

Co SA



C o S A acknowledges the Jagera and Turrbal people, the traditional custodians of the land which facilitates the creation of this project. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present, and their descendants. We respect that all time is one.

Sovereignty has never been ceded. It always was and always will be, Aboriginal land.

Conversations on *Shadow Architecture* (C o S A) was born from a trip to Cairo in May 2012, in the weeks surrounding Egypt's first democratic election after the Arab Spring. At the time I was living in Berlin, and images of Tahir Square's makeshift tent-city – temporarily home to thousands of protestors, activists and citizens – was a nascent symbol of the revolution that became synonymous with Critical Spatial Practice (CSP). CSP can be understood as a theoretical lens and practical mode to critically engage with the cultural, social and political potential of space and architecture. A decade later and in the continuing context of global uprisings (Black Lives Matter, #MeToo, faction resurgences, climate advocacy) CSP has renewed relevance as a useful tool for collective agitation, where new and interesting ways to live in the world are consciously cultivated while drawing lessons from the past.

As a thought exercise with artists, composers, architects and thinkers since 2012, C o S A has grown like an octopus to incorporate interrelated limbs that find a nexus within CSP. Here architecture (built and unbuilt, its absence as much as presence), politics, history, economies and the future are understood as inextricably linked through complex networks of spatial variables that affect the way we think, feel, move, make decisions and operate together. C o S A invites audiences to engage with and read their daily surroundings, with the hope that this more entangled understanding will lead to new forms of empowerment for both the individual and diverse community ecologies. Rather than

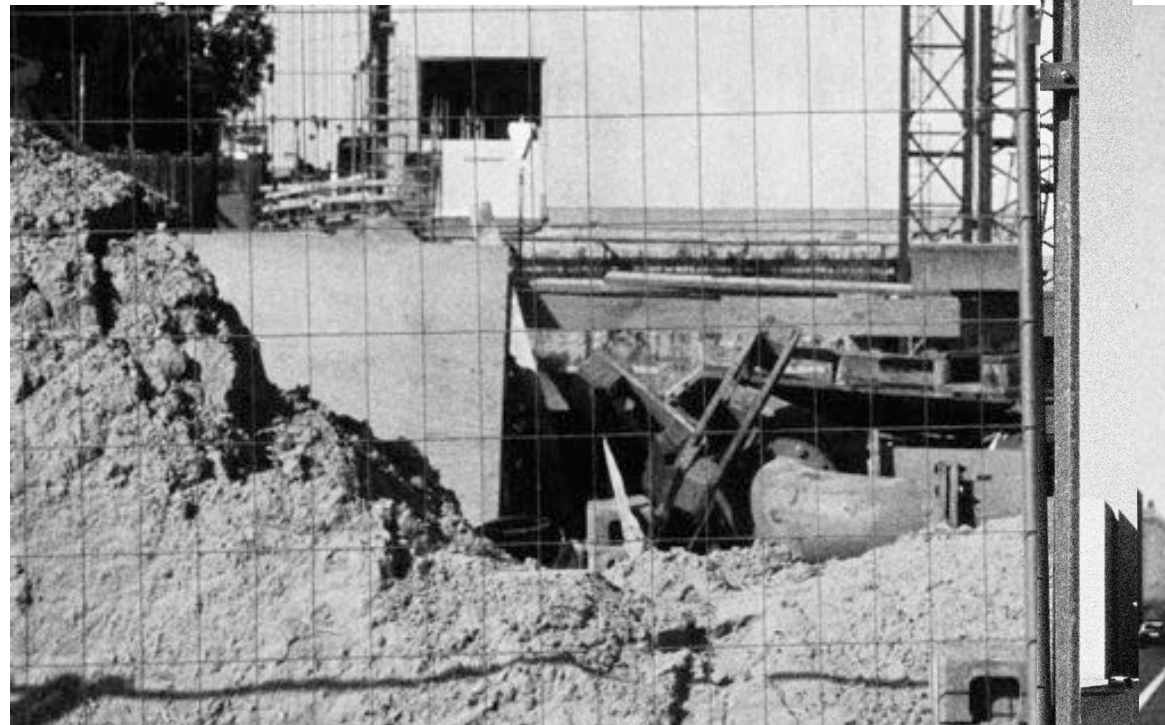
providing answers C o S A questions how the world around us choreographs our very being.

The project title borrows a term coined in 2012 by Warsaw-based architect Aleksandra Wasilkowska. In her book, *Shadow Architecture / Architektura Cienia*, Wasilkowska defines shadow architecture as spatial artefacts that emerge from the bottom up, functioning in the margins of systems and without the participation of an architect or bureaucracy. These forms of architecture are an analogue to the integration of the subconscious and the shadow archetype in Jungian therapy. Wasilkowska posits that only spontaneous and self-organised activities in official city structures and planning can create a healthy and inclusive environment. The term describes architecture that supports the shadow economy (informal, unofficially recorded or recognised) known to comprise a substantial percentage of circulating capital at any given time. The gravitas of this economy underpins both potential and hinderance in the contemporary paradigm of the 'transaction' (interpreted infinitely) and its affiliated ripple effects.

The contributors to C o S A were invited because their practices resonate with the non-hierarchical limbs of our thought exercise: creatives who disrupt the machine or reject the monotony of what's practiced in the everyday. They step clear of the well-beaten track to provoke the core of our humanness – and its shadow – recalling the currency of fluid, liminal and responsive existence.

2012

- Case study one 003.tif
- Case study one 004.tif
- Construction Berlin 003.tif
- Construction Berlin 006.tif
- Construction Berlin 007.tif
- Construction Berlin 010.tif
- Construction Berlin 013.tif
- Construction Berlin 022.tif
- Construction Berlin 024.tif
- Construction Berlin 025.tif
- Construction Berlin 028.tif
- Construction Berlin 029.tif
- Construction Berlin 030.tif
- Construction Berlin 031.tif
- Construction Berlin 033.tif
- Construction Berlin 035.tif



- Construction Berlin 037.jpg
- Construction Berlin 038.tif
- Construction Berlin 040.tif
- Construction Berlin 041.tif
- Construction Berlin 042.tif
- Construction Berlin 043.tif
- Construction Berlin 045.tif
- Construction Berlin 046.tif
- Construction Berlin 047.tif
- Construction Berlin 048.tif
- Construction Berlin 050.tif
- Construction Berlin 056.tif





The short film *The Public* considers the civic dimensions of the term ‘public’ through a study of public space and public housing in Sydney. The narration is composed from fragments of several key anthropological texts: *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, by Emile Durkheim; *Magic, Science and Religion*, by Bronislaw Malinowski; *Magic and Fetishism*, by Alfred C. Haddon, as well as the lyrics to the traditional English folk song *Geordie*. *The Public* considers the anthropological role in enabling colonial violence through the provision of an ethical framework, and the class violence imported as part of the process of colonisation. The poetic conceit of the work lies in the redirection of the anthropological voice back on itself, so to speak, in the hope of demonstrating the implicit violence of structures that continue to shape the civic sense of The Public.

< *The Public* 2021 [video stills] ∨





I'm the Son of the Nile

(001)



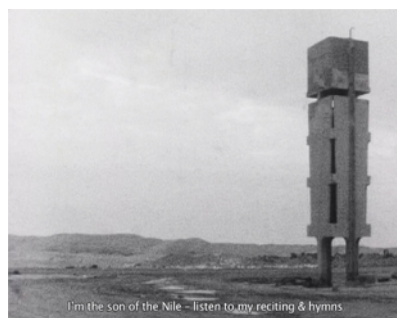
(002)



(003)



(004)



(005)



(006)



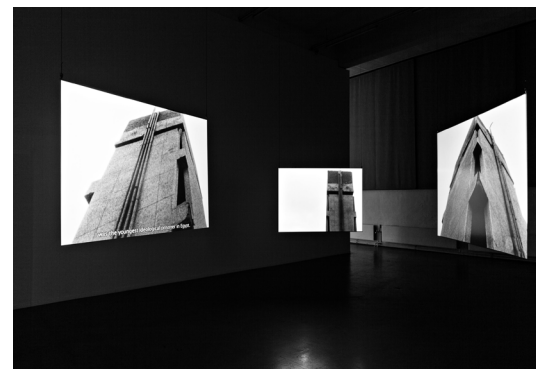
(007)



(008)



[Cairo]



Project Speak2Tweet, 2011-ongoing ^
multi-channel video installation
photo courtesy of Fred Dott

In response to the Egyptian government's countrywide internet shutdown during the first days of the 2011 uprising, a group of programmers developed 'Speak2Tweet', a digital platform that would allow Egyptians to post on Twitter via voicemail. Composed of thousands of phone messages from Egyptians, the original initiative enabled a unique archive of the collective psyche to emerge. In 2011 Amin developed the multi-channel video installation *Project Speak2Tweet* to preserve this oral archive and maintain its vocal diversity.

Juxtaposing the personal and affective accounts of the growing protests with video recordings of abandoned urban structures in Egypt, *Project Speak2Tweet*

captures an aural moment in time and the spectre of systemic, structural corruption. A decade after the uprising, and in light of escalating digital surveillance and censorship, the work highlights the extent to which advances in communication technologies are often disguised by the idealistic promise of democratic expression. In light of historical events, the experience of hearing those unrestrained voices for the first time and listening to them now is very different and, in many ways, an instructive rebuttal against the utopian discourses that underwrote discussions of social media platforms a decade or so ago.

My love for you Egypt, increases by the day

(001)



My love for you, Egypt, increases by the day.

(002)

(003)



We are not leaving before we cleanse Egypt from this corrupt regime.

(004)

(005)



We will sacrifice everything for you, and we are not turning back.

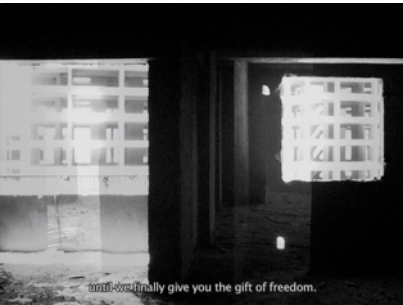
(006)



I swear to God you will be free, and soon!



Either we free you, or die trying to.




until we finally give you the gift of freedom.

^ Project Speak2Tweet 2011- ongoing >
[video stills]

The Flag

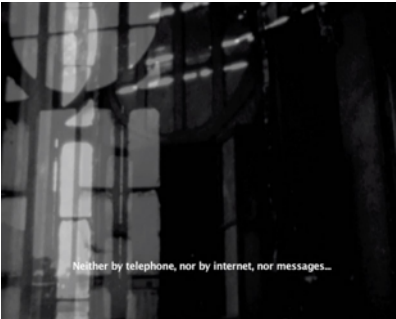
(001)



Brothers, Hosni Mubarak has disconnected me from all forms of communication.

(002)


(003)



Neither by telephone, nor by internet, nor messages...

(004)

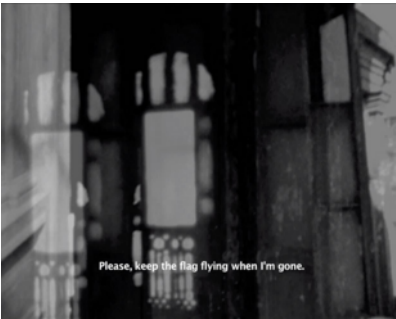
(005)



what could happen.


(006)

(007)

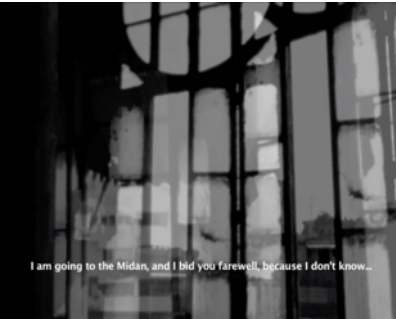


Please, keep the flag flying when I'm gone.


(008)




I won't be able to contact you.



I am going to the Midan, and I bid you farewell, because I don't know...



Pray for me. I don't know if I will be returning or not.



Peace.

This is a drawing of my home, as I remember it, on a sandy loam flat beside the Maranoa River located about 2.4kms from the township of Mitchell, in South-Western Queensland.

That home was constructed from nearby forked eucalyptus saplings and corrugated iron sheets, acquired variously from the local garbage dump or from abandoned structures nearby. One of the features of the structure was that everything was secured by steel wire without a single nail.

It was on land 'Reserved for Aborigines'.

There were a half a dozen other Aboriginal families who lived on this reserve and some were from Cherbourg Aboriginal Settlement, several hundred miles east of Mitchell. Cherbourg was one of numerous Aboriginal Reserves operated by the State of Queensland and it was notorious for its mistreatment of those unfortunate enough to live there.

Our Reserve was dubbed 'Little Cherbourg'.

There was no sewerage. We dug 6-feet deep holes in the sand and put a 'toilet' on top.

