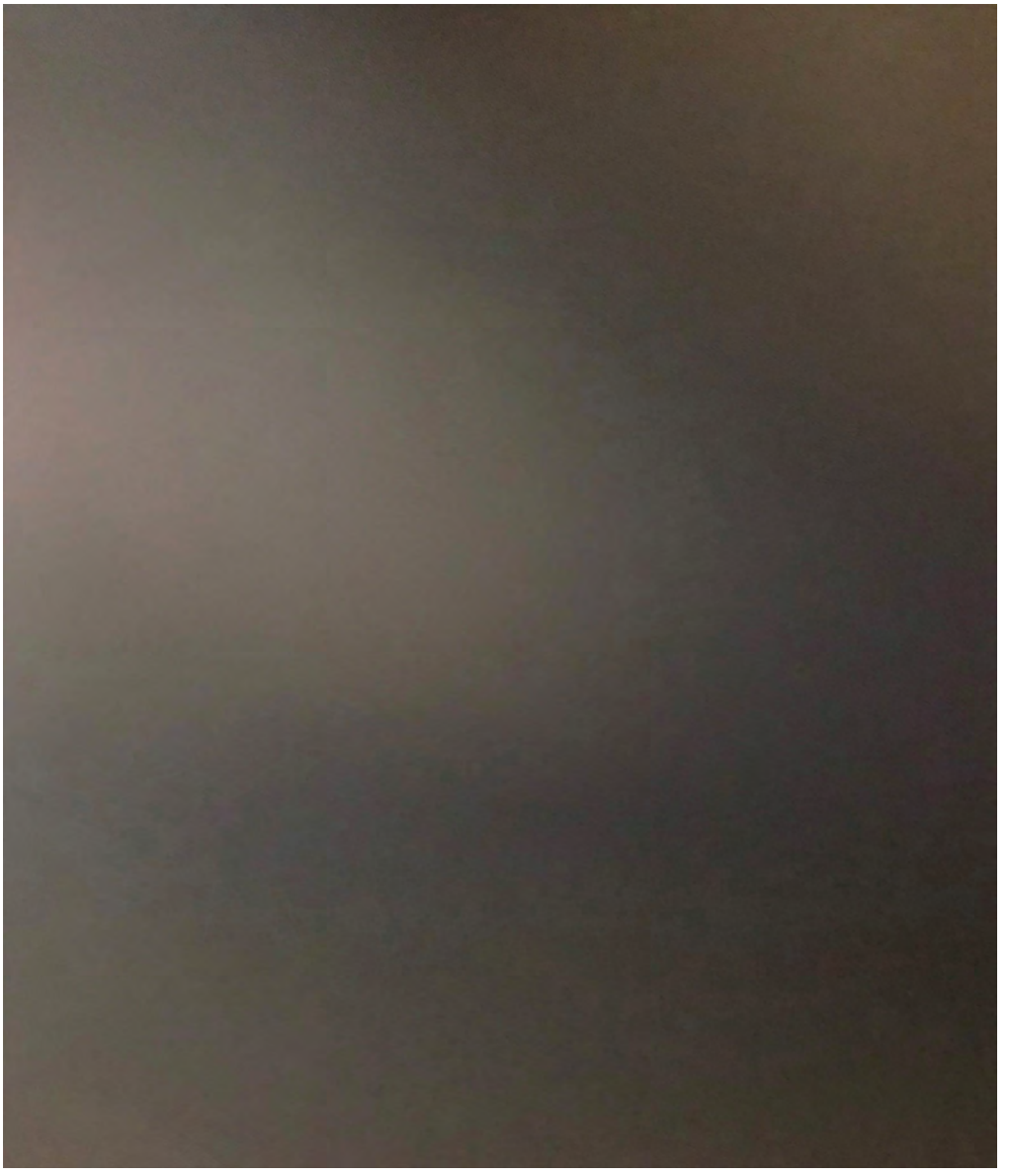


FIGURE 16.5 Study of light through fabric while walking in nature. *Light Study, October 24, 2020*, digital photograph, Lysa Janssen, (2020).

Notes

1 Beth Teitell, "Why We Turn into Different People When We Fly," *The Boston Globe* (Boston, MA), July 9, 2019.
2 John Stilgoe, *Metropolitan Corridor* (New Haven, CT and London: Yale University Press, 1983), 250.
3 Stilgoe, 252.

17

OUTDOOR INTERIORITY

City Creatures

Nerea Feliz

City Creatures is a multispecies design project that is conceived with an expanded notion of public interiority that is not defined by architectural boundaries and is instead characterized by models of interior occupation. Within the urban environment, intense spatial appropriation through use, as well as physical and atmospheric manipulation, can temporarily turn streets and squares into corridors and rooms, producing the experience of outdoor interiority. The adoption of this expansive understanding of public interiority as a condition that can take place in the outdoors comes with the need to challenge interior design's disciplinary anthropocentrism. The Living Planet Index has documented a 69% reduction in monitored wildlife populations since 1970.[1] It also recognizes urbanization as a big threat to biodiversity, causing the elimination, fragmentation, and reduction of habitats. In the midst of the current biodiversity crisis, it is imperative to explore strategies to better integrate other species within the built environment. This proposal for the MoMA PS1 competition uses the design of a popular public space as a means of environmental activism. It also deploys interior design techniques (lighting, textiles, and furnishings) to transform the PS1 patio into an "interiorized" space and to establish a sense of intimacy between humans and the diverse life forms inhabiting urban spaces, particularly insects.

Cities are commonly associated with human occupation, but they are, in fact, home to a wide range of life forms. Among them, insects and arthropods represent an abundant and diverse population, constituting over 80% of the world's species. Unfortunately, they often go unnoticed or are regarded as pests. However, insects play crucial roles in urban ecosystems as pollinators, seed dispersers, decomposers, and food sources for other species like bats and birds. Additionally, they serve as bioindicators[2] of environmental conditions. Recent research has even shown that insects in New York City compete with rats as waste scavengers, contributing to waste management.[3] The project's goal is to bring the often-underappreciated world of insects into the spotlight, highlighting their active participation in urban life by attracting their presence.

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-19

FIGURE 17.1 Nightime axonometric drawing for 2019 MoMA PS1 Competition entry. *City Creatures*, Nerea Feliz and Joyce Hwang (2019) with drawing assistants Hannah Frossard and Bruno Canales.

To support an insect habitat, the design integrates an elevated garden around the main courtyard. By incorporating wildflowers, the garden attracts various pollinators such as fireflies, ladybugs, bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds. Particular attention is given to the monarch butterflies, an endangered species that can be found in NYC during the spring and summer months prior to the start of their migratory route to Central Mexico, by including milkweed, which is essential for their breeding and feeding stages and happens to bloom between late spring and the end of summer, coinciding with the time of the PS1 pavilion.[4] The elevated planting beds offer better visibility of this ecosystem while also minimizing direct contact between insects and people, as certain species are repelled by human presence. To create an inviting atmosphere, a golden corrugated metal wall conceals the basic structure, elevating the planters, irrigation system, and storage. The wall's golden hue attracts specific insect species, while its reflective quality adds vibrancy to the courtyard ambiance (Figures 17.1 and 17.2).

During the night, the design employs "positive phototaxis," the natural phenomenon that attracts insects to artificial light sources (Figure 17.3). The proposal includes curtain-like scrims made of mosquito netting fabric and suspended from catenary cables across the MoMA PS1 courtyard. Each set of curtains culminates in an artificial light source to draw insects and cast their shadows on the hanging scrims. The curtains filter and reflect light, producing an ephemeral glow that defines the atmosphere of this outdoor "room" in the evening. The scrims also support the projection of pre-recorded documentation of insects in conjunction with real-time occurring shadows. The visual display of insects through shadows and video projections against the mosquito netting's backdrop creates a captivating and immersive experience. The scalar augmentation of insects facilitated by the projections provokes an unusual interspecies connection. During the day, the textiles provide shadow and transform the courtyard into a softer, interior-like setting. At the installation's end, the mosquito nets can be donated to humanitarian organizations fighting malaria (Figures 17.3 and 17.4).

By adopting a broader understanding of interiority that goes beyond the confines of architectural enclosure, the project seeks to expand interior design disciplinary boundaries to the urban outdoors and to be inclusive of nonhuman species. These disciplinary shifts open new territories for practice and for innovative design solutions, such as the use of lighting, furnishings and textiles deployed outdoors to foster a sense of shared interiority between humans and other species. "City Creatures" seeks to transform the PS1 courtyard into a public and inclusive environment that welcomes, celebrates and draws attention to the presence of insect populations in the city; in so doing, it interrogates our limited notion of the right to urban occupancy to include a broad web of interdependent species (Figure 17.5).

FIGURE 17.2 Daytime axonometric drawing for 2019 MoMA PS1 Competition entry. *City Creatures,* Nerea Feliz and Joyce Hwang (2019) with drawing assistants Hannah Frossard and Bruno Canales.

FIGURE 17.3 Daytime perspective views for 2019 MoMA PS1 Competition entry. *City Creatures*, Nerea Feliz and Joyce Hwang (2019) with drawing assistants Hannah Frossard and Bruno Canales.

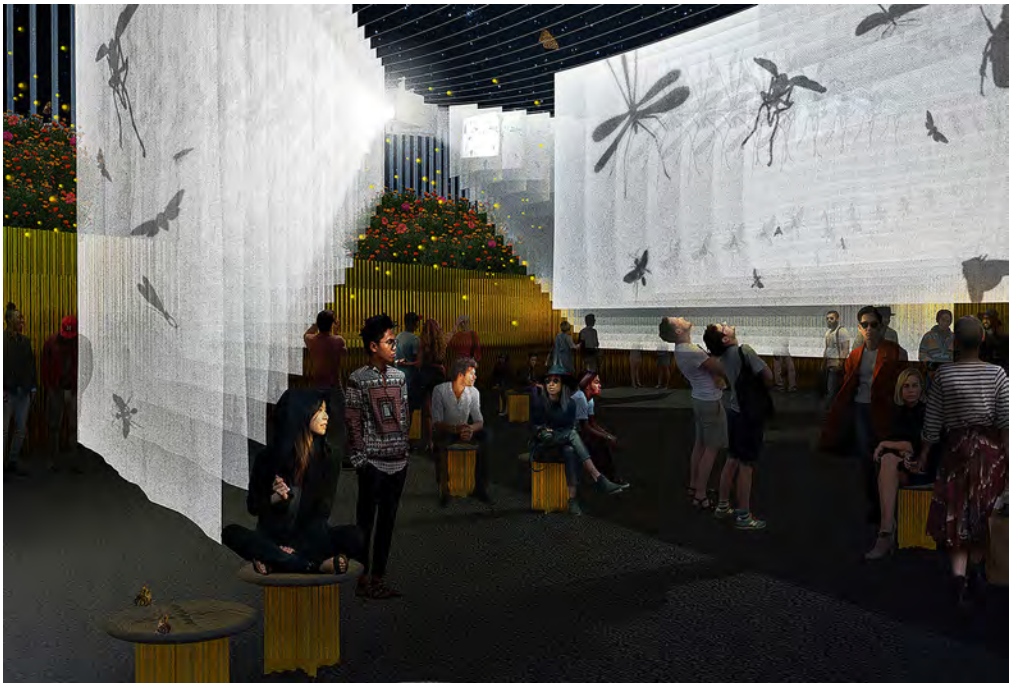


FIGURE 17.4 Nightime axonometric drawing for 2019 MoMA PS1 Competition entry. *City Creatures*, Nerea Feliz and Joyce Hwang (2019) with drawing assistants Hannah Frossard and Bruno Canales.

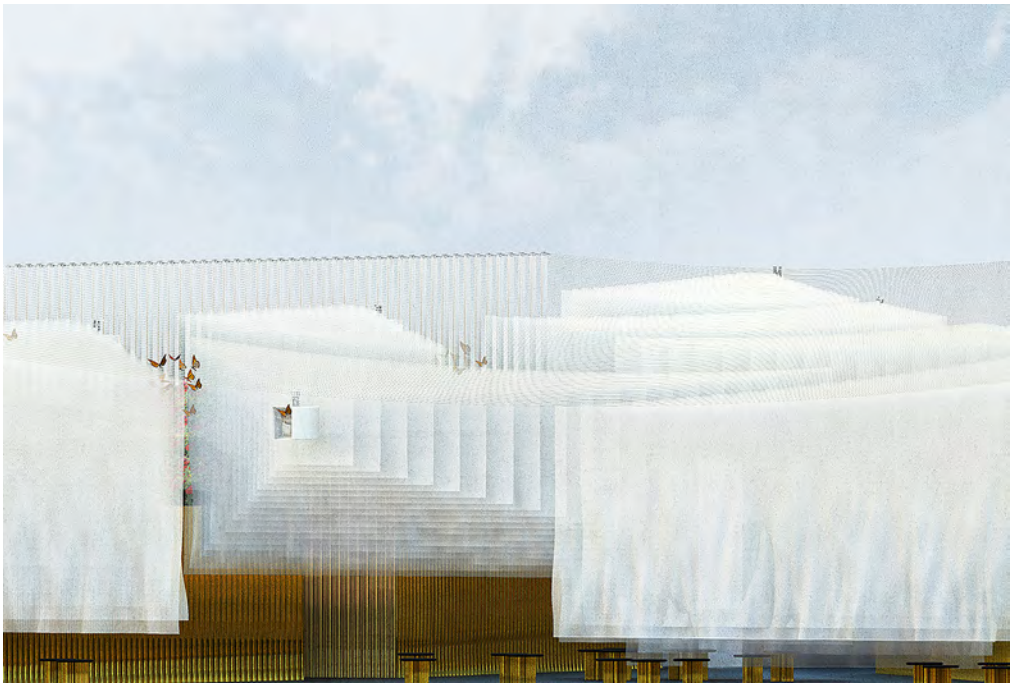


FIGURE 17.5 Daytime perspective drawing for 2019 MoMA PS1 Competition entry. *City Creatures*, Nerea Feliz and Joyce Hwang (2019) with drawing assistants Hannah Frossard and Bruno Canales.

Notes

1 J. Westveer, R. Freeman, L. McRae, V. Marconi, R.E.A. Almond, and M. Grooten, "A Deep Dive into the Living Planet Index: A Technical Report," WWF, Gland, Switzerland, 2022, accessed January 31, 2024, https://www.livingplanetindex.org/documents/LPR_2022_TechnicalSupplement_DeepDiveLPI.pdf

2 Sanhita Chowdhury, Vinod Kumar Dubey, Srishti Choudhury, Abhibandana Das, Deepika Jeengar, B. Sujatha, Anil Kumar, Nagendra Kumar, Anshuman Semwal, and Vinod Kumar, "Insects as Bioindicator: A Hidden Gem for Environmental Monitoring," *Frontiers in Environmental Science* 11 (2023): 1146052. https://doi.org/10.3389/fenvs.2023.1146052

3 Elsa Youngsteadt, Ryanna C. Henderson, Amy M. Savage, Andrew F. Ernst, Robert R. Dunn, and Steven D. Frank, "Habitat and Species Identity, not Diversity, Predict the Extent of Refuse Consumption by Urban Arthropods," Global Change Biology 21 (2015): 1103–1115. https://doi.org/10.1111/gcb.12791

4 Claire Hagen Dole, "Milkweeds—Easing the Plight of the Monarch Butterfly", Brooklyn Botanic Garden, accessed January 31, 2024, https://www.bbg.org/article/milkweeds

PART III

Atmospheres + Forms

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

18

AN INTRODUCTION TO ATMOSPHERES + FORMS

Amy Campos

FIGURE 18.1 An hourglass-shaped, multi-color cloud set against the black, starry background of space. This cloud of dust and gas is illuminated by light from a protostar, a star in the earliest stages of formation. In the center of the hourglass shape is a small, dark demarcation line. This line is an edge-on view of a protoplanetary disk, a disk of material being pulled into a star as it forms. Taken by NASA's Webb Telescope, image processed by Space Telescope Science Institute 2022.

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-21

The image from NASA's new Webb telescope above shows a protostar,[1] a new star in the process of being formed. The red and blue hourglass of gasses shown centered around a black thin space (the protostar) are being pulled into the star in its formation. These gasses and matter are heated and compressed to form the material of the star through nuclear fusion eventually. The context of the many conditions around this new star is essential to its being formed, much like a human individual connecting and pulling in experience from a larger public context to form one's own identity and self. This incredible image helps us to understand the intention for the title of the section and is a useful metaphor for the connections we can make between the works presented here (Figure 18.1).

This next collection of essays, loosely networked under the subtitle, *Atmospheres + Forms*, present Public Interiority as a tangible but elusive collection of environmental and social conditions defining public space in a variety of contexts and experiences, anchored in squarely interior-oriented precedent and practice. *Atmospheres + Forms* suggests a scale of space and time beyond a single moment or region; it suggests much larger interconnected psychological, social, and spatial and environmental networks operating beyond a single place or cultural moment. Scales of climate and cycles of time, social, and cultural evolution, technological innovation, and power are all folded into an expanding definition of public interiority.

How does one know where, when, how to be in public? What makes a space legible as a public place of interaction? What are the scales of interaction, how are they mediated, what are the social boundaries and how are these understood? Climatic atmospheres define systems of gathering. When the sun is too hot or too shaded, when winds are harnessed or rerouted to control temperate and visual texture, or when and how sound is amenable to discussion or discretion. Public gathering ebbs and flows diurnally based on these factors. Social atmosphere also sets protocols for interaction and defines familiarity and safety for a population to explore physical proximity for culturally appropriate degrees of exposure (being seen), anonymity (being known or culturally classified), and connection (human interaction).

Igor Siddiqui explores Jean-Michel Wilmotte's interior urban design practice with the express aim "to connect contemporary scholarship on public interiors with professional precedent." Wilmotte's approach to urban design was a reaction to the "grandiose gestures"[2] of 1990's urban form which included human-scaled furniture and other elements that created social situations rather than formal city-scaled gestures, and considers the city an existing condition to be respected, cared for, and enhanced, much the way an interior designer might respond to an existing architecture. Siddiqui elaborates on Wilmotte's practice and approach as a model for future urban interior design practice, centering public space as social space with Wilmotte's intention to bring his careful understanding of human interaction in space to an urban context.

Penny Sparke's chapter on curative environments in Britain from 1840–1914 discusses this particular historic moment and spatial type as "(semi)-Public Interiority." Her chapter

proposes a fluid relationship between interior and exterior spaces in service of rehabilitation strategies developed at the time. The curative environments or hydropathic hotels and mental health institutions (formerly called lunatic asylums) developed a landscape methodology that extended domestic interior features into the exterior spaces, defined exterior rooms with delicate wicker furnishings, and created comfortable places of repose, to inspire internal focus, space for thinking and relaxation within a familiar public setting. This (semi)-public interiority was developed with the belief that designed environments, using domestic principles, could facilitate curative experiences to help people re-enter society.

Najia Javaid's essay introduces the idea of a bound public space within a former Mughal palace, defined by controlled light, air, and processional space, that produces a set of prescribed public social actions. Walking and talking within public space meant being seen within a framework of social signifiers (having access to this social space, who one is interacting with, how one is dressed). The format of the interactions, facilitated by the space and its associated unspoken rules in this historical example is a convenient counter to Marcin Kędzior's discussion of three scales of interiority: psychic, atmospheric, and social. His description of dreamspace, the continuous public interior of Nolli's plans, universal planetary music and the idea of a public collectivity creates a tantalizing potential for the re-creation of oneself, loss of control of one's identity and possibility for chance encounters unimagined outside of the public collective. There is an aspirational self possible in Kedzior's discussion of these three scales of interiority, as well as Javaid's processional spaces. William Willoughby's text on the publicness of study and devotion offers another perspective on pandemic era isolation and the practice of publicizing work as an act of public interiority.

Vasari's corridor and the public piazzas in Florence introduce an atmosphere of surveillance and social order in Shai Yeshayahu's piece. In this case the very interior nature of the piazza at the Uffizi Palace is built for the ruling class to watch over and eavesdrop on the public. The public space, in this case, is a direct construction of power and control. Kendra Locklear Ordia's ''Rewild'' essay discusses a very different power dynamic between forgotten public spaces and native vegetation reclaiming those spaces. These topics expand the discussion of this section to include power and provenance—who are public spaces for? Who are they made by? Nathan Smith's account of the making of the ''Rift Table: Material, Process + Interiority'' connects local material histories and processes with a notion of publicness that is centered on building regional context and identity in public form through the developing hemp industry in Kentucky. How are public spaces made?

The social, historical, and environmental atmospheres that define public interiority in this section form complex systems of collective behavior, social legibility, habitual, and new interactions that create belonging and safety. Publicness allows for anonymity and potential while interiority produces a socially legible context, creating community.

Notes

1 NASA Webb Telescope Team, "NASA's Webb Catches Fiery Hourglass as New Star Forms" *NASA*, November 16, 2022, https://www.nasa.gov/universe/nasas-webb-catches-fiery-hourglass-as-new-star-forms/
2 Jean-Michel Wilmotte, "A Question of Common Sense," in *Architecture intérieure des villes – Interior Urban Design* (Paris: Le Moniteur, 1999), 15.

