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BIG WORLDS UNDER LITTLE TENTS
Joel Robinson

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Keywords: pavilion, architecture, exhibition, exposition, world's fair, internationalism.

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INTRODUCING PAVILIONS: BIG WORLDS UNDER LITTLE TENTS

Joel Robinson, The Open University

Abstract

What is a pavilion? In this issue of the Open Arts Journal we learn that this little-studied type of structure has assumed a diversity of forms and functions, which beg the question of whether the pavilion should be seen as an architectural type at all. This editorial introduction suggests that one way of conceptualizing the pavilion across time and space is as a transient (and often modest) presence in the landscape, one which belies the otherwise rather weighty ideas or positions about the world embodied or put on display there. This thesis is unfolded in various ways in the contributions to this themed issue, which explore pavilions as spaces of display, ornamental eccentricities and experimental prototypes, as well as national monuments of a heraldic or diplomatic kind.

It may have been possible in the not-too-distant past to dismiss the pavilion (the '*pavilloner,*' as Le Corbusier disparagingly called it) as a minor and inconsequential type of architecture, a frivolous ornament on the landscape. Today, one might find it harder to ignore such architectural spaces – whether they are built for official institutions and international expositions, or conceived by artists as more experimental structures that intervene within a politics of cultural representation. Pavilions are now often front and centre to what are being called the spaces of global cultures. Hence, it is time that there were more scrutiny of what they are, or what they have been in modern history. Considering the symbolic capital they afford those individuals, organizations or nations that have them constructed, but also the agency they offer those who would seek to challenge consensual culture and raise questions about the use of public space, pavilions might be recognised for what they are: architectural works that may appear trifling (especially next to grander civic monuments), but which are more often than not embattled structures, bound up with claims to power, status and identity, and thus harbouring some rather big ideals or ideas about the world.

Toward a Genealogy of the Pavilion

As a way of beginning, it might be helpful to try and visualise, for heuristic purposes, a simple genealogy of the pavilion, which would support the above hypothesis. Such a genealogy could be complicated later; this is certainly what the texts that follow this introduction will do. Beginning with the earliest examples, one might call to mind those portable foldaway structures, capable of being set up quickly in the encampments of military campaigns and diplomatic assemblies. In the ancient Roman Empire and beyond, these acquired the name 'butterflies' – *papilio* in Latin, from which the modern French *pavillon* derives. This was possibly on account of their fleeting appearance in the landscape, and the way that their canopies appeared to flap in the breeze. Such structures were undoubtedly utilitarian, but they were also heraldic, stately and ornamental, in keeping with their purpose. They continued to be used through the

Figure 0.1: William Kent, Temple of Ancient Virtue, 1734, Stowe Gardens, Buckinghamshire. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

modern period, although the more purely functional tents used in warfare today hardly compare.

Bringing the pavilion more squarely into the sphere of art and culture were the much more festive tents of medieval and renaissance pageantry. Here, different forms and uses were found, to the extent that the image of the pavilion now begins to divide and multiply. As it enters palatial gardens, villa parks and country estates (Figure 0.1), however, the pavilion is still very much tied to power and wealth, as well as to land and territorial claims. This is why, in spite of appearances, it is never entirely uncoupled from its largely patrician and martial associations. It enters the world of the propertied classes with a less obvious pragmatic or diplomatic purpose, more as an embellishment or pleasant diversion. Yet, it is no less meaningful for that. Never reducible to a frivolous addition, the construction of a pavilion usually was (and perhaps still is) motivated by self-aggrandisement, aesthetic speculation, civilizing ritual or political strife of some kind.

By the eighteenth century, parks and gardens were beginning to host a broad range of structures that might (at a stretch) be referred to as pavilions. Europeans were now aware that garden pavilions actually had a much more ancient history outside Europe and Asia Minor, extending to the Far East. Having spent some time in Canton, the architect and former employee of the Swedish East India Company William Chambers enthused: 'No nation ever equaled the Chinese in the splendor and number of their garden structures' (Chambers, 1773, p. 35). Amidst the classical revival, many pavilions now took on the character of more permanent (or quasi-permanent) fixtures in the landscape; some became so monumental, rigid and austere that they lost the sprightliness of butterflies altogether, and transmogrified into something new, not infrequently resembling mausolea more than flamboyant marquees.

Now associated with recreation and entertainment, pavilions held various functions in the 'modern' English-style landscaped parks, and in the increasingly eclectic, fanciful gardens of the Regency and Victorian eras – as a glance at the pattern books of nineteenth-century architects like John Buonarotti Papworth will reveal. They served as lodges, boathouses, gazebos, seats, pergolas, stages, bandstands, conservatories, aviaries and cabinets. They were now built to resemble rustic cottages, Grecian sanctuaries, Gothic follies, or Orientalist exotica – e.g., Turkish kiosks, Moorish fortresses, Indian temples, Chinese pagodas and later Japanese teahouses **(Figures 0.2-0.3)**. These last attested not only to the cosmopolitanism of the patron,

Figure 0.2: Giovan Battista Filippo Basile, Pavilion in the Arab-Norman Style, English Gardens, 1850-51, Palermo. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 0.3: Japanese Pavilion, or Chokushi-Mon (Imperial Envoy's Gateway), 1910-11, Kew Gardens, London. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

but also to imperial aspirations and fantasies of remote times or places. Following the building of the Royal Pavilion at Brighton, the demand for an architecture of leisure in the nineteenth century saw such pavilions taken to the seaside or adapted to the public park for the benefit of a much wider populace.

With modernity came the evolution of an entirely different species of pavilion. This was inseparable from a new culture of exhibition, of spectatorship and spectacle – of the kind that turned all and sundry into consumers. Its dominant form was the exposition space. Consider the Crystal Palace of 1851, effectively a monster pavilion sheltering smaller individual marquees, each advertising the wares of a nation, whether that was Britain, with its exoticised colonial possessions, or one of its continental competitors. From the late nineteenth century onward, nations (colonisers and colonies alike) participating in such international expositions (or world's fairs, as they came to be called in North America) were represented by their own pavilions, built in a wide array of styles intended to reflect a certain image or identity. Thereafter, the architecture of the pavilion was mobilised in events that – as contemporary observers found – were 'not just exhibitions of the world, but the ordering up of the world itself as an endless exhibition' (Mitchell, 1989, p. 218).

The upshot of its co-opting by the world's fair, of course, is that the pavilion was no longer frozen in some make-believe Arcadia, at the disposal of the elite alone. It was now regimented into a suburban grid, and seen by thousands (for a fee, of course), at the pace of Fogg and Passepartout on a whirlwind visit. Gone were the private, contemplative encounter and the picturesque taste of the previous century, which dictated studious placements and perspectives for the pavilion. Aesthetic edification was now less imperative than a didactic or purportedly educational agenda, which barely disguised the role of exposition architecture in the normalization of capitalism. The size of such pavilions became important (especially for Europe's colonial powers), not just to accommodate displays inside, but to impress and outwardly convey authority, legitimacy or identity. This was the age of nation-building after all. It was also the age of empire.

The imagination characteristic of the more fanciful garden buildings of the past (be it the Indian House of 1750 at Augustusburg, the Alhambra of 1758 at Kew Gardens, or the Creaky Pagoda of 1786 at Tsarskoye Selo) found its way into these new exposition façades – in an anticipation of Disneyland *avant la lettre*. Yet, what was in prior times designed to be viewed from calculated vantage points became a panoptic

instrument for directing the movement and vision of much larger numbers of people inside. Of course, some garden pavilions of the past had served as spaces of display, boasting curiosities or sculptures, even living things (e.g., glasshouses, menageries and zoos) on their interiors. But the pavilion was now so closely associated with the displays they contained that the architectural container itself was often demoted to a theatrical set.