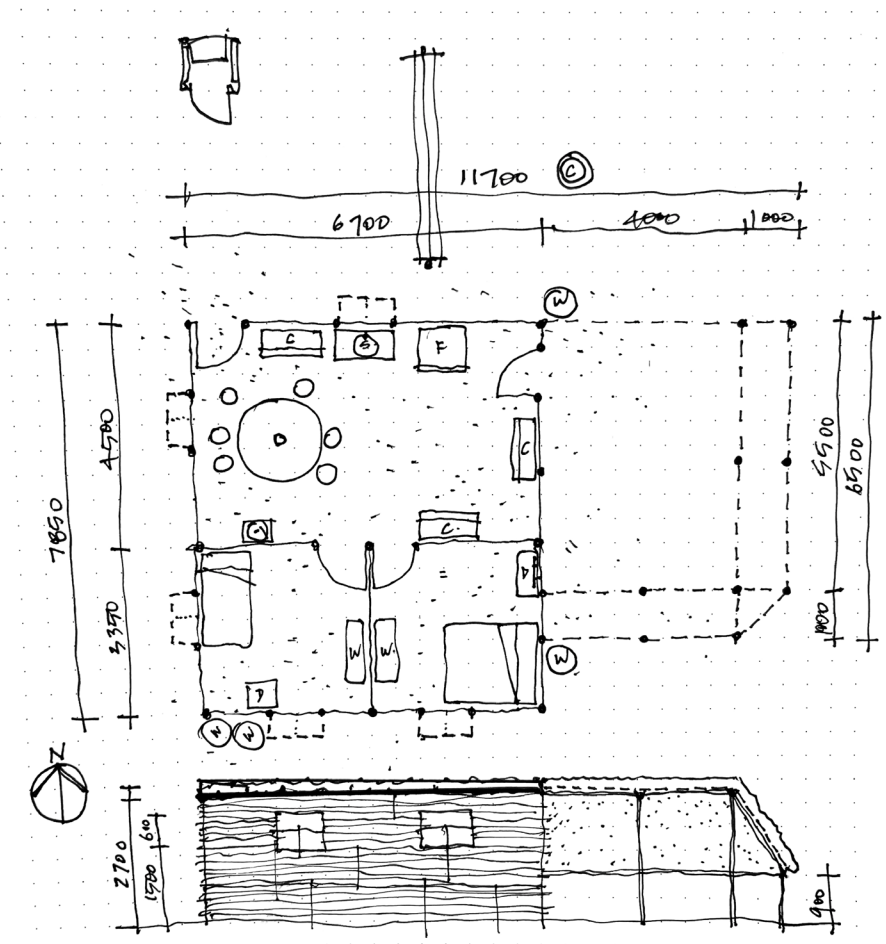
No running water. We paid a whitefella to bring us bore water via truck.

No electricity. We had a wood stove, a kerosene-fired refrigerator, an assortment of kerosene and carbide lamps, candles, battery-powered torches and even a battery-charged record player.

A school bus drove past our home but never stopped. We weren't eligible to ride that bus, apparently. Walked to school every day instead.

Then one day, I believe it was in early 1968, I woke up to the sound of a bulldozer outside my bedroom (where I shared a bed with my younger brother, Marshall). The Booringa Shire Council had arrived to bulldoze our home.

This is how I remember my home as a 14 year old. Almost 50 years ago now. √



[Mitchell]



I'm named after my paternal grandfather Lorenzo and my maternal grandmother Ευανθία/ Evanthia.

When I spoke to my grandfather or 'Papou' Lorenzo recently over the phone (due to COVID-19 lockdown and heavy restrictions in Western Sydney), we talked about our heritage. He said the complexities of our history were something I'd never be able to understand.

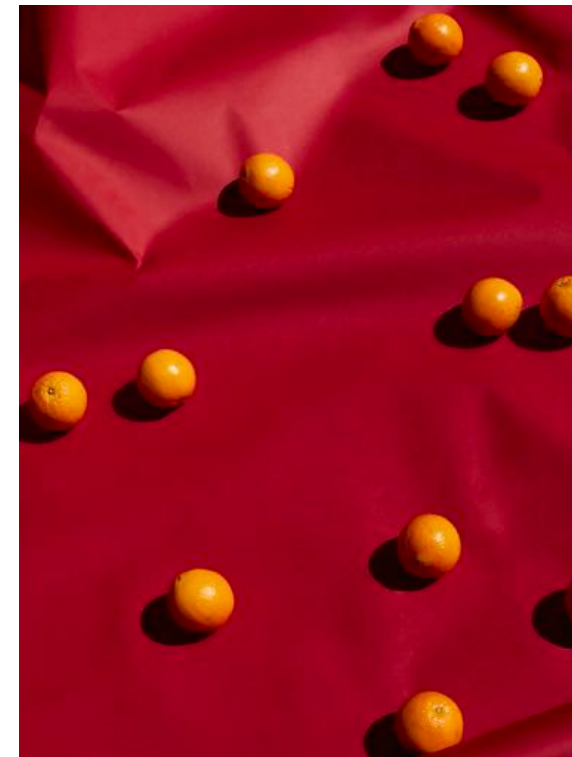
My parents were born in Egypt as were all of my grandparents except for my maternal grandmother, who was born in Lebanon. They spoke Greek, Italian, English, Arabic and French. At home in Western Sydney one side speaks Italian, the other side, centred in the Inner West, speaks Greek.

'We are not Egyptian,' my grandfather strongly states, but he also says he never wanted to leave: 'We had to. We were forced to leave'. After a long discussion detailing the history of generations of Egyptian-born Europeans, we agreed that the local culture, architecture, food and symbols had penetrated our subconscious.

Both my parents' families lived in the same building in Port Said. The port was named after the Egyptian ruler of the time - Mohamed Sa'id Pasha, who granted Ferdinand de Lesseps permission to dig the Suez Canal. Lorenzo and his father helped build and maintain the Canal. The 12-storey building they lived in had a food market underneath which used an external basket and pulley system to provide daily fresh food to all residents.

In Sydney the food is grown in the backyard along the riverbank with Egyptian hieroglyphs painted on the outside of the shed. My culture has been one constant trade, living a shared experience without a shared identity.

The title of the work borrows a phrase from Aleksandra Wasilkowska in her 2012 book 'Shadow Architecture / Architektura Cienia'.



Photographs by Amanda De Simone



Today buildings are statically welded, glued and cast together. By designing for disassembly future buildings will be flexible and function as material banks.

— Kasper Guldager Jensen

Where did that material come from? What damage has been done to the land in the excavation of that material? How will it be returned to the earth eventually or can it be pulled apart and changed and reused?

— Glenn Murcutt

There are tremendous 19th century materials lying everywhere around Australia where men believed that what they built was forever.

— Alistair Knox, *Living in the Environment*

The universe is one, all creation has a duty to maintain it at the risk of your soul, keep things as they are. Leave the world as you found it.
Not better or worse.

— Bill Gammage, *The Biggest Estate on Earth*

(In South Africa) reliance on waste as a building material often does not happen by choice, but because it is the only available building material.

— Tomà Berlanda, *Architectural Review*



Five Mile Radius began their inquiry into recycling laminated chipboard by emailing 12 demolition companies in Brisbane and asking if they would supply us with discarded materials. Logan City Demolitions LCD were the first (and only) company that responded. All of the chipboard in our work was retrieved from their sites.

The following is a record of one of our conversations with LCD's newly appointed Managing Director Jenneffer Mckiernan, pictured here with demo expert Oishin O'Sullivan. The company was founded 45 years ago with the motto 'From Landmark to Landfill'. Today the company has a new motto: 'Demolition With a Difference'.

[Meanjin (Brisbane)]



FMR

So Jenneffer, what happened in 2019 that changed recycling in Queensland?

JENNEFFER Before that, we had no government levy which meant pretty much all demolition waste went straight into landfill. Landfill being the ground. That all started to change in 2019 when a waste levy came in from the state government, essentially a tax for landfilling, that we pass on to our clients. Since then a lot of resource recovery has started because the levy is so high. Landfill went from costing about \$20 a tonne, to costing \$110 a tonne. It was a really big moment for us and our industry because we'd been so used to pricing work at that rate. You know, people were getting houses knocked down for \$10,000/\$15,000, now it's costing well over that.

What is Resource Recovery?

It's where we now send C&D (construction and demolition) waste. That is the entire house, your timber floorboards, your roof purlins, all the joinery inside, literally everything gets taken to a part of the landfill site called resource recovery. It gets dumped into an area and they have pickers and sorters who pull out anything they can use. Good timbers, great joinery, copper, stainless steel, steel... they can all get scrapped or salvaged.

Queensland was one of the last places to implement this. It was already happening in NSW and other states. They are encouraging people to recycle but you can only recover so much. They pull out bits and pieces however the rest just goes into landfill.

Yeah, so what goes to landfill and what doesn't? Like what are the big offenders?

Well asbestos is number one because there is nothing you can do with asbestos. You can't recycle it, it has to go into the ground. Say if there's a house that has been savagely burnt down and it's got asbestos in it, that whole house is deemed contaminated.

Treated timber can't get recycled and it's a really big shame you know, Queensland-style homes have a lot of treated timber in them. It has chemicals like arsenic and others and unfortunately there's a lot of that waste.

Yeah that's annoying as the building code actually prevents termites from entering the building. You're supposed to stop them at the ground. Yet they frame entire houses in poisonous treated timber. We are just creating something that is essentially landfill for the future.

Exactly, it's just such a shame that no one has come up with a better solution for that. Eventually landfills will run out of space. Development is going to be harder, more costly, but also harder on the environment. We've got to come up with some better solutions.

Ok so what is the vision here for LCD?

Like I said, our industry got turned upside down in 2019, definitely for the better because the future is recycling and innovation. We want to be able to recycle a lot of our own waste before it goes to a facility where we really don't know or can't control what's happening to it. We need to get that circular business model happening, it just makes the whole process better and I think it makes people happier, especially with the way the world is. They want to see recycling rates high. Ours are already at about 85% - 90% but there is still room to improve there.

Thanks Jenneffer

No worries



^ Five Mile Radius sourced much of their chipboard from a house under partial demolition in Ormiston, a 5 bedroom, 6 bathroom 'masterpiece' built in 2000 and measuring 701m2

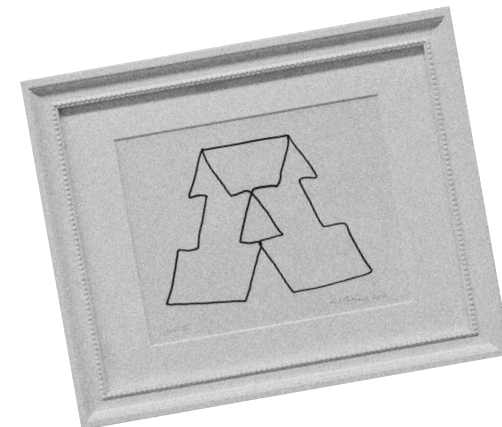
Inside a pandemic-enduring world, the folds and apertures of architecture shoulder new purpose and meaning. Doorways and windows keep the outside at bay. Walls become fences, and roofs block the sky. From within the shadows of architecture, texts (in the widest sense) slip between worlds; defying borders in their myriad forms. Texts can be pirates, adventurers, reaching out to touch and connect. With gender and cultural fluidity, they can shape dialogues imbued with political and cultural intent.

Pared back to single digits – two text/number symbols – *Ally Sloper* and *Multiple Choice* occupy familiar forms. Condensed with information and ideas, they draw from patterns of communication and knowledge, engage systems-thinking and current debates. They assert states of existence and presence, bringing humanity to the fore through an English first-person pronoun and the cross-cultural signifier 'X'.