19

JEAN-MICHEL WILMOTTE'S INTERIOR URBAN DESIGN AS A MODEL OF PUBLIC INTERIOR PRACTICE

Igor Siddiqui

Introduction: Rewinding to 1999

Contemporaneously with the emergence of landscape urbanism as a design theory in the 1990s,[1] the French interior designer and architect Jean-Michel Wilmotte published his monograph *Architecture intérieure des villes—Interior Urban Design*.[2] Just as landscape urbanists collectively advocated "claiming landscape as urbanism"[3]—challenging architecture's conventionally dominant role in the shaping of cities—Wilmotte's 1999 book offered a singular and by now seemingly obscure proposition, like a nearly forgotten anomaly or isolated incident, to conceptually approach the city as a work of interior design.[4] As his fourth published monograph, *Architecture intérieure des villes* reflects the evolution and expanding scope of Wilmotte's prolific professional practice established in the mid-1970s. The three books that preceded it feature a variety of building rehabilitations, interior commissions, museum exhibitions, and furniture designs. The 1999 monograph instead pivots to outdoor environments and public spaces—that is, on the urban territories between rather within buildings—while continuing to use interiors as a key reference in the narratives accompanying the visual portfolio. Today, this collection of works appears like a late-postmodern phantom from the past with the air of a 90s playlist, distant enough to have its echoes catch one by surprise yet not so far removed not to carry with it a tune reminiscent of another, more recent, title: *Public Interiority*.

This essay compares public interiority as a prompt posed by this book project (and the programs through which it came to be) with Wilmotte's concept of interior urban design. Through such pairing, the aim is to identify insightful, productive as well as problematic intersections between already actualized and potential future models of interiors-oriented practices in contemporary cities.

Public Interiority: A Question of Practice

The enticement of public interiority as a thematic call for convention is in part a result of the words' pairing but also has to do with each term's multifaceted definition. Rather than

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-22

prematurely arriving at each of their binary opposites—and getting "endlessly trapped in a dizzying *mise-en-abyme* conundrum"[5] because of such a misstep—"public" and "interiority" can individually be approached from a vast range of perspectives, from policy to psyche. Placed together the two terms gain specificity but retain their openness, the way a good name often does. The title evokes, for example, the work of Sharon Hayes, the artist and queer activist known to have staged readings of intimate love letters in the street[6] as well as reminds one of recent political bans on drag performances in Tennessee and elsewhere. The vastness of thematic, disciplinary, and practicable possibilities embedded in the title *Public Interiority* received a tighter framing—like a conceptual crop—by the text that served as a call for submissions to the namesake symposium and the accompanying exhibition. According to its opening sentence, its primary audience was designers, who were prompted to "address the intersections between experience-based interiority and the city." The overarching objective, according to the text, was to expand and broaden "our notion of interiors" by operating "outside the architectural enclosure" and within "outdoor urban conditions."[7] Articulated in this way, "public" references that which is spatially outside of buildings and belongs to the shared milieus of cities; in parallel, "interiority" connotes a state, a spatial condition, and a stand-in for a set of practices whose name, if slightly rephrased and uttered out loud, might sound something like "interior design."

In lieu of explicitly pinning the aims of *Public Interiority* onto a single discipline, the prompt encouraged participation by those from "an expanded and broad field,"[8] an academic version of an open party invitation made in the hopes that interesting strangers—kindred spirits bearing gifts—may come. Not all but the majority, nonetheless, of those who convened as a result of the call were in some way affiliated with academic programs in interior design (or, with those that have over the last decades changed their name to interior architecture).[9] This included symposium presenters and moderators (including the program's organizing faculty and board members); exhibition participants, as well as the audience of academics, practitioners, and students gathered under the roof of a college offering accredited professional degrees required for professional licensure in interior design (in the US at least, there is no such a thing as a licensed interior architect). The self-selected makeup of attendees confirmed that the discussion on public interiority was taking place among friends and friends-of-friends rather than perfect strangers, and that the field in question was indeed more of a home turf than uncharted territory. The thematic framing of public interiority was thus always already in relation to a field populated by subjects aware of their disciplinary boundaries, the reframing of which constitutes an exciting, hopeful, necessary—and possibly emancipatory—movement forward. This makes *Public Interiority* a project that contributes toward building a discipline rather than obscuring its salient features.

Public Interiority is an affirmation of interior architecture and design's academic vitality as scholars and educators dedicated to the field's development prototype future trajectories and anticipate their broader impact in the profession and the world that it serves. Existing theories relating interiors with public space and urbanism abound, from Benjamin and Branzi to Sennett and Sloterdijk and beyond, as does the likelihood of finding interiors wherever you look (once you start looking). As a result of diverse artistic practices, one can also recognize interior aspects of many works situated in the public realm and

outdoors more generally—think SUPERFLEX, Lucy Orta, Jorge Pardo, Martin Puryear, and go on for days—but the impression remains that little in this regard so far, outside of academia, has been done specifically by interior designers and those who professionally self-identify with interior design as their primary expertise. Even the Dutch designer Petra Blaisse, perhaps best known as a master of the ultimate interior device, the curtain, seems to trade her affiliation with interiors with that of landscape the moment a commission takes her practice, called Inside Outside, from indoors to outdoors.[10]

How might this impression be adjusted if, rather than only looking ahead toward the realm of future potential, one looked further back? Who are the interior designers that have taken the expertise from their own field and brought it outside, not only outdoors but also into the public realm? Like the value of delving into existing theories and making them useful anew, what may be gained by learning from past models of professional practice, however imperfectly they may suit the present moment? Starting from scratch may be exciting; already having something to start with is shrewd.

Wilmotte: An Interior Urban Designer

Considering Jean-Michel Wilmotte's professional practice is one attempt at addressing this question of precedent. Wilmotte (b. 1945 in Soissons, France) graduated from the École Camondo, the private Parisian school of interior architecture and design, in the early 1970s as part of the same cohort of students as Philippe Starck. Soon thereafter, he established his own practice, named Governor,[11] focusing primarily on interior design and furnishings. In 1982, both Starck and Wilmotte—along with three other then-emerging French designers, Ronald-Cecil Sportes, Annie Tribel, and Marc Held—were invited to redesign the private apartments in the Élysée Palace for President François Mitterrand. Each designer was responsible for one room; Wilmotte was in charge of the president's bedroom (Figure 19.1), Starck of the room for the president's wife Danielle Mitterrand, and the others were given the living, dining, and guest room.[12]

Wilmotte and Starck's individual careers advanced significantly following the presidential commission, to say the least. While Starck eventually became a global brand, particularly famous for his product designs, Wilmotte developed a reputation by pursuing other high-profile public commissions, such as the permanent scenography and exhibition design of the Louvre's Richelieu Wing (Figure 19.2) and the Pavillon des Sessions as well as furnishing of the Champs-Élysées pedestrian promenade (Figure 19.3). As Wilmotte's practice evolved, the types of project sites also expanded from those primarily bound by building enclosures to more complex urban environments. Unlike Starck's business which, as it expanded and scaled, became increasingly invested in promoting a more general notion of design as a ubiquitous process and product (of which interiors, like tableware, lighting, and cars, are effectively a subset), Wilmotte remained invested in interiors as a practice with a civic dimension, even if through both reputation and additional credentials he also operated like an architect and a prolific product designer.[13] The 1999 monograph captures his explicit efforts to expand the definition of interior design as a practice and its role in the design of cities.

Architecture intérieure des villes encompasses a selection of projects pursued by Wilmotte's office between 1991 and 1999, organized into sections dedicated to urban

FIGURE 19.1 President François Mitterrand's bedroom in the private apartments of the Élysée Palace, designed by Wilmotte in 1983. Image courtesy of Wilmotte & Associés, ©Deidi Von Schaewen.

spaces, transport, street furniture, and outdoor lighting. Through a combination of color photography and architectural illustration, the book visually conveys a sense of priority given to design considerations such as human scale, materiality, texture, color, pattern, atmosphere, and vegetation. Particular attention is given to the significant scalar shifts that occur in each project, making sure to show both, for example, the entire form of an urban plan and the thoughtfully considered small-scale elements that make it livable on the ground. Taken as part of Wilmotte's broader body of work and in relation to his other monographs, *Architecture intérieure des villes* appears like a transition, a segue between his thriving career as an interior designer and that of the head of a growing corporate practice dealing with increasingly public commissions that span multiple spatial, professional, and disciplinary realms.

In the book's introductory essay, "A Question of Common Sense," Wilmotte assumes an understated and deliberately pragmatic stance toward interior urban architecture, referring to it as a matter of "breathing new life" into cities while likewise declaring, "There is no need for grandiose gestures."[14] Written from a perspective reminiscent of Michel de Certeau,[15] the essay's opening is a reflection on walking in the city. Wilmotte describes the experience as follows,

FIGURE 19.2 A view of the Richelieu Wing at the Louvre Museum, designed by Wilmotte in 1993, with the Puget Courtyard in the background. Image courtesy of Wilmotte & Associés, ©Alessandra Chemollo.

> The visitor's horrific gaze falls upon a plethora of knotted signs—a jigsaw of road signs, telephone booths, Superloos, traffic lights, lamp posts and a host of different containers. A real labyrinth of floor markings and advertising signs on walls and posts. An overgrown tree conceals sight lines, while further on rubbish and water stagnate at the bottom of a steep slope. Anarchic car parks infiltrate pedestrian zones taken over by delivery trucks. Rough plaster bruises the palms of our hands and the myriad forms of road surfacing wage fratricidal wars. Then night falls, but we are stifled by the lack of lighting.[16]

According to the text, this is the condition in which the contemporary city presents itself to the walker—as well as to the designer tasked with intervening in it. For Wilmotte, the practice of interior urban design involves repair, cleaning, scrubbing, fixing, adapting, furnishing, painting, illumination, and, in general, caring for what already exists; it is a process of treating the city "with kid gloves," or, as he writes in the original French version, *avec des délicatesses de couturier*, "with the dressmaker's finesse."[17] The city is thus an existing condition not unlike a room, building, or other inhabitable structure,[18] and working on it, from the perspective of interiors, is in effect an act of stewardship.

FIGURE 19.3 Street furniture designed by Jean-Michel Wilmotte in 1994, installed at the Champs-Élysées pedestrian promenade in Paris. Image by author.

For example, in the design of public spaces for Cap d'Agde—where, according to the monograph, Wilmotte's firm first applied the concept of urban interior design in practice—the objective was to construct a sense of unity in a city fragmented into parts with different identities. Urban in scale and open to the sky, the project nonetheless implemented a spatial strategy commonly used in interiors. According to the project text, "The work was organized around a tripartite design process: the materials, the street furniture, and their staging."[19] Swaths of local black basalt arrayed in different patterns cover the ground like urban wall-to-wall carpeting, while the interplay between custom-designed seating and towering light fixtures provides a scalar link between people, buildings, and the seaside setting (Figure 19.4). The result is an urban environment in which, not unlike interior spaces that evolve over time, some of its constituent layers merge with one another, while others stand out as intentional markers of change.

The public interiority in Wilmotte's work—as an act of interior design occurring in the public realm—is articulated as a matter of professional ethos rather than particular relationships to building envelopes; a process of making livable the spatial conditions traversed by various patterns of contemporary life. Conceptually, the seamlessness of Wilmotte's movement between inside and outside has in this way little to do with the transgression of physical architectural boundaries but is rather distinguished by the framed

FIGURE 19.4 A view of street furniture, lighting, and black basalt paving in the resort town of Cap d'Agde, designed by Wilmotte in 1995. Image courtesy of Wilmotte & Associés. ©Robert Cesar.

relationship between the existing condition and the designer's attentiveness to it as an interiors-oriented model of design practice. In projects like Cap d'Agde, this means that surfaces and smaller-scale objects, in addition to engaging what already exists, take precedence over the architectural logic of enclosures and envelopes. It is a savvy mode of operating in (and on) the world, at once deliberately sensitive, sensible, nonthreatening, and precisely—and rightly so—calculated and opportunistic.

Wilmotte's professional trajectory, however, needs not be romanticized. To consider the ease with which he has navigated different disciplinary and social milieus throughout his career simply as an outcome of choice, will, or talent would ignore the political and social heft that has backed his profitable rise since the 1980s. His proximity to the French president, and also to the Minister of Culture Jack Lang (the public official that famously shaped Mitterrand's engagement with architects and the realization of the Grands Projets)[20] who once attributed Wilmotte's success to a smoothness with which he treats his clients as future friends,[21] are just two among countless nodes in the network of connections that underlies the creative work itself. His has been a path of privileged access. To his undeniable credit, he is the rare interior designer—not an architect working on interiors while they scale up to other types of commissions, but a trained expert in the tailoring of interior spaces—who managed to translate their working approach to the scale of urban design

without abandoning the specific perspective and sensibility inherent to the field that launched him. Yet, those hoping to find in his creatively mobile practice a sense of emancipation from disciplinary confrontations may not wish to pay much attention to the press which to this day highlights his reputational disadvantage, among architects, for his affiliation with interiors, corporate success, as well as the overt affection for historical architecture.[22] Upon his induction into the French Academy of Fine Arts in 2017, an honor bestowed on only eight other architects, the French conservative newspaper *Le Figaro* wrote, as if admitting collective guilt, "We often criticized Wilmotte for being an interior architect."[23]

Future Forward: Theory + Practice

Assessing the work of Petra Blaisse—another type of public *interiorist*[24]—Sylvia Lavin argues,

> Considering Blaisse with a calculated refusal of the logic of inside and outside is productive because this boundary trope leaves her at the mercy of a fundamentally architectural distinction—no matter how elegantly she moves along its razor's edge—and subject to an intellectual/disciplinary apparatus that rarely does justice to anything other than itself.[25]

Wilmotte's treatment of the city as a found condition, like the shell of a building or an old suit, is a similar attempt to sidestep applying a building-boundary logic to artistic and professional expertise. A decade prior to the publication of *Architecture intérieure des villes*, Wilmotte's self-identification veered even further from architectural orthodoxy. "I'm a one-man-band rather than an interior architect," he says in his 1988 monograph. "I belong to a new generation of 'communicators.' I have a contemporary job in the contemporary world: in a broad sense I'm a builder, but also a communicator."[26] In imagining such a practice, one might see something akin to radio waves circulating through space, like data-carrying wireless signals, indifferent to enclosure.

In the preface to *Architecture intérieure des villes* titled "Warning," the urban theorist Paul Virilio writes about globalization's obliterating effect on spatial distinctions between inside and outside, the exterior and the interior.[27] Virilio spent his early career, in the mid-1960s, developing the theory of the oblique function with the architect Claude Parent which attempted to address the notion that the dynamic nature of contemporary life had yet to find its compatible expression in the built environment.[28] While Virilio and Parent's proposition to place all human activity on inclined ground had limited impact on the morphology of contemporary cities, Wilmotte managed to respond to conditions of mobility through much more subtle means—an achievement that is acknowledged in the preface. Describing such contemporary movement as nomadic, migratory, and as an exodus—shifting "not only people and entire populations, but also their places of living and their very livelihoods"—Virilio calls for "relevant professions" to make such experiences "inhabitable" while also affirming the synergy of "domestic objects and urban development."[29] The scalar shift between the two requires imagination, and Virilio wonders, while implicating Wilmotte in a possible answer, "What name should we give to those who create these ruptures of scale, which are just as much ruptures of load?"[30]

Embracing interior design as a spatial practice charged with making life more livable and habitats more inhabitable requires being open to—and perhaps even actively anticipating—its inevitable evolution in response to the forces that continuously redistribute public commons, privacy, work, domesticity, leisure, and security beyond the conventional containment of buildings. This is why interiors and interior designers move outside, onto new terrains, immersed in changing climates and ecosystems, while tracing through their movement the magnitudes and directionality of lifecycles, migrations, transactions, and transport; not to change or expand for the own sake of it (although the dream of autonomy from other fields can be a motivator too), but to go where such labor might make a difference. In this way, the field may already have much of what it needs to pursue this work—while acknowledging that, like all professions, the boundaries of its expertise are dynamic rather than fixed.

To have its agency, confidence, and impact expand, however, the field needs to seriously engage professional practice—with all its financial, political, and human resources, complexities, as well as its imperfect baggage—in addition to continuing to articulate its theoretical repertoire through teaching, noncommercial experimentation, and academic research. Landscape urbanism provides one insightful case study of a profession's advancement and transformation through synergy between theory and practice. At the scale of individual practice, Wilmotte offers another useful reference case, even if his published proposition about interior urban design may ultimately be as easy to file under savvy publicity than design manifesto. To advance the serious idea that a city can be approached as a work of interior design beyond his own practice, Wilmotte would have benefited from a critical mass of allies, combining compatible professional capacities with intellectual insight by the likes of Virilio. On the other hand, for *Public Interiority* to sustain a broader disciplinary transformation akin to landscape urbanism, it might wish to consider seriously engaging professional practice—perhaps finding its own allies with as much clout and capital as Wilmotte.

Notes

1 For an intellectual history of landscape urbanism as a field, see Charles Waldheim, *Landscape as Urbanism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016); also see Dean Almy, ed., *On Landscape Urbanism* (Austin: Center for American Architecture and Design, 2007).

2 The English subtitle is a result of the English translation included in the French-published monograph. Unlike the English term "urban design," the verbatim translation of the French title into English would be "Interior Architecture of Cities." Prior to the publication of the monograph, *Architecture intérieure des villes* was also the title of Wilmotte's exhibition featuring his firm's urban design projects along with a newly designed urban furniture collection for Hess Form + Licht. See "Exhibitions Dedicated to Jean-Michel Wilmotte's Work," in *Jean-Michel Wilmotte*, ed. Philip Jodido (Melbourne: Images Publishing, 2018), 252.

3 Waldheim, *Landscape as Urbanism*, 13–31.

4 In his introductory essay "A Question of Common Sense," Wilmotte, for example, calls for "treating public space with the same sensitivity as private space." Jean-Michel Wilmotte, *Architecture intérieure des villes—Urban Interior Design* (Paris: Le Moniteur, 1999), 15.

5 Sylvia Lavin, "Petra Envy," in "What About the Inside?" special issue, *Harvard Design Magazine* 29 (Fall/Winter 2008–09): 92.

6 See, for example, Hayes's work *Everything Else Has Failed! Don't You Think It's Time for Love?* from 2007 for which the artist stood on a busy corner in New York City during lunchtime, reciting what they refer to as a love address—a text with the content of a lover's letter delivered in the form of political speech. The performance work also exists in the form of an audio installation.

Hayes produced similar works involving a range of public sites, collaborative participants, and various media.

7 The quoted phrases are from "Call for Submission: Public Interiority Symposium + Exhibition 2023," The University of Tennessee—Knoxville College of Architecture + Design, accessed September 20, 2023, https://archdesign.utk.edu/public-interiority-symposium-cfp/

In the interest of transparency and clarity of intent, it is important to acknowledge that as a member of the advisory board of *Public Interiority*, I was a part of the effort to give shape to the call for proposals and to the programs that resulted from it. In this way, my discussion of the nature of the narrative of the textual prompt, and the ways in which it frames the theme within the broader disciplines of interior architecture and design, as well as in interdisciplinary terms, can in many ways be taken as an internally oriented reflection—of how we manage the field that we are in and our place in and in relation to it—rather than a purely external critique.

8 "Call For Submission: Public Interiority Symposium + Exhibition 2023.".

9 This includes the institution that hosted, and whose faculty spearheaded, *Public Interiority*. See "Interior Design Changes Name to Interior Architecture," The University of Tennessee, Knoxville: College of Architecture + Design, published on September 7, 2017, https://archdesign.utk.edu/interior-design-changes-name-to-interior-architecture/

For a discussion on distinctions in nomenclature, throughout the field's history, see Penny Sparke, "Interior Decoration, Interior Design, Interior Architecture: Lines of Development in a Professional Field" in *Home Stories: 100 Years 20 Visionary Interiors*, eds. Mateo Kries and Jochen Eisenbrand (Weil am Rhein: Vitra Design Museum, 2020), 29–41.

10 This is perhaps best represented in the current version of Blaisse's firm Inside Outside's website where "Interiors" and "Landscapes" serve as distinct sections of the project portfolio. While organizing a designer's portfolio according to different categories—such as typology, scale, chronology, professional service, and so on—is often practically necessary, the distinction between interiors and landscapes in this case appears surprisingly nonporous, given the firm's reputation for operating across a range of spatial gradients and privileging soft and ephemeral layers of inhabitable environments primarily associated with interior design. See "Work," Inside Outside, accessed January 31, 2024, https://www.insideoutside.nl/Landscapes/Work

11 The firm was later renamed Wilmotte & Associés, and this name remains in use today.

12 Jean-Michel Wilmotte, "La Lettre No. 20: L'architecture française vers le grand large," L'Institut François Mitterrand, published June 10, 2007, https://www.mitterrand.org/l-architecture-francaise-vers-le.html

13 In the 1990s, in the midst of significant professional success, Wilmotte received an architecture degree by reciprocity. See Franck Gintrand, "De quelle architecture Wilmotte est-il le nom?" *Chroniques d'architecture*, published February 13, 2018, https://chroniques-architecture.com/architecture-wilmotte/

For Wilmotte's extensive body of work as a furniture and product designer, see the retrospective monograph Jean-Michel Wilmotte*, Design: Catalogue raisonné 1974—2023* (Paris: Skira, 2023).

14 Jean-Michel Wilmotte, "A Question of Common Sense," in *Architecture intérieure des villes—Interior Urban Design* (Paris: Le Moniteur, 1999), 15.

15 See the essay "Walking in the City" in Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, trans. Steven Rendall (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

16 Wilmotte, "A Question of Common Sense," 15.

17 Wilmotte, "A Question of Common Sense," 15; the latter translation from the original French text is my own.

18 In her overview of theoretical approaches to interiors, Suzie Attiwill identifies the collaborative writing of Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone as being based on their relational definition of the interior design vis-à-vis a prior existing condition of which the physical exterior is but one possibility. Attiwill, "interiorizt," 113.