Conversely, there were pavilions that actually stole attention away from the exhibits, becoming a lot more memorable than whatever might have been displayed inside. If some world's-fair buildings were attention-getting preambles for the exhibitions they contained, others capitalised on the excuse of an exhibition and the great licence afforded by such temporary events to make bold architectural statements. The Soviet Pavilion at Paris' 1937 Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne; the Roman Pavilions at the 1927 and 1929 Tripoli Trade Fairs organised by Italy; or the Misulgwan Exhibition Building at the 1915 Korean Products Competitive Exhibition organised by Japan, were ironically more lasting precisely on account of their ephemerality.

It was not only belligerent imperialists and fascists that found expositions to be propitious testing grounds for architecturally-staged propaganda. Within the nascent space of these increasingly rather sensational events (and the more specialised trade fairs), the fantasies of the avant-garde were likewise given air to breed. Here too, the pavilion regained some of its older martial connotations, becoming a rather overt polemical instrument – albeit of a very different kind now – in the hands of progressive architects. It could wage war on the establishment, vindicate alternative aesthetic or ideological positions, and respond to changing social circumstances. That buildings like Le Corbusier's 1925 L'Esprit Nouveau, or Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's 1929 Barcelona Pavilion, were isolated events – surrounded by the historicist kitsch, inflated exoticism or corporate vulgarity that typified such fairs – only made this oppositional stance more firm.

In modernist circles, the pavilion became a laboratory for experimentation and for showcasing new forms, materials or techniques. It became a work of pure architecture, dressed up as a housing prototype or model factory. Here was a new pavilion again. More than anything else, it was exhibiting itself, or the potential for architecture to be something else. It was oriented to the future rather than retrospectively dwelling on some antique ideal or mythical Asia. This was the pavilion as architecture's Other, its utopian antagonist, critiquing or propelling it in new directions.

Not surprisingly then, the very image of the pavilion was taken up not only in the domain of leisure but also in utopian projects responding to urgent social needs, becoming the model, for instance, for hospitals and social housing, even for Ernst May's lightweight, open-plan, whitewashed 'pavilion-type' schools in Frankfurt's garden suburbs during the late 1920s (Henderson, 1997).

After the Second World War, the pavilion became the site for some of the most hotly debated tensions in modernist architecture – be it monumentality versus instrumentality, form versus function, regionalism versus universalism, or the local versus the global. The grounds of the Venice Biennale are a case in point; they form a microcosm, whose national pavilions reveal how these tensions played out in the wake of fascism. As the Cold War escalated, utopianism was tempered by realism (e.g., Alison and Peter Smithson's *Patio and Pavilion* of 1956, with Nigel Henderson and Eduardo Paolozzi); or, conversely, it was made even more delirious by the cybernetic fantasies from Joan Littlewood and Cedric Prices' concept of the *Fun Palace* (1964), through the ludic technoscientism of Archigram and the architects of Osaka '70, to the engineering poetics of Frei Otto and Renzo Piano **(Figure 0.4)**.

What has been referred to by Paul Greenhalgh as a lull in World's Fairs through the '"Post-Modern" decades' (2011, p. 13) meant that the pavilion was more defined by marketing and entertainment venues during the 1980s and 90s. National pavilions at international expositions (Seville in 1992; Hannover in 2000; Shanghai in 2010) (**Figures 0.5-0.6**) made a comeback however, with the resurgence of mega-events (Roche, 2003) amidst a millennial rhetoric of globalization and regeneration, or to mark centenaries in an age where hope often doubles back into the past and away from its own bleak horizon. This is a nostalgia that also drives the heritage industry, prompting the novel and paradoxical activities of pavilion conservation or reconstruction. In 1965, for instance, Gerrit Rietveld's Sonsbeek Pavilion (Arnhem, Netherlands, 1955) was rebuilt; in 1986, Mies van der Rohe's Barcelona Pavilion was reinstated in the grounds of Montjuïc; in 2009, Victor Pasmore's Apollo Pavilion (Peterlee, England, 1968) was restored.

As for what the pavilion has become more recently, it might be premature to say. It is still something like it was before, of course. But new prospects are apparent: recycled containers, squatter tents, emergency shelters, nomadic lodgings, pedagogical exercises, site-specific

Figure 0.4: Renzo Piano Building Workshop, IBM Traveling Pavilion (installed in Amsterdam 1983-86), 1982. Courtesy: Renzo Piano Building Workshop. Photograph: Gianni Berengo Gardin.

Figure 0.5: MVRDV, Holland Pavilion, Hannover World Exposition 2000. Courtesy of MVRDV.

Figure 0.6: EMBT Architects, Spanish Pavilion, Shanghai Expo 2010. Courtesy of EMBT Architects.

installations, floating theatres, 'smart' machines, VR cubes, internet forums and other hybrid ventures traversing time and space, and registering the ever more itinerant and interconnected experience of twenty-first century affluence. No surprise, then, that the pavilion – as a mobile adaptable device no longer tied down to gardens and fairs – has become a popular 'medium' for many contemporaries (e.g., Monika Sosnowska, Shigeru Ban, Matali Crasset, Atelier Bow-Wow, Dré Wapanaar, Atelier van Lieshout, Xefirotarch, Ernesto Neto, Marco Casagrande, Eko Prawoto, EXYZT) working at the interface of art and architecture **(Figures 0.7-0.10)**.

Figure 0.7: Monika Sosnowska, 1:1, 2007, steel. Courtesy of the artist, Foksal Gallery Foundaton, The Modern Institute, Galerie Gisela Capitain, Kurimanzutto, and Hauser & Wirth.

Figure 0.8: Shigeru Ban and Jean de Gastines, Hermès Pavilion, 2011, Design Tide Exhibition, Tokyo. Courtesy of Shigeru Ban Architects.

Figure 0.9: Matali Crasset, Feral House/Le Nichoir (Maison Sylvestre), 2011, Le Vents de Forêts Contemporary Art Program, Fresnes au Mont, Bois de Paroches, Lorraine. Courtesy of Matali Crasset Productions. Photograph: Lucas Fréchine.

Figure 0.10: Atelier Bow-Wow and SDM Architects, BMW Guggenheim Lab Mumbai, 2012-2013, Mahim Beach, Mumbai, Courtesy of the BMW Guggenheum Lab and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation. Photograph: UnCommonSense.

A place for reflection

What is a pavilion? Since no single answer to this question satisfies, perhaps all one can do is raise it, or consider the terms through which an answer – or answers in the plural – might be tentatively approached. Part of the reason for asking the question is to sidestep the more directly obvious answers, and ensure some pause for reflection. It is not really the aim here to gather together a number of plausible responses, or to have the sum of the contents make up an answer, so much as to keep the question open. In that respect, this volume of texts might itself be said to take on the character of a meta-pavilion[1] – or a provisional and loosely-bounded forum at any rate – for starting to reflect on what pavilions are, what they have been and could become.

What the above account of the pavilion's genealogy reveals (while shallow on historical specificity or detail) is that the pavilion is not static. It is not a single unchanging type; in fact, it is not a type at all. The pavilion is not only an amorphous thing, adapting to several forms and functions, but is also responsive to changes in its geographical and historical environments. If, for instance, my opening account collapses history into a simple diachronic narrative, the papers collected for this issue of the *Open Arts Journal* paint a more elaborate picture. They will attest to the diversity of forms and functions that pavilions have assumed over several recent centuries, and investigate the various social and geographical contexts in which they have been built and used.

The pavilion has taken on all manner of forms and functions from the marquees of crusader-era Palestine, to Inigo Jones' stone China House (*c.* 1655) at Beckett Hall in Oxfordshire, to the showy structures of the 2010 Shanghai Expo (to take three, not entirely arbitrary reference points). But even so, there is a shared sense of what a pavilion is, captured in some of the following adjectives: smallish, ephemeral, lightweight, adaptable, subsidiary, contingent, peripatetic, makeshift, ceremonial, pleasant, ornamental, fantastic, playful, enchanting, hybrid, experimental, inventive.