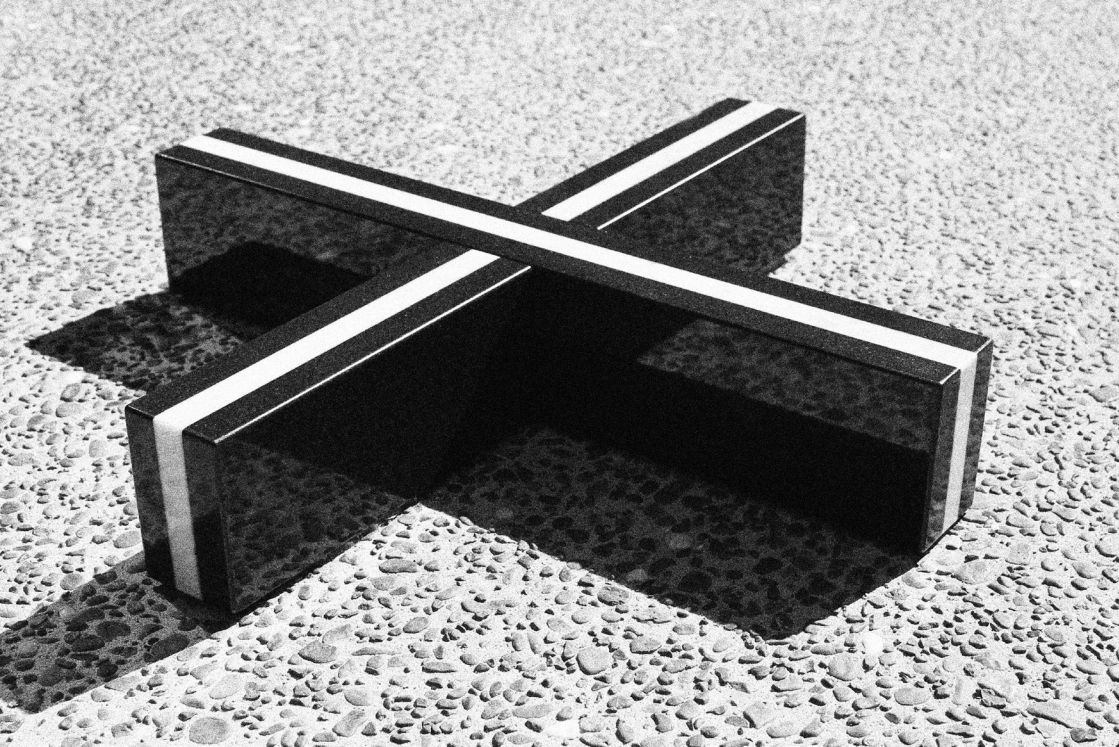
As discrete entities, the single figures develop character and personality, coloured by the idioms of texts/numbers/symbols and cultural and political contexts. Resisting silence, these texts seek to activate the viewer's internal voice. The 'I' flexes in the present tense and the 'X' corrects and connects. They propose active subjects and not passive objects.



[Whangaparāoa]



< *Lean II* 2012-2021
ink drawing on mylar



Anchored by gravity, the stone X of *Multiple Choice* occupies the ground plane. Marking a turning point on a geopolitical map, the composite pairs black granite, a once molten lava from inside the Earth, with the white marble of mountains. Each rock is prized and used in building structures for people and gods. To achieve its intersectional form, the black and white stone marker needs stable and even ground; an armature hinged on the acknowledgement of Indigenous rights and land.

The x-figure reprises early cave drawings and earth markings that trace movements of ancient peoples across continents and time. In *Multiple Choice*, one line crosses another reflecting the method of mark-marking. Together with stories and songs, these early human tracings discredit colonising governments' claims of *terra nullius* - 'land belonging to no one'. The multi-part stone chromosome acknowledges ancestors past and present, and their descendants connected to the land.

A stone marker, *Multiple Choice* offers a reference point, outlining a baseline axis (x) on a graph or map. In post-colonial contexts (legacies of which are still oppressively present), a pared back symbolism of colour and form brings race politics into frame. Viewed beyond obvious binaries, the black stone brackets and supports the white, a union of separate elements, each distinctive yet aligned. The proportions of black and white invert the legacy of Indigenous and colonial power relations, and accentuate the value of traditional ways when re-setting frameworks and guiding at crossroads.

Multiple Choice ^
2013
Indian black granite,
Italian Carrara marble

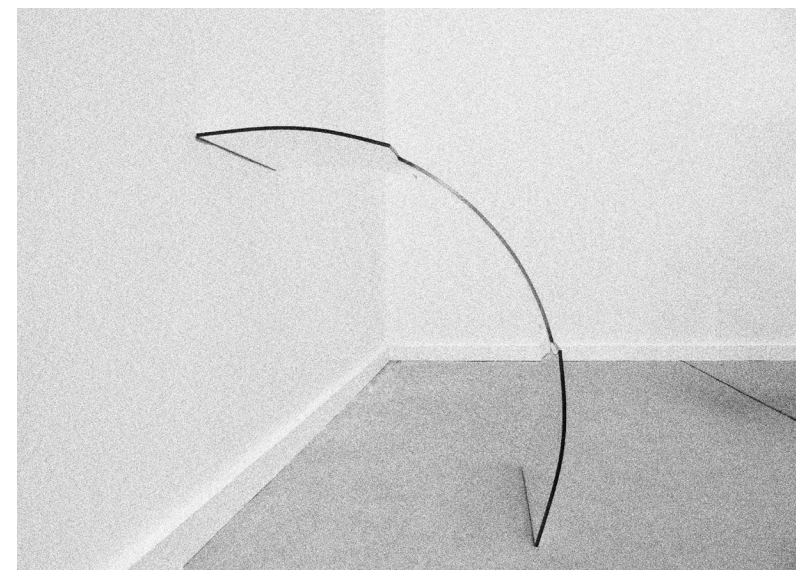
Ally Sloper
2013
tempered polished glass
v

The arched I-form of *Ally Sloper* is barely present like an audible whisper. Stealthy as a spy, s/he/it/they emerges and disappears. This absence relays also the silenced authorship of Marie Duval, potentially Europe's first woman cartoonist who was instrumental in developing the eponymous Ally Sloper super-star character. Mimicking this Victorian working-class hero who sloped into back alleys hiding from exploits that challenged norms, the sculpture lounges languidly while defying physics and other rules.

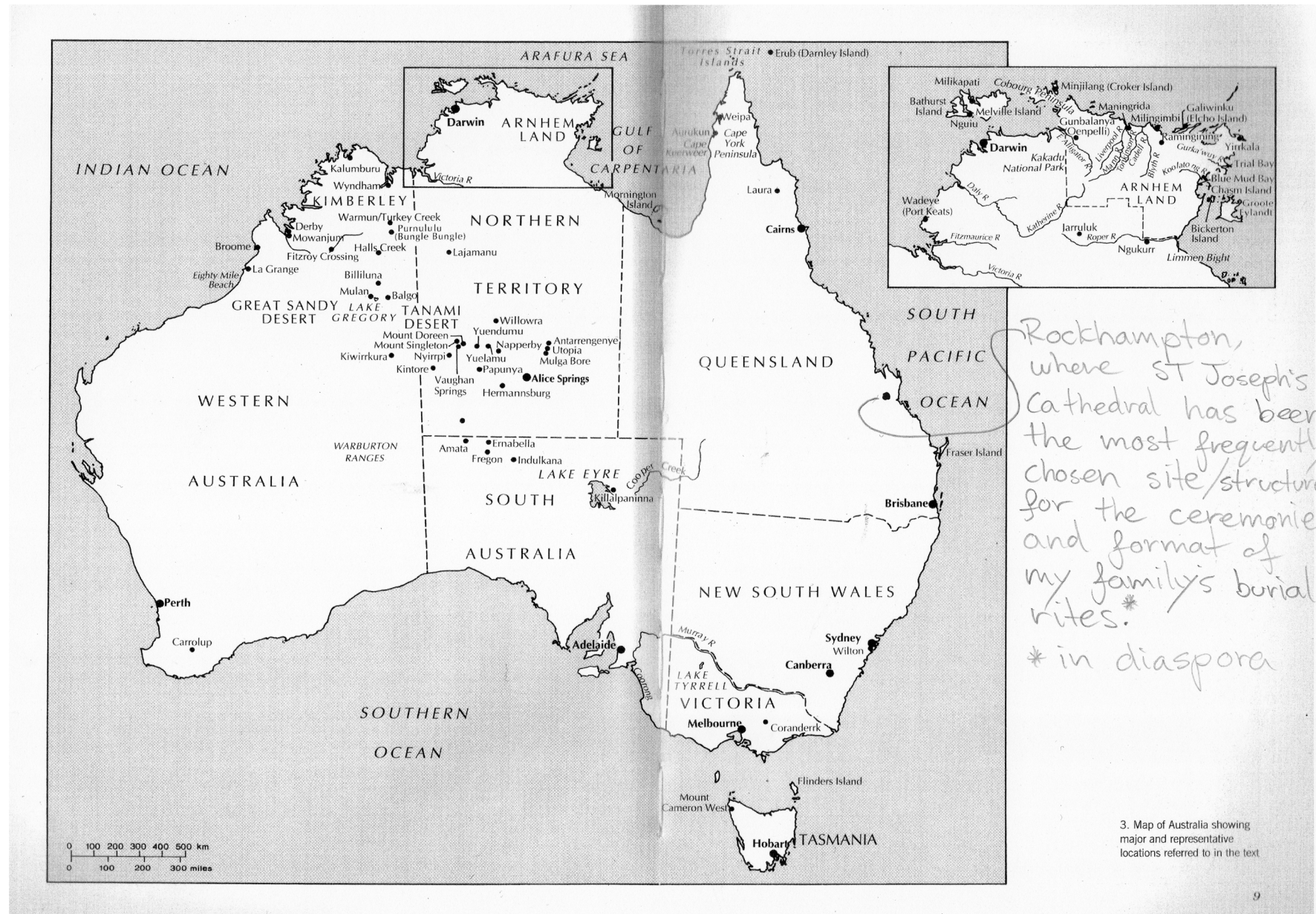
Fully transparent, *Ally Sloper* investigates personality as affect and form as a conduit. The 'I' curves like a phonetic 'eye'. Personalised as a pronoun and the number One/First, the distinctions between the object/subject and the viewer become blurred. Imagining the glistening show-case in Benjamin's *Passagen-Werk*, the glass mediates between inside and out, a display of desire and ego, with the individual as merchandise in the commodification of things.

Ally Sloper mimes entasis, the convex curve given to a column to correct optical illusions of weakness arising when columns are tapered for structural strength. The camber here is also concave, and sliver thin. *Ally Sloper* extends the angle to the point of collapse. At face value, a non-compliant structural I-Beam, the *Sloper* is more of an anti-beam where transparency is a virtue and fragility a form of strength.

Quiet and reflective, the naked pronoun reveals thoughts, spirit and soul. The numeral One bends from floor to wall, human-scale and reliant on support. Taut and arched, s/he holds a position and leans in, against the odds. Transformed from liquid to solid, the translucent glass *Sloper* remains elastic over time. From certain angles, the concrete realm of materiality dissolves in arcs of light, creating a liminal shelter for neither human nor thought, but something in between.



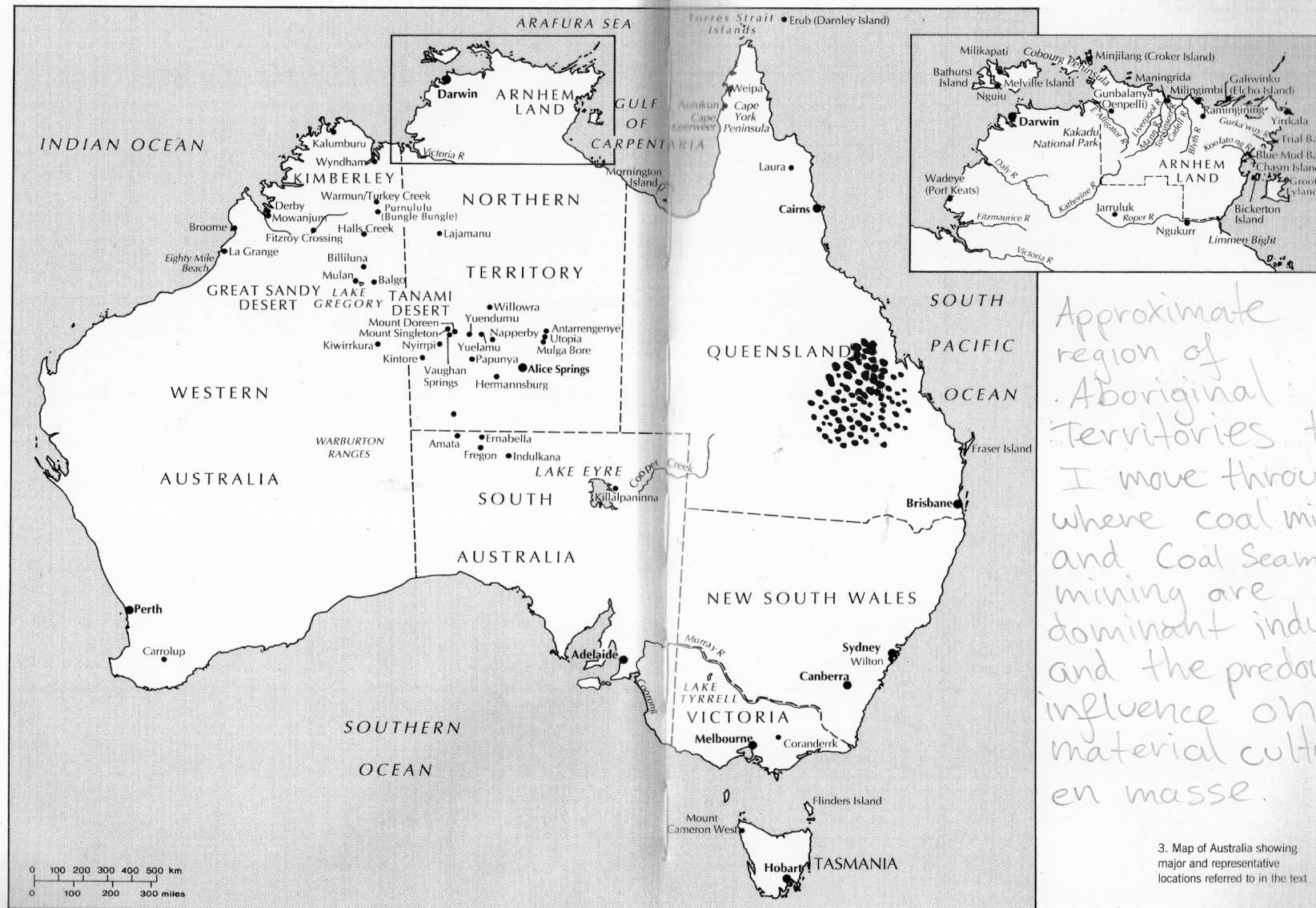
(001)