19 Wilmotte, "Agde," *Architecture intérieure des villes*, 46.

20 Richard Bernstein, "Rise of Jack Lang, Superstar of French Culture," *New York Times*, August 15, 1985, A2.

21 Jean-Louis Pradel, *Wilmotte* (Paris: Electa Moniteur, 1988), 51.

22 "De quelle architecture Wilmotte est-il le nom?" *Chroniques d'architecture*, February 13, 2018.

23 Béatrice de Rochebouët, "L'émotion de l'architecte Jean-Michel Wilmotte reçu à l'Académie des beaux-arts," *Le Figaro*, October 27, 2017.

24 Broadly speaking, *interiorist* may refer to a subject who has a relationship to interiors as an object of study, interest, or practice. In the introduction to their book *From Organization to Decoration*, for example, Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone state, "In the twenty-first century interiors is a flourishing and prosperous field, with a multitude of designers, educators and students, happy to refer to themselves as 'interiorists';" see Graeme Brooker and Sally Stone, eds., *From Organization to Decoration: An Interiors Reader* (London: Routledge, 2013), xiii; Suzie Attiwill refers to the Spanish term for interior designer, *interiorista*, as a reference for term coined in English, while also engaging Michael Benedikt's earlier use of the word; see Suzie Attiwill, "interiorizt," in eds. Graeme Brooker and Lois Weinthal, *The Handbook of Interior Architecture and Design* (London: Bloomsbury, 2013, 107–116.; see also Michael Benedikt, "Environmental Stoicism and Place Machismo," *Harvard Design Magazine* 16 (Spring/Summer 2002): 1–8.
25 Lavin, "Petra Envy," 92.
26 Pradel, *Wilmotte*, 51.
27 Paul Virilio, "Warning," in *Architecture intérieure des villes—Interior Urban Design* (Paris: Le Moniteur, 1999), 9.
28 Virilio explored, with Parent, the development of the oblique function through theoretical texts, speculative architecture, and built commissions. In this work, Virilio and Parent used the inclined plane as a principal architectural substrate that organizes all human activities in lieu of level ground. They collected much of their creative output in nine issues of a magazine self-published throughout 1966. For a reproduction of the original magazine, along with an English translation, see Paul Virilio and Claude Parent, *Architecture Principe 1966 and 1996*, trans. George Collins (Besançon: Les Éditions de l'Imprimeur, 1997).
29 Virilio, "Warning," 9–10.
30 Virilio, "Warning," 10.

20

(SEMI-) PUBLIC INTERIORITY IN BRITISH CURATIVE ENVIRONMENTS, 1840–1914

Penny Sparke

Public Interiority

In contemporary debates about the interior, the notion of interiority, both private and public, has been widely discussed.[1] While many of those discussions are linked to the need to theorize contemporary interior design practice to give it the same intellectual status as architecture, interiority can also be considered from a historical perspective. As Richard Sennett explained in a lecture he delivered at the Harvard Graduate School of Design in 2016, the "standard historical account" tells us that the capacity for interiority—that is, for human beings to have reflective, subjective lives and an understanding of themselves as autonomous thinking, feeling beings—is linked to the concept of privacy, and the safety of enveloping spaces, which were, at least in part, facilitated by the introduction of differentiated, single-purpose enclosed rooms, such as bedrooms, in the domestic setting.[2] That capacity revealed itself fully, Sennett tells us, in nineteenth-century western urban homes and was at its strongest in the bourgeois context.[3]

However, as Sennett also explained, Georg Simmel offered what Sennett considered to be a contradictory story; i.e., one that suggested that people also experienced interiority behind the masks of neutrality that they adopted when they were in public settings; e.g., in busy urban shopping areas, such as the Potsdamer Platz in Berlin.[4] Simmel's ideas have inspired a significant amount of scholarship about public interiority, which, to date, has mostly focused on urban environments and to which this volume of essays is largely dedicated. As Liz Teston, who has written extensively on the subject and is one of the editors of the volume, has explained, "Interiority is a condition of feeling inward, whether that condition is literally inside or a sensation of psychological otherness distinct from your physical surroundings or others around you."[5] From that definition—the idea, that is, that interiority permits a sense of individual autonomy—flows the possibility of interiority being experienced in open exterior spaces, such as those of the city, as well as enclosed interior ones.

I am choosing to stay close to Sennett's "standard account" of interiority because I want to discuss interiority in a historical context, from, that is, 1840 to 1914. Those years were

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-23

chosen because that was the period during which most of the British establishments I am discussing—specifically three types of late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century curative environments, namely hydropathic hotels, convalescent homes, and lunatic asylums (now known as psychiatric hospitals)—were constructed and had popular appeal. Also, in that period, the idea of domesticity—its psychological meanings, its sensorial qualities, and its visual, material, and spatial culture, as well as the autonomy that it was believed to give people—which is core to my discussion of the exterior, transitional, and to some extent interior, curative environments listed above, was culturally dominant.

Like Simmel, I want to address interiority primarily in exterior settings, in this instance, the extensive, usually landscaped grounds that surrounded the above establishments. To Simmel's emphasis on the exterior environment, however, I will add the dependency of these outdoor spaces on the concept of domesticity, a quality normally associated with indoor spaces. The makers (see below) of the environments I am discussing believed that domesticity was the key to providing inhabitants with the curative environments that they believed they needed. In recognition of that belief, I will avoid making a black-and-white distinction between the exterior and interior spaces of the establishments/institutions under review and, instead, demonstrate the permeability of the boundaries between them and the deliberate strategies that were employed to engineer that sense of seamlessness. Liz Teston has proposed the possibility of a "landscape interiority," defined as a typology within the broad category of public interiority.[6] This essay supports that proposition and seeks to understand how that typology might have manifested itself in the context of the exterior curative spaces under discussion here.

Simmel made a distinction between people's experiences of the rural and the urban, suggesting that, as they need to protect themselves from the stimuli of the city, the psychology of the individual in rural life differs from that of the city dweller. Furthermore, the meaningful relationships that Simmel contends are possible in a rural environment cannot, he claimed, be reconstructed in the metropolis.[7] In the environments under review here, it will be shown that deliberate attempts were made to create pastoral outdoor spaces that depended on a union between nature that had experienced relatively few human interventions and the modifications subsequently made to it to create suitably picturesque, healing environments.

It is worth briefly elaborating on the kinds of "agents" who made these interventions into the landscapes in question. According to Sarah Rutherford, based on the extensive research that she undertook in archives, the grounds around lunatic asylums were planned and executed by four different types of "designers," namely freelance designers, horticulturists, nurserymen and landscape contractors, and a group of non-landscape professionals, including architects, medical superintendents, and stewards.[8] Rutherford claimed that, based as it was on the model of the country house, "the asylum developed as a distinct landscape type during the nineteenth century."[9] Arguably, given their similar debt to the country house model, these remarks could also be extended to the landscapes surrounding hydropathic hotels and convalescent homes. There is also the possibility that the "users"—whether defined as guests or patients—of the spaces in question also exercised some agency with respect to their interior and exterior environments. As Dorita Hannah has suggested, "architecture is dependent on the creativity of the users, who actively help engineer their environment via perception and sensory engagement,"[10] i.e., through exercising their capacity for interiority. In this context, the atmosphere of domesticity is

all-important. Liz Teston describes the possibility of interiority as "being experienced in an interior-feeling place that is primarily delineated by atmospheres and merely supported by architectural form."[11]

The intention underpinning the above interventions by the range of "actors" listed above in their exterior environments was to replicate the conditions that encouraged the sense of interiority that was experienced in their interior settings, as well as taking advantage of what was believed to be the curative power of nature. Given that these non-urban spaces were imbued with a specific agenda, it is suggested that they do not conform to Simmel's view of the innocent, untouched rural environment from which inhabitants have no need to protect themselves but offer, instead, a model of "landscape interiority" that has something in common with both its interior and its urban equivalents.

In that, the establishments under review here were not private dwellings but, rather, what have been described as "homes from homes;" their interior and exterior domesticity were borrowed and consciously simulated.[12] This was undertaken, in part, to distinguish them from prisons, workhouses, and hospitals, which were much less domestic in nature. Vlad Ionescu contends that,

> The difference between a home and hotel apartment concerns less the interior design and the spatial arrangement as the inhabitant's temporal, emotional, and imaginative relation to the interior. The home implies a strongly embodied relation between an interior and the sense of interiority that it brings about (memories, sense of time, directions, fantasies).[13]

I would like to suggest that the environments within and without the hydropathic hotels, convalescent homes, and lunatic asylums under review here can be understood in the same way as Ionescu's "hotel apartment." Although there were clearly varying degrees of freedom of entry into them, like the hotel apartment, they were all residential, simulated domestic settings that stimulated interiority. If we were to accept, for a moment, the existence of a binary distinction between the private and the public spheres in which the former defines the interiors of the private family home and the latter all spaces—both interior and exterior—in which people gather together outside the home, the establishments being reviewed here could be considered to be public spaces, both inside and outside. In that they are not the same as the shared spaces of the city, however, which are open to anyone who chooses to inhabit them, but, rather, only accessible to a limited number of residents, the idea that they should be described as "semi-public" spaces seems more appropriate.

The focus of this essay is less on the specific nature of the interiorities experienced by the inhabitants of these environments, which is difficult to retrieve than on the visual, spatial, material, and sensorial means through which it was hoped that they would be experienced.

Curative Environments in Britain

The porousness between the exterior and interior spaces in the three types of curative environments under review permitted two-way movement. While the atmosphere of domesticity that was created inside the buildings through the inclusion of particular items

of furniture and furnishings—such as bulky upholstered sofas, complex seating arrangements, highly patterned wallpaper, and textiles in tertiary colors, decorative mantelpieces covered with photographs and bric-a-brac; multiple potted plants; rich Turkey or Persian carpets; and paintings on the wall—which combined with certain textures and smells, was replicated outside through a number of human interventions, including the addition of items of garden furniture which encouraged exterior experiences of interiority. At the same time, such were the benefits of being outside—among them fresh air and the therapeutic effects of nature—that efforts were also made to bring them as far as possible back into the buildings themselves. Key to that strategy were the additions of transitional structures such as terraces, loggias, and verandas that were open to the air; of balconies attached to rooms above ground; and, as at the County Asylum in Lancaster, of conservatories and winter gardens which opened directly on to the grounds and brought the garden (almost) inside the buildings. In addition to these transitional architectural features, elements from the outside, both natural and man-made—potted plants and items of garden furniture among them—were brought into the very hearts of the buildings themselves, visible in reception areas, lounges, and dining areas, among other interior spaces.

Before I undertake an analysis of the ways in which interiority was both facilitated and encouraged through the construction of a simulated atmosphere of domesticity in the three kinds of curative space under review—especially, but not exclusively, through their landscaping—it is important to understand the historical context within which these environments came into being.

All three establishments had the physical and mental well-being of their inhabitants at their core. Unlike hospitals, which were seen as more functional institutions, their focus was emphatically on the environmental aspects of the curing process. Hydropathic hotels were medically-focused establishments in which (mostly wealthy) people could come and stay and undergo what was called a "water cure" for a range of illnesses and diseases, including arthritis, gout, as well as respiratory and nervous problems. Although they were often built on sites where, in the eighteenth century, people had come to "take the waters," they were rooted in the later theory of "hydropathy," a nineteenth-century health movement, which emerged in mainland Europe and was imported into Britain and the United States. It involved people taking hot and cold baths and showers, being wrapped in wet compresses, and drinking large volumes of water. It was part of a holistic lifestyle that involved diet and exercise. A certain Captain R. T. Claridge was responsible for introducing and promoting hydropathy in Britain and Ireland from 1842 onwards.

Hydropathic hotels in the UK emerged when, following a health-related visit to Gräfenberg in Silesia, where the first hydro hotel was constructed, a certain Dr James Wilson opened Gräfenberg House at Malvern in June 1842, offering his patients a range of hydropathic cures.[14] Many other similar establishments followed suit across Britain, and by 1900, there were about 300 in existence.[15] The relatively small institutions that opened at the beginning of the craze were, by the second half of the nineteenth century, joined by very substantial buildings with lavish facilities. Over the decades they became less focused on hydropathy, however, and evolved into tourist hotels.

In the nineteenth century, convalescent homes were numerous in Britain, particularly in coastal resorts. As it became clear that people were relapsing after surgery or returning to work too soon, a period of convalescence by the sea or in the countryside was recommended as an important part of the recovery process. The homes began as voluntary

institutions, resembling, at first, the hospitals they were serving. Gradually, more purpose-built, large-scale convalescent homes were opened, providing "more home-like settings, with rooms where patients could sit and dine, and gardens in which to sit."[16] Many, such as the railway men's convalescent homes, were funded by charities, while others catered for private fee-paying patients. By 1900, at least 350 convalescent homes had been founded across England, Scotland, and Wales.

Many of the large-scale lunatic asylums that were built in the same period were constructed, furbished, and landscaped in response to the new ideas about how mental patients should be treated that were current at the time.[17] Based on what was called "The Moral Treatment," the aim was to treat patients as human beings and offer them a therapeutic, home-like setting.[18] Mechanical restraints were discontinued, and work and leisure became the main treatment. Lunatics began to be treated as patients rather than prisoners, and many asylums were modeled on middle—and upper-class family homes.[19] The earliest enactment of this had been at the York Retreat, founded by William Tuke, a Quaker, in 1792. Still, it wasn't until the passing of the County Asylum/Lunacy Act in 1845 that the approach became widespread, and many large-scale asylums were built. According to Sarah Rutherford, "over one hundred and fifteen public asylums were built in England, with ninety-six between 1845 and 1914."[20]

Exterior Curative Environments

Most of the large-scale curative environments of the three types described above had at their core large, imposing, complex buildings and systems of buildings, which were presented in a variety of historicist styles—Neoclassical, Gothic, Tudor Revival, Scottish Baronial, and eighteenth-century French, among them. Although the different styles inevitably created different atmospheres, they all, most importantly, recalled the large country houses of the period, which provided the models for these curative spaces. Usually surrounded by extensive grounds, the buildings were often sited on elevated positions, looking down on the landscapes, towns, cities, and frequently seascapes that lay below them. As evidenced by a photograph on a period postcard (one of the many used for all the visual information provided in this essay) Eastbourne's Hydro Hotel, an impressive building with multiple gable windows on its front facade, opened in 1896. It was situated in one of the finest positions on the South Cliff of Eastbourne with a southerly view, facing the Parade. The hotel was built facing the sea, 120 feet above sea level, to ensure inspiring views of the English Channel, Beachy Head, and the South Downs.[21]

A little further along England's south coast, to the east of Eastbourne, the Men's Metropolitan Convalescent Home in Cooden, just outside Bexhill-on-Sea, which opened in 1840, was a similarly gabled, imposing building. A sloping lawn led down from its front façade to extensive landscaped grounds. The whole site was situated in a rural setting not far from the sea. Many lunatic asylums were similarly either situated on high ground or, if not elevated, located in isolated rural settings outside cities and towns. Northern Ireland's County Antrim Lunatic Asylum, opened in 1898, was positioned on high ground two miles north of Antrim on a site of a hundred acres.

The grounds of these establishments were surrounded by boundary walls, which helped to define them as extensions of their interiors, and they were usually landscaped. Often, as at the Scottish Baronial-style Ben Rhydding Hydro Hotel, opened in 1844 in

Otley in Wharfedale on the edge of Ilkley Moor, Yorkshire—one of the first large-scale examples of its kind to be constructed, and which treated Charles Darwin; the Westhill Convalescent Home in Southport, Merseyside, an elevated building constructed in the Gothic style between 1875 and 1878; and the County Lunatic Asylum in Lancaster, opened in 1816, an extended winding path led from the boundary of the site to the front entrance of the building (Figure 20.1). The intention was to evoke the estates of English country houses and the comfort, safety, and security—all prerequisites of well-being—that accompanied life in those dwellings. It was an aspirational, aristocratic model of English domesticity which offered people with lower social standing the possibility of (imagined) upward mobility. While that model was mostly obviously expressed through the rich colors and patterns of the interior decoration, the complex furniture arrangements, and the general atmosphere of comfort and luxury that could be found in the main interior rooms of the buildings under review, its extension to their exterior spaces, in the form of landscaping, indicated the inseparable link between the two.

The curative exterior environments under discussion here all offered spaces for walking, resting, communing with nature, and thinking—in short, for experiencing interiority. This went beyond the primarily aesthetic role of the landscaped grounds of country houses. The therapeutic role of the exterior environment at the Eastbourne Hydro Hotel was obvious as "the grounds were laid out with relaxation in mind and originally featured a tennis lawn, terraces, beautiful shrub embankments and a variety of walks."[22] Fresh air and sunshine were considered essential for health and well-being, as was the sense of individual autonomy that could be achieved by engaging with these carefully constructed outdoor environments.

FIGURE 20.1 The landscaped grounds of the County Asylum, Lancaster. Image from author's collection.

The facilities offered in the grounds varied from establishment to establishment, as did the guests'/patients' engagement with them. The hydropathic hotels offered their guests opportunities to engage in several outdoor leisure activities—golf, croquet, bowls, and tennis, among them (Figure 20.2). Two grass tennis courts and croquet lawns were available at Eastbourne, while at the Brookwood asylum in Surrey, opened in 1867, inmates could join the institution's cricket team.[23] At many of the pauper lunatic asylums, as they were called at the time, male patients worked on the grounds in the manner of laborers on country house estates. They undertook a variety of farming and horticultural tasks, from working with animals to growing vegetables in kitchen gardens, as well as looking after greenhouses and tending the flower gardens. At the Brookwood Asylum, male patients planted and reaped hay in the grounds, while the same institution also supported a dairy farm.

The types of landscape also varied at different places, from relatively wild at one end of the spectrum to tamed at the other: Relatively untouched nature was combined with the results of careful human intervention. Some trees were left in place while new ones were planted. Cultivated shrubs, such as those positioned near the main building of the Brookwood Asylum, were widespread, while formal gardens, such as the geometrical flower beds at the Semon Convalescents' Home in Ilkley, Yorkshire, built in 1874 and a neighbor to Ben Rhydding (although catering for a more destitute level of society), and the cultivated gardens at the Tyn-Y-Coed Convalescent Home in Llandudno, Wales—a men-only establishment opened in 1878—were also a common feature.

The human interventions that were made into these landscapes enhanced their domestic atmospheres and their users' experiences of interiority in a variety of ways, allowing the guests/patients who ventured into them to be able to sit, rest, or take in a particular view. Small garden buildings and pavilions, which provided shelter from inclement

FIGURE 20.2 A view of the lawn and loggia, with people playing croquet, at the Hydro Hotel, Eastbourne. Image from author's collection.

weather, such as the one at Oxford's Warneford Asylum, so named in 1843, played a part in this, as did rustic wooden bridges, like the one over a small stream in the woods at the Railway Convalescent Home at Par in Cornwall, built in 1872.

Wooden benches and other forms of outdoor seating—including rattan and wicker chairs and deck chairs, which could not be left outside on a permanent basis—also enhanced the domestic nature of, and therefore the opportunities for interiority in, these exterior spaces. Although made of relatively hardy materials destined for outside, they offered an opportunity for repose, comfort, and reflection such as might be found in an enclosed winter garden. Lucy Marlor has noted that, in a more recent example of an urban space that facilities public interiority—New York's Seagram Plaza—seating also played an important role,

> The success of the Seagram Plaza is partially due to the presence of a range of seating types on the steps, lips, and edges of the plaza. This encourages the user to pause, experience the site (and other people) and carry out interior activities such as meetings, eating lunch, and work tasks. In addition, several atmospheric conditions within the plaza create the feeling of entering and being inside a spatial zone. Changes in materiality suggest an entry threshold as the user passes from the coarse finish of the sidewalk onto the oversized pink granite paving of the plaza. The framed openness of the void space, against the solid verticality of the surrounding buildings, creates an atmospheric volume. Luminous interiority[24] can be observed via the shadows cast from the imposing buildings, which again delineate the boundary.[25]

Back at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, similar strategies were already in place in the rural settings under review. At the Metropolitan Convalescent Home for Women in Bexhill-on-Sea, opened in 1881, a wooden bench was positioned opposite a small pavilion in what was called the "patients' garden" (Figure 20.3). Another bench was placed, facing outwards, against the front façade of the Falmouth Hydro Hotel. These establishments were being built at the same time as the ambitious program of urban public parks, built to offset the activities of drinking and gambling and to enhance the comfort and health of large swathes of the population, was being developed in Britain. As well as emulating the large estates of country houses, lessons about making people comfortable in outside spaces were likely also being learnt from the public parks.

Bringing the Outside Inside: Transitional and Interior Curative Environments

At the Cerne Abbas Convalescent Home in Poole, Dorset, built in 1890, an open terrace, protected from the weather by a curved roof supported by slender white columns with decorative ironwork, allowed its patients to sit "outside" and enjoy the view. The roof enabled the presence of an open balcony linked to the upper-level room immediately above the terrace, while Smedley's Hydro Hotel in Matlock, an early example of its type, opened in 1853, featured an open terrace, once again supported by columns, and positioned above the double stairwell that formed the entrance to the establishment. Dartford's Stone House Asylum, built between 1862 and 1866 in the Tudor Revival style, featured an extension, shown in a 1909 photograph featured on a postcard, that was dedicated to an open terrace, complete with a line of daybeds for its patients.

FIGURE 20.3 A bench and pavilion in the Patients' Garden at the Metropolitan Convalescent Home for Women, Bexhill-on-Sea. Image from author's collection.