There may yet be something of a common thread though. For, beneath the pavilion's often diminutive canopies are found some rather big ideas about the world. Indeed, it is one of the several internal contradictions that distinguishes the pavilion from

other structures, in that while it often masquerades as a modest or innocuous amusement, it is in fact a highly rhetorical and discursive thing, not least due to its age-old exhibitionary rationale and global orientation. The extent to which pavilions give shelter to competing visions of the world – embattled microcosms of a kind – is for now an open question, and readers are ultimately left to make up their own minds about this hypothesis. Bearing in mind Ian Hamilton Finlay's embattled *Temple of Apollo* **(Figure 0.11)**, however, we might find that this poet's polemics in respect to gardens apply no less to pavilions: 'Certain gardens are described as retreats when they are really attacks' (Finlay, 1992, p. 38).

In the call for contributions to this volume, authors were not directed to engage with a particular period, location or type of pavilion. They were allowed instead the freedom to ponder the pavilion on their own terms, from their own specialisms, be it art history, material culture, visual arts, architectural design, museum studies, curatorial work or heritage

Figure 0.11: Ian Hamilton Finlay, Temple of Apollo at Little Sparta, 1980, Stonypath, near Edinburgh. Courtesy of the Wild Hawthorn Press and the Estate of Ian Hamilton Finlay. Photograph: Joel Robinson

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1   This would of course not be the first time that a publication has been likened to a pavilion; to take just one example, the online publication *Pavilion: Journal for Politics and Culture* (www.pavilionmagazine.org) – which since 2001 has served as a venue for various kinds of texts and artistic projects – makes this point quite literal.

conservation. Even so, there was an emphasis on use and social function, if only to get away from the mere admiration of form characterizing glossier architectural publications. It was hoped, by asking the question 'what is a pavilion?', that a range of perspectives – social-historical, geopolitical, postcolonial, iconographical, pedagogical – could be brought to bear, not so much on formulating a definitive answer but on revealing how little has been done to raise the question itself.

While much has been written about specific buildings like the Barcelona Pavilion or L'Esprit Nouveau, little has been said about the pavilion *tout court*. Little thought has been given to what the pavilion is in more generic terms, as a type, category, medium, space – or whatever it might be. Studies of garden structures and exhibition buildings are plentiful, and there has been some consideration of mobile, small or temporary architecture (Kronenburg, 1996; Slavid, 2007; Siegal, 2008; Jodidio, 2011) in illustrated catalogues that furnish a more promotional literature. However, the emphasis is almost always elsewhere, such that the question of what pavilions are is taken for granted or falls to the wayside of other interests and concerns (e.g., aesthetic form, structural and material innovation, portable design, representational value).

A broader critical discourse on the pavilion does not exist. It seems that historians, critics and architects of the past have often slighted the pavilion, associating it with elitist pleasure, or a negligible capriciousness, as if it smacked too much of kitsch, especially from

the universal expositions onward. Indeed, some of the most audible and high-minded voices of modernity were dismissive. John Ruskin's criticism of Joseph Paxton's Great Exhibition Building, that it had merely 'magnified a conservatory' (Ruskin, 1854, p. 5), is well known; his equation of architecture with permanence and remembrance made the pavilion a trifling thing. In the French context, Auguste Perret declared that a tent was not architecture (Udovicki-Selb, 1997, p. 56); his more influential pupil, Le Corbusier, spoke derogatorily of the '*pavilloner*' (p. 58) – in spite of his well-known and strategic use of pavilions to proselytise a new spirit in the design of domestic and urban habitation.

It could be that this condescension toward architecture's Other accounts for the short shrift that it has generally been given. As noted above, outside of garden history, a burgeoning literature on fairs, and a more recent vogue for mobile, small or temporary architecture in a time of diplomatic, climatic and economic crises, little evaluative work has been directed toward the subject of pavilions. Where this may be changing is in the resuscitation of the international exposition as a platform for architectural innovation, horticultural exhibitions and programmes like the Serpentine Pavilion **(Figures 0.12-0.16)**, as well as the explosion of curatorial studies that have conspired to generate new interest. In 2009, Frankfurt's Deutsches Architekturmuseum mounted a show, *The Pavilion: Pleasure and Polemic in Architecture*, signaling an emergent trend that is also noticeable in a few recent

Figure 0.12: Serpentine Gallery (formerly a refreshment pavilion), with Jean Nouvel's 2010 Serpentine Pavilion, Kensington Gardens, London. Courtesy of the Serpentine Gallery. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 0.13: Daniel Libeskind, with Arup, Serpentine Pavilion (Eighteen Turns), 2001, Kensington Gardens, London. Courtesy of the Serpentine Gallery. Photograph: Stephen White.

Figure 0.14: Álvaro Siza, and Eduardo Souto de Moura, with Cecil Balmond, Serpentine Pavilion, 2005, Kensington Gardens, London. Courtesy of the Serpentine Gallery. Photograph: James Winspear.

Figure 0.15: Rem Koolhaas and Cecil Balmond, Serpentine Pavilion, 2006, Kensington Gardens, London. Courtesy of the Serpentine Gallery. Photograph: John Offenbach.

Figure 0.16: Peter Zumthor, with Piet Oudolf, Serpentine Pavilion 2012, Kensington Gardens, London. Courtesy of the Serpentine Gallery. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

essays probing the topic of pavilions (Curtis, 2006; Bergdoll, 2009; Bussman, 2009; Hirsch, 2009; Colomina, 2009; Phillips, 2010; Lavin, 2012).[2]

What this issue on pavilions offers is a chance to extend, consolidate and deepen reflection on what kind of things pavilions are. As will become apparent, a leading emphasis is on what might be called 'the architecture of display,' and the way in which pavilions set out different worlds or competing visions of the world. While some contributors are concerned with the pavilion as an object or work of art in its own right, displaying itself, others home in on its contents. This interest in what the container contains is welcome. It indicates how the meaning of the word *pavilion* has shifted to encompass the curatorial product that it presents on the inside. It moreover serves as a corrective to a blinkered awe of pavilions for their outwardly spectacular visual effects, and helps ground discussion in a consideration of their use and their social and ideological milieus.

The accent here is deliberately on the twentieth century and contemporary age; yet all of the authors are aware that the pavilion has a longer richer legacy, and at least one of them offers a more historical case. Chronological order is secondary here, and the usual hierarchical split into more polished essays on the one hand and shorter exploratory reviews, statements and commentaries on the other (or worse, academic and non-academic texts) is relaxed in favour of a more thematic organization. The issue starts with essays that introduce key historical topics, then moves to address pavilions as exhibitional mechanisms, before ending with coverage of exciting, recent experiments in the making, use and 'afterlife' of pavilions. It is hoped that this forum might contribute to the lively discussions in that 'place between' art and architecture (Rendell, 2006), where questions of public space and civic participation are brought to the fore.

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2   For proof of this trend, one does not need to look too far past the Serpentine Pavilion programme, founded in 2000 by Julia Peyton-Jones (and Hans-Ulrich Obrist), director of London's Serpentine Gallery. In 2008, Baroness Carmen Thyssen-Bornemisza launched her own project with the intention of commissioning art pavilions for different locations around the world. Such competitions, like the one organised by Natalie Seroussi in 2007 on the grounds of the Paris architect André Bloc's estate in Meudon, are becoming more common. In a project that will restructure the map of contemporary art, the Guggenheim Foundation is presently financing the construction of nineteen biennial pavilions on the island of Saadiyat in Abu Dhabi (United Arab Emirates). Finally, the annual programme recentlylaunched by the Royal Pavilion at Brighton, *Pavilion Contemporary*, will commission artists to make works responding to this site and its architecture.