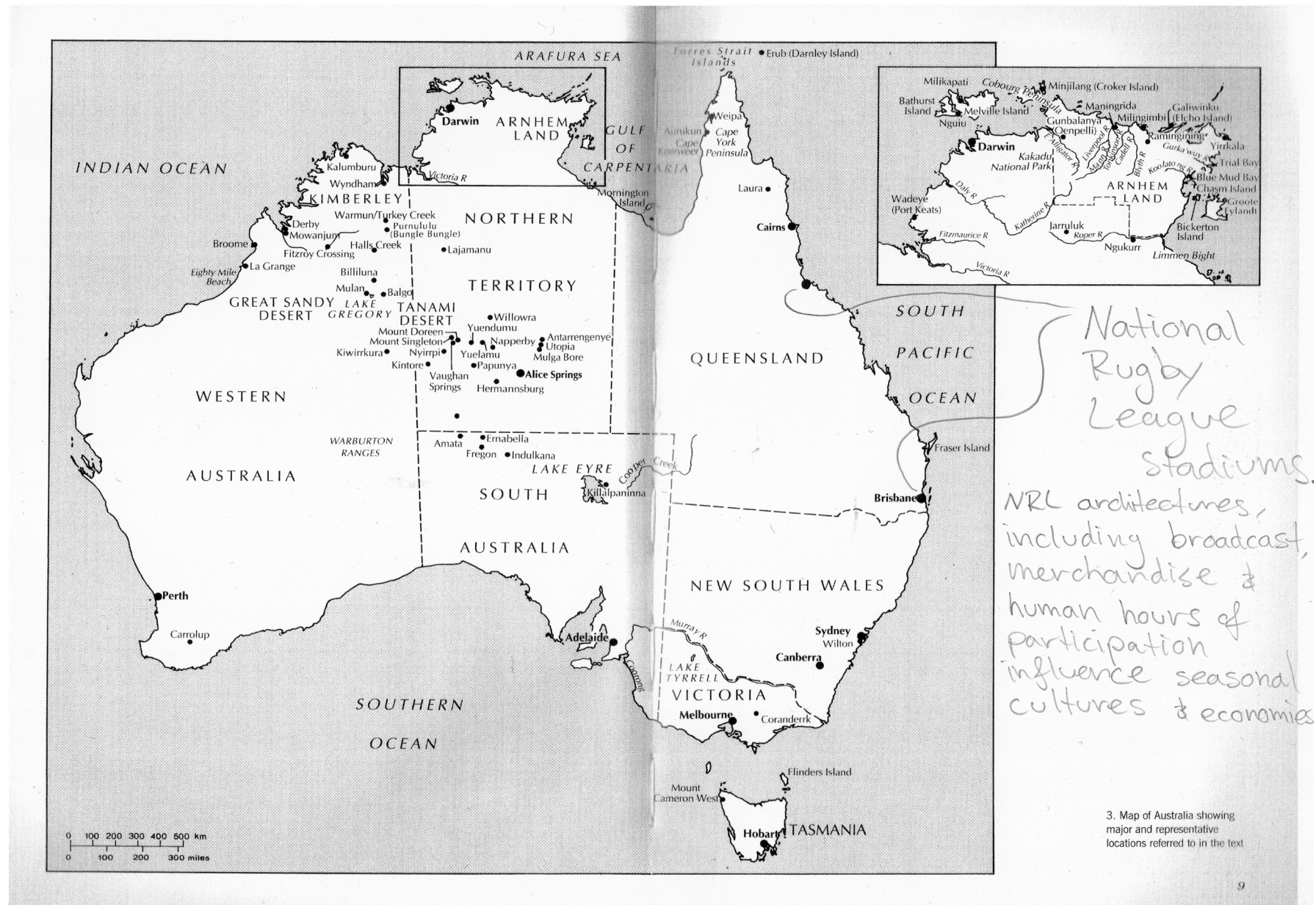
Wally Caruana, 'Map of Australia showing major and representative locations referred to in the text,' in *Aboriginal Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1993), 9.

[Rockhampton, Brigalow Belt]





Wally Caruana, 'Map of Australia showing major and representative locations referred to in the text,' in *Aboriginal Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1993), 9.



Wally Caruana, 'Map of Australia showing major and representative locations referred to in the text,' in *Aboriginal Art* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1993), 9.



[Darug (Sydney)]



Doric gā mātēr ~ Attic gē mētēr 'earth mother'

Doric Ancient Greek 800 – 100 BC. The Doric column.¹

Both an artifact² from and of 2021, the work materialises 2021 in the form of a legacy of the processes of colonialism-extraction, utilisation, consumption and waste. The bricks that start to build the Doric column are made up of materials that are both natural and human-produced waste, and that have been collected from the locations I've both inhabited and worked in as an architect, during the past two years: New York, USA; Chiapas, Mexico; Greater Sydney, Australia.

The internet and social networking sites such as Freecycle and Facebook Marketplace, were used to connect me to people who had an excess of a material that they were going to throw away. One of the clays used, for example, was collected from a person who was digging up his own backyard in Darlington, NSW (Eora Nation). Another clay was a waste product made by the quarrying of sandstone in Gosford (Kuring-gai & Darkinjung). A sustainable home builder had collected the clay to use on a strawbale and earth home in Hartley, and I was part of the team on site who were helping to cob render the interior walls.

Paper-pulp-crete, utilises paper as an aggregate in its mix. The practice of reprinting sets of full scale drawings when design changes occur throughout the life cycle of an architecture project within architectural offices, produces a mass of redundant pages of information for the recycling bin. These were collected to make the paper pulp. Otherwise, materials such as clam shells were taken from a restaurant, some of the sand used was taken from the side of the Silver City highway in Broken Hill (Wilyakali or Wiljaali Land), and bamboo rods left over from a garden in Cronulla (Dharawal Land).

The drawings, made with indigo under glaze, depict the journey these elements made from the land to construct whole new environments, hence

1 The Doric column, used in the construction of Archaic Greek temples represented a transition from working with impermanent materials - wood, to working with permanent materials - stone.

2 An item made or given shape by humans.

showing how purposing a material for construction purposes is connected with the prioritisation of a specific cultural value. For example, the mortar used to construct certain stone buildings of 18th century Sydney Cove such as Cadman's Cottage, were often made with lime that was produced by the processing of shells taken from the shell middens of First Nations people. These middens originally also served as an indication for other nomadic family groups who came into the area as to which resource had already been recently harvested and eaten from and therefore needed time to rebalance its place within the ecosystem.

The final layer of the column utilises electronic waste - specifically, discarded mobile phones. Technology has abstracted our sense of time and space by changing the speed of actioning our desires, allowing us to arrive at destinations faster both physically and virtually. Yet, our sense of interconnection to each other, especially during the pandemic for example, is currently very much governed by the interaction and social rules of our smart phone app technology. In showing the locations and the people involved in the acquisition of all the materials that made this work, the aim is to break an object down into its moment of direct human handling, and comprehend its hidden layers of information regarding the relationship between humans and the environment; the reasons for its utilisation and our impact on the biosphere.



Materials:

Clay brick:
__Clay from Gosford, NSW via a building site I worked on in Katoomba, NSW
Land of the Darkinjung & Kuring-gai People

Roman Concrete mix:
__Trashed oyster shells from a restaurant in Potts Point, Sydney, NSW (Lime – Calcium Oxide)
Eora Nation Land
Collected seashells from beachfronts in the Rockaways New York, Illawara coast NSW, and Puerto Escondido, Mexico (Lime – Calcium Oxide) | Land of the Rockaway & Maspeth people, the Wodi Wodi Dharawal People, and the Zapotec People
__Sand from the Sydney civil street works in Kings Cross, NSW
Eora Nation

__Sand from the side of the Silver City Highway in Broken Hill, NSW
Land of the Wilyakali or Wiljaali People
__Paperbark fallen from a paperbark tree in the Botanic Gardens, Sydney, NSW
Eora Nation Land of the Cadigal, Dharawal & Dharug People
__Clay from the Hudson River Lake Clay in New York State, USA
Land of the Lenni-Lenape, Mahican & Iroquois People
__Clay from Somersby, NSW via a recycled pot of clay in Botany, NSW
Land of the Darkinjung & Kuring-gai People
__Clay from Gosford, NSW via a building site I worked on in Katoomba, NSW
Land of the Darkinjung & Kuring-gai People

Adobe brick:
__ Clay from a backyard in Darlington, Sydney, NSW
Eora Nation Land of the Cadigal, Dharawal & Dharug People
__ Sand from the Sydney civil street works in Kings Cross, Sydney, NSW
Eora Nation Land of the Cadigal, Dharawal & Dharug People
__ Leftover garden straw from a Sutherland Shire Freecycle post
Eora Nation Land of the Gweagal & Dharawal People
__ Paperbark fallen from paperbark tree in the Botanic Gardens, Sydney
Eora Nation Land of the Cadigal, Dharawal & Dharug People

Paper pulp-crete:
__Architectural drawings from the architectural office I worked in, New York 2018-2020
Lenni-Lenape People
__Architectural drawings found on the street in a rubbish bin in Surry Hills, NSW
Eora Nation
__ Ikea instruction drawings found on the street in a rubbish bin in Surry Hills, NSW
Eora Nation
__Clay from a backyard in Darlington, Sydney, NSW
Eora Nation Land of the Cadigal, Dharawal and Dharug People
__Clay from Somersby, NSW via a recycled pot of clay in Botany, NSW
Land of the Darkinjung & Kuring-gai People
__Clay from Gosford, NSW via a building site I worked on in Katoomba, NSW
Land of the Darkinjung and Kuring-gai People
__Trashed oyster shells from a restaurant in Potts Point, Sydney, NSW (Lime – Calcium Oxide)
Eora Nation
__Collected seashells from beachfronts in the Rockaways New York, Illawara coast NSW, and Puerto Escondido, Mexico (Lime – Calcium Oxide)
Land of the Rockaway & Maspeth people, the Wodi Wodi Dharawal People, & the Zapotec People

Paper pulp-crete terrazzo:
__Trashed oyster shells from a restaurant in Potts Point, Sydney, NSW (Lime – Calcium Oxide)
Eora Nation
__Collected seashells from beachfronts in the Rockaways New York, Illawara coast NSW, and Puerto Escondido, Mexico (Lime – Calcium Oxide)
Land of the Rockaway & Maspeth people, the Wodi Wodi Dharawal People, & the Zapotec People
__Sand from the Sydney civil street works in Kings Cross
Eora Nation
__Sand from the side of the Silver City Highway in Broken Hill NSW
Wilyakali or Wiljaali Land
__Paperbark fallen from a paperbark tree in the Botanic Gardens, Sydney, NSW
Eora Nation Land of the Cadigal, Dharawal and Dharug People
__Clay from the Hudson River Lake Clay in New York State, USA
Land of the Lenni-Lenape, Mahican, and Iroquois
- Clay from Somersby, NSW via a recycled pot of clay in Botany, NSW
Land of the Darkinjung and Kuring-gai People
__Clay from Gosford, NSW via a building site I worked on in Katoomba, NSW
Land of the Darkinjung & Kuring-gai People
__Reused broken fired pottery from my own supply, NSW
Eora Nation
__Old mobile phones found in the recycling bin at Officeworks, Bondi Junction, NSW
Eora Nation
__MDF, bamboo rods and water pipe insulation sourced from Facebook Market place and Freecycle
Eora Nation

Indigo under glaze:
Indigofera tinctoria

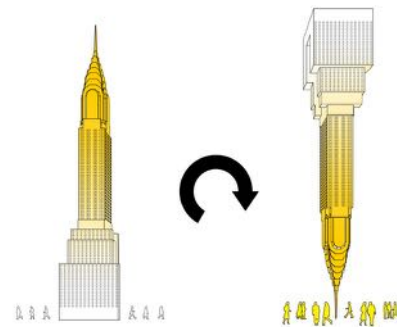
We The People, from HWKN New York, is an interactive project exploring how a new generation of buildings will create more human cities.