One of the most popular transitional spaces between inside and outside visible in these curative environments was the conservatory, or winter garden. Made of iron and glass and filled with exotic plants and the opportunity to sit and experience interiority, winter gardens were attached to many of the buildings under discussion. In 1896, it was reported that in Eastbourne's Hydro Hotel, "a garden room [is] connected to the central hall and opens, by folding glass doors, on the verandah."[26] The Woodlands Convalescent Home in Rawdon, near Leeds, which opened in 1880, also provided its patients with seats in its jungle-like conservatory, while, by the 1890s, the County Lunatic Asylum in Lancaster had a large winter garden, filled with palms and wicker furniture, which could be accessed at the end of a long gallery (Figure 20.4).

Although interior spaces are not the focus of this essay, the porousness that existed between the outside and inside spaces of the curative establishments under review means it is impossible to exclude them completely. Moving, therefore, into the highly domesticated interior spaces of all three types of buildings, it was common to find both plants and garden furniture in the main rooms. By the second half of the nineteenth century, indoor plants had become an integral component within both aristocratic and middle-class definitions of domesticity. From palms to ferns to cacti, indoor plants softened the appearance of indoor domestic spaces and provided a therapeutic role in the home. The lounge at Seacroft Hydro Hotel in Skegness opened in the late 1890s, was filled with potted palms and wicker furniture, while a lounge area in one of the long galleries in the Brookwood Asylum featured several potted plants positioned on crocheted tablecloths and a terrarium containing yet another potted plant.

FIGURE 20.4 Wicker furniture and plants in the conservatory at the County Asylum, Lancaster. Image from author's collection.

From the above analysis of the exterior, the transitional, and, briefly, the interior spaces of three kinds of nineteenth-century curative environments, it is clear they all exuded domestic atmospheres, which facilitated interiority. As, rather than being exposed to the endless crowd of the urban streets, the guest/patients were part of a restricted group of people, however, the interiority experienced in these exterior setting was, perhaps, as suggested above, most accurately described as a semi-public experience, rather than a fully public one. At the same time, both the buildings and grounds in question were not actual "homes" but, rather, simulations of one. This suggests a new hybrid concept of interiority, one which sits somewhere between the spheres of the "private" and the "public." That sense of hybridity and ambiguity is reinforced by the porosity of the boundaries—what Liz Teston calls "thickened thresholds"[27]—between the exteriors and interiors of these curative environments, which enabled both the atmosphere of domesticity to flow out and the therapeutic effects of nature to flow in.

That was made possible through a number of strategic interventions in the interiors, transitional spaces, and exteriors of the buildings in question, among them the simulation of domesticity both within these "homes from home" and outside them; the inclusion of furniture in outside landscaped spaces, and the care and maintenance of the grounds, both of which brought interiority into the exterior; the addition of winter gardens and other transitional spaces—terraces, balconies etc.—which brought exteriority inside; and the presence indoors of plants and flowers which also brought the outside in.

Notes

1 Roderick Adams and Lucy Marlor, "Breaking the Binary Oppositions of the Interior: A Momentary Permanence," *Interiority* 2, no. 2 (2019): 113–128. https://doi.org/10.7454/in.v2i2.58
Interiors Beyond Architecture, eds. Deborah Schneiderman and Amy Campos (New York: Routledge, 2018).
The Interior Architecture Theory Reader, ed. Gregory Marinic (London: Routledge, 2018). https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315693002
Christine McCarthy, "Toward a Definition of Interiority," *Space and Culture* 8, no. 2 (2005): 112–125. https://doi.org/10.1177/1206331205275020
Penny Sparke, "The Modern Interior Revisited," *Journal of Interior Design* 34, no. 1 (2008): v–xii. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1939-1668.2008.00002.x
Penny Sparke, "The Modern Interior: A Space, a Place or a Matter of Taste?," *Interiors Design/Architecture/Culture* 1, no. 1 (2010), 7–17. https://doi.org/10.2752/204191210791602276
Mark Pimlott, "Interiority and the Conditions of the Interior," *Interiority* 1, no. 1 (2018), 5–20. https://doi.org/10.7454/in.v1i1.5
2 Richard Sennett, "Interiors and Interiority," Harvard GSD, April 26, 2016, video, https://youtu.be/hVPjQhfJfKo
3 Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades Project*, trans. Howard Eiland & Kevin McLaughlin (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004).
4 Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis of Modern Life," in *Georg Simmel on Individuality and Social Forms*, ed. Donald N. Levine (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1971), 34.
5 Liz Teston, "On the Nature of Public Interiority," *Interiority* 3, no. 5 (2020), 66. https://doi.org/10.7454/in.v3i1.72
6 Teston, 62.
7 Simmel, 34.
8 Sarah Rutherford, "Landscapers for the Mind: English Asylum Designers, 1845–1914," *Garden History* Summer 33, no. 1 (2005): 64.
9 Rutherford, 62.
10 Dorita Hannah, "Event-Space: A Performance Model for Spatial Design," in *The Interior Architecture Theory Reader*, ed. Gregory Marinic (London: Routledge, 2018), 303. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315693002
11 Teston, 62.
12 Jane Hamlett, *At Home in the Institution: Material Life in Asylums, Lodging Houses and Schools in Victorian and Edwardian London* (London: Palgrave, 2015).
13 Vlad Ionescu, "The Interior as Interiority," *Palgrave Communications* 4, no. 1 (2018), 2. https://doi.org/10.1057/s41599-018-0088-6
14 James Bradley, Marguerite Dupree, & Alastair Durie, "Taking the Water Cure: The Hydropathic Movement in Scotland, 1840-1940," *Business and Economic History* 26, no. 2 (Winter 1997): 426-437.
15 Richard Metcalfe, *The Rise and Progress of Hydropathy in England and Scotland* (London: Forgotten Books, (2018 [1906]).
16 "Brooksby House, Largs. From Yachting Residence to Seaside Convalescent Home," Historic Hospitals, https://historic-hospitals.com/tag/convalescent-homes/
17 Rutherford, 61–86.
18 W.A. Browne, *What Asylums Were, Are, and Ought to be, Being the Substance of Five Lectures Delivered Before the Managers of the Montrose Royal Lunatic Asylum* (London: Legare Street Press, 2008 [1837]).
Andrew Scull, "Moral Treatment Reconsidered: Some sociological comments on an episode in the history of British psychiatry," in *Madhouses, Mad-doctors, and Madmen: The Social History of Psychiatry in the Victorian Era* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981).
19 Mary Guyatt, "A Semblance of Home: Mental Asylum Interiors," in *Interior Design and Identity*, eds. Susie McKellar and Penny Sparke (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004).
20 Rutherford, 61.
21 "History," Hydro Hotel Eastbourne, www.hydrohotel.com/history
22 "History," Hydro Hotel Eastbourne, www.hydrohotel.com/history

23 "History," Hydro Hotel Eastbourne, www.hydrohotel.com/history
24 Teston, 61-82.
25 Marlor, 201.
26 Anon *Eastbourne Hydro News* 1, no. 1 (1896 [Monday 20th]), 1.
27 Liz Teston, "On the Nature of Public Interiority," *Interiority* 3, no. 5 (2020), 64. https://doi.org/10.7454/in.v3i1.72

21

MOVEMENT, FLOW, + MATERIALITY AT SHAHI QILA

Mughal Grandeur as Public Interiority

Najia Javaid

Public interiority has gained interest recently due to the recognition of interiority in urban spaces such as above-grade semi-covered pathways, subway stations, indoor malls, arcades, and biophilic airport cities.[1] However, public interiority cannot just be limited to modern cities and architecture; it has long existed in various forms throughout history, with examples like The Winter Palace in Saint Peterburg or the Palazzo Ducale di Urbino in Italy.[2] In this essay, I will show how theories of public interiority were exemplified in sixteenth-century Mughal interiors and architectural spaces using Lahore, Pakistan's Shahi Qila (قلعہ شاہی) complex, as my space of study. The Shahi Qila complex spans over 50 acres and is strategically located with the River Ravi toward its northwest and the Walled City of Lahore toward its South. Built during the era of Mughal Emperor Akbar, with later additions during the reigns of Jehangir, Shah Jehan, and Aurangzeb, the fort comprised public buildings and private residential palaces, all interconnected via gardens, courtyards, and walkways.[3]

Scholars have studied various aspects of public interiority, which include appropriation of space, materiality and geometry,[4] flow and movement, human interaction, and time. These theories prove that public interiors depend on all these aspects and create opportunities for placemaking, haptic experience, and social interaction; they help shape the behaviors of society and create opportunities for engagement[5] (Figure 21.1).

Geometric Form & Movement

The Shahi Qila complex is divided into quadrants by gardens, podiums, and fountains connected via hardscaped pedestrian streets. The boundaries of the private and public zones in the Shahi Qila are defined via the strategic placement of various quads built by rulers of different eras. These quads are separated by green spaces, not walls or physical barriers. However, the pathways create a natural movement and continuity, making users unaware of zoning or division. Architectural critics Poot, Van Acker, and De Vos write "the interior experience of movement centers around the mobility of individual bodies in space."[6]

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-24

FIGURE 21.1 Jehangirs Quadrant. Image by Shaan Kirmani (2022).

This movement and mobility are created by the repetitive sandstone pedestrian walkways, which connect the various buildings within the complex from the outside, into the buildings, and beyond.

All quadrants within the complex house a central podium; during the Mughal era, these were used for public sermons or as stages for dance and music performances. Currently, the Shahi Qila is open to the general public, and these podiums mimic a mini town square, where the users meet, cross paths, and then meander their own way. These are critical junctions within the complex, providing the occupant with opportunities for appropriation of space, leisure, impromptu meetings, protests, and performances.

Materiality

The Sheesh Mahal or Palace of Mirrors (محل شیش) is an excellent example of the in-between transitional space between interiors and exteriors, which is achieved through dematerialization and recurring ornamental detailing. Located at the complex's northwest corner, the palace was built during Shah Jehan's era for his beloved queen Mumtaz Mahal. It comprises of a series of rooms, *dalan* (دالان, porticos), and open courtyards. It is known for its perforated marble screens, *aina kari* (آئینہ کاری, convex glass mosaic work), and *pietra dura* (inlay of semi-precious stones) (Figure 21.2).

The peripheral walls of the Sheesh Mahal consist of perforated carved white marble screens, which bring in filtered natural light, creating beautiful patterns on the polished stone floor and a fresh breeze to keep the interiors cool from the harsh summer weather. Like the Brussels arcades, the perforated carved screens connect the interior to the vast

FIGURE 21.2 Sheesh Mahal Palace, *Dalan* (دالان, portico) overlooking the courtyard. Image by Shaan Kirmani (2022).

exterior via transparency and views of the river and beyond without invading the privacy of the queen's chambers (Figure 21.3).

The Sheesh Mahal's most magnificent feature is *aina kari*; this mirrorwork helps create a three-dimensional illusion within the thick walls of the fort. When the light rays hit the surface, they deviate and spread in all directions while the mirrors create a spectrum of surface images. The portico's high vaulted ceilings, inlaid with *aina kari*, reflect the outdoor gardens and bring in natural light during the daytime, creating an illusionary greenspace within the interior. At night, even a single lamp reflects the convex mirrors and illuminates the space, creating an illusion of being under the stars. While the masonry construction materials and techniques of sixteenth-century Mughal architecture were massive, the feeling of being outside is achieved in the Sheesh Mahal through dematerialization and light (Figure 21.4).

The Sheesh Mahal uses hierarchical planning from the open-to-sky courtyard, then the *dalan*, and main inner rooms. The *dalan* acts as the transitional zone between interior and exterior, shielding occupants from the harsh weather conditions yet providing fresh air and light. However, the lack of a distinct boundary, achieved by the Mughal architects via materials, ornamentation, and repetition of details from interior to exterior, creates a visual harmony between the spaces. The open-to-sky courtyards, enclosed on four sides by the aforementioned screened rooms, were treated as a part of the interior, used for evening activities and sleeping during the cooler nights. This homogeneous material treatment of different levels of enclosure, bound together with the greenspaces and the pathways, creates spatial connectivity within the whole complex (Figure 21.5).

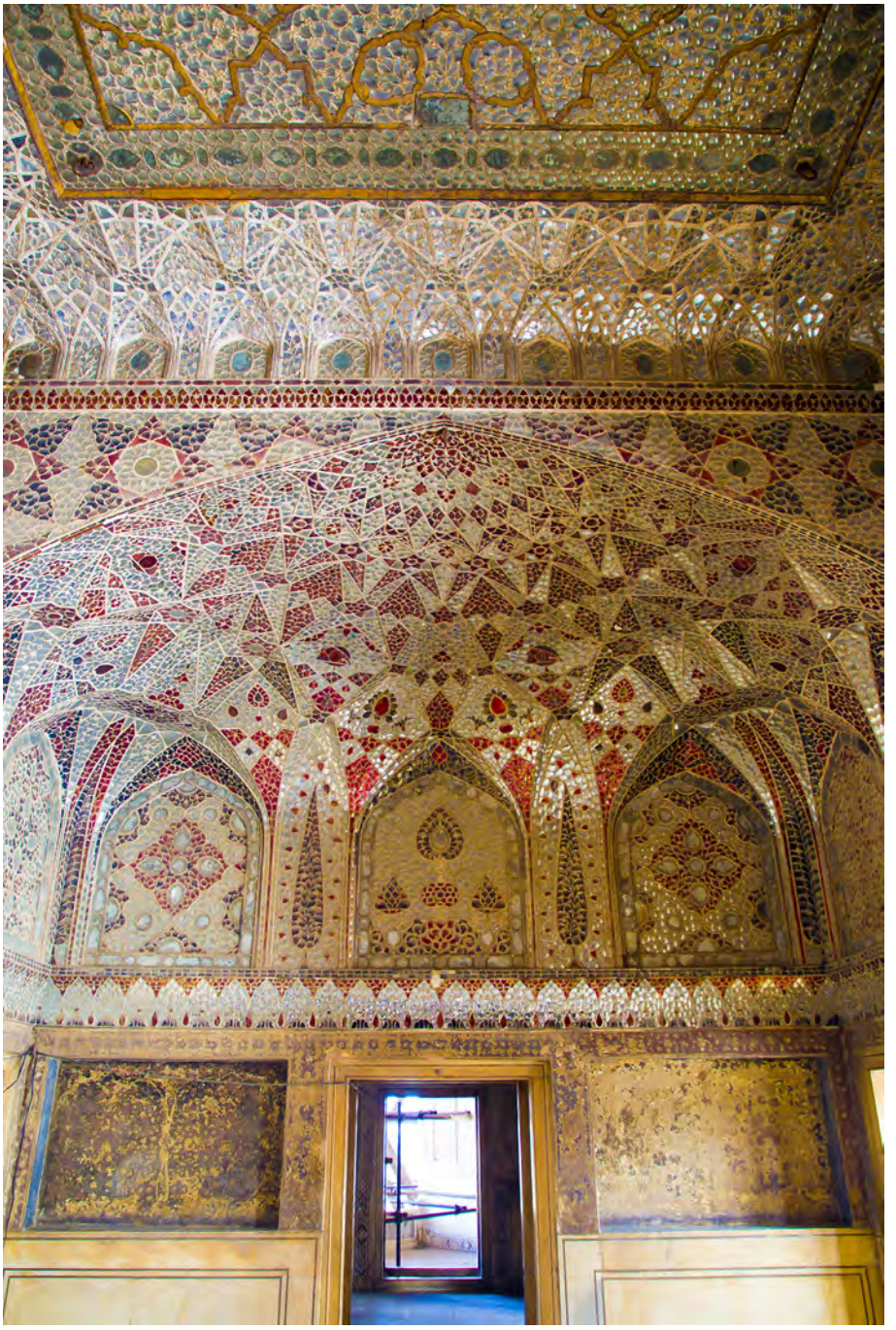


FIGURE 21.3 Sheesh Mahal Palace, *Aina Kari* (آئینہ کاری, convex glass mosaic work). Image by Shaan Kirmani (2022).

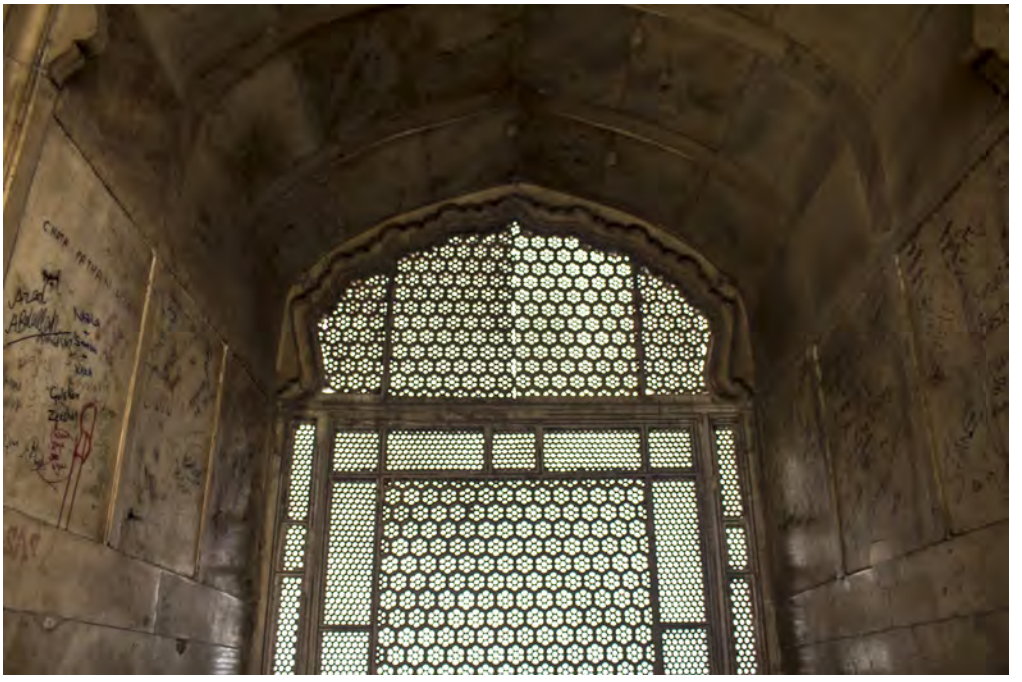


FIGURE 21.4 Sheesh Mahal Palace, perforated marble screens. Image by Shaan Kirmani (2022).

FIGURE 21.5 Shahi Qila, *Dalan* (دالان, portico) overlooking the gardens. Image by Shaan Kirmani (2022).

Monumental spaces are emphasized by significant shifts in scale and materiality, which play a huge role in giving them urban qualities. Still, the geometry, volume, and dematerialization of spaces bring in intimacy to interiors. The planning of the various quadrants and the pedestrian connections in the Shahi Qila complex greatly influences the movement and flow of people. The materials and detailing evoke closeness, belonging, and interiority, making this "mini-city within Lahore" a public interior.

Notes

1 Thomas Kong, "Lives in Large Interiors," in *The Handbook of Interior Architecture and Design* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013), 166.
2 Marc Pimlott, *The Public Interior as Idea and Project* (Heijningen: Jap Sam Books, 2016), 60–62, 67–71.
3 Walled City of Lahore Authority," *Walled City of Lahore*, Accessed on May 23, 2024, https://walledcitylahore.gop.pk/
4 Charles Rice, *Interior Urbanism: Architecture, John Portman and Downtown America* (London: Bloomsbury, 2016).
5 Marc Pimlott, *The Public Interior as Idea and Project* (Heijningen: Jap Sam Books, 2016), 10.
6 Tine Poot, Els De Vos, and Maarten Van Acker, "Thinking beyond Dualities in Public Space: The Unfolding of Urban Interiority as a Set of Interdisciplinary Lenses," *Interiors: Design|Architecture|Culture* 9 (3): 324–45. doi:10.1080/20419112.2019.1622235.

22

INTERIORS WITHIN INTERIORS

Visual Outlook on Strategies and Tactics in Constructing Public Interiors During the Sixteenth Century

Shai Yeshayahu

Inception

In 2011, scholarly articles and international exhibits commemorating Giorgio Vasari's quincentennial birthday declared that the antecedent to tastemakers and influencers was *The Lives of the Artists*. This seminal work has been recognized for its profound impact in defining the cultural milieu of artisans during the sixteenth century. According to art historians, the book, as authored by Vasari, displayed a collective identity for Italian painters, sculptors, and architects, which he named *Rinascita*, or rebirth. In so doing, he has distinctively been credited as the biographer who invented art history.[1]

That accolade eclipsed Vasari's cunning ability to develop new ways of reasoning. In this scope, Vasari's quest to collect and link disparate facts or statistics for the production of new knowledge led him to identify a biographical synopsis of the Renaissance. Yet, that accomplishment probably serves as the backdrop to forging a strategically defined sociocultural milieu for the Medici family and Florence's public interiority.[2]

Beginning in 1554 and throughout his lifetime, Vasari methodically endowed Cosimo de' Medici with a long-lasting legacy, carefully re-choreographing palazzos, piazzas, governmental buildings, a church, a bridge, interior spaces, paintings, sculptures, and gardens. The sum of these interventions eventually defined his journey from home on the other side of the river (Palazzo Pitti) to work in the city's urban center (Palazzo Vecchio). They led to the invention of a networking system that reconstructed Florence's built context. Over the last five centuries, that innovation remained one of the most significant re-identifications of public interiority to this day.[3]

Vasari's capacity to link the relationships between people, sociocultural spaces, and urban context was a skill that historians generally fail to acknowledge. This is perhaps because *The Lives of the Artists* is a portable idea, a readable collection of dispensable and transferable biographies. Conversely, the Vasari Corridor is a fixed intervention, a sequence of constructs annexed to Florence's site specificities. This difference is what radicalized the sensorial character of Florentine collective memory, one that reconditioned the spatial experience and public interiority of its urban fabric. In this logic, the

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-25

corridor is not simply a passageway but also a surveilling instrument to listen and tally human activity.