Historical themes and contexts

The texts gathered in this first section are wide-ranging, both geographically and temporally. They are a means to set up a discussion about pavilions – the forms they have taken, the functions they have served, the meanings attributed to them, and the values placed upon them (even after they have been dismantled). It introduces a number of the antinomies internal to the pavilion, which make the various offspring of the *papilio* so very hard to pin down. One such antinomy has already been introduced, and refers to how the relatively entertaining and innocent deportment of the pavilion often belies much more pompous intentions and suspect representational claims.

In 'Not months but moments: Ephemerality, monumentality and the pavilion in ruins,' Ihor Junyk ponders the significance of another incongruity, that of the comparatively temporary aspect of pavilions in earlier picturesque gardens versus the air of permanence often sought at the universal expositions of the late nineteenth century – where it was all about projecting 'eternity in an hour' (Tenorio Trillo, 1996, p. 7). He suggests that a desire for reconciling these led to *fin-de-siècle* fantasies of destruction and ruin (far from functionalist emblems of a *Zeitgeist*). A more macabre instantiation of this was Albert Speer's German Pavilion for Paris' 1937 Exposition. The lighter, transient pavilions of the present day, e.g., the Serpentine Pavilions, are construed as a sobering rejoinder to that pathological cult of monumental classicism.

Also inherent in the history of pavilions, as the texts in this section (including Junyk's overview) bring to light, are the tensions between the retrospective and the progressive, past and future, dreams of remote times and visions of new orders, Arcadia and Utopia, classical and avant-garde. Pavilions might embody the vernacular or the universal, the exotic or the norm. They can become ornament or instrument, an object in itself or a receptacle for something else. This is not to say that the pavilion has to be one or the other, in mutually exclusive terms. What the pavilion discloses is the relativism of these terms – their slipperiness and the contingency of their meaning.

The next two essays more clearly adumbrate the notion of an 'architecture of display.' They are included here because their authors are less interested in objects put on display than in their architecture. Jane Lomholt's 'At the bottom of the garden: The caffeaus of the Villa Albani' takes us back to eighteenth-century Rome, the foremost destination on the Grand Tour, and to a less familiar kind of pavilion, one whose present state of decay has overshadowed its original purpose. This was a leisurely café attached to an Italian villa and

its formal gardens, but not just any coffee house: this doubled as a monumental hall for the display of its antiquarian owner's collections, which were overseen by the celebrated expert Johann Joachim Winckelmann. Not only was this pavilion instrumental in confirming Cardinal Albani's knowledge, entitlement and lineage, but anticipated the exhibitionary architecture of the next century.

'Folkloric modernism: Venice's Giardini della Biennale and the geopolitics of architecture' takes us further north in Italy, to the Veneto, and those public gardens laid out under Napoleon. From the end of the nineteenth century, these were effectively turned into an outdoor museum of pavilions, promulgating the cultural potency of Europe's chief nations. Crammed with buildings in all styles, these gardens would have horrified eighteenth-century spectators who complained about the placement of pavilions of different styles being too close together (Hirschfeld, 1779, p. 289). Here, Joel Robinson is less concerned with aesthetic judgements than postcolonial identities. He shows that the architectural landscape of the world's oldest and largest international exposition of art becomes reconfigured in the post-fascist 1950s and 60s through the addition of national pavilions that show up the 'folkloric' nature of architectural modernism.

Also treating the theme of folklore is Jaimee Comstock-Skipp's essay, 'From the world's fair to Disneyland: Pavilions as temples.' It explains how the typology of the 'temple-pavilion' (exploited in the crowd-pulling colonial and empire expositions of the first half of the century) served as the model for one of Disneyland's most recent rides, namely the *Indiana Jones Adventure: Temple of the Forbidden Eye*, which opened to the public in 1995. Incidentally, amusement parks had been incorporated in the grounds of world's fairs early on, but this is a case of the former incorporating the exotic architectural fantasy of the latter. Comstock-Skipp's deliberation on the temple-pavilion is a reminder that the architectural representation of Asia (i.e., not-Europe) at the World's Fairs was no less a spectacular fiction than the 'Disney Pavilion' itself.

The architect Karolina Szynalska's commentary on a little building referred to as the *Papilio* at Markham Moor (on the A1, Britain's longest road) brings us back to some of the themes with which this section began. It also raises questions about heritage and the conservation of structures that were only ever meant to be ephemeral. Discussing this butterfly-shaped roadside hyperbolic paraboloid – which went from serving as a petrol station to a franchise restaurant – she brings to mind Le Corbusier and Edgar Varèse's earlier and better known but no-longer-extant

Philips Pavilion (also a 'hypar') for the 1958 Brussels Exposition. Szynalska also shows how contemporary nostalgia can transmute modernism's most fleeting projects into a kind of industrial picturesque.

The architecture of display
Ever since the universal exposition saw nations split away from exhibiting their wares together in a single building that was constructed more on the scale of a palace, and erect their own temporary pavilions, the main use of the pavilion has arguably been as a venue of display. This was what Henry-Russell Hitchcock identified as 'exposition architecture' in 1936, on the eve of New York's 'World of Tomorrow' World's Fair. It was at the 1867 Exposition Universelle in Paris that individual national pavilions were first seen, establishing a tradition that is still evident at such mega-events today. The pavilion is now no longer an object (if it ever was just that), but a receptacle; any consideration of it must now pay attention as much to what it contains as to the thing doing the containing. It is this tension that the papers collected here, in this next section, explore.

This section begins with a short reflection on Penelope Curtis's study of the relationship between modern architecture and sculpture; a relationship that she sees as effectively dissolved in the pavilion. The pavilion is not just a place for sculpture, e.g., Georg Kolbe's *Morning* (1925) in Mies van der Rohe' Barcelona Pavilion, but is a work of sculpture in its own right – albeit 'sculpture in the expanded field' (Krauss, 1979). Here Brian Hatton, is interested in the way that container (architecture) and contained (sculpture) are conflated in projects like the Smithsons' above-mentioned *Patio and Pavilion* (with Henderson and Paolozzi), and later in the American context, with Dan Graham's series of glass pavilions.

Observing how the Barcelona pavilion served to create both a 'vitrine' and 'stage' for sculpture, Hatton elaborates on Curtis' argument. He suggests that what Graham (and Mies van der Rohe before him) made obvious is that pavilions are both viewing lenses and performative spaces in which members of the audience become both subject and object. They are participants that, in rendering superfluous the addition of figurative sculptures to a pavilion, replace the role of statuary in its job of activating the space of the architectural work. The question of participation in the ostensibly public spaces opened up by pavilions as works of public art is incidentally a topic over which much skepticism has recently been expressed (Phillips, 2010; Lavin, 2012). This is a topic to which I return in connection with a discussion of the contemporary pavilion below.

The relation between container and contained is by no means a simple dichotomy. This is underscored by the fact that pavilions have just as often been the main object on display. This was certainly the case at those more specialised events, such as the Milan Triennale or Deutscher Werkbund exhibitions[3] – events that were also a reminder that, even before the expositions and fairs, pavilions themselves were things to be put on display. Just as buildings like Bruno Taut's Glashaus (Cologne, 1914) were shown in modern exhibition parks (for the purpose of promoting new styles), so too were Georgian garden pavilions 'curated,' their placements and visual prospects deliberated upon in treatises and terms that in some ways presaged the idea of an open-air museum. Thus, the pavilion as a work of art – something that puts itself on display – was certainly nothing new to the twentieth century.

What is it, though, that pavilions put on display? Beyond themselves, and beyond the artworks or assorted trinkets shown inside them, what is it that they exhibit? In the case of one very seminal exhibition of 1933, as Flavia Marcello writes in 'Fascism, middle class ideals and holiday villas at the 5th Milan Triennale,' what might have been displayed was a utopian vision of social reform, targeted at those in a position to improve their status or standing. In spite of the relative autonomy that their individual architects may have exercised, the modernist housing prototypes encountered here amounted to a very different kind of propaganda than the supranational kind found in world's-fair pavilions.