HWKN's pioneering designs began as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic. 'We saw we had to turn this crisis into an opportunity,' says principal Matthias Hollwich. 'Having seen how adaptive society is, we realised now is the time to create buildings that respond to people's wants and desires. Places that actually encourage people to live, work, and play to the fullest.' HWKN dispensed with traditional, often sterile goals such as maximising efficiency. In their place HWKN chose to design focussing on an elevation of emotions and strengthening the public realm.

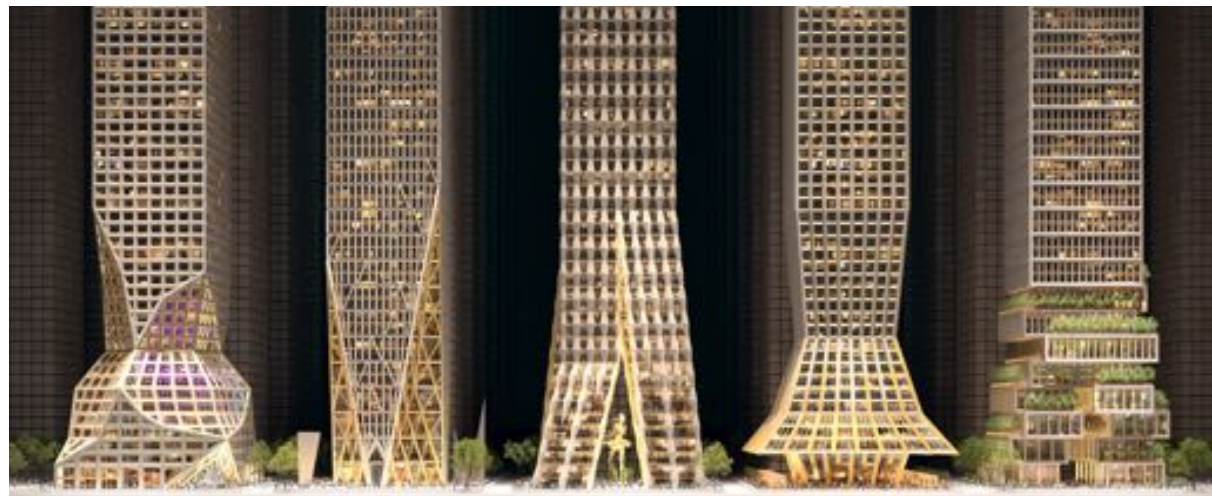
First and foremost, and as can be seen with the prototypes in the project, HWKN reinvents the way new buildings engage with the ground. Architects traditionally focus on the crown or the façade, designing towers to be experienced and viewed from afar – often from above – while reserving the base for standard-use retail and parking. Counters Hollwich, 'HWKN turns the building literally upside down: we now prioritise the ground level for humans, creating playful experiences and space actually for the public. The 'crown' of the new building is now its base.' Further, the civic spaces created by this new, open building core will be 'celebratory'. The place where people meet friends, plan hangouts, and start adventures. Where new lives are dreamed of and begun.

***We The People* is not simply an architect's dream. It puts the audience and the buildings in dialogue, in order to imagine the future together.**

We The People:
Rethinking How Buildings Can
Build Better Cities



[New York City]



Ways of creating and communicating music, especially Western musics, are imbedded in systems of notation that are resistant to reform and innovation. Standard music notations are not expressive nor open for interpretation, rather, they are instructions to be executed precisely with little to no creative input from the musicians. Graphic scores, on the other hand, offer abstracted guidance that generate space for other possibilities.

Although visual, *Uncommissioned Compositions* stem from a musical understanding. They offer structures and methodologies that activate group participation through cross-aesthetic metaphor – the use of one aesthetic to excite potential and possibility in another. By addressing concepts of ownership, responsibility, and agency, the works germinate new creative ventures beyond their current visual manifestations – dissolving absolute/sole authorship towards allowing for more horizontal processes of shared creation.



∨ *Uncommissioned compositions – Symphony No.1* 2021
pencil, acrylic, pastel, pen on paper



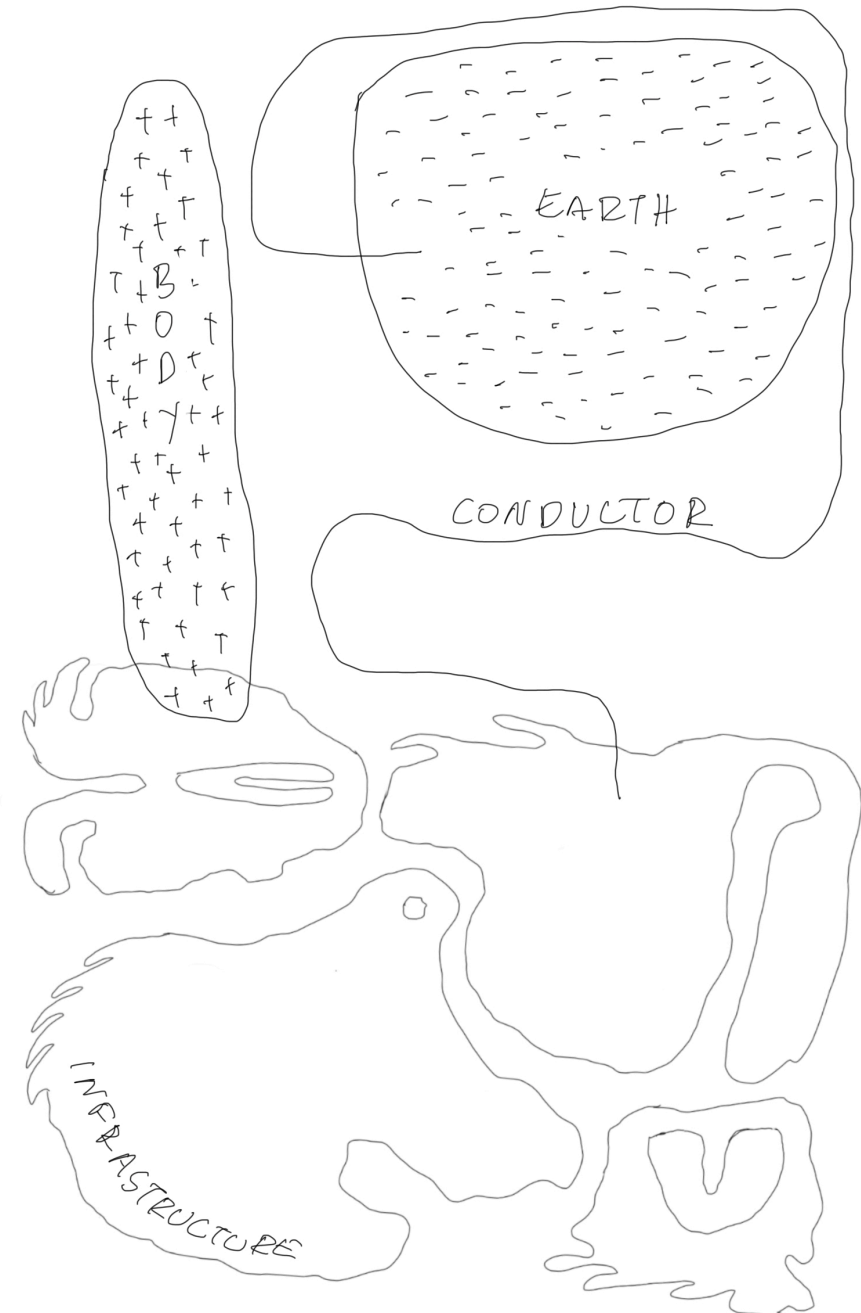
^ *Uncommissioned compositions – Layer* 2021
pen, laser-print, pencil on paper
< *Uncommissioned compositions – Glove* 2021
pencil on paper

The earth's surface has a limitless supply of mobile electrons that give the ground we walk on, or the water we swim in, a natural negative electric charge. When you touch with naked feet the ground, it dissipates static electricity and environmental electrical charges that are on you. At the same time, you receive a charge of energy in the form of free electrons as your body synchronises with the natural frequencies of the earth.

In contemporary cities there is little possibility for walking barefoot, so our bodies do not discharge the static and environmental electricity daily and it accumulates. Moreover, we live in an era of exhaustion and fatigue, caused by an incessant compulsion to perform, as German philosopher Byung-Chul Han points out. We are loaded, both literally and metaphorically.

CIRCLE 4 is an infrastructure for grounding. Visitors are welcome to take off their shoes and walk over an archipelago of mineral forms, which are connected through a conductive wire to the ground/earth. Doing so, they can unload the body's accumulated electrical charge and meditate on letting go of the social imperative to produce and perform.

CIRCLE 4 is part of a series of infrastructures that support personal and collective wellbeing.



[Chalkidiki]



^ Diagram for Circle 4; An Infrastructure for Grounding 2021

I seem to only have memories of Perú in crisis.

A teacher I studied economics with, Jesuit priest Juan Julio Wicht, used to say that for every problem there was a solution, and that a problem without a solution was, in reality, a *crisis*. Crises exist within a system, and the only way out of them is by shifting systems. If a garden isn't growing, perhaps it's the soil that needs to change.

But why change the soil when one could eliminate the need for a garden altogether? Systems live within systems, and crises exist within crises too.

Insurgencia indicates disobedience to authority, in its root a term that depicts uprising (from the Latin *surgere*, and the prefix *in* - 'to rise within'). If we rise above the need for a garden altogether, we are left with the responsibility to imagine the alternative. Do we move to the forest? And if so, how do we contribute to it? How many layers of systems do we break and how deep inside the void are we comfortable experiencing before we panic and realise that all these systems were meant to make us feel safe. Shell after shell, one potential crisis is sustained by the next one, until we realise that we need to begin, once again, building structures and systems with the hopes of ~~a perfect world.~~

Insurgencia is an invitation to practice disobedience on the daily and not every 10 years.

I seem to only have memories of Perú in crisis.



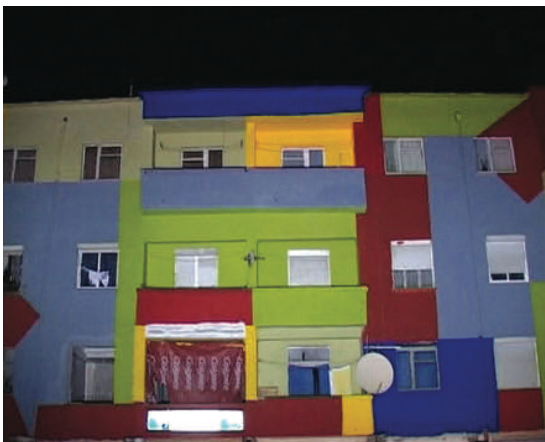
[Lima & Valparaíso]



MOMOPROT
MÓDULO MÓVIL DE PROTESTA

Un proyecto de Nicolás Kisic Aguirre -nka pe
Desarrollado en Tsonami Arte Sonoro -tsonami.cl
Foto: Pablo Saavedra

Momoprot en marcha contra la PSU.
Viernes 17 de enero de 2020.
De Plaza Sotomayor a Congreso Nacional, Valparaíso, Chile.