The achievement, unlike a book, is a precursor for our contemporaneous technologies. Much like satellites, the corridor creates a condition suitable to generate audio-visual spectrums with auditory and visual capacities. For this reason, this project, *Interiors within Interiors*, is a visual inquiry that looks at historical facts and uses them to speculate on the probability that the Vasari Corridor is the first information system (IS) displaying the urban data that leads to understanding the details of human spatial inhabitation. Particularly because instead of sitting fixed-gaze in front of a computer, sifting through data from spatial technologies like Global Positioning Systems (GPS), Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and remote sensing systems, as most urban planners, interior designers, architects, and landscape architects do, Cosimo likely walked above the streets unnoticeably listening to conversations, tallying market flows, and watching the sociocultural pulse of its citizens. Without the World Wide Web and search engines like Google, he and his kin could easily track, analyze, record, collect, and visualize the essence of Florence's public interiority.

In contrast to our current social media outlets, the following visuals demonstrate the feasibility of Vasari's corridor as the earliest implementation of a novel method to detect and monitor one kilometer of urban activity (Figures 22.1–22.5)

Such speculations provide a strong outlook for linking disparate buildings to shape a data-driven network in the late 1500s. Back then, the process seemed new, as new as the massive pulling of glass (fiber-optic cables) on pre-established grids developed to transmit digital information in the 1990s. Each technique prepared users to engage in linking bits, spaces, and places sightlessly. It is, as urban theorist William J. Mitchell noted, a type of infobahn (a blend of information and autobahn) or superhighway, an infrastructure of data that can permit interactions between users and objects, allowing for smarter connectivity and flow of information to rise.[4]

Inadvertently, Vasari achieved an insider's view to the public interiority of a city designed over 1560 years. Nothing was more useful for Cosimo than the windows across the Vasari Corridor which made him privy to invaluable information about the life of Florentines in the sixteenth century. Within these axioms, the idea that spatial technologies are active tools capable of reconditioning our perception of public interiorities offers designers manifold ways to dissect "exterior and interior worlds into a vocabulary of discrete symbols capable of rearranging according to rules, enabling each of us means to imagine alternate versions of our existence."[5]

This speculative realization also serves to clarify why art historians claim that the arrival of spatial technologies is an evolving mechanism based on the invention of the telescope, perspective drawings, and the camera obscura. However, those tools, one can add, are like the Vasari Corridor, satellites, and the World Wide Web, which are equipped for pattern finding and imagining hidden, secretive, and fringe-like realities that bring to life public interiority.

With that, the three mechanisms are equally important and considered a networking system that continues to animate Florence's unique urban opus. They visually explain the probable arenas where the exploitation of the city's urban data remains useful for its citizens. These sections, unlike traditional drawings, magnify the sensorial conditions, orienting readers to grasp how seemingly dispersed constructs on opposite sides of the river create a network that supports much beyond what the eye can see.

FIGURE 22.1 The 1556 map denotes the sectional positioning of the four interconnected audio-visual scenes in Cosimo's journey from home, Palazzo Pitti, to work, Palazzo Vecchio. Grahic by Author, with assistance of Miguel R Pister, Eira Roberts (2019, 2024).

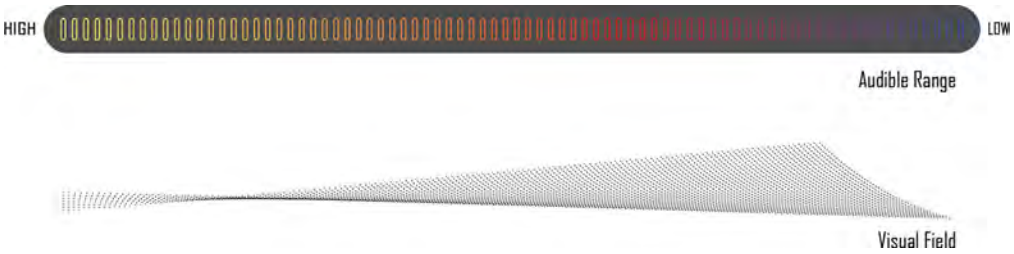


FIGURE 22.2 Key: Audible spectrum and Visual field. Grahic by Author, with assistance of Miguel R Pister, Eira Roberts (2019, 2024).

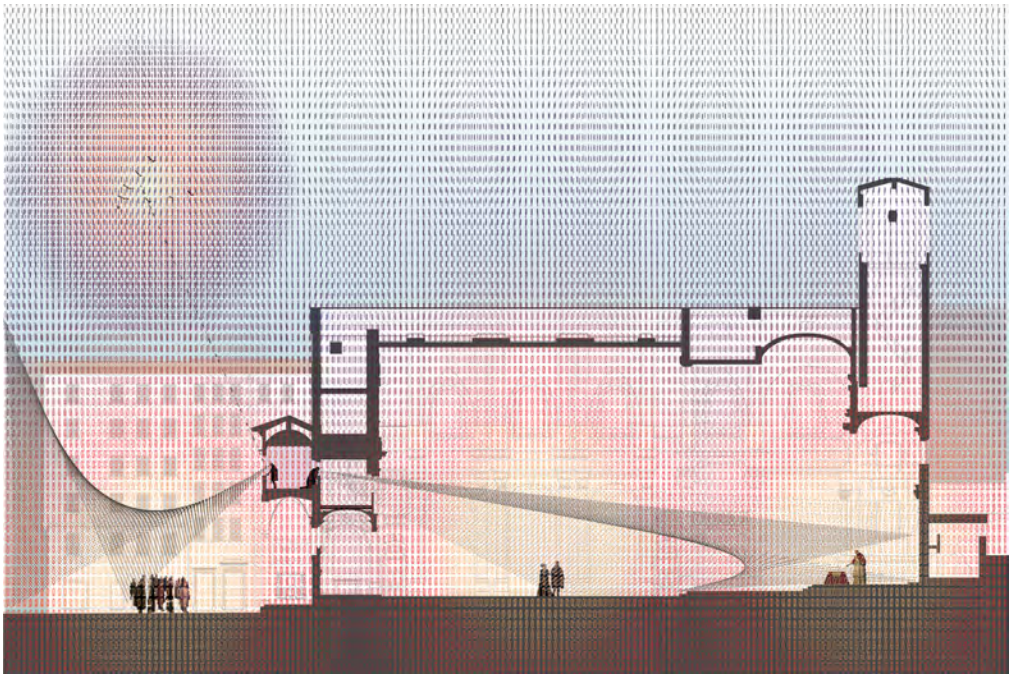


FIGURE 22.3 The church: A Cut Between Worlds: At Santa Felicita where Cosimo's multiple realities stretch the boundaries of the sacred, secular, and political. Grahic by Author, with assistance of Miguel R Pister, Eira Roberts (2024).

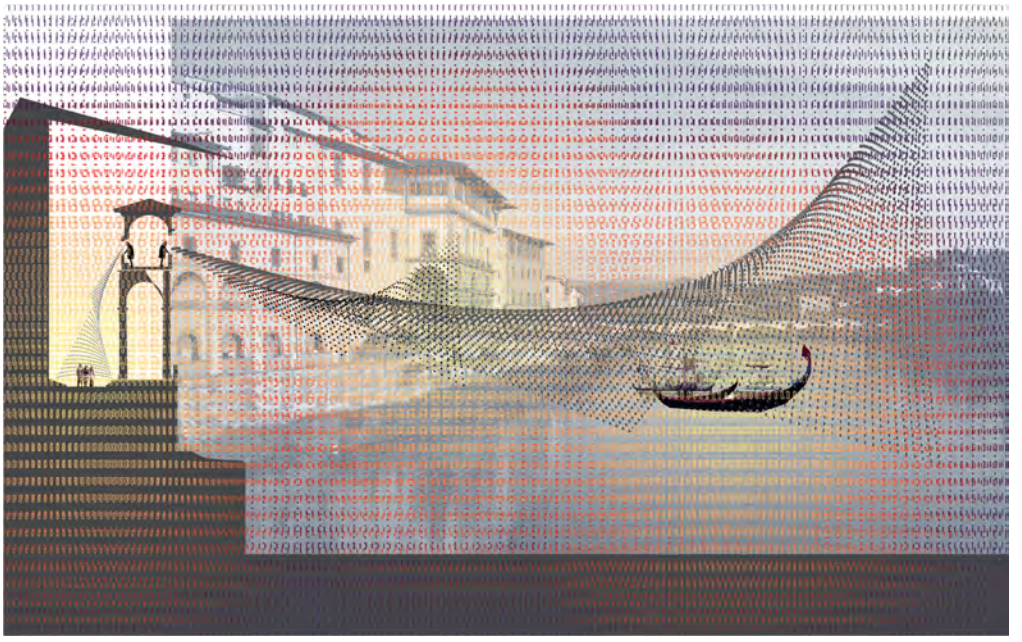


FIGURE 22.4 The Arno as Ledger: Where the Medici Monitored Florence's Trade. cosimo's figure is overvewing the bridge activity unnoticed. Grahic by Author, with assistance of Miguel R Pister, Eira Roberts (2024).

FIGURE 22.5 Private Lives on Public Display: Eavesdropping on Ponte Vecchio's Shoppers heading back and forth from the Oltrarno (the other side of the river) to the city's center. Grahic by Author, with assistance of Miguel R Pister, Eira Roberts (2024).

FIGURE 22.6 The Uffizi: Merchant's Headquarter Court-Yard and Cosimo's political, economical, and social forms of surveillance. Highlights of gathering activities and the audio visual spectrum of the observer towards them. Grahic by Author, with assistance of Miguel R Pister, Eira Roberts (2024).

Notes

1 Stephanie Bastek, "The Father of Art History, The Man Behind the Great Men of the Renaissance," *The American Scholar*, January 8, 2021. https://theamericanscholar.org/the-father-of-art-history/
2 W. Chandler Kirwin, "Vasari's Tondo of 'Cosimo I with His Architects Engineers and Sculptors' in the Palazzo Vecchio. Typology and Re-Identification of Portraits." *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen institut in Florenz* 15, no. 1 (1971): 105–22. http://www.jstor.org/stable/27652263
3 Shai Yeshayahu, "A Proto-Typology of Interior Urbanism," in *The Interior Urbanism Theory Reader*, ed. Gregory Marinic (London: Routledge, 2024), 389–95.
4 William J. Mitchell, *City of Bits: Space, Place, and Infobahn* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1995), 3.
5 Ian Tattersall, "An Evolutionary Framework for the Acquisition of Symbolic Cognition by Homo Sapiens," *Comparative Cognition & Behavior Reviews* 3 (2008): 99.

23

STUDIES OF STUDY

Interiority by Making

William T. Willoughby

Studying is a place-based and time-bound practice of social importance. To participate in public discourse, we must not only interact, but we must study first and then come forth prepared. As a long-standing Western ideal, studying edifies the self, making us into a better social being able to contribute to public life. We can trace spaces of study back to monastic practices: small devotional spaces or cells set aside for religious inquiry and scholarship. Antonello da Messina famously depicted a space of study in his painting St. Jerome in His Study (circa 1475), which idealized a room for collecting, reflecting, and inspired translation. Where and how is the habit of study practiced today? Is it through our smartphone, our laptop, or our headphones? Is it present in a third place, such as a coffee shop, subway commute, or other informal space where ubiquitous computing allows us to enter a pocket of time for inquiring, reflecting, learning, or expressing our views on digital devices? (Figure 23.1)

Studying is digging, exhuming artifacts, and reviving thoughts of perennial significance. Study parallels archeology and shares its methods of uncovering things, mapping relationships, making hypotheses, and establishing theories. Studying is seeing for oneself—making personal discoveries and novel connections. Study reveals what's most hidden. Knowledge held only in the mind is theoretical, abstract, incomplete, and oftentimes contradictory. In turn, things made with intent and skill, while irrefutably real, belong to heuristics—approximating closely held truths and emphasizing their inherent ambiguities. Whether by thinking or making, much of our effort to find truth is wasted—producing more accidents than affinities.

Studying, like art, leads to making something new from older sources—or contributing something novel to current discourse. Art's presence in the world, as the fruition of study, takes on a new set of realities. Through art, what's gestated inside—assembled from a clutch of inquiries, affinities, and discoveries of personal significance—is brought outward and exhibited. These collages/assemblages are examples of interiorizing art, encapsulating a life, and making that public (Figure 23.2).

Nearing his death, William Butler Yeats wrote that we "can embody truth but cannot know it," fitting his life into a phrase.[1]

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-26

FIGURE 23.1 *Architect Defleshed (after Cadmus and Rossi)*, (2022), mixed media assemblage with animal bone, 10″ × 10″. Photo and the college are both by the author.

For sure, truth in any external sense is unknowable. Yet I believe we all yearn for some semblance of inner truth—despite inhabiting a world that's uncertain, divisive, overwhelming, and seemingly broken.

Study is a function of human wellness. Our bodies require sustenance for us to continue living. Thinking is a byproduct of the body—but the coalescence of thought, including our overall embodiment, forms and informs our sense of self. What I really mean is the continual formation of consciousness we call "self." Study feeds and constructs consciousness just as food nourishes the body. In earlier times, the benefit of study was for it to spill forth and enrich public life. Over time, the point of publishing has been to bring the fruits of study outward and into public—to publish is to make public. The study as a place, as a refuge of self, is a crossing point between studying inside and the sallying outward to the world beyond.

FIGURE 23.2 *Architect's Qi (after Cadmus and Messina)*, (2022), mixed media assemblage with copper, 10″ × 10″. Photo and the college are both by the author.

Perhaps study occurs—as in Paul Cadmus' painting Architect (1950)—in a secluded space with pen, pencil, drawing instruments, paper, and good light? I believe that a person without a proper place cannot learn to learn and cannot make art. My own artistic "study of study" resulted in a series of surrealist assemblages set in bespoke frames. I savored the slow intentional process of discovery, assembly, arrangement, and making. I sought to understand interiority and study across time—wherein fragments derived from history, personal memory, and contemporary conditions relate complexly (Figure 23.3).

These studies of study, as assemblages—re-imaginings based on the paintings mentioned above and other depictions of interior spaces—represent a means of constructing new narratives by merging images from different eras, media, and technologies. I like how these images transgress their cultural space and overlap with another cultural milieu or time. Interiors cannot help but become assemblages; this goes double for a person's study or

FIGURE 23.3 *White Room #2, St. Jerome Digitized, Diced, and Dispersed (after Noyes and Messina)*, (2022), mixed media assemblage, 10″ × 13″. Photo and the college are both by the author.

studio. We fill the room with artifacts and tools just as we fill the frame with images. I believe the art of assemblage and collage are valuable tools for accessing interiority (Figure 23.4).

Today, social media's constant thrum tends to invert and subvert the threshold between our private and public selves. Our content feeds, and text messages are awash with visual culture—becoming our main means of connecting communally, informing our thinking, and rewiring the way we study and absorb information. This constant flow of new information, made easily available through digital devices, can overwhelm. Delivered so quickly, information can't connect without the mind's ability to make information into something meaningful and actionable. Most of us search throughout our lives—despite the media—never wise enough, accumulating and consolidating the scraps of wisdom we fashion together into ourselves.

Some people imagine Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a looming threat of human replacement. No matter the outcome, AI may shock us with its otherness or become our peculiar counterpart, but it cannot tap into the core sentiments that comprise our humanity, live our lives, share our experiences (collective and personal), or touch whatever remembrances serve as our motivations today. Humanity, and our developing humanness, is a journey that must be lived to be understood and appreciated in public. (Figure 23.5)

Will I ever fully understand Yeats's note above? I think he implies that truths kept inside are vulnerable, tentative, and untested. Yet when we make those inner truths public, giving them form through art, we can then collectively witness those privately guarded

FIGURE 23.4 *Breuer Seated/Departs (after Messina)*, (2022), mixed media assemblage, 13″ × 10″. Photo and the college are both by the author.

truths and measure what they're made of. To study is to follow the pattern of another's insights, approximate their truth, and apply it to work done today. The truths we gain through study ought to balance the truths we make ourselves. Ultimately, studying and making means participating in a heartfelt conversation between the doing and the done—I hope the works in this series offer fodder for further doing.

FIGURE 23.5 *Motion Think, Turney and Watson (after Messina and Kersh)*, (2022), mixed media assemblage, 13″ × 10″. Photo and the college are both by the author.

Note

1 William Butler Yeats, *The Letters of W.B. Yeats*, ed. Allan Wade (London: Hart-Davis, 1954), 922.

24

PILLOWS/PLANETS/PIAZZAS

Marcin Kędzior

The diagrams forming this project are situated on three different scales of *interior*: 1) The *Pillow* series relates to the psychic interior; 2) The *Planetary* series deals with a planet's atmosphere as an interior or *inner-space*; 3) The *Piazza* series explores public space as a consolidation of a collective body or social interior.

The *Pillow* series is a material index of dreams (Figure 24.1). In the most secure room of the house (the bedroom) and the most stable part of the bedroom (the bed) lie the tumult and absurdity of dreams. Dreamspace is an outlandish psychic interior that constitutes about one-third of our lives. But it is not an interior closed in on itself but could be understood as an expansion of interior psychic space to encompass the public realm. Dreaming does not happen inside a single skull; rather, it is a drifting co-creation of a fantastical world with our environment, daily life, and physiological infrastructure. Since our thoughts are constantly inflected from the outside by social interactions, images, and our wanderings, we could say that we think *through space*. In other words, space itself is a kind of mind, both interior and public. Dreams use our daily encounters, activities, or obsessions and mutate them into alternate images. Even while dreaming, the cold, the light, the window curtain, and street sounds creep into dreams like masked figures at a ball. Dreaming, in turn, causes slumbering bodily movements, tossings, and wrestlings that register on the surface of the pillow, like a psychic-weather-map or an ancient, indecipherable language. A night drift dream script inexplicably scrawled on fluffy pillow alcoves. Forehead wrinkles imprint on pillow lines like dream-itineraries. The more wrinkles, the darker it is—a pillow is heavy with dreams. The weight of a dreaming mind on the pillow exerts a gravitational force, pulling in interior bodily grumblings and the public realms that haunt us. An expanding dream-interior enfolding lived public worlds.

The *Planetary* series plays with the astronomer Johannes Kepler's development of *universal music* by creating experimental musical scores from the topography of the planet Mars, taken from NASA aerial photographs (Figure 24.2). Although it is in *outer-space*, each planet has an atmosphere that gives rise to an *inner-space*. A difference in gravity enables a floating musical time, disrupting a segmented and rationalistic measurement of time as meter, and

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-27

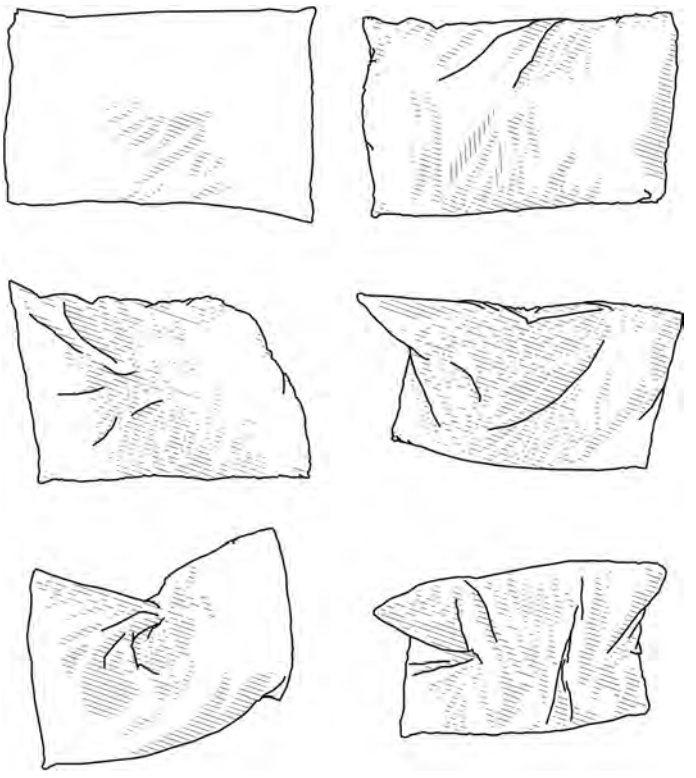


FIGURE 24.1 *Pillow Series*. Image by author (2023).

producing continuous, unpredictable, *flows*. To embrace a planet musically is to generate a *Mars Music* genre, the way the existing classical music genre *Arabesque* is inspired by geometric architecture or the way the *Barcarolle* genre is connected to the speed and rhythm of a gondolier's rowing through the canals of Venice. The annotations of the planetary series include specific musical notes and harmonies, but visually, the scores are *alien* and nonlinear in form, dispersing shapes and itineraries, pointing to bass landscapes and cosmic percussions. Craters are a reminder that a planet's interior is formed by materials from the *outside*, a cacophony of fiery collisions rocking and metaling the planet. When metals from asteroids are mined and turned into weapons, a human history of metal and fire recapitulates a violent geological history. On Earth, we have seen some craters turned into amphitheaters that swell up with dramatic productions of both love and war. The meteorite reverberates in the planet's topography like a weary head falls on a pillow, but it is a public dream or performance, a collective body vibrating together.