The next paper picks up on questions now being raised about European representations of former colonies at expositions. Jennifer Way's essay, "'A bazaar in the coliseum": Marketing Southeast Asian handicrafts in New York, 1956,' is a probing social historical account of the Vietnamese Pavilion during a trade exhibit that took place at a recently-opened New York convention centre built in the 'international style.' She discusses the attempts to create the atmosphere of an oriental bazaar there and turns to Edward Said's classic analysis of the politics of representing the East, bringing it to bear on a dissection of the Vietnamese Pavilion and its significance within the escalating political drama of the Cold War.

Beccy Kennedy's contribution, 'Pavilioning Manchester: Boundaries of the local, national and global

at the Asia Triennial,' continues this interrogation of the ways in which the Orient has been represented in the Western hemisphere. However, her subject is contemporary (or twenty-first-century) art and artists from all over Asia, and particularly art that raises questions of how a city like Manchester can come to function as a platform – indeed, as a kind of 'pavilion,' in the expanded sense of this term – for communicating the complex movements and identities that delineate the place of Asia within such a metropolitan glocale. Kennedy reviews the 2008 and 2011 triennial exhibitions, critiquing their shortcomings, in order to suggest how alternative curatorial positions might move away from the model of national pavilions, and mediate Asia in Manchester more sensitively.

The politics of representation also concerns the next essay included here, which returns the reader to the question of pavilions at the Venice Biennale. Wendy Asquith's assessment of the first Haitian pavilion at 54th Biennale in 2011, which was called *ILLUMInations*, enriches the discussion of the architecture of display from the angle of curatorship. Her contribution is titled: 'Haiti's first national pavilion at the Venice Biennale: Anachronism or illuminating opportunity?' She notes the spate of criticism that the Biennale has suffered in recent decades, on account of its Eurocentrism as well as the rather archaic ideas about nationhood that it embodies. Asquith suggests that any effort to supplement this with representation of the art of former colonies like Haiti will be seen as equally fraught or outdated. Be that as it may, even so, she raises the question of whether this does not present curators with the opportunity to illuminate or expose the Biennale's structural foundations with a view to challenging them.

In their statement about the Dallas Pavilion, Jaspar Joseph-Lester and Michael Corris remind us of another challenge to the conservative structure of the Biennale in recent years. For the 2013 Biennale, dubbed *The Encyclopedic Palace*, they have curated a city pavilion. Yet, they have done this in the form of a little book, which is intentionally contrasted with the big, vast 'non-places' that characterise Texas. 'The Dallas Pavilion' follows on from other pavilions that have pitted cities against the nation-based organization of this exposition. Yet it is presented as printed matter, as a catalogue or document of the city's seminal 'art spaces' and the works, activities and trends hosted by them. This pavilion-*cum*-book considers how location is embedded in the thinking and creative output of Dallas-based artist, curators, educators, museum directors and critics. Opting for a book over a building, as a space that facilitates alternative curatorial strategies, Corris

3   Some of the other trade shows that put architecture on display through the construction of pavilions might include the Leipzig International Building Exhibition (1913), the Exhibition for Unknown Architects in Berlin and Weimar (1919), the New Building exhibition in Berlin (1920), the Berlin Secession Exhibition (1923), the Turku Exhibition (1929), the Stockholm Exhibition of Industrial Art (1930).

and Joseph-Lester's 'pavilion' evokes Victor Hugo's prophecy about the decline of architecture in the age of print; here, that prophecy would seem to be brought to bear more specifically on the pavilion.

Contemporary projects

The final section raises more pointed questions about the contemporary pavilion and its continued meaningfulness for architectural culture. Not everyone is optimistic. This is not for lack of imagination in design, but skepticism as to the politics and public dimension of the pavilion. Despite the formalist wizardry to which pavilions have played host over the last few decades, there may, in the end, not be a whole lot more to them than chic advertisement or auteurial posturing. If the pavilion could still communicate the utopianism or optimism of social transformation in the immediate post-war era, things appear to have moved on since then. In contemporary pavilions – be it the annual Serpentine commissions or the Guggenheim biennial buildings under construction on Saadiyat Island (Abu Dhabi) – whatever optimism that remains appears to be all on the surface.

In 'Pavilion Politics,' an essay of 2010 that responds to the Serpentine commissions, the curator Andrea Phillips advanced a critique of the contemporary pavilion. (Not incidentally, she was writing in the year that saw Jean Nouvel build his neo-Constructivist pavilion, which tipped its sunshade – so to speak – at the bright red follies of Paris' Parc de la Villette, but otherwise fell quite short of Bernard Tschumi's ludic anarchism.) For Phillips, the Serpentine pavilions merely aestheticise, in built form, what is already all too often a questionable rhetoric of *outreach*, *impact* and *participation* in arts policy. While the pavilions of 'star architects' like Hadid, Nouvel, Frank Gehry and Daniel Libeskind capitalise on the avant-garde language to which they pay tribute, all they really do is stage 'social engagement' or engineer a 'scenography of democratic participation' (Phillips, 2010, p. 114) in a way that entirely belies the 'transposable commodification,' 'transnational branding' and 'privatized space' (p. 106) of which they are really representative.

Writing in 2012, Sylvia Lavin finds that the ubiquity of pavilions in the contemporary landscape is little more than a sign of their 'exhaustion' and 'enfeeblement.' The pavilions of Greg Lynn and Jürgen Mayer, or any of the Serpentine buildings, signal little more than the 'pavilion's fall from project to party décor' (Lavin, 2012, p. 214). The teleological thrust and social urgency of examples like L'Esprit Nouveau and the Barcelona Pavilion show up the inconsequentiality of the contemporary pavilion as a 'politically eviscerated shed'

(p. 218). 'By contrast,' Lavin declares with a kind of Tafurian melancholy, 'today's pavilions are for the most part vestigial adaptations'; they 'are no longer proleptic, having lost any connection to an advanced cultural or historical project' (p. 213). To be sure, she permits some exceptions: those self-reflexive projects in which artists take the lead in collaborating with architects on works that intervene in reified social relations.[4]

Whether one agrees or not with these critical positions, it is against this budding debate about the contemporary pavilion that the projects covered in this section might be considered. The texts included here look at some recent examples in the creation, use and dismantling of pavilions. Save for Sophie Kazan's review of Zaha Hadid's Mobile Art Pavilion (MAP) – a touring exhibition building designed in 2006, eventually permanently installed in the grounds of Paris' Institute of the Arab World – all of these contributions are written by the architects or artists themselves. Generally, these are shorter texts, with the exception of Chris Tucker's essay on the recent 'deconstruction' of the Children's Art Pavilion (1996) in Newcastle, Australia; in addition to being a description of the project, this last paper raises poignant aesthetic and moral questions in respect to temporary structures, which have 'lived' among a community for some time but are slated for demolition.

In contrast with the dazzling curves and sleek planes of Hadid's Mobile Art Pavilion, Yam Lau and Michael Yuan's 'mobile display unit' for the Donkey Institute of Contemporary Art (DICA) represents an on-going low-budget collaboration, which assumes its meaning in a peripatetic activity involving chance encounters and the participation of passers-by and local communities.

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4   Despite their criticism, Phillips and Lavin would probably not have engaged with the debates around public art opened up by contemporary pavilions had the Serpentine programme not existed, and had they not felt something was salvageable in such initiatives. Phillips seems more favourably disposed toward the symbolic value of projects like OMA's *Image of Europe*, a tent built in Brussels in 2004 for an exhibition sponsored by the European Union; or the perceptual experience fostered by David Adjaye and Olafur Eliasson's *Your Black Horizon*, a pavilion that debuted at the 2007 Venice Biennale. Lavin, for her part, concedes that 'the pavilion's displacement from its privileged position of prolepsis has made new options available' (p. 218). She cites the collaborative experiments of Thomas Demand (e.g., *Nagelhaus*, 2007-2010, built under a viaduct in Zurich with the assistance of Caruso St. John Architects), as well as François Roche and Stéphanie Levaux of R&Sie (e.g., *Hybrid Muscle*, 2004, built on the invitation of Philippe Parreno, who used it as the stage-set for his film *Boys from Mars*, at Rirkrit Tiravanija and Kamin Lerdchaiprasert's Land Foundation, near Chiang Mai, in northern Thailand).