< *Dammi i Colori* 2003
[video stills]

Quotes from Edi Rama, artist and Prime Minister of Albania (2013 – present), former mayor of Tirana (2000 – 2011), in conversation with Anri Sala for *Dammi i Colori* 2003 about colour as a factor of change and a political tool –

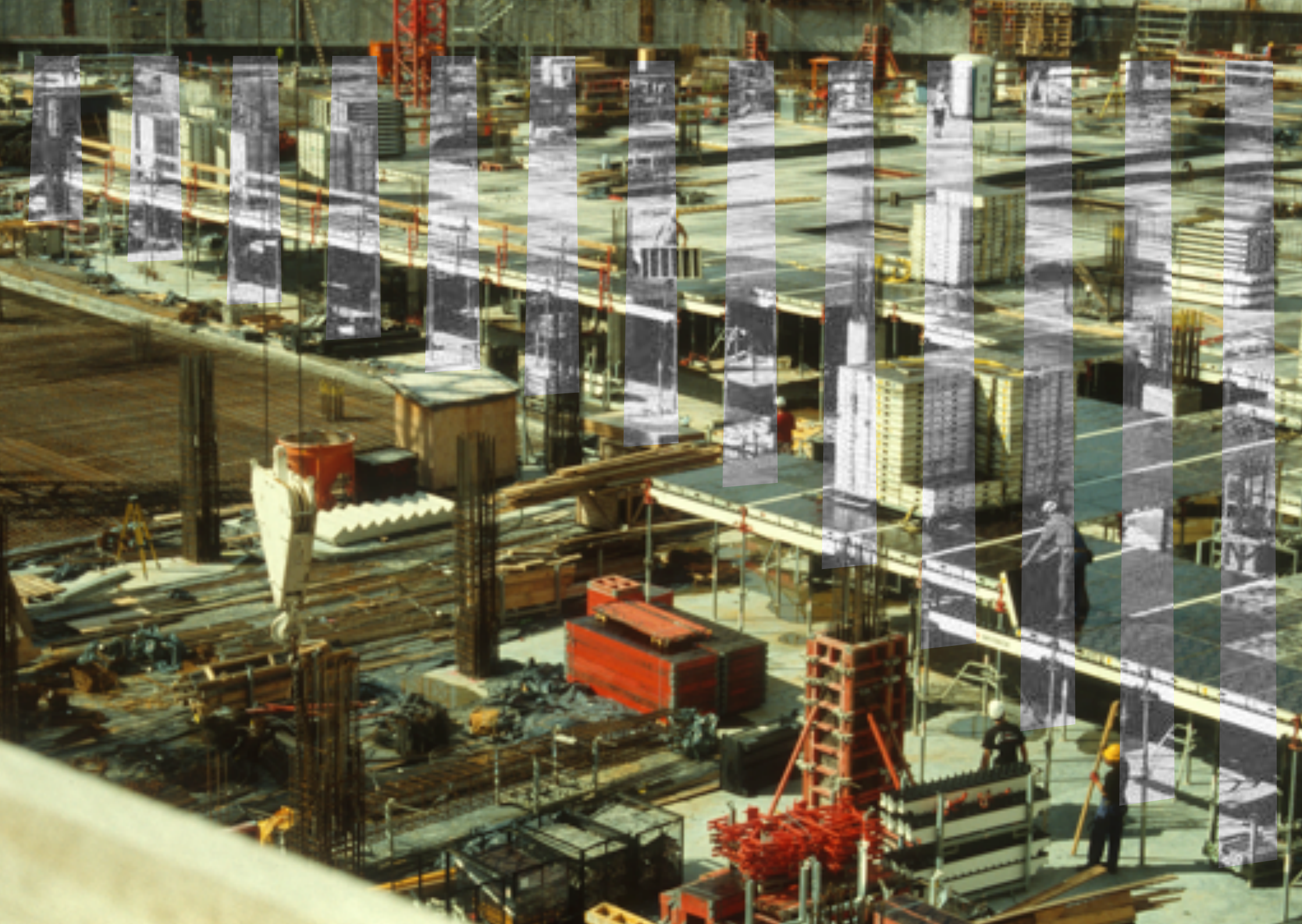
I think that in this case, the colour is not a façade, it is not a superficial element, but is part of the content, a substantial element, the foundation of the building, because it is not only a very strong sign of change, a shake up, a clash, a shock, but it also establishes a new standard of communication and perception; it establishes a new standard of relations with oneself as part of this reality. I think that thanks to the colour, its use as an element of creation and of coagulation, and the merger of the existing architectural elements or of the living life, we may spur an inspiration, a motivation, or a wish that may form the necessary illusion to go ahead, so that this city may become a very attractive or habitable city, also by using some sense of humour, given the facilities we do not have.

The question here is that colour has an impact first of all on the breathing of the city, the intensification of the rhythm of its breathing, the breaking of a dust screen, the creation of a new time and the setting of a new time pace for the city. It is much more than the colour one would want his building, therefore I think that quite unconsciously those who do not like the colouring of the city, but who want the process to continue, affirm precisely this, that this is not a question of taste, but a question of choice in relation not to the colour as a picturesque element, but in relation to the need to give the city new breathing space.

I think that the ambition to make this city a city of choice and not a city of destiny is a utopia in itself. It seems to me to be a utopia to have the ambition to transform this city, where you are doomed to live by fate, into a city where you choose to live and a possible bridge for realising this ambition is certainly an instrument of this utopia.

[Tirana]





'As we trooped along behind the enormous Customer, there got to be more and more of us. We pushed and jostled in her wake... And the Lady kept growing... if she hadn't bent down, she'd have gone through the glass roof... As we were passing by, the printer... death notices and visiting cards... popped out of his cellar, pushing a baby carriage with his two brats in it... there wasn't much life in them either... All bundled up in paper money... Nothing but hundred-franc notes... all counterfeit... so that was his racket... The music dealer from 34, who owned a phonograph, six mandolins, three sets of bagpipes, and a piano, refused to leave anything behind... He wanted us to take the whole lot with us... we harnessed ourselves to his showcase, and the whole thing collapsed under the strain. There was a terrible crash.' — Louis Ferdinand Céline¹

The economy shapes both architecture and the ethics of its creators. A city focused only on profits may turn into nothing more than an Excel graph. However, the architects who design buildings without taking into account their future maintenance costs can create monsters that would pray on institutions' budget and could slowly drive them into bankruptcy.² The alternative economies which are being invented at times of crisis such as time banks, cashless exchange of goods and services, alternative currencies or expanding the informal economy, will surely influence both the architecture and organisation of the cities of tomorrow.

In many countries the shadow economy reaches up to 40% of the market share. The forecasts predict an ongoing increase in informal transfer of the capital. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)³ almost half of all the working people in the world, which is around 1.8 billion people, are involved in the shadow economy. It is estimated that by 2020 this number will rise to two-thirds of all working people. More and more customers decide to go shopping at the street markets. This phenomenon is so common that many big corporations decide to launch their products also onto the stalls.

The traditional economy still denies the existence of informal economy⁴ because it is hard to examine and the boundary between the formal and informal circulation is rather blurry. Most of the economists ignore the influence it has on the world economy and describe it as a marginal or pathological phenomenon. The whole notion of a term 'informal shadow economy' is stigmatising. The journalist Robert Neuwirth in his book *Stealth of Nations. The Global Rise of the Informal Economy*⁵ calls for a change in the language and finding a new name for the phenomenon. Instead of 'shadow economy' or 'black market' he proposes a different name, *System D*. Neuwirth spent several years in many places in the world interviewing hundreds of street vendors who live on the boundary or completely out of the formal capital circulation. This is how he describes *System D*:

SHADOW ARCHITECTURE / ARCHITEKTURA CIENIA

Aleksandra Wasilkowska 2012

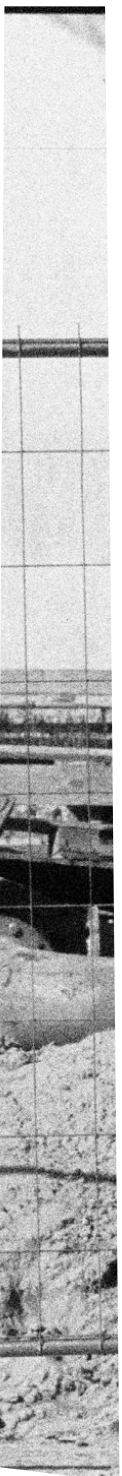
1 L.F. Céline, *Death on Installment Plan*, New Directions Publishing, 1966, translated by Ralph Manheim.

2 F. Schneider, A. Buehn i C.E. Montenegro, *New Estimates for the Shadow Economies all over the World*, International Economic Journal, 2010.

3 Source: www.oecd.org The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development OECD.

4 Informal Economy—category that was introduced by British anthropologist Keith Hart to describe the open-air economy he found in Accra, Ghana, where peddlers, hawkers, vendors, and others with no fixed location, and without registering with or being regulated by the government, did a massive amount of business on the side of the road. His goal was to recognise rather than stigmatise this home-grown economic sphere.

5 R. Neuwirth *Stealth of Nations. The Global Rise of the Informal Economy*, Pantheon Books, USA 2011. His presentation can be seen here: www.ted.com/talks/robert_neuwirth_the_power_of_the_informal_economy.html.



‘There is another economy out there. Like those floating soap bubbles, its edges are diffuse and it disappears the moment you try to catch it. It stands beyond the law, yet is deeply entwined with the legally recognised business world. It is based on small sales and tiny increments of profit, yet it produces, cumulatively, a huge amount of wealth. It is massive yet disparaged, open yet feared, microscopic yet global. It is how much of the world survives, and how many people thrive, yet it is ignored and sometimes disparaged by most economists, business leaders, and politicians. You can call it *System D*. (...) *System D* is a slang phrase pirated from French-speaking Africa and the Caribbean. The French have a word that they often use to describe particularly effective and motivated people. They call them *débrouillards*. To say a man (or woman) is a ‘*débrouillard(e)*’ is to tell people how resourceful and ingenious he or she is.

The former French colonies have sculpted this word to their own social and economic reality. They say that inventive, self-starting, entrepreneurial merchants who are doing business on their own, without registering or being regulated by the bureaucracy and, for the most part, without paying taxes, are part of ‘*l’économie de la débrouillardise*.’ Or, sweetened for street use, *Système D*. This essentially translates as the ingenuity economy, the economy of improvisation and self-reliance, the do-it-yourself, or DIY economy.’ — Robert Neuwirth

The spontaneously developing shadow economy, called also the Grey economy or *System D* will become an important element of global economy as well as of the city landscape in the 21st century. The street markets and space occupied by street vendors very often create local informal centres and a real alternative at the times of crisis. Together with the advance of *System D* we can expect to see the development of architecture and infrastructure related with it. Street stalls, collapsible tables, carts and other architectural forms of *System D* will have a more important role in our everyday life. As we change the language and the name of the alternative economy we should also coin a term of *Shadow Architecture*.

Shadow Architecture consists of objects, which were created without participation of any architect and is a side effect of the processes driven by the shadow economy. The awareness of *Shadow Architecture* has been denied by urban planners and architects although this kind of architecture has its regular users: petty traders and serious street vendors. The Shadow Archetype in Carl Gustav Jung’s analytical psychology stands for an element which has been denied from the individual and collective consciousness. *Shadow Architecture* is a kind of spatial structure which eludes central planning, just like street stalls.

Shadow Architecture are collapsible tables, kiosks, plastic cloths, boxes, cases, tables and carts, benches and gaps in gateways where vendors place clothes dryers with shoelaces and insoles. They fill in the niches on the market and gaps between the buildings; sometimes they become a dominant tissue of the city. 95% of the world architecture is created without architects. The global grassroots illegal ‘bazaristan’ often becomes a local informal city centre.⁶

It is hard to find here two products which are identical and offered at the same price. Both the stall architecture and product prices continuously adapt to the changing reality.

The crisis usually generates new practices in social life and violent systematic changes. As it happened in Sidi Bouzid in Tunisia where Mohamed Bouazizi, street vendor of fruits, set himself on fire after confiscation of his stall by police protesting against the oppression of power. His death incited riots and led President Ben Ali to step down. Bouazizi and his stall became a symbol of the revolution in the Arab world.

⁶ Parade Square (*Plac Defilad*) undeveloped since 1950s, around centrally located Palace of Culture and Science in Warsaw during the economic transformation became an important site for meetings and shopping. From a thicket of stalls and folding stands a market emerged, which later on changed into Merchant Shopping Centre. After forcing the illegal merchants from Parade Square to leave the municipal authorities have not been able to replace the old market with a new space, a meeting point or a planned Museum of Modern Art. The central Parade Square is described as a ‘hole’ in the city.

‘Those truly noble businesses, open late into the night, had always been the object of my most fervid dreams. Their dimly lit, dark, solemn interiors exuded a rich, deep aroma of paints, lacquer and incense, a fragrance of remote countries and rare materials. There, you might find Bengal lights, magic caskets, the stamps of long vanished countries, Chinese decals, indigo, colophony from Malabar, the eggs of exotic insects, parrots, toucans, live salamanders and basilisks, mandrake roots, mechanical toys from Nuremberg, homunculi in pots, microscopes and telescopes, and above all, rare and peculiar books, old volumes full of astonishing illustrations and intoxicating stories. I remember those merchants, old and dignified, who served their clients in discreet silence and were full of wisdom and understanding of their most secret wishes.’

—Bruno Schulz⁷

INTEGRATE THE SHADOW. A COUPLE OF RECIPES FOR STREET TRADE IN A CITY.

⁷ B. Schulz, *The Cinnamon Shops*, translated by John Curran Davis, www.schulzian.net/translation/shops/shops.htm

⁸ J. Kurczewski, M. Cichomski, K. Wiliński *Wielkie Bazaary Warszawskie (Great Warsaw Bazaars)*, Wydawnictwo Trio, Warsaw 2010

⁹ The Street Vendor Project www.streetvendor.org

The space around street trade creates local informal city centres. Marketplaces or stalls are something more than just places of direct exchange of goods and services. They form local and open meeting places, community performances, incarnation of contacts where real money is being confronted with real merchandise.⁸ The energy of community which is created by market places can be compared to the energy of public gatherings such as holy masses, sport games, parades or general protests. The movement of buying and selling masses builds a certain kind of fervour, a social exchange. Street trade is always close to the human, the city dies without it.