The *Piazza* series focuses on urban spaces and events that constitute social interiors (Figure 24.3). Using Giambattista Nolli's paradigmatic map of Rome, this series attempts an urban *rhythmanalysis* that considers the way a collective body is animated through habits, rituals, practices, customs, and recurring festivals. Some of these diagrams emerge as iconic shapes that stand in for a public that is yet to come. While others are choreographies drawing on game pieces, Renaissance ideas about space, cosmic and gravitational qualities, 1960s abstract utopian experiments, and the character of the surrounding

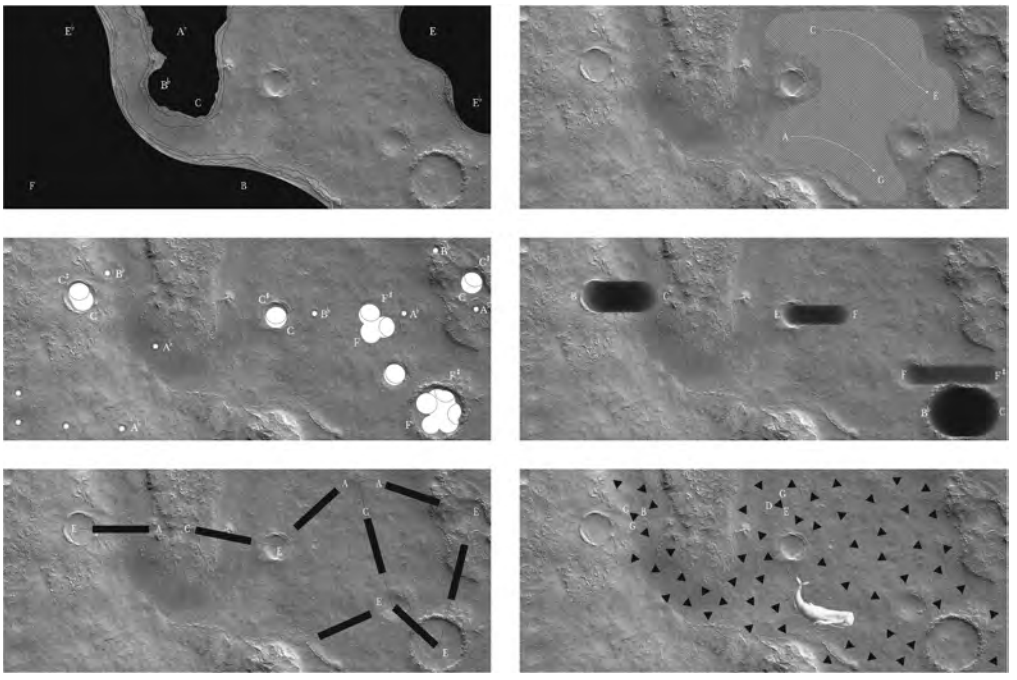


FIGURE 24.2 *Planet Series*. Image by author (2023).

urban fabric (including the size and dimensions of the nearby Pantheon). Nolli's figure-ground plan depicts all the private areas, houses, structural columns, and walls as dark. *Public interiors*, including corridors, piazzas, and church interiors, are white space. Beyond public/private, gray tones are the intermediate spaces of plants (and their shadows), fountains, and rivers, celebrating the vitality of life and possible habitats for other creatures. Even if we find ourselves outside, we are enveloped by the ribbon-like arcades and the consistency of cornice heights that continue above us like virtual ceilings. To unpack what *public* might mean, beyond white urban interior-space on a Nolli map, we consider what holds the public together in the first place. What accounts for the pleasure and excitement of social agglomeration? These diagrams are movement notations for a rhythmic urban life. Or, in some cases they are images or icons that have an affective power to consolidate a community with a particular tone or sub-genre of the social interior. In either case, cultural stories, rhythms, and role-playing modulate the shift from an individual to a collective body. If communities are consolidated by cultural rhythms and movements, then *interior* here would be a shared and living heritage, born anew with each performance, animating publics, and leading to amorphous, social interiors.

The three scales of interiority: psychic in the *Pillow* series, atmospheric in the *Planetary* series, and social in the *Piazza* series, are connected through notions of rhythm. Biological and cultural rhythms map onto meteorological rhythms. For example, circadian rhythms align bodily rhythms of sleeping and waking with the Earth's rotation, bodies rising and dropping with the apparent movement of the Sun. Recurrent festivals mark solstices or significant changes in seasons, creating a link between cultural rhythms and the Earth

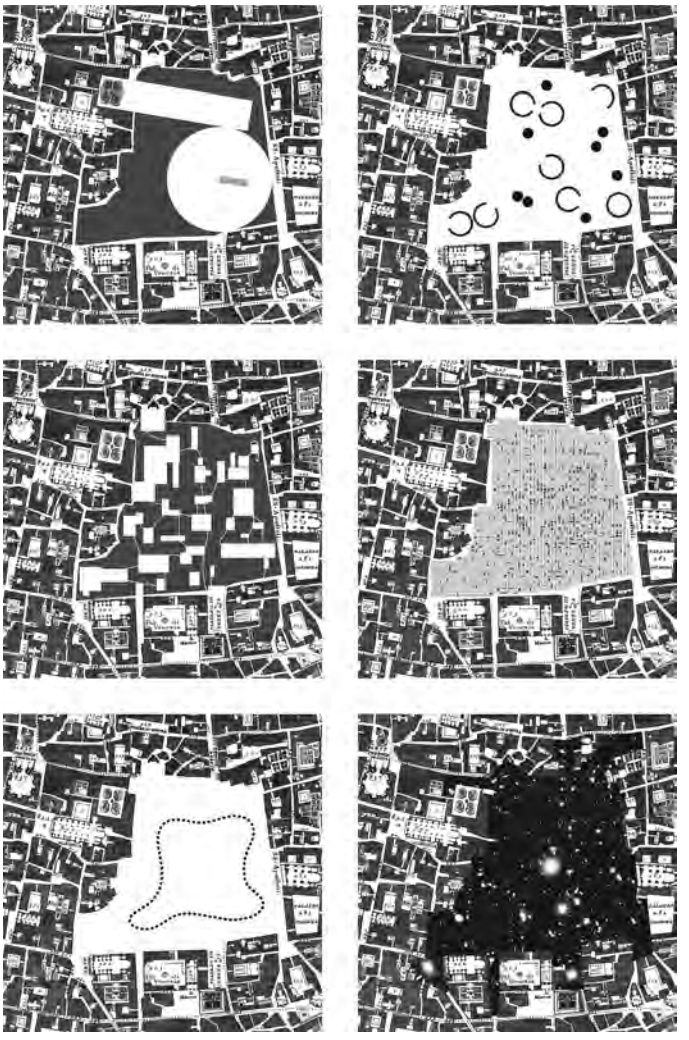


FIGURE 24.3 *Piazza Series*. Image by author (2023).

circumambulating the Sun. Because cultural festivals include collective motions of walking, singing, and drumming together, they also align physiological rhythms of breathing, heartbeat, and many other bodily and psychic resonances. Finally, cultural stories allow for the convergence of a social group, explaining some facet of the cosmos, allowing a group to live, dream, breathe, pulse, and move together.

25

REWILD

Kendra Locklear Ordia

Public interiority as a spatial condition engages sensory and contextual encounters with exterior urban spaces, expanding our definition of urban spatiality beyond those solely defined by physical enclosure.[1] Public interiority, in this sense, creates a dialogue across atmospheres, perception, and use with a focus on human-centric experiences. It serves as a scalable, integrated network, making it a liminal spatial condition for dialogue to enable interiors to absorb the urban exterior and vice versa. By layering nature into the dialogue of public interiority, we expand the understanding from that of human-centric spatial experiences to life-centric ecological experiences exploring the entanglement of humans and nature expressed in public nature interiority. Within these in-between spaces, nature exists in gradients of natural to artificial and wild to controlled. Nature is obviously found in open exterior environments but also integrated into enclosed interior spaces for enhanced connection to nature or biophilic design. Regardless of application or environment, our view of the appropriateness of these dualities is interpreted through our perception of human cultivation or intention to care for this nature, as shown in Figure 25.1.

To further understand the notion of public nature interiority, we must understand our awareness of nature, beginning simply with the term. Nature is seen as an entity that just is. We cannot distill it down to one "nature," but typically understand "naturalness" as a continuum or gradient. Nature often is culturally defined by human intention for care versus ecological benefits. The difference between the cultural concept of nature and the scientific concept of ecology (i.e., the difference between experience and function) demonstrates how our perception of nature frames its perceived value. [2] By understanding the nuances of a cultural language of nature between natural appearance and ecological function, we can intentionally communicate aspects of culture, place, and human-nature values within public nature interiority. If we disregard ecological functions in our approach to public nature interiority, we reduce spatial experiences in our everyday environments in exchange for aesthetic conventions that impact the larger conversation around designing with nature—at both interior and exterior scales.

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-28

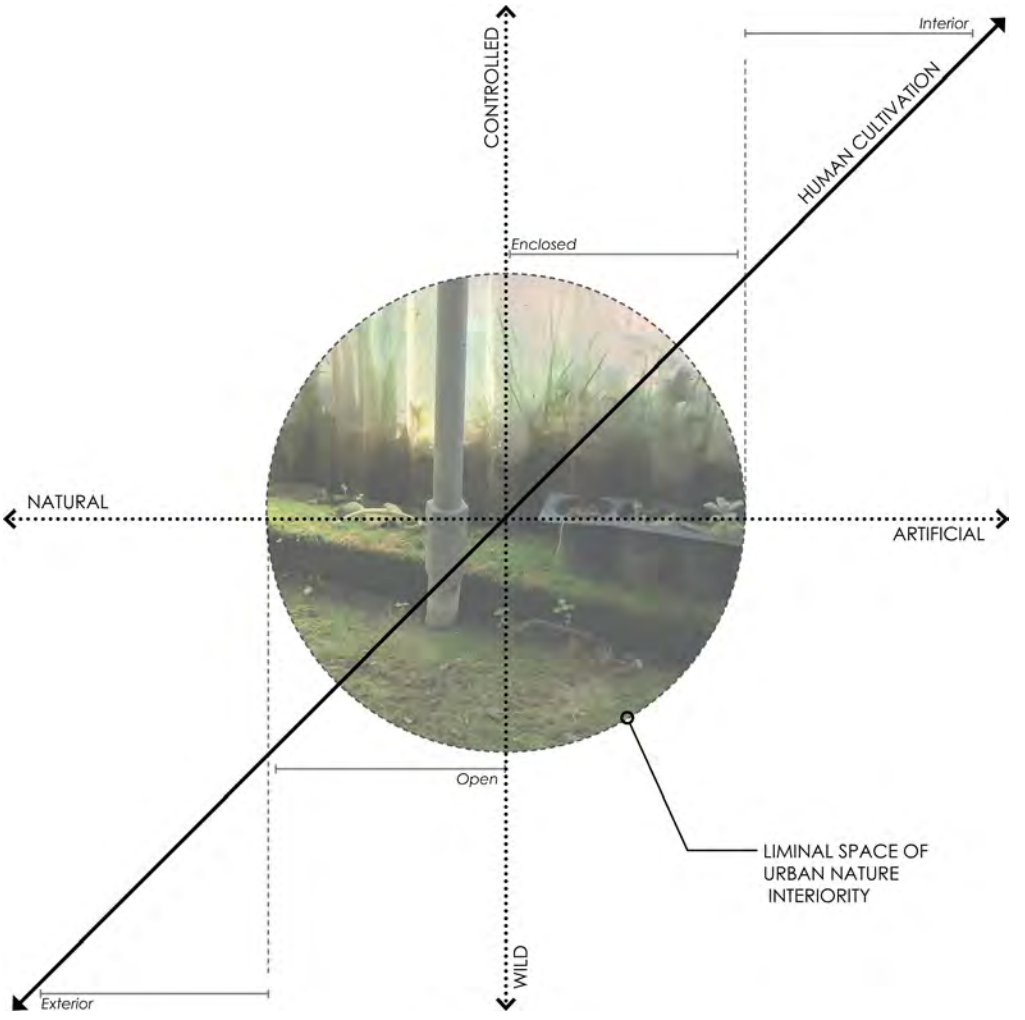


FIGURE 25.1 This graphic proposes a visual framework for nature gradients from natural to artificial and wild to controlled as primary dualities. The diagonal line, "human cultivation" represents the variability in intention for care of nature ranging from minimal care in wild/natural environments to a higher level of cultivation or care required in controlled or artificial (non-native) nature designs. The overlapping central domain identifies where the concept of public nature interiority can have the most spatial impact. Photo and graphic by author (2023).

Public nature interiority has a role in communicating embedded ecological values since nature has functional purposes that vary from place to place or region to region. Larger extents of native ecosystems have been removed from urban contexts, resulting in loss of pollinators, habitats for animals and birds, and increases in issues related to flooding and heat island effects. By understanding and communicating the scientific and functional relationships of nature in the city, aspects of system-level thinking are enhanced through the lens of curiosity and discovery explored in characteristics of the naturalistic

urban environments as seen in the success of public infrastructure projects such as the Highline in New York or the 606 in Chicago (Figure 25.2).

On a smaller scale, the illustration in Figure 25.3 speculates on public nature interiority in a typical downtown alley intersection in Lincoln, Nebraska, as a public, rewilded greenbelt. This approach to public nature interiority may contradict traditional aesthetic preferences of controlled nature in urban environments, but for restored ecological systems to function, they often appear wild and messy. This creates space that can accommodate desires for "other" nature near where we live, work, and play enhancing the physical benefits of connection to nature while providing increased opportunities to access the physiological benefits of nature.[3] It can promote a strong reference to place, enhancing emotional attachment and cues to care while showcasing elements of wilder nature.

Within the human scale of the alleyway, public nature interiority relies on distinct edge conditions for contrasts of interior and exterior, creating opportunities to blur boundaries between physical structures and within these outdoor corridors. However, human presence is often discouraged in urban alleys. Air movement and daylight access are often stifled. Materiality is mismatched and often neglected. The cultural understanding of nature based on picturesque preferences does not exist in desirable forms in these liminal spaces. However, these loose-fit parts and messy ecology can be used to frame more novel ecosystems within everyday environments. These spaces hinge on intersections of

FIGURE 25.2 A collage of the existing conditions with current rewilded green infrastructure at the Highline (NYC) and the 606/Bloomingdale Line (Chicago). Existing image of Bloomingdale Line included with permission from photographer, David C. Schalliol. All other photography and collage by author (2024).

FIGURE 25.3 Rewild alleyway concept showcasing integration of native species for enhanced ecological functions to spatial conditions of public nature interiority, Lincoln Nebraska. Photos and collage by author (2023).

rewilded, biodiverse environments and human occupation. They contain unique possibilities for complementary relationships where the human body, mind, and spirit is enriched through biophilic connections, values, and intention for care leading to a more resilient and productive nature.[4]

The field condition diagram in Figure 25.4 highlights the scalability of plantings found in urban environments in Lincoln ranging from vertical lichens in shaded crevices to native grasses glistening in bright daylight while visibly undulating in the ever-present

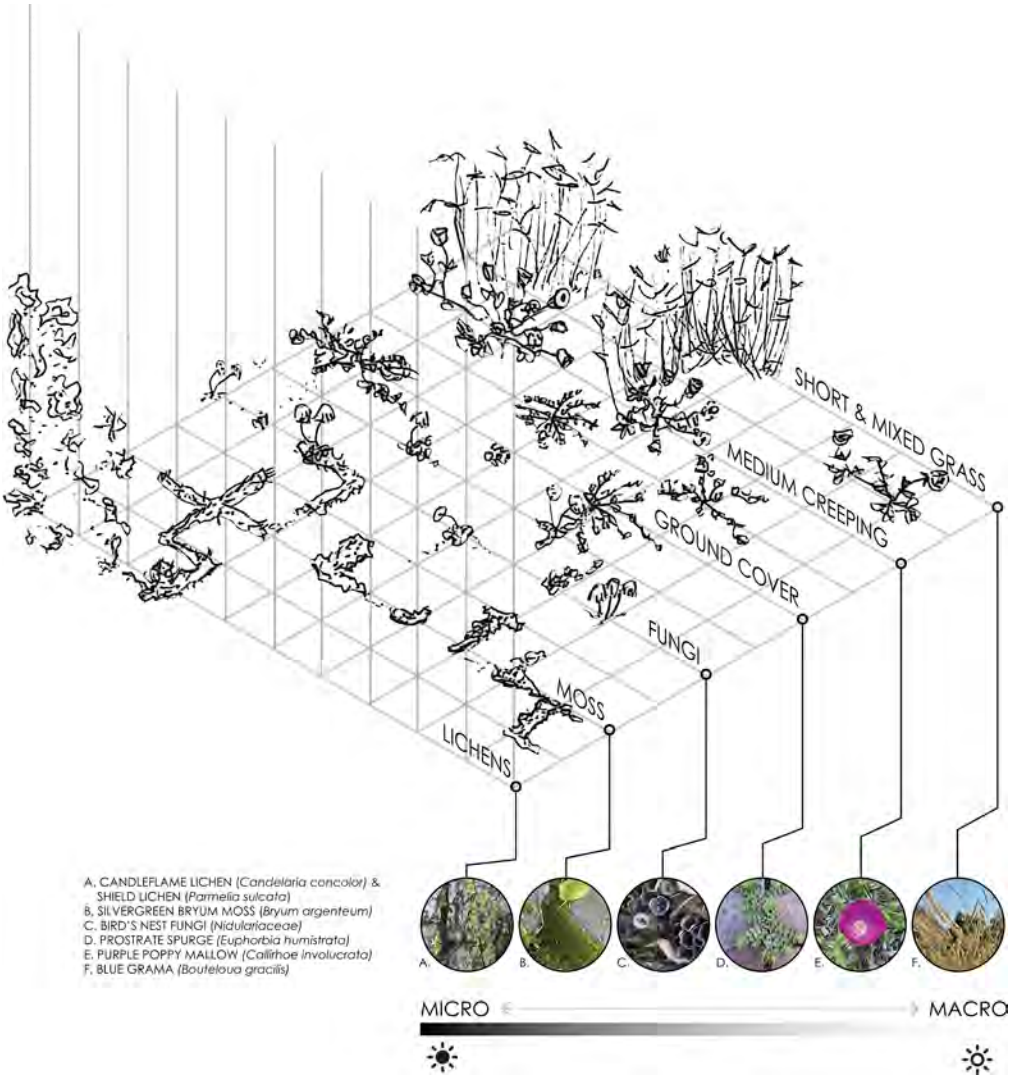


FIGURE 25.4 Field conditions of urban nature discovered in downtown Lincoln, Nebraska, ranging from small scale ecosystems growing vertically and horizontally (micro) to medium scale plantings and grasses (macro). Shade to sun exposure also correlates across scale as shown above. Photos and graphic by author (2024).

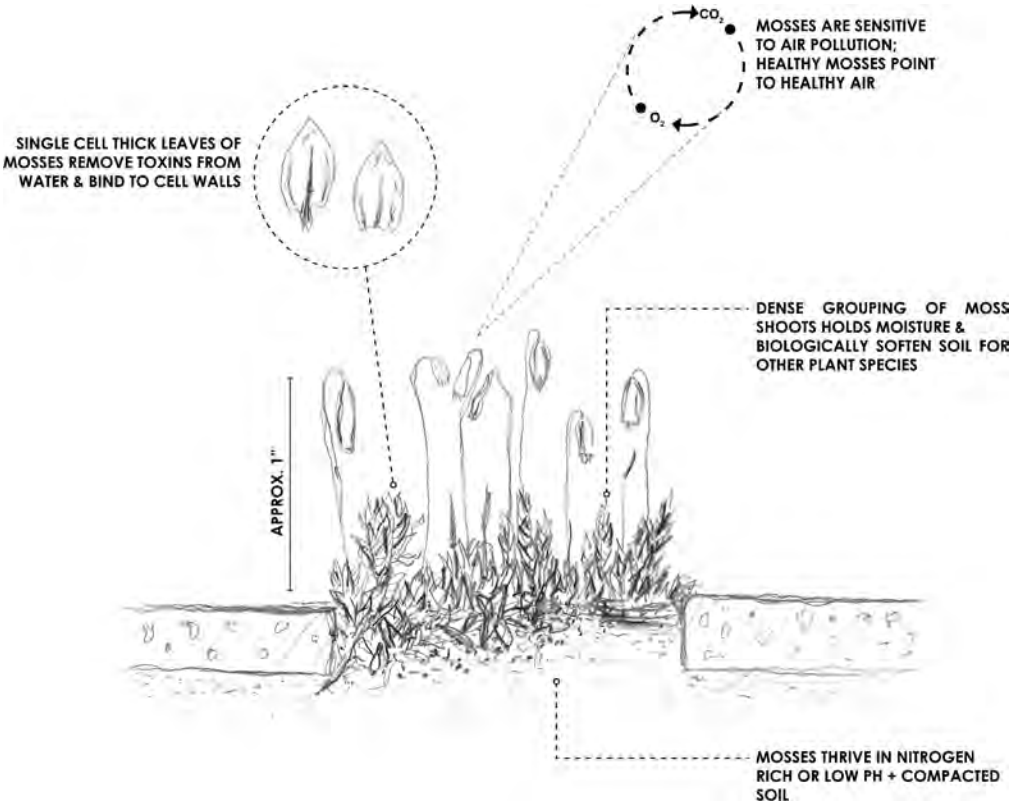


FIGURE 25.5 A section of moss (Bryum argenteum) growing in the cracks of paving depicting the biological functions of this common micro ecology occurring in urban areas. Sketch and graphic by author (2024).

wind. This juxtaposition of messy, wild nature conflicts with the aesthetics of the city's sterile, modern core challenging time, scale, and connection with ecological place. However, seemingly misfit (re)wild nature does offer urban explorers experiences of fascination, awe, and inspiration found in the micro-ecologies and minute details of hidden nature already existing in these environments. These micro-ecologies of urban nature often have symbiotic relationships with nutrient sharing and bio-filtration functions serving as surrounding air quality indicators, as depicted in Figure 25.5.[5] They create valuable habitats for urban pollinators, and their deep tap root systems can also assist in phytoremediation in buried urban soils. They offer layers of life in forgotten areas that no longer exist on human terms. They are spontaneous and resilient. On a smaller scale, they represent the ecosystem of the city; they are valuable and beautiful.