Lau's personable photo-essay tells the story of the artists harnessing a bespoke kiosk to a donkey and crossing from rural territories into the streets of Beijing. It is an 'asinine' gesture, not only provocative in its deadpan humor (mocking the borders of art institution and city periphery alike), but reminiscent of the nomadic movements of peoples, both in the past and the present. When the donkey is not stopped by police or harassed otherwise, audiences cluster around it to watch videos or browse pamphlets. This unplanned social interaction and its documentation is a crucial part of the work, a form of ethnological investigation of the everyday sphere, serving as a spur to other 'happenings' in more contentious or relaxed spaces.

Equally collaborative and interactive are Sarah Bonnemaison and Robin Muller's 'warming hut' for a skating oval at the 2011 Canada Games in Halifax (Nova Scotia) and Harriet Harriss' Ping-Pong Pavilion built with students from Montana State University and Oxford Brookes University for the 2012 London Festival of Architecture. Although very different in form, materials and usage, both projects happily underscored the importance of sport in the history of pavilions. Whereas the Architextiles Lab's pavilion sought to blend the hand-crafted with hi-tech electronic interfacing and smart materials that responded to the body's presence, Harriss' project was more interested in demonstrating how to take controlled risks by allowing the rules of a game (ping-pong in this case) to dictate certain decisions in design. Vital to both structures is the kind of innovation that takes place through play and participation, and to which the pavilion is especially conducive.

These project statements and reflections offer a sense of the sundry forms and functions that pavilions might take today. They range from being officially authorised, expensively funded and well-crafted buildings to interventionist, grassroots and makeshift experiments. Having a decidedly more urban than rural setting, they are community-oriented, not simply fabricating a

scenography of public space but asserting the praxis of engagement, participation and collectivity more persuasively. They demonstrate how the pavilion, as a structure that converges on exhibitionary architecture, might be adapted to the local character of places, or redefined with a view to different publics. For these reasons, projects like Tucker's Children's Art Pavilion, which existed as an umbrella for the Newcastle Art Gallery's programme for widening participation, seem to be worlds apart from the 'party décor' pavilions erected in London's Kensington Gardens every summer.

Just a stone's throw from the lake laid out in 1730 by Queen Caroline, and the former site of the Crystal Palace, the Serpentine Pavilions indeed attract all the advantages of a populous world city, while benefiting from the green setting in which such buildings were traditionally accommodated. They are a barometer of the latest vogue, and are undeniably of superb imagination. Certainly, the programme is good advertising for its sponsors, as well as the established architects chosen to stamp their signatures – if only momentarily, for one season – on a moneyed West End landscape. Yet, what the programme does (or has the potential to do) is raise the very question *what is a pavilion?* – and *whither the pavilion?* It does this from a more visible prospect, and maybe throwing up questions about public art and public space is its most important achievement.

Already, however, a counter-discourse has begun to surface in more self-critical projects, which tend to be less well-funded, unofficial, sometimes even legally questionable, and always provocative **(Figures 0.17-0.19)**. The experimental architectural collective raumlaborberlin's *The World is Not Fair – The Great World's Fair 2012*, conceived together with the theatre company Hebbel am Ufer (HAU), challenged the

Figure 0.17: Paolo W. Tamburella, *Djahazi*, 2009, cargo vessel and shipping container, serving as the pavilion of the Cormoros Islands at the 53rd Venice Biennale. Courtesy of Paolo W. Tamburella.

Figure 0.18: Sanjeev Shankar, *Jugaad Canopy*, 2010, oil cans, public art installation in Rajokri, New Delhi. Courtesy of Studio Sanjeev Shankar. Photograph: Sundeep Bali and Adam Roney.

Figure 0.19: Alex Hartley, The Mobile Cabinet of Curiosities and Embassy of *Nowhereisland*, stationed in Newquay Harbour, Cornwall, United Kingdom, 2012, mixed media. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

spectacle of global expositions with the installation of fifteen makeshift pavilions **(Figures 0.20-0.22)**. They brought real issues to the table – via theatre, performance and video – instead of disguising the violence, disorder and unevenness of the world beneath the sham magniloquence of international peace and prosperity. 'What will be exhibited is not the world as it is or should be, but how we perceive, understand, and interpret it' (raumlaborberlin and Hebbel am Ufer, 2012), wrote the organisers.

Erected in Berlin's Tempelhofer Park, a former airfield of historic importance on account of its use during the Second World War, the pavilions of the *Great World's Fair 2012* sought 'to examine ideas, systems, and phenomena by which even the most outlying cultures are now globally connected with each other' (raumlaborberlin and Hebbel am Ufer, 2012). Willem de Rooij's pavilion housed a sound recording – *Farafra* – of camels on the Libyan-Egyptian border, recalling the display of animals and humans alike in the colonial villages of international expositions. Johannesburg video artist and activist Tracey Rose's television-shaped pavilion reopened the wounds of Apartheid with a live soap opera. Japanese playwright Toshiki Okada's

Figure 0.20: Branca Prlić and Tamer Yiğit, 52.4697°N 13.396°E, for *The Great World's Fair 2012 – The World Is Not Fair*, an event organized by raumlaborberlin and Hebbel am Ufer, June 2012, Tempelhof Park, Berlin. Courtesy of raumlaborberlin.

Figure 0.21: Tracey Rose, Pavilion for *The Great World's Fair 2012 – The World Is Not Fair*, an event organised by raumlaborberlin and Hebbel am Ufer, June 2012, Tempelhof Park, Berlin. Courtesy of raumlaborberlin.

Figure 0.22: Erik Göngrich, *Pavilion of the World Fair* (background: Pavilion created by architectural collective Umschichten), for *The Great World's Fair 2012 – The World Is Not Fair*, an event organised by raumlaborberlin and Hebbel am Ufer, June 2012, Tempelhof Park, Berlin. Courtesy of raumlaborberlin.

pavilion, *Unable to See*, memorialised the victims of the 2011 Tōhoku disaster. Film directors Branca Prlić and Tamer Yiğit's conceived a pavilion for refugees, called *52.4697°N 13.396°E.* Beirut artist Rabih Mroué's tunnel-like pavilion *Double Shooting* alluded to the conflict in Syria. Erik Göngrich's *Pavilion of World's Fairs* lampooned the exposition institution with comical flags, slogans and murals.

Integrated in their park-like setting by red-and-white-striped awnings and partitions, the festive tent-like structures of *The World Is Not Fair* sheltered very different world views than those expressed in pavilions ornamenting the Arcadias and Utopias of the modern era. If these often communicated the grand ideas and ideals of Enlightenment, the pavilions of Tempelhofer Park seem more like postmodern billboards for raumlaborberlin's motto, 'Bye bye Utopia!' On an increasingly militarised planet, where the difference between natural, diplomatic and industrial disasters is increasingly blurry, such counter-discursive projects represent a 'place between' art and architecture. They are host to the more meaningful encounters between the 'pleasure and polemics' that pavilions have always facilitated. Here, the pavilion more clearly exposes itself for what it is – a little tent under which big worlds and embattled perceptions of the world come into view.