Strategies for inclusion of street trading in the official trading system depend on the consciousness of both officials and architects. New York introduced licenses for street vendors, specifying the rights and obligations related with their presence in the city, in addition, they also decided that the location of a stall or a cart can be changed. The important thing is that the stall cannot appear closer than 3.1 meters to the intersection, and 6.1 meters to the building entrance. This solves the problem of vendors and passers-by moving in the same space. Each year, a competition for the best street vendor of the year is held.⁹ Sri Lanka has introduced a council of merchants at the city council, Barcelona Municipal Institute of Markets (IMMB) promotes tours around markets in the media, and many travel agencies organise guided tours around marketplaces. Exploring marketplaces is also part of the educational program in schools where every student should know a marketplace which is the closest to their place of living. In many cities authorities support food cooperatives by providing once a week venues where fruit and vegetable are distributed.

Street vendors of *System D* should be treated as an important social group. The shadow architecture: stalls, carts and stands can complement the so-called ‘high’ architecture and should be considered in official projects regarding important intersections, bus stops, metro stations, railway station entrances and in all places which generate traffic. Local plans should provide solid areas which would allow street trade because a city without a street trade looks like an unfinished model.

Szara strefa gospodarki w wielu krajach to nawet 40% rynku. Prognozy mówią o nieustającym wzroście nieformalnego przepływu kapitału. Prawie połowa ludzi pracujących na świecie – około 1,8 mld osób – pracuje w szarej strefie. Do 2020 r. liczba ta ma wzrosnąć do dwóch trzecich wszystkich pracujących ludzi. Tradycyjna ekonomia wciąż wypiera ze swojej świadomości zjawisko szarej strefy, ponieważ trudno ją badać, a granica pomiędzy nieformalną gospodarką i oficjalnym obiegiem jest rozmyta. Nieformalna ekonomia wpływa nie tylko na PKB, ale również generuje określony charakter przestrzeni i architektury. Fluktuacje niewidzialnego rynku wpływają na oddolne wypełnianie luk w przestrzeni miejskiej.

Shadow economy in many countries amounts up to 40% of the market share. The forecasts predict an ongoing increase in informal transfer of the capital. Almost half of all the working people in the world, around 1.8 billion people, are involved in the shadow economy. It is estimated that by 2020 this number will rise to two-thirds of all working people. The traditional economy still denies the existence of informal economy because it is hard to examine and the boundary between the formal and informal circulation is rather blurry. The informal economy influences not only the GDP, but also defines characteristics of the space and architecture. Fluctuations of the informal economy shape the grass-root filling of gaps in the urban space.

Wieloletnia gospodarka na brzoście.
Za: F. Schneider, A. Saez, C.E. Wacziargue,
New Estimates for the Shadow Economies
all over the World, International Economic
Journal, Vol 24, str. 458. Za zgodą autorów
i International Economic Journal.

World view of informality.
After: F. Schneider, A. Saez, C.E. Wacziargue,
New Estimates for the Shadow Economies all
over the World, International Economic Journal,
Vol 24, p. 458. With kind permission of the
Authors and International Economic Journal.

10% 10-20% 30-40% 40-50% 50-60% dane niedostępné
data unavailable

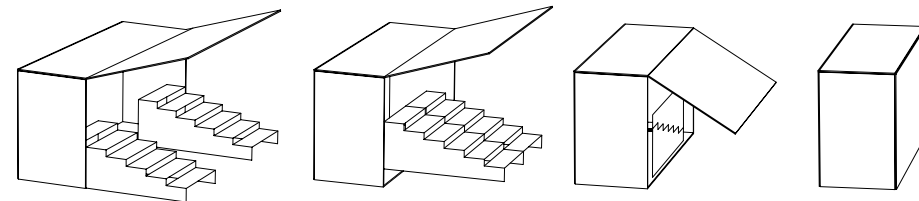


01

Typologia/Typology

Stragan warzywny

A vegetable Stall

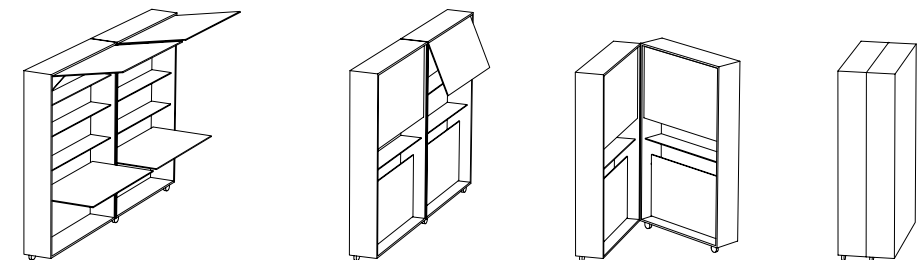


02

Typologia/Typology

**Stragan z książkami i gazetami
zamykany jak książka**

A stall with books and newspapers
which closes as a book

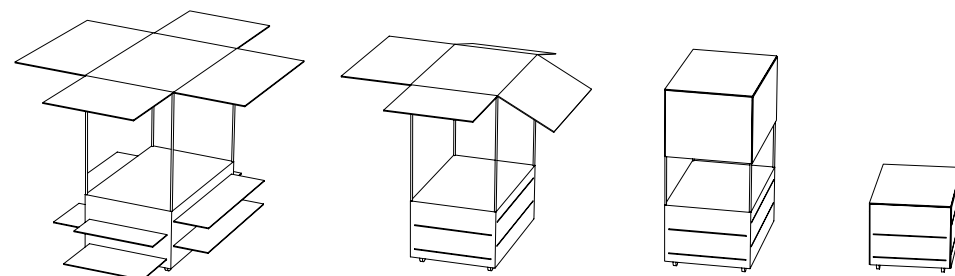


03

Typologia/Typology

Wózek na biżuterię i pamiątki

Cart for jewellery and souvenirs





SUBTRACTION

Keller Easterling 2014

CONSIDER BUILDING REMOVAL

Whatever the pleasures and prodigious efforts associated with erecting architecture, the art of causing it to disappear can be equally compelling or satisfying.

The subtraction of buildings is as important as the making of buildings, and most buildings trigger a subtraction of some sort. As marketers, financial experts, planners, and politicians develop buildings, they also detonate buildings and landscapes. Financial industries surround seemingly static and durable structures—from small houses to massive sports stadiums or four-thousand-room casinos—with a volatile balloon of inflating and deflating value. Development encourages migrations into and away from cities, causing rapid growth and rapid decline. Buildings themselves even cause destruction not only because they replace previous buildings, but also because they can, by their often toxic presence, destroy their surroundings.

In the wake of recent crises, catastrophes, and population shifts, as buildings radiate negativity, a significant portion of the heavy machinery used to construct buildings is now busy taking them apart. Ruin and decay has its own pornography. Demolition has its own TV shows.

SUBTRACTION

1

Disassembly and teardown are now popular art forms. The newest approaches to building removal even appear to retract skyscrapers into the ground. Finally, it is easy to see, with half-closed eyes, an accelerated time lapse within which large swaths of building and landscape seem to be simultaneously cultivated and harvested or built and unbuilt—an economy where subtraction is the other half of building.

While a subtraction economy already exists, it is still perceived as something that does not exist—as something negative and therefore unknowable or to be avoided. Even when subtraction is planned, it is often treated as the disposal of an accidental or unintended consequence—a failure of planning's already fragile utopias. Subtraction is erasure rather than exchange—hiding an error rather than managing an ecology. Subtraction generally signals loss while accumulation or accretion generally signals growth. And when building is the only proper, sanctioned event, there is no platform in place for constructively handling the deletions that reasonably or unreasonably accompany building.

Architects and urbanists are connoisseurs of object form expressed with shape, outline, and geometry, and the design of object form usually results in the addition of building. But a subtraction economy that removes building must also

2

KELLER EASTERLING

might be appropriate in many parts of the world where sprawling overdevelopment has attracted distended or failed markets, where development would be wise to retreat from exhausted land or floodplains, or where special preserves, like rainforests, are valued for attributes that development disrupts. Such a protocol may also offer somewhat less violent tools of acquisition and more safeguards against disenfranchisement in the margins of informal settlement.

With its own aesthetic pleasures and an expanded repertoire of form making, subtraction also offers a redoubled territory for design. Before the 1960s, there were no historic preservation programs in universities. Soon, training in building and preserving might expand to include managing the subtraction or contraction of development—a practice that arguably even has a significant, if unacknowledged, tradition in the disciplines of architecture and urbanism. Architects—trained to make the building machine lurch forward—may know something about how to put it into reverse.

4

KELLER EASTERLING

deploy active forms. Subtraction is not simply absence, but a moment in a set of exchanges and advances, aggressions and attritions that are part of most active organizations. Active forms are multipliers, switches, remote controls, or governors—time-released protocols that generate or manage these exchanges with a stream of objects and spaces. They are capable of orchestrating the ebbs and flows—the appearance and disappearance—of buildings.

A subtraction economy might even significantly alter the longstanding cultural habit of regarding buildings as financial instruments with the flexibility of currency. The financial industry has elaborate schemes for manipulating the virtual values attached to buildings despite the fact that buildings are often too durable to respond as if they were money. But an alternative subtraction portfolio materializes risks and rewards with tangible spatial variables that can be traded and banked on in a parallel market. These negotiations, designed as spatial levers, can stabilize, compete with, or even overwhelm financial markets to expand, contract, or erase development.

Building subtraction, as a major industry and a design protocol, is a lucrative emergent global enterprise, a source of employment, and a political instrument. A subtraction protocol

SUBTRACTION

3

In this issue of Zawia themed 'Change', we are discussing the implications of the rapidly changing political and social realities on architecture and the role of the architect. One of the ideas that we will discuss is the effect of 'connectedness' of networked individuals on possible futures of architecture and urbanism. Within your views on participation shifting away from populist romanticisation of political participation, how do you see the possible role of architects within this continuously changing situation?

ZAWIA

The role and the potential alternative roles of the architect is something that I have been interested in for some time. Over the last couple of years I have been investigating what I call Crossbench Praxis, a mode of practice, which, instead of fostering an all-inclusive model of participatory practice when it comes to architecture and the built environment, focuses on a 1st person singular mode of engagement, creating a sensibility towards the necessity of assuming responsibility. The term 'participation' has often been misused as a tool for populist political legitimization rather than a tool that enables and produces actual situations. From my point of view it is increasingly important to both understand and communicate that change starts with you (yourself!) and not someone else or a group of potential stakeholders or constituencies. In my book *The Nightmare of Participation*, which may – at times – read like a redneck liberal or even conservative approach to the subject matter, I am propagating a practice that takes precisely this issue of responsibility into account. Architects, as a case study, may come in handy in this regard as they often stand between the frontlines of the respective clients, groups, stakeholders and agents, which become active and claim territorial power within urban projects.

MIESSEN

At Studio Miessen, as well as in my academic studio at the Städelschule in Frankfurt, we are working on a number of projects in which we are rethinking and designing spaces that envision and enable the emergence of new 'publics', groups of individuals, who were previously not meeting in the same space. This pro-active imagining and designing towards specific realities is crucial. And it necessitates individual action, often self-initiated, which is something which actually needs to be learned. At most schools of architecture, students are being conditioned to become managers of architectural projects instead of being sensitized towards a reality, which may also be in need of a more obtrusive, not to say aggressive, approach. In order to stimulate change one needs to be projective,

CROSSBENCHING: HOW TO DESIGN SPACES OF FERTILE FRICTION

Markus Miessen *Interview with Zawia* 2012

propositional and initiating rather than reactive or even reactionary in terms of critical spatial practice on a larger scale. The architect is an interesting role model for independent, outside practice. Although, as an architect, one usually depends on a client-producer-relationship, one is (often) not politically entangled with many of the power structures at play and can hence propose and operate based on one's individual ethics. This independent position allows one to approach a situation in a less biased and, arguably, more objective way than many directly involved and entangled individuals and groups can.

The romanticisation of participatory practices, from my point of view, is often based on the notion of participation as an all-inclusive model, a paradigm, which has had its day, especially since history shows that the all-inclusive model has a limit when it come to scale and, especially today, often ends up in Slacktivism that does not assume any long-term or sustainable forms of responsibility. In other words: I am not interested in political feel-good mechanisms that have little or no practical effect. After the 1990s have produced buzzwords such as 'sustainability' or 'participation', we are now facing a severe need to exit the normative framework of those catchy-phrase discourses that nestle around the all-so-politically-correct and reductive understanding of those terms. Culture is not stable, but based on dynamic processes of learning and becoming. These processes need to be exploited towards a more differentiated notion of spaces that foster the becoming of 'publics' and complex collective identities.



In your introduction to the 'Architecture & Critical Spatial Practice' (ACSP) module, your studio at the Städelshule, you make a statement that much contemporary production in architecture is void of its responsibilities towards how critical practices operate and is unaware of its consequences compared to the inquiries posed by art. How do you see this dialectic between what architecture physically is (practice) and what it ultimately aspires to be (theory), within your practice and research, and also within your teaching?