This understanding of different ecological scales and processes can deepen the human relationship with nature and the public interiority it creates and occupies. It can shift our perception of what nature is valuable and where it could be allowed to thrive in urban environments, enhancing our experiences. The spatial quality of public nature interiority in this essay offers opportunities for non-traditional aesthetic preferences or notions of beauty and reflection within the realm of the urbane. It is within the marginal, urban

spaces inside all our cities that aspects of public nature interiority can begin to act as spatial apparatus for human discovery and interaction enhancing our understanding of embedded ecology functions of nature, engagement with place, and values of nature.

Notes

1 Tine Poot, Els de Vos, and Maarten van Acker, "Thinking beyond Dualities in Public Space: The Unfolding of Urban Interiority as a Set of Interdisciplinary Lenses," *Interiors* 9, no. 3 (2019): 324–345.

Richard Sennett, "Interiors and Interiority Lecture," Symposium on Architecture: Interior Matters filmed April 22, 2016, at Harvard Graduate School of Design. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hVPjQhfJfKo

Liz Teston, "Politicizing the Interior," in *Interior Architecture Theory Reader*, ed. Gregory Marinic (New York: Routledge, 2018).

2 Joan Iverson Nassauer, "Messy Ecosystems, Orderly Frames," *Landscape Journal* 14, no. 2 (September 1995): 161–170.

3 Marcia P. Jimenez, Nicole V. DeVille, Elise G. Elliot, Jessica E. Schiff, Grete E. Wilt, Jamie E. Hart. and Peter James, "Associations between Nature Exposure and Health: A Review of the Evidence," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 18, no. 9 (May 2021): 4790.

4 Stephen R. Kellert, *Birthright: People and Nature in the Modern World* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2021): 157.

5 Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Gathering Moss: A Natural and Cultural History of Mosses* (Corvallis, OR: Oregon State University Press, 2003): 98.

26

RIFT TABLE

Material, Process, + Interiority

Nathan Smith

In "Accelerated Obsolescence," architect Albert Pope acknowledges the structural challenges posed by carbon-based systems and calls for a quickening pace of innovation to address climate change. "First among these reforms is a fundamental change in our relationship to the object world that surrounds and enables us." Pope refers to our current scenario as one of material *estrangement*, which arises from the very realization that our supporting cast of artifacts and infrastructure has no capacity to support us into the future. This predicament suggests our need to accelerate the reinvention of our object world.[1] Pope recognizes that the reality of utilitarian objects extends beyond the restrained frame of their functional role. "Equal to the vast archives of painting or poetry, the quotidian network of utilitarian objects transforms the base materiality of the world into an environment that is recognizably human."[2]

The design of everyday objects provides an opportunity to rethink this human environment and its ensuing interiority in material terms. Free from the inertia of the building envelope, objects play a dynamic role in creating social, semiotic, and material experiences. Their configuration and proliferation construct the forms of public interiority that inform our behaviors and connection to place. This interiority operates on both proxemic and material levels, affecting not only our methods of public assembly but also how we consider objects themselves. Our culture of objects becomes a kind of material consensus.

To address the "deracinated" material culture recognized by Pope, how can the next generation of objects connect users to a narrative that combines forms of interiority, energy, and contextual nuance? Could design develop following an almost culinary ethic invested in the specificities of a regional ecology's potential to inform objects? Could the spaces and objects that collect and present us to ourselves become informed by regional systems? (Figure 26.1)

In my office at the University of Louisville there are two Cesca chairs, ubiquitous objects so commonplace and pirated as to have almost lost their connection to a near century-old presence in the history of design. Designed by Hungarian-German architect

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-29

FIGURE 26.1 Hemp stalks, Shaker Village of Pleasant Hill, KY. Image by author (2023).

Marcel Breuer in 1928 and called the B32, the chair was originally manufactured by Thonet. This company had mastered the mass production of bentwood furniture in the previous century. When the B32 went into production, over 50 million of Thonet's No. 14 chairs had already been produced, becoming standard equipment for European café life.[3] Their lightness and ubiquity permitted a great capacity for public mobility, helping to make city sidewalks a vital public interior of spatial and visual connection.

As Thonet merged their well-honed bentwood techniques with modern materials from the automotive industry (the cantilevered chair structure was first implemented in the Czech Tatra T12 automobile), bentwood translated to steel tubing with its new formal and aesthetic opportunities.[4] The B32 employed the cantilevered structure in chrome finish that preoccupied leading designers of the time, while the wood frame and caning of the seat and back referred to Thonet's history of bentwood construction.[5] Here, material innovation from the automotive industry led to a displacement of the structural logics of wood while maintaining other elements prevalent in Thonet's existing construction process.[5] Today, remote in space and time from the values and technological shifts that led to its creation, the chair serves not as an index to any physical context or behavior but to an aesthetic history full of optimism around the potential for technological innovation, formal novelty, and the ensuing lightness of contemporary life.

Design grapples with the ingrained culture of its history. While the relics of design continue to attract us with svelte lines and storied pedigrees, the resultant interiority may likely be the greatest obstacle to confronting the challenges posed by climate change. That is to suggest that the problem posed by our contemporary set of supporting artifacts is twofold. On the one hand, the aesthetic and material culture of design and the ensuing spatial effects (now proliferated at the scale of architecture) require a feast of fossil fuels, both to produce and maintain in operation. Furthermore, our expectations of the built environment have been tempered by this aesthetic, one unable to provoke the forms of subjectivity and interiority required to confront present challenges at the pace called for by Pope.

Rift Table was a first sketch to consider how landscape, agriculture, and process could willfully inform an object. In this design, I was interested in connecting material culture to processes related to the renewed capacity to cultivate hemp legally in Kentucky. Further, I wanted to look at the material in itself, without the slippages and formal atavisms of the B32; a kind of material *beginning again*. The table became a method to describe both the plant itself and a method of material transformation, where the near-weightless hemp stalks carry a compressed and systematized version of themselves in a precarious, animist posture. *Hempwood* is a Kentucky-produced composite of hemp and a soy-based adhesive subjected to a process of compression and heating. The resulting material has a density similar to oak and is worked with conventional woodworking tools (Figure 26.2).

The adjacency of the hemp stalk and the smooth horizontal surface of the Hempwood top communicates both a material process and one of interiorization, prompting a line of communication between the landscape becoming an object and the object's role in connecting subjects. A tabletop creates that space for gathering around, accommodating quotidian objects that drive our conversations (pages, mugs, chess sets, etc.). Here, the index to the material process and landscape reinforces the idea of interiority as a regionally supported mutual relationship (Figures 26.3–26.5).

FIGURE 26.2 Hemp bales, Hempwood plant, Murray, KY. Image by author (2023).

FIGURE 26.3 Top view, *Rift Table*, Nathan Smith (2023). Image by author.

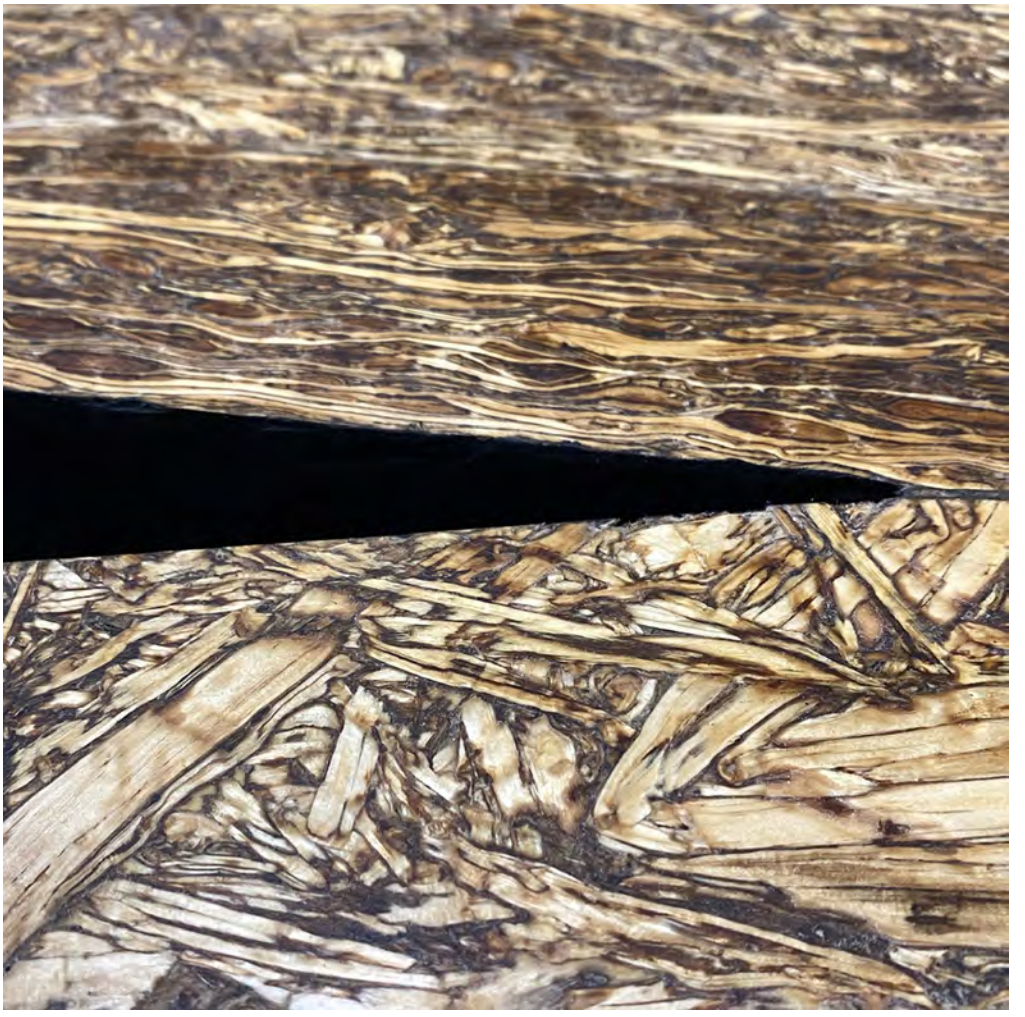


FIGURE 26.4 Detail, *Rift Table,* Nathan Smith (2023). Image by author.

FIGURE 26.5 Side view, *Rift Table*, Nathan Smith (2023). Image by author.

Notes

1 Albert Pope, "Accelerated Obsolescence," *Log* 47 (2019), 146.
2 Pope, "Accelerated Obsolescence," 148.
3 Ekaterini Kyriazidou and Martin Pesendorfer, "Viennese Chairs: A Case Study for Modern Industrialization," in *The Journal of Economic History* 59 no. 1: 151.
4 Ivan Margolius, "Cars, Furniture, Architecture—How Tatra Car Seating Inspired an Iconic Modernist Chair," *The Friends of Czech Heritage Newsletter* 14, Winter/Spring 2016, 7.
5 Christoper Wilk, *Marcel Breuer: Furniture and Interiors* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1981), 71.

PART IV
Closing

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

27

INTERIORITY IN THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

A Refrain

Suzie Attiwill

This essay is best approached as an assemblage; a selection and arrangement of what can be said and seen. It has been important to think through how to approach writing about the concept of interiority as the lure to define/re-define interiority in its coupling with public—as public interiority—has the potential to catch one in a complicated terrain of competing theoretical arguments.[1] Sidestepping this, the proposition of this essay is to select and arrange a series of encounters; and in the process, think *with* and *through* them to craft connections with concepts of "interiority," "interior," and "public interiority." In some respects, this will be like a work of history—gathering existing examples to give an account of interiority in the urban environment. However, this essay does not aspire to a cohesive teleological narrative nor a survey of the topic.[2] Instead, this is an assemblage composed of several encounters—*Interior Cities, URBAN + INTERIOR*, "The Public Interior and its Subjects," "urban subjectivity," and "urban interiority"—that provoke different ways of thinking and practicing interiority in the urban environment. This assemblage itself is situated in another assemblage—this book, composed of further encounters with chapters all addressing/contributing to the provocation of public interiority.

It is important to highlight that these are specific and local encounters with "interiority in the urban environment" selected by an interiorizt posing "?interior" as a creative problematic in an outside.[3] These encounters have happened through reading, listening to lectures, and teaching as sites of encounter with propositions—ideas and projects—that force one to think and experiment. Therefore, this essay requires a different orientation from you as the reader; as distinct from reading the following as an attempt to explain interiority in the urban environment, this essay is an invitation to participate in opening the inquiry and experiment.

Interior Cities

In the early 1990s, while studying interior design as an undergraduate student at RMIT University, a significant shift in the curriculum occurred. This was due to a change in the head of the Interior Design department (the oldest undergraduate interior design program in Australia). Professor John Andrews arrived from the UK and repositioned the teaching of

DOI: 10.4324/9781003493501-31

interior design from a focus on interior design in relation to commercial design, ergonomics, spatial planning, and a history of furniture styles to one that emphasized the student as the site of practice and consequently practice as individual and the practice of interior design as one engaged with spatial experience and phenomenology. The *Poetics of Space* by the philosopher Gaston Bachelard became a key reference and, even now over forty years later, continues to be a companion text for many students in their aspirations for the design of interior space.[4] Italo Calvino's *Invisible Cities* was and continues to be another significant reference.[5]

In 1999, Andrews, together with academics and students from the program, published a book titled *Interior Cities*.[6] He defined the book as "a chronicle of the theoretical concerns and design practices of the community of architects, designers, artists, and teachers involved in the Interior Design Program at RMIT University 1992 to 1999."[7] While the emphasis was on constructed interior space, Andrews described how the concerns were "deeply urban and the configurations, reflections, references, and forms of expression emerge from the study of urban space."[8] The city of Melbourne was conducive to this concept of the city as an interior. Its colonial grid layout with laneways and arcades enclosed one boundary of the city to the other. With its many laneways and spaces in-between, Melbourne feels like an interior city. Design studios were dedicated to Situationist derives and experiments with psychogeography. Students became flâneurs, roaming streets and seeking poetic moments as inspiration to transform the urban environment into an interior spatial experience. *A Drifter's Memoirs*—an essay by Andrews as part of a symposium *Imagining the City* in 1992—gives an account of how "streets became corridors; the squares—rooms; the passages—hallways saturated with potential encounters, dream images, and adventure."[9] This ethos of cities as interiors where the practice and thinking of interior design is extended into the urban environment continues to be embedded through the teaching and the city posed as an urban laboratory.

FIGURE 27.1 1st year undergraduate RMIT interior design project, Melbourne, *in-2-photo*, Ziqi Cao (2019).

An example of this is the first brief in the first week for first year interior design undergraduate students that invites them to venture into the city of Melbourne and to "explore how the experience and understanding of space is produced between the inhabitant/s and the space/s they occupy. The experience of an interior is not generalized and fixed, but individual and transformative as both the interior spaces and the occupants are forming in dynamic relation with each other."[10] (Figure 27.1)

URBAN + INTERIOR

An interest in the urban environment within interior design programs—both in teaching and research—is not particular to Melbourne, Australia. It is curious how this interest emerged across programs around the world in the early twenty-first century. One could speculate about this as a response to the evolving nature of the discipline and a resistance to being defined primarily by and within an architectural context. It is interesting how critical this experimentation within a teaching environment has been to the emergence of interior design as an expansive discipline. While it has been argued that the term "urban interior" has a history in urban planning and design,[11] the dominant understanding of "interior" comes from an architectural and/or built environment context and "urban interior" is often conflated with "interior urbanism." The deployment of specific interior design practice and techniques in the urban environment, I would suggest, is recent.

In 2015, together with interior design colleagues from Milan and Madrid, we proposed a special issue of the *idea journal*—a journal of the Interior Design/Interior Architecture Educators Association[12]—addressing the concept of urban interior. "The conjunction 'urban + interior' brings together two conditions which are often posed as dichotomies. Here rather than a relation of either/or—*either* interior *or* urban—the relation is one of addition, of putting together in a propositional manner."[13] We received submissions addressing urban interior projects in cities from around the world including Bangkok, Jakarta, Melbourne, Milan, Madrid, Stockholm, London, and Manhattan. There were essays that spoke about "interiority in the urban environment" and therefore valuable to mention here. A visual essay described a journey through the city of London where "the reflective gaze of the phenomenologist transcends normality to reveal the underlying structure of the phenomena and the intentionality of the subjective experience"[14]; research from Jakarta gave definition to an interiority produced through the porosity of inside and outside spaces manifesting in different modes of inhabitation, events and rituals[15]; and another research essay about "temporary domesticized spaces" of the walkways in Hong Kong by Filipino domestic workers who set up cardboard spaces as living rooms and social spaces—even territories—to rest, eat, dance, talk, and groom. "Ritualized inhabitation."[16] This journal, like this essay, is an assemblage of encounters (Figure 27.2).

An interesting aspect with this encounter is a response to the premise of the *URBAN + INTERIOR* journal by academic Jacopo Leveratto who criticized what he saw as a lack of acknowledgment of the historical evolution in the coupling of urban and interior in the fields of architecture, design, and urban planning. In "Urban Interiors: A Retroactive Investigation," Leveratto details this history to demonstrate the potential of "interior disciplines" in relation to identifying "innovative strategies for building and activating hospitable urban spaces through a specific focus on their habitability."[17] Leveratto has contributed a number of texts on this topic where he articulates the development of urban space "as a domestic interior, around the 'gestures' of the subjects who inhabit it … [as] a new idea

FIGURE 27.2 Temporary cardboard units that appear on the central elevated walkways at Exchange Square, Hong Kong on a Sunday. Photograph by Evelyn Kwok (2013).

of urbanity—a subjective identity that is not imposed or inherited, but can be imagined, built, and modified in the most absolute autonomy." This concept of "personal urbanities" and "personal cities"[18] offers another encounter.

"The Public Interior and its Subjects"

Academic and artist Mark Pimlott and his writing, lectures, and photographs on conditions of interior and interiority over several decades offer a different orientation to that of the domestic and personal in relation to thinking about interiority in the urban environment.[19]

This photograph by Pimlott (Figure 27.3) which was reproduced on the cover of the *URBAN + INTERIOR* journal shows people crossing an urban environment composed of diagonal geometric shapes. There is a shared reference here to the "interior city" of Melbourne—the grid. Pimlott's writing on grids gives insight into how he approaches thinking about interiority in the urban environment. With reference to the use of the grid as a device "used to territorialize and urbanize the frontier of the United States … its means have influenced the making of its cities and their spaces."[20]

> A certain kind of subject is created by such an environment—defined by the United States Government from the time of the Land Ordinance as the Interior—and a certain kind of public interior accommodates and is addressed to that subject, confirming their subjects' perceptions of norms and privileges.[21]

FIGURE 27.3 Stockholm_S, Mark Pimlott (2003).

Pimlott's book *The Public Interior as Idea and Project*[22] is based on a lecture series he presented to TU Delft Architecture students titled "The Architecture of the Interior" motivated by the criticality of exposing the effect of the relationship between the public interior and its subjects.

> … to make the interior visible … as a realm beyond the domestic, apparently centered on the self; and to make students and readers aware that the public interior, in producing the most influential spaces of our urbanized environment, was a realm of many possibilities: it could be about manipulation, control, and instrumentality, but it was, about allusion, affordance, and the imagination, about the self and others, about consciousness of being among others and in the world, and so about the possibility of freedom.[23]

He positions his interest in interiors as one to be distinguished from the "inside out" claim that he cites as a dominant discourse in the discipline; counterposing that "interiority, as experienced by the individual, seems to suggest one means of resisting the condition of interior."[24] With reference to the English definition of "interiority," Pimlott draws out the implications of interiority as "inner character" and how this "infers a condition of inwardness and individual contemplation."[25]

The design of public interiors therefore, for Pimlott, should resist the condition of the interior, and in doing so, enable people to enact a reflective distance and to become

aware of themselves in the presence of others. He addressed this directly in a research seminar on public space in Naples, Italy titled "The Public Interior and its Subjects":

> … invert the dynamic within those public interiors that attempt to pre-determine the behavior and responses of their subjects. Instead of creating subjectivities, they allow their users to create themselves as subjects. Each of these truly public interiors, within their afforded realms, have suggested possibilities for individual pleasure, for being oneself in public, both alone and with others, for engagement and relations with others, for personal agency, for action, for varieties of freedom.[26]

"Urban subjectivity"

Urbanist and sociologist Richard Sennett also poses interiority as a site of resistance against the interior although the interior here is different to Pimlott's public interior. Referencing research he was doing at the time in Cairo, Sennett speaks about the desire to be in the street as a condition of interiority and away from the confines of the interior i.e., the domestic realm and its association with the familiar, known, and personal—which he refers to as "the tyranny of intimacy."[27] This was in a keynote lecture for the Harvard Architecture Symposium—*Architecture's interior matters in new ways today* (April 2016)—where he addressed the issue of interiority in the urban environment in a paper titled "Interiors and Interiority."[28] Sennett began with a "standard account of interior and interiority" in relation to "the notion of subjective life as being something sheltered and enclosed" that began in middle eighteenth-century bourgeois Europe. There is resonance here with Pimlott in terms of a critique of the condition of interior as domestic and domesticizing.