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'NOT MONTHS BUT MOMENTS': EPHEMERALITY, MONUMENTALITY AND THE PAVILION IN RUINS

Ihor Junyk

This essay examines a fundamental tension between ephemerality and monumentality in the history of pavilion architecture. Descended from the ancient tent, the pavilion was taken up by European landscape architecture in the eighteenth century and integrated into an aesthetic of the picturesque. These ephemeral structures became both settings and instruments of a set of fleeting experiences that can be grouped under the category of reverie. However, during the course of the nineteenth century, the pavilion underwent a dramatic change, gradually becoming the monumental representative for nations participating at the various expositions and World's Fairs of that century and the next. Unable to actualise the permanence they were meant to embody, pavilions instead called forth aggressive fantasies of ruin and death. Wary of the deathly aesthetics of monumentality and sublimity, architects working in recent decades have returned the pavilion to its original ephemerality. Experimenting with new materials and digital technologies they have created contemporary follies as new spaces for reverie.

Keywords: pavilion, monumentality, ephemeral, ruin, death, reverie, Paris Exposition 1939.

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'NOT MONTHS BUT MOMENTS': EPHEMERALITY, MONUMENTALITY AND THE PAVILION IN RUINS

Ihor Junyk

Abstract

This essay examines a fundamental tension between ephemerality and monumentality in the history of pavilion architecture. Descended from the ancient tent, the pavilion was taken up by European landscape architecture in the eighteenth century and integrated into an aesthetic of the picturesque. These ephemeral structures became both settings and instruments of a set of fleeting experiences that can be grouped under the category of reverie. However, during the course of the nineteenth century, the pavilion underwent a dramatic change, gradually becoming the monumental representative for nations participating at the various expositions and World's Fairs of that century and the next. Unable to actualise the permanence they were meant to embody, pavilions instead called forth aggressive fantasies of ruin and death. Wary of the deathly aesthetics of monumentality and sublimity, architects working in recent decades have returned the pavilion to its original ephemerality. Experimenting with new materials and digital technologies they have created contemporary follies as new spaces for reverie.

❪ The butterfly counts not months but moments, and has time enough. ❫

                        Rabindranath Tagore

Despite its status as a minor architectural form (or perhaps because of this very fact), the pavilion embodies in a heightened way one of the central dilemmas of architectural modernity, and perhaps aesthetic modernity more generally – namely, the conflict between ephemerality and monumentality. In a time of ubiquitous impermanence and fleeting change how is it possible to stop time and make deep impressions, and indeed should one even try? Throughout most of its history the pavilion has been a self-consciously provisional structure. Descended from the ancient tent, it was taken up by European landscape architecture in the eighteenth century where it took various guises, including the kiosk and the pagoda, structures that can all be grouped under the general category of the folly. Even when these humble

structures were given more elegance and permanence by the aestheticizing tastes of the aristocracy, one might argue that the fundamentally ephemeral character of these buildings remained one of their central features. Integrated into an aesthetics of the picturesque, they were both the setting and instrument of a set of fleeting experiences – surprise, pleasure, desire – that I will call reverie. During the course of the nineteenth century, however, the pavilion underwent a dramatic change. From the humble folly it gradually became the avatar of the nation at the various expositions and world's fairs of that century and the next. But in doing so, the pavilion embodied a fundamental contradiction. As part of a finite exposition, by its very nature it was ephemeral; as a building that would sooner or later disappear from the topography of the city in which it was built, to be re-sited subsequently either in its home country or in the archives of cultural memory.

But ideology and nationalism demanded ever more monumental pavilions – buildings that would testify to the power and permanence of the nation and induce in the spectator feelings of awe. Unable to reconcile permanence and transience, pavilions instead called forth aggressive fantasies of ruin and death, a tendency that finds its aesthetic formulation in Albert Speer's 'theory of ruin value' and its embodiment in the Deutsches Haus, the German pavilion designed by Speer for the Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques de la Vie Moderne in Paris, 1937. Speer's work is both the apotheosis and crisis of a particular necrophilic conception of the pavilion. Wary of the deathly aesthetics of monumentality and sublimity, contemporary architects have returned the pavilion to its original ephemerality. Experimenting with new materials and digital technologies they have created contemporary follies as new spaces for reverie.[1]

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1   This is not to say that every pavilion prior to the *fin de siècle* was ephemeral, nor that every pavilion of the twentieth century was monumental. History is far messier than that and there are counterexamples to any such generalisation. Among them are the examples of an aesthetic and ideological tendency in Le Corbusier's iconic Esprit Nouveau pavilion for the 1937 Exposition Internationale, which presented a modernised vision of ephemerality, as well as the pavilions of Italy, Nazi Germany, the Soviet Union, the French Trocadéro, and many other structures besides which opted for a monumental classicism. While the 1937 exposition comprised works of ephemerality, then, the aesthetics of monumentality clearly dominated. If the following account schematises somewhat it is not in order to deny such cultural complexity but to present these dominant trends more clearly and starkly.

From ephemerality to monumentality

Etymologically, the word 'pavilion' can be traced back to the Old French term 'pavellun' which is itself derived from the Latin 'papilio' meaning 'tent' or literally 'butterfly,' presumably because of the way that tent flaps moving in the wind were reminiscent of the beating wings of a butterfly. (Bergdoll, 2009, p.13). The pavilion entered the vernacular of eighteenth-century landscape architecture and drew very much on the ephemerality of these origins. Inspired by the buildings of Asia and the Middle East, architects created compact, standalone structures to be used in the complex dramaturgy of picturesque garden design. These were typically playful and even experimental structures unconstrained by the classical canon and the hierarchy of building types. While the tent-like 'Turkish kiosk' was the most obvious descendent of the 'papilio,' countless buildings in a variety of 'exotic' styles emphasised the origin of the pavilion as a makeshift, temporary structure.

This constitutive ephemerality manifested itself not only in the external form of the pavilion but also in the uses to which these buildings were put. The popularity of the pavilion was in part inspired by a turn to the picturesque in European aesthetics

in the eighteenth century. In 1719 both Alexander Pope and the architect John Vanbrugh used the term 'picturesque' to argue for the creation of landscapes suffused with pictorial instead of architectural qualities (Bergdoll, 2000, p.75). Anchored in a sensationalist epistemology, the advocates of the picturesque rejected the geometric formalism of the gardens of Versailles with their appeal to the intellect, and valorised instead simple and natural gardens as the setting most likely to facilitate sensation and experience. Over the course of the eighteenth century architects developed an elaborate set of representational techniques for use in landscape design. Asymmetric composition, winding paths, water and lighting effects were just some of the tools designers could mobilise to elicit emotion and inspire thought. Pavilions also played a crucial role in this regard. The combination of landscape and built structures allowed designers to lead garden visitors to reflect on the relationship between nature and culture. Similarly, the stylistic heterogeneity of pavilion buildings served as a springboard for meditations on cultural relativism, history, or the fate of civilisations. Reciprocal views allowed a structure to appear from several different positions in the park and be juxtaposed with new objects and settings, potentially serving as

Figure 1.1: The Sultan's Copper Tents, Drottningholm Palace, Sweden, 1787. Photograph: Holger Elgaard.

a prop for the contemplation of perspective, meaning and knowledge. But the experience of pavilions was certainly not exclusively serious or contemplative. The term 'folly' emerged in the eighteenth century to refer to a diverse class of garden structures defined by their whimsy, playfulness, and lack of utility. As Anthony Vidler has noted, 'what was not permitted in "serious" building was, by definition, permitted in the folly. A mere plaything, the folly could exhibit the dimensions of play' (Vidler, 1983, p.11). 'Rooms for dreaming' (Bussmann, 2009, p.39), follies were places where one could put aside the serious business of the world and give oneself over to fantasy, amusement, and pleasure.