When architecture is or becomes physical it has a reality to it that one cannot negate. It, by default, has consequences. What I am trying to foster is awareness for those very consequences. Its physicality does not necessarily become visible by newly adding physical structures to the built environment, but to enable change by designing the necessary frameworks that can alter the physical reality in which we work or learn, sleep or protest, gather or eat. Both at my studio in Berlin as well as at the school, we ask ourselves how one can be sensitized in regard to the way in which architecture and any designed and devised spatial mechanisms or frameworks perform, how they effect physical reality and how they affect its user, its passerby, to understand who is benefiting from it and who is suffering from it, to understand to whom it speaks. The key objective in this regard is the creation of new 'publics': heterogeneous social entities, which have previously not met or overlapped in the same way. In a period, which could be labeled 'post-public', the most important question about public spaces (rather than the myth of 'public space') is how one can generate spaces that, even in private or institutional settings, can enable unbiased forms and formats of heterogeneous social gathering.

ZAWIA In the past years you have been investigating conflict-based forms of participation, what Chantal Mouffe calls 'conflictual consensus' and what you call 'agonistic spatial encounter' in your recent cultures of assembly teaching at the Städelshule. Could you please explain more about what the module tries to answer?

MIESSEN In my studio at the Städelshule we are working on and towards an understanding, imagination and possible application towards what such 'agonistic space' could possibly be, what it entails, how it can be devised, programmed and conceptually be constructed. This year, we are doing so by having first investigated a series of examples broadly nestled around the concept of *Cultures of Assembly*, a set of formal and informal political spaces, which served as case studies towards an understanding in regard to spaces of assembly, congregation, and (political) gathering. Those examples ranged from deliberately designed spaces with a specific and homogenous political message or propaganda in mind (such as Albert Speer's Zeppelinfeld in Nuremberg), specifically designed assemblies on the scale of a State (a selection of international parliament interiors), informal and sometimes ad hoc spatial frameworks that enable political discussion by making territorial claims (Occupy Frankfurt and Tahrir Square), to name a few. For this first phase of the project, we produced a newspaper titled *Cultures of Assembly*, which we first presented at Städelshule's Rundgang in February and have been distributing since.

For ACSP you propose a slightly unconventional outcome of studies, what you call a 'thesis towards a 'spatial condition', which could be an architectural scale proposal, a social event, a policy document, an analysis of spatial typologies, or a critical documentation of an existing situation. How needed is this diversified type of product, and is there a general framework where these different mediums become connected? Could this be a potential medium for a larger engagement with the public than proposals of physical interventions?

ZAWIA

What is the *condition* that we envision? I find it very useful to think about a condition that one is working toward rather than to imagine a product or clearly outlined and pre-defined physical framework. What I am attempting to foster at the school is a collaborative methodology, which takes into consideration that not every spatial situation or reality may favor a physical 'solution' or approach.

MIESSEN

During our case studies phase, which culminated in the *Cultures of Assembly* newspaper, one of the 'learning from' scenarios that we investigated were several international Occupy camps, most specifically the one in Frankfurt, located outside the European Central Bank. One of the most interesting findings had to do with the legal status of the camp, the way in which it was territorially and structurally organized and in which legal application had been written for it. Its status is that of a *Mahnwache*, which is a German term for a picket or guard rather than a demonstration. This legal framework is the most important asset for the realization of the local Occupy project as it allows for an organization and physicalization of the protest well beyond the timetable of a Demonstration, which is usually limited to a specific timeframe. We found out that at some point the city of Frankfurt filed an official complaint to the organizers of Occupy Frankfurt, claiming and warning them that in case they would not protest more they would have to clear the camp (part of the legal concept of the *Mahnwache* is that there is a constant need for the presence of guarding the cause).

Spatially, we were particularly interested in the way in which the participants of the camp had dealt with the legal implications regarding the territorial ground condition of the site, down to the detail of tent stakes (the nail-like metal pins that are used to lock the tent structure to the ground), for example. As one of the official policies stated that the moment that the ground condition was penetrated, the protesters could be removed from the site, the organizers devised a smart mechanism that created a new ground condition, a secondary layer on which everything floats, where every physical element touches, but never enters the existing topography of the park outside the European Central Bank.

In the projects and methodology at ACSP, and also within many of our projects at Studio Miessen, it is our aim to approach architecture and spatial practice in this manner: to understand it as a composite of physical and non-physical realities, which together create a framework for action, a structural support that assumes responsibility and has consequences that one, as an author and producer, needs to be aware of.

TEXT EXCERPTS

ALEKSANDRA WASILKOWSKA

'Shadow Architecture / Architektura Cienia' published by Fundacja Inna Przestrzeń / The Other Space Foundation in 2012. Reproduced by permission of Aleksandra Wasilkowska

KELLER EASTERLING

Excerpt from Keller Easterling, *Subtraction, Critical Spatial Practice 4* (Berlin: Sternberg Press, 2014). Reproduced by permission of Sternberg Press Ltd., Keller Easterling, and Markus Miessen

MARKUS MIESSEN

Edited version of an interview first published by Zawia Magazine volume00 CHANGE, on 19 August 2012. Reproduced by permission of Markus Miessen



LIST OF WORKS

TARIK AHLIP
born 1985 Adelaide, Australia,
lives Sydney, Australia

The Public 2021
single-channel video with sound
duration 5:00mins

Palm 2021
lenticular print
47.3 x 84.1 cm

Court 2021
lenticular print
47.3 x 84.1 cm

courtesy the artist

HEBA Y. AMIN
born 1980 Cairo, Egypt
lives Berlin, Germany

Project Speak2Tweet 2011 – ongoing
three-channel video installation including four films
with sound:
‘My love for you, Egypt, increases by the day’ ‘2011,
duration 4:33mins (voice recording: February 8,
2011); “The Flag” 2011, duration 2:11mins (voice
recording: January 31, 2011); “I’m the Son of the
Nile” 2013, duration 2:43mins (voice recording:
February 5, 2011); “The Gecko” 2014, duration
2:39mins (voice recording: February 2, 2011)

*courtesy the artist and Zilberman Gallery, Istanbul
& Berlin*

RICHARD BELL
born 1953 Charleville, Australia
lives Brisbane, Australia

My Inland Home 2021
digital image on paper
29.7 x 42 cm

courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane

LAUREN YVONNE BRINCAT
born 1980 Sydney, Australia
lives Sydney, Australia

*A city without a street trade looks like an unfinished
model* 2021
installation: oranges, paper and recycled Tasmanian
oak, dimensions variable

Courtesy the artist and Anna Schwartz Gallery

FIVE MILE RADIUS
Brisbane Studio

KITCHEN WASTE (Furniture) 2021
installation: recycled chipboard cabinetry, manually
processed – burnt with beeswax, pigment and
charcoal finishes
80 x 80 x 80 cm

courtesy the artists

FIVE MILE RADIUS AND THE FABRICATED FRAME
Brisbane Studios

KITCHEN WASTE (Mycelium Panel) 2021
material research: mycelium (mushroom hyphae)
and chipboard composite
material testing: bricks, joinery, small decorative
panels, large construction panel
installation dimensions variable

courtesy the artists

GILL GATFIELD
born 1963 Kawerau, Aotearoa New Zealand
lives Whangaparāoa, Aotearoa New Zealand

Ally Sloper 2013
tempered polished glass
81.5 x 50 cm

Multiple Choice 2013
Indian black granite, Italian Carrara marble
9 x 50 x 50 cm

courtesy the artist

DALE HARDING
born 1982 Moranbah, Australia
lives Brisbane, Australia

*Discussion points originating from Central
Queensland – towards Aboriginal Architectures* 2021
graphite on paper
21 x 156 cm

courtesy the artist and Milani Gallery, Brisbane

FIONNUALA HEIDENREICH
born 1979 Sydney, Australia
lives between New York City, USA and Sydney,
Australia

Ruin – Artifact of a legacy 2021
podium: handmade stoneware clay tiles with
drawings made in indigo glaze
half column: constructed with handmade bricks
made from found, discarded, recycled or naturally
formed earth clay, sand, lime powder, recycled
paper, shells, mobile phone bits, paperbark,
discarded broken ceramics; internal bamboo rods
130 x 51.5 x 25.4 cm

*Building a Ruin – Artifact of a legacy: concept
development* 2021
digital prints on paper
180 x 224 cm

courtesy the artist

HWKN
New York Studio :: Matthias Hollwich, Dorin Baul,
Robert May, Olga Snowden, Jessica Knobloch,
Richie Yu, Drew Busmire

We The People – a prototype 2021
installation: free-standing columns, wallpaper
graphic, Playmobil figures

*The Australian installation of We The People is a
reduced iteration of a gallery-wide HWKN exhibition
at Aedes Architectural Forum, Berlin, Germany, 19
November 2021 – 13 January 2022*

courtesy the artists

SIMON JAMES PHILLIPS
born 1973 Armidale, Australia
lives Berlin, Germany

Uncommissioned Compositions – Symphony No.1
2021
pencil, acrylic, pastel, pen on paper
1.1 x 25 m

Uncommissioned Compositions – Glove 2021
pencil on paper
110 x 147 cm

Uncommissioned Compositions – Layer 2021
pen, laser-print, pencil on paper
A3 working booklet

courtesy the artist

VALENTINA KARGA
born 1986 Chalkidiki, Greece
lives Berlin, Germany

CIRCLE 4; An infrastructure for grounding 2021
Installation: aluminium plates and wire
dimensions variable across ground

courtesy the artist

NICOLÁS KISIC AGUIRRE
born 1984 (Peruvian) Rockville, USA
lives Seattle, USA

*“INSURGENCIA RADIO. MÓDULO DE ESCUCHA”
(INSURGENCIA RADIO LISTENING MODULE)* 2021
sound installation: wood, found objects, electronics,
mixed media

LAS AVENTURAS DEL MOMOPROT 2020
video work documenting the use of the Momoprot
(Mobile Protest Module) around Valparaíso, Chile
during January 2020 in the context of the “estallido
social chileno” that took place between October
2019 and March 2020

courtesy the artist

NICOLÁS KISIC AGUIRRE & SARAH AL ADAYLEH

INSTRUCTIVOS INSURGENTES: MOMOPROT 2021
printed A5 DIY manual + A2 installed poster:
instructions to build ‘Momoprot’

courtesy the artists

ANRI SALA
born 1974 Tirana, Albania
lives Berlin, Germany

Dammi i Colori 2003
single channel video, colour, stereo sound
duration: 15:25

*courtesy the artist and Marian Goodman Gallery,
New York; Galerie Chantal Crousel, Paris; Hauser
& Wirth, Zurich & London; Johnen Galerie, Berlin;
Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle, Munich*

Metro Arts Brisbane

2 – 30 October 2021

Dominik Mersch Gallery Sydney

28 May – 25 June 2022

NOTE ON WORKS

Several concepts in the project have multiple iterations, arising from artists' inability to complete work due to Covid-19 pandemic lockdowns in Australia and abroad (resulting in studio inaccessibility beyond allowed travel radar, closed kilns, curfews, shipping delays, et al). In many cases a concept or 'in-progress' work is exhibited in Brisbane 2021, and the resolved work exhibited in Sydney 2022.

CURATOR'S ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge the unceded land and waters of and surrounding the country we now call Australia. I honour all Indigenous people past and present, without whose care and custodianship we wouldn't be here today. Thank you for the air we breath. I acknowledge Indigenous leadership for shaping Australia's identity.

Oceans of thanks for myriad reasons to Graeme Auchterlonie, Geraldine Kirrihi Barlow, Ellie Buttrose, Leissa Dane, Peter Dane, Riley Dane, Libby Davis, Marilena Hewitt, Alanna Irwin, Nina Miall, Dominik Mersch, Izabela Pluta, Peta Rake, Meryl Ryan, UAP, Kyle Weise, and all the C o S A contributors, thank you for your hard work in these enduring times.

C o S A

This project has been assisted by the Australian Government through the Australia Council, its arts funding and advisory body.



This project is supported by the Queensland Government through Arts Queensland.



Metro Arts




















Beautifully printed in Meanjin by Conerstone Press












Book design by Marilena Hewitt
© PLATYPUS Journal, 2021
platypuspublication.com



2012

-  Case study one 003.tif
-  Case study one 004.tif
-  Construction Berlin 003.tif
-  Construction Berlin 006.tif
-  Construction Berlin 007.tif
-  Construction Berlin 010.tif
-  Construction Berlin 013.tif
-  Construction Berlin 022.tif
-  Construction Berlin 024.tif
-  Construction Berlin 025.tif
-  Construction Berlin 028.tif
-  Construction Berlin 029.tif
-  Construction Berlin 030.tif
-  Construction Berlin 031.tif
-  Construction Berlin 033.tif
-  Construction Berlin 035.tif
-  Construction Berlin 037.jpg



-  Construction Berlin 038.tif
-  Construction Berlin 040.tif
-  Construction Berlin 041.tif
-  Construction Berlin 042.tif
-  Construction Berlin 043.tif
-  Construction Berlin 045.tif
-  Construction Berlin 046.tif
-  Construction Berlin 047.tif
-  Construction Berlin 048.tif
-  Construction Berlin 050.tif
-  Construction Berlin 056.tif