"Urban subjectivity" is a term Sennett uses for interiority in the urban environment—an interiority produced by the street. The implications of this become clearer when he refers to sociologist Georg Simmel's "Metropolis and Mental Life," written in 1903.[29] Simmel gives an account of the individual confronting the metropolis and how the effect of this results in "a blasé attitude" to diminish the encounter with an exteriority of overstimulation—as a "protection of the inner life against the domination of the metropolis."[30] Sennett refers to this text as a "theory of the street" with reference to Simmel's observation that there is "an inside/outside divide made by the street rather than removed from the street."[31]

> Urban subjectivity … a reaction, caused by exposure to difference and complexity which divides perception. On the one hand, there is a show of seeming indifference, and on the other, behind the mask, you are still feeling all of this stimulation. In other words, you are divided.[32]

Sennett, while keeping this idea of a mask-like attitude, shifts from the implication of Simmel's theory that this involves a withdrawal and detachment from the urban environment. In contrast, for Sennett, urban subjectivity is an active engagement in the world behind the mask, where one is free to be able to observe without interacting—and to practice what he coins "observational cruising."[33]

"Urban interiority"

Following are two interior design studios where the concept of urban interiority was posed to and with interior design master students in relation to specific situations; not to universalize the ideas but to develop local solutions—making site specific. As encounters, design studios are powerful in that they become a location for research and experimentation, discussion and contestation, expression and proposition in relation to thinking and practicing interiority in the urban environment. The design scenarios produced by the students create and materialize "possible worlds and a way of thinking and critically responding to current issues and concerns."[34]

In September 2016, I was invited to participate in the International Master of Interior Architecture and Design (IMIAD) program. This edition was convened by Özge Cordon and Bahadir Numan, interior architecture academics at the Istanbul Technical University and titled *Inhabiting Nicosia: Interior Strategies for the Public Realm*. It was held in the city of Nicosia in Cyprus with master students and academics from universities in India, Germany, Switzerland, North America, Turkey, and Cyprus, as well as local Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

I proposed and led one of several workshops. Titled "urban + interiority," the brief framed interiority as a dynamic network of relations and forces as distinct from a subject-centric idea of interiority.[35] Over the twenty years since I studied interior design as an undergraduate and the *Interior Cities* encounter, my research has been an experiment with other ways of making the relation between people and space than one which assumes a phenomenological/Cartesian subject at/as the heart of interior design practice. At the time of this workshop, I was particularly interested in the potential of reframing interiority as collective individuation. This thinking was, and continues to be, influenced by the ideas of philosopher Gilbert Simondon who makes the distinction between understanding individuation as produced by the individual and the individual a product of individuation.[36] The following quote from philosopher Gilles Deleuze was also a provocation to re-posing interiority: "subjectification isn't even anything to do with a 'person': it's a specific or collective individuation relating to an event (a time of day, a river, a wind, a life …). It's a mode of intensity, not a personal subject."[37]

Posing urban interiority as collective individuation foregrounded individuation as an event situated in dynamic forces and relations. In the context of Nicosia, this brought to the fore historical, economic, social, and political conditions. A demilitarized border divides Cyprus into the Republic of Cyprus and Northern Cyprus (a state recognized only by Turkey); runs through and divides the city of Nicosia. The United Nations reinforced this buffer zone following the invasion of Turkey in 1974. Together with Cordan and Kağan Günçe (an Interior Architecture academic, Eastern Mediterranean University), we selected a car park on the northern side of the buffer zone inside the old walled city of Nicosia as a site for the project. The people living in the area are socio-economically disadvantaged Turkish migrants renting houses in various states of disrepair. We worked with a group of ten interior master's students as well as local consultants to experiment with creating collective individuation. As the project evolved over ten days and the local children became curious, we involved them and their teachers to also come up with proposals for the future.

While students were asked to work with a particular site, they were guided to consider it as an ecology of subjectivity i.e., as a relational composition of forces. Three design

scenarios were proposed: an "emotional museum" involving encounters bringing north and south Nicosia together through historical awareness and an engagement with temporality—a composition of past and present for a future; "UNIT-Y," a unit that could be adapted for economic benefit by the community; and a football club bringing young people from north and south together to play. The workshop enabled an encounter with the criticality and potentiality in re-posing the idea of interiority in a complex urban environment and the value of thinking interiority in the urban environment as collective individuation.

"Urban Interiority" was the title of an RMIT master's design studio which I designed and led in 2021. This studio was held in the city of Melbourne following a period of extended lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Melbourne had six lockdowns totaling 262 days from March 2020 to October 2021, one of the world's longest lockdowns. The impact of this on the city was devastating as shops and offices were closed for several months at a time. The brief for the studio was to invent a new urban interiority as a proposition to ameliorate the situation. The importance of experimentation and shifting from equating urban interiority with the experience of individuals and urban interior with space were provocations.

The pandemic had made apparent the interconnectedness of everything—locally and globally—and while this prompted a retreat into social distancing and isolation to escape from Covid-19, it was not sustainable in all sorts of ways—mentally, socially, environmentally. A key reference for the studio was psychoanalyst and political philosopher Félix Guattari's "Ecosophical Practices and the Restoration of the 'Subjective City'."[38] In this essay he calls for "a collective reorientation of human activities [that] depends in a large part on the evolution of urban mentalities"—involving "new practices," "new styles of living," and the production of a "new subjectivity."[39] The concept of ecosophy refers to a practice that shifts from conceptualizing the environment as space to an approach that frames the environment ecologically and for Guattari, there are three ecologies—mental, social, and environmental.

> Ecology must stop being associated with the image of a small nature-loving minority or with qualified specialists. Ecology in my sense questions the whole of subjectivity and capitalistic power formations, whose sweeping progress cannot be guaranteed to continue as it has for the past decade.[40]

Temporal Citizenship. Towards an empathetic city was one of the projects from the studio. As international students, they decided to focus on the issue of citizenship and questioned the emphasis on nationality and certificates to create a sense of belonging. Re-purposing money exchange booths which had been abandoned due to the impact of travel bans reducing tourism and hence money exchange to near zero, *Temporal Citizenship* sought to foster belonging in/with the city through interactions involving speaking, listening, and seeing to interconnect people across time in the urban environment. This activation of temporality included making relations with Naarm (the Indigenous name for Melbourne) and an encounter with over 60,000 years of Indigenous culture as present in the present (Figure 27.4).

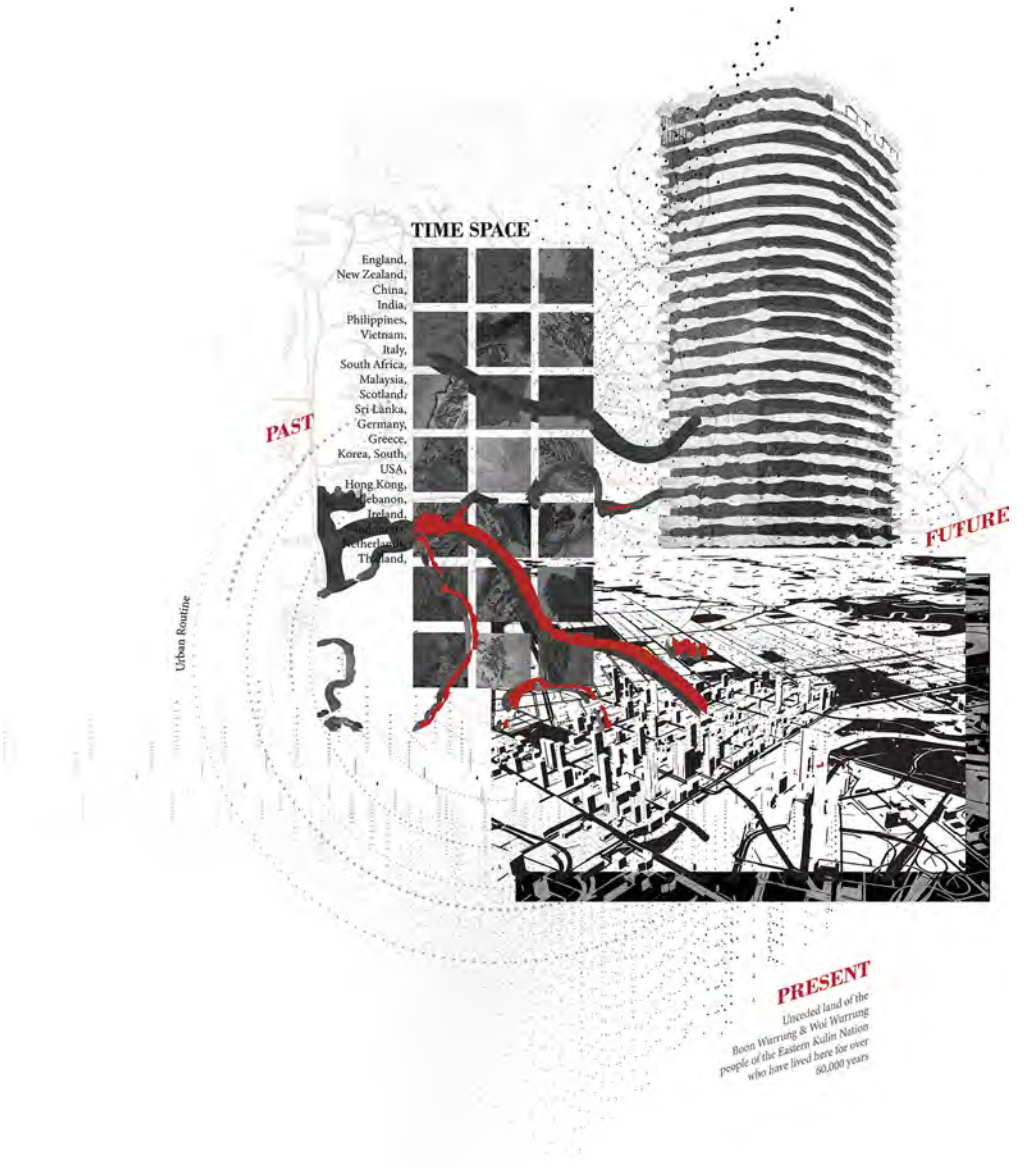


FIGURE 27.4 Spatial and temporal cartography of Naarm/Melbourne, Jiaqi Ma (2021). Part of the project Temporal Citizenship: Towards an Empathetic City, Stephanie Siy Cha, Guanfeng Huang, and Jiaqi Ma.

Interiority in the Urban Environment

To conclude with a return to the title of this assemblage and consider what the wandering line of an interiorizt has manifested through the encounters and now situated within an extended assemblage composed of texts and images addressing the provocation of public interiority. Considering "public interiority" as another encounter with interiority in the urban environment, how does it connect into the refrain that has been produced here? An emphasis on the individual in relation to the city/the public interior/the street seems to be increasingly amplified. For example, Leveratto refers to "personal cities" in relation to how over the last two decades and the impact of technologies, the urban topography has been "continuously redrawn according to individual needs, points of view and habits."[41] *The City is Me* is a thesis that claims there has been a paradigm shift where "I = Person is the definition of city because there is no longer any distance between who inhabits the place (man), the place (city) and the ways of inhabiting it (the relations of power and the available techniques)."[42] The editors of a monograph titled *Intimate Metropolis. Urban Subjects in the Modern City* say they coined the term "intimate metropolis" to refer to "the extent to which the modern city is predicated on the concept of the private individual, and on the sanctity of the individual's inner most thoughts and feelings."[43] Sennett's flâneur-like figure comes to mind and his affirmation of the desire and importance of "being alone in impersonal conditions enables a certain interior work, a subjective activity"[44] seems to advocate this tendency.

In many encounters, interiority is affirmed as individual subjectivity in an urban environment considered as exterior space. For example, from this refrain: the spatial experience of interior design students experiencing the city through poetic imagining; Pimlott's subjects who encounter themselves among others in public space and how critical reflective distancing instantiates the potential for "a public to emerge"; an urban subjectivity made of the street that enables an escape from the familiar/familial into the "suspended space of the exterior"—a pausing and opening up in an exterior—which for Sennett is critical to the production of memory. And as the refrain continues there is an inflection that moves from individual to collective individuation, and interiority produced by and in an urban environment composed of mental, social, and environmental ecologies.

Situating these encounters in the milieu of the twenty-first century city and focusing on interiority in the urban environment, it is apparent that digital technologies have collapsed interiority and urban environment together. People on their mobile phones are not practicing what Simmel described as "an inside/outside divide made by the street rather than removed from the street" nor Sennett's "an urban account of interiority—i.e., subjective feeling—linked to an exterior condition."[45] Philosopher Byung-Chul Han's observation is that people are being stripped of their interiority through voluntary self-exposure via social media and other forms of data capture. For him, there is no inner life left; everyone has become exteriorized where capitalism has led to the control of the psyche through digital technologies. People's behaviors are steered and regulated.[46] Perhaps this is a "public interior" albeit not architectural. The burgeoning growth of populations also is transforming the idea of cities and hence the urban environment. The twenty-first century has been defined by the United Nations as "the century of the city." For the first time in history there are more people living in urban environments than rural areas (55%, with a

projected increase to 68% by 2050).[47] The vast movement of people due to tourism, migration, and displacement, and the impact of climate change and weather events challenge the urban environment in unprecedented ways.

In this milieu, the concept of "public interiority" locates some of the most critical and urgent contemporary concerns facing the "century of the city" and in doing so, invites new ways of thinking about interiority in the urban environment. Perhaps it is necessary to move from interiority as the individual/Enlightenment subject and decenter anthropocentrism; to shift from assuming interior as necessarily architectural, domestic, and enclosed and instead, experiment through posing ?interior in a "planetary ecology."[48] In doing so, interiority in the urban environment becomes a problematic not in search of an answer so much as an ongoing experiment that keeps the future open for a people to come.

Notes

1 This approach takes its cue from Isabelle Stengers, a Belgian philosopher of science, who advocates "experimenting with refrains" as a way of "escaping the web of conflicting definitions" and "modern dualisms" that happens when one poses epistemological questions regarding subjectivity. Isabelle Stengers, "Experimenting with Refrains: Subjectivity and the Challenge of Escaping Modern Dualism," *Subjectivity* 22 (2008): 38–59, https://doi.org/10.1057/sub.2008.6
2 There are other publications that offer extensive coverage on this topic—for example: Gregory Marinic, ed., *The Interior Urbanism Theory Reader* (Oxford, UK: Routledge, 2024).
3 Suzie Attiwill, "Interiorizt," in *The Handbook of Interior Architecture and Design*, ed. Graeme Brooker and Lois Weinthal (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2013).
4 Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, trans. Maria Jolas (Boston: Beacon Press, 1994). First published in French in 1958.
5 Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*, trans. William Weaver and Erwin Salim (Harcourt, 1974). First published in 1972 in Italian.
6 Ross McLeod, ed., *Interior Cities* (Melbourne: RMIT University, 1999).
7 John Andrews, "Designing Education," in *Interior Cities*, ed. Ross McLeod (Melbourne: RMIT University, 1999), 8–13. 8.
8 Andrews. 9.
9 John Andrews, "A Drifter's Memoirs," in *Imagining the City* (Melbourne: Centre for Design at RMIT, 1992), 83–87. 83.
10 Text from the *in-2 brief* for Interior Design Studio 1, 2019 – written by studio coordinator Olivia Hamilton, Interior Design, School of Architecture and Urban Design, RMIT University.
11 Jacopo Leveratto, "Urban Interiors: A Retroactive Investigation.," *The Journal of Interior Design*, 2019, 1–11.
12 IDEA is an association with membership comprising Australian and New Zealand interior design/interior architecture university programs. The *idea journal* is one of a handful of peer-review journals dedicated to the publication of research in the discipline. The full archive and current issue can be accessed here: https://journal.idea-edu.com/index.php/home
13 Suzie Attiwill et al., "URBAN + INTERIOR," *idea journal* 15, no. 1 (2015): 2–11, https://doi.org/10.37113/ideaj.vi0.266. 2
14 Valerie Mace, "The Transfigured Phenomena of Domesticity in the Urban Interior," *idea journal* 15, no. 1 (2015): 56–77, https://doi.org/10.37113/ideaj.vi0.266. 2.
15 Paramita Atmodiwirjo, Yandi Andri Yatmo, and Verarisa Anastasia Ujung, "Outside Interior: Traversed Boundaries in a Jakarta Urban Neighbourhood," *idea journal* 15, no. 1 (2015): 78–101, https://doi.org/10.37113/ideaj.vi0.53. 56.
16 Evelyn Kwok, "Agency in Appropriation: The Informal Territory of Foreign Domestic Helpers in Hong Kong," *idea journal* 15, no. 1 (2015): 102–17, https://doi.org/10.37113/ideaj.vi0.57
17 Leveratto, "Urban Interiors: A Retroactive Investigation," 8.
18 Jacopo Leveratto, "Personal Urbanities: Domesticating the Public Domain," *Philosophy Study* 6, no. 7 (July 2016): 424–31, 430.

19 See those listed below as well as Mark Pimlott, "Only Within," ed. Gini Lee, *idea journal: Interior Territories. Exposing the Critical Interior*, 2009, 84–95. Mark Pimlott, "Notes on the Very Extensive or Continuous Interior," in *Interior Wor(l)Ds**, ed. Luca Basso Peressut et al. (Torino, Italy: Umberto Allemandi & Co., 2010), 45–55. Mark Pimlott, "Interiority and the Condition of Interior," *Interiority* 1, no. 1 (2018): 5–20. "The Public Interior – A Public Discussion", MPavilion Melbourne, 7 February 2018; Mark Pimlott, "Notes on the Very Extensive or Continuous Interior," in *Interior Wor(l)Ds**, ed. Luca Basso Peressut et al. (Torino, Italy: Umberto Allemandi & Co., 2010), 45–55.
20 Mark Pimlott, *Without and within. Essays on Territory and the Interior* (Rotterdam: Episode Publishers, 2007), 61.
21 Mark Pimlott, "The Public Interior and its Subjects" (Estramoenia Research Seminar on Public Space, Università di Napoli Federico II, May 24, 2022).
22 Mark Pimlott, *The Public Interior as Idea and Project* (Jap Sam Books, 2016).
23 From a media release for a lecture by Pimlott—"The Public Interior as Idea and Project," at the National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Australia on February 6, 2018.
24 Pimlott, "Interiority and the Condition of Interior," 8.
25 Pimlott, 6.
26 Pimlott, "The Public Interior and its Subjects."
27 Richard Sennett, "Interiors and Interiority," *A+t. Independent Magazine of Architecture+ Technology*, 2017. 18.
28 Richard Sennett, "Interiors and Interiority" (Harvard Graduate School of Design, April 22, 2016), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hVPjQhfJfKo
29 Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life (1903)," in *The Blackwell City Reader*, ed. Gary Bridge and Sophie Watson (Oxford and Maiden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2002).
30 Simmel, 12.
31 Sennett, "Interiors and Interiority," 2017, 13.
32 Sennett, 13.
33 Sennett, 16.
34 Jamie Brassett and Betti Marenko, "Introduction," in *Deleuze and Design*, ed. Betti Marenko and Jamie Brassett (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015): 1–30, 4.
35 The workshop is discussed in detail in: Suzie Attiwill, "Urban Interiority as Collective Individuation," in *The Stories of Interior: Multiple Perspectives on Interiority* ([in]arch conference, Jakarta, Indonesia, 2018).
36 Gilbert Simondon, "The Genesis of the Individual," in *Incorporations*, ed. Jonathan Crary and Sanford Kwinter, trans. Mark Cohen and Sanford Kwinter (New York: Zone, 1992), 297–319.
37 Gilles Deleuze, "Life as a Work of Art (1986)," in *Negotiations 1972-1990*, trans. Martin Joughin (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 94–101. 98-99.
38 Félix Guattari, "Ecosophical Practices and the Restoration of the 'Subjective City' (1989)," in *Machinic Eros: Writings on Japan*, ed. Gary Genosko and Jay Hetrick, trans. Kuniichi Uno and Gary Genosko (Minneapolis: Univocal Publishing, 2015), 97–115.
39 Guattari, 111.
40 Félix Guattari, *The Three Ecologies*, trans. Ian Pindar and Paul Sutton (London: Continuum, 2008), 35.
41 Leveratto, "Personal Urbanities: Domesticating the Public Domain," 429.
42 Rosane Araujo, *The City Is Me* (Intellect Books, 2012), 143.
43 Vittoria di Palma, Diana Periton, and Marina Lathouri, "Introduction," in *Intimate Metropolis. Urban Subjects in the Modern City*, ed. Vittoria di Palma, Diana Periton, and Marina Lathouri (London & New York: Routledge, 2009), 1.
44 Sennett, "Interiors and Interiority," 2017, 16.
45 Sennett, 13.
46 Byung-Chul Han, *Psychopolitics. Neoliberalism and New Technologies of Power*, trans. Erik Butler (London & New York: Verso, 2017).
47 UN, "World Urbanization Prospects," *United Nations News, Department of Economic and Social Affairs* (blog), May 16, 2018, https://www.un.org/development/desa/en/news/population/2018-revision-of-world-urbanization-prospects.html
48 Guattari, "Ecosophical Practices and the Restoration of the 'Subjective City' (1989)," 99.

INDEX

Pages in *italics* refer to figures and pages followed by n refer to notes.