Although the uses of the pavilion were manifold, the experiences it solicited were overwhelmingly defined by their transitoriness and ephemerality. This was not a place for undivided attention or the hard work of reason. Instead it called forth mobile states of thought and feeling – those that flowed like water or flitted like butterflies – in order to house a diverse company of experiences, for whom the term reverie can perhaps serve as a kind of master figure, as in the thought of Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Indeed, writing during the heyday of the picturesque garden and the folly, Rousseau turned to reverie as an alternative to Enlightenment rationality with its instrumental purposiveness and optical clarity. In his *Reveries of a Solitary Walker* Rousseau describes the pleasures and possibilities offered by this mode of being:

> ❛ I would slip away and get in a boat all alone, which I would row out to the middle of the lake when it was calm, and there, stretching out full-length in the boat, my eyes looking up to the sky, I would let myself float and drift slowly wherever the water took me, sometimes for several hours at a time, plunged in a thousand vague but delightful reveries, which, although they did not have any clear or constant subject, I always found a hundred times preferable to all the sweetest things I had enjoyed in what are known as the pleasures of life. ❜

(Rousseau, [1782] 2011, pp.52–53)

With his thoughts mimicking the drift of his body, Rousseau discovers the *jouissance* of the fleeting, the contingent, and the non-purposive. This section in many ways echoes the famous description of the picturesque Elysée garden in *La Nouvelle Heloise*: 'The more I wandered through this pleasant refuge,' notes one of the characters, 'the more I felt increasing the delightful sensation which I had experienced upon entering … I was more eager to see the objects than to examine the impression they made on me, and I preferred to

give myself up to that charming contemplation without taking the trouble to reflect about it' (Rousseau, [1761] 1968, p.307). Later, meditating on his experiences in the garden, Rousseau notes that 'I had promised myself a pleasant reverie. I had dreamed there more agreeably than I had expected. I spent in the Elysium two hours to which I prefer no other time in my life' (p.315). Here the garden plays a parallel role to that of the lake in the fifth walk of the *Reveries*. It provides the site and spark for a variety of fluid states of consciousness which are indistinct and so deeply pleasurable and satisfying. Although he does not mention the pavilion, it is plain why this structure could enhance and intensify the kinds of experiences that Rousseau describes. It may be said, then, that the eighteenth century pavilion was the home of reverie.

But this place of intimate and private experiences develops over the course of the nineteenth century into a much more public structure. Democratic revolutions, the spread of capitalism, and the rise of mass culture all engendered novel forms of public spectacle that required new types of buildings and the pavilion evolved to accommodate them. Initially, agricultural and industrial expositions were held in provisional structures that hearkened back to the 'papilio.' When the Agricultural Fair comes to Yonville in Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, the only structure erected is a tent: 'It was here at last, the day of the famous Agricultural Fair! On the morning of the solemn occasion, all the townspeople were at their doors talking about the preparations; the pediment of the town hall had been festooned with ivy; a tent for the banquet had been set up in a field; and in the middle of the Square, in front of the church, a sort of ancient cannon was to signal the arrival of the Prefect and the naming of the prizewinning farmers' (Flaubert, [1856] 2010, p.115). Similarly, the industrial expositions of the early 1800s were originally housed in tents or in tent-like structures made of more durable materials.

However, as these expositions developed over the course of the nineteenth century, morphing eventually into world fairs, they were tasked with increasingly elaborate symbolic work. The fairs were not merely an occasion to gather and display consumer goods, industrial products, or works of art; they became both emblem and instrument of more grandiose aims. The 1851 Great Exhibition in London was meant to establish Britain's industrial pre-eminence, while the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition became an opportunity to demonstrate Chicago's status as a world class-city, rivaling Paris and New York. The 1937 Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques de la Vie Moderne in Paris was set out to facilitate world

peace and economic revitalisation. Given these aims, it was inadequate for the exposition pavilions simply to provide cover for their contributors. They needed to carry an independent and more powerful semiotic charge.

In order to fulfill these symbolic mandates architects turned again and again to the register of the monumental. This is an aesthetic modality of great antiquity, stretching back to the pyramids of the Egyptians and the temples and tombs of the Greeks and Romans. Etymologically, the word monument comes from *monumentum* in Latin, which derives from *monere*, meaning 'to remind,' but also 'to warn,' for posterity. 'Monuments are reminders, in enduring material, of the achievement of a collective (whether family, city or nation),' notes James Porter. 'They are collective expressions with ideological force' (2011, p.685). Although monuments can take radically different forms, Porter argues that 'what all monuments in any form share is an expression of permanence in the face of loss' (p.685). In order to achieve this monumental structures have typically availed themselves of the aesthetic resources of the sublime. According to Porter, 'though not always huge in size, monuments invariably make a huge and lasting impression on the beholder' (p.687).

In spite of the manifold differences between structures such as the Crystal Palace, the Manufactures and Liberal Arts Building, and the Deutsches Haus, they all aspired to monumentality as a means to make ideological points and mobilised the rhetoric of the sublime. Whether it was the overwhelming luminosity of Paxton's building, the sheer size of Post's, or the

Figure 1.2: George B. Post, Manufactures and Liberal Arts Building, World's Columbian Exposition, Chicago, 1893.

power of Speer's, all three structures sought to inspire awe in beholders and thereby convince them of the permanence and rightness of the values these buildings embodied.

But there is an element of bad faith here. For despite the persuasiveness of the rhetoric of monumentality and sublimity, it is clear that the monument is not eternal. The life of monumental stone is longer than the life of man, but it too is subject to time and decay; it is ultimately ephemeral. This is a state of affairs long recognised and explored by various poets. In discussing his poetic achievement in Ode 3.30, Horace notes that 'I have finished a monument more lasting than bronze, more lofty than the regal structure of the pyramids, one which neither corroding rain nor the ungovernable North Wind can ever destroy, nor the countless series of the years, nor the flight of time' (Horace, [23 BCE] 2004). Here the author presents a *paragone*, a competition of the arts. By making a claim for the superiority of poetry, he highlights the fragility of architecture, whose materiality is vulnerable to the ravages of time and the elements.

That motif of collapse and ruin recurs in Latin poetry. In the fourth century CE, Ausonius meditated on the melancholy spectacle of faded inscriptions on monumental structures:

> 'Lucius' is one letter, but it is separated by twin points: in this way a single sign indicates the <entire> praenomen. After an 'M' is inscribed, at least I think so – it is not all visible. The top has been damaged by the stone breaking and has fallen off (dissiluit saxi fragmine laesus apex). [. . .] The letters [. . .] have perished in a confusion of signs (omnia confusis interiere notis). Are we surprised that men die? Monuments gape apart (monumenta fatiscunt), death comes even to stones and names.

(Cited in Porter, 2011, p.691)

In this account a stone has collapsed, and with it the memory of those it was meant to preserve. Even in the nineteenth century, a period of intense appetites for monumental building, Shelley's *Ozymandias* is a warning against the hubris of those who would attempt to step outside time and inscribe their names for eternity.

This recognition, however, has generally been a melancholy one, for the desire to endure is a deeply rooted one, in Western culture at least. At the very beginnings of the Western tradition Aristotle identified it as a fundamental biological drive:

> For the most natural function of living things… is to produce another living thing like itself…in

order that they may partake of the eternal and the divine as far as they can; for all living things "desire" [the eternal and the divine], and it is for the sake of this that those who act according to nature do so. 🎜

(Aristotle, [350 BCE] 1981, p.415b)

Faced with the onslaught of time and the transitoriness of life, humans both procreate and create, seeking to extend themselves both biologically and culturally. While this is a concern going back to antiquity, one might argue that it takes on a particular pathos in the modern day. Looking at the discourse of ruination in early twentieth century Germany, Mark Featherstone argues that this 'will to endurance functions as a symptom of a deeper pathology that one might call the obsession with disappearance'. (Featherstone, 2005, p.302). In opposition to the modern condition, 'whereby the self experiences the shock of transience and the horror of the endless slippage of form,' certain producers of culture 'sought to generate an image of profound wholeness that could remain resistant to the chaos of modernity.' This is a psycho-pathology that functions as a 'neurotic response to the natural history of transience' and 'produces a symptomology of permanence, totality, and eternity' (pp.302–303) Featherstone calls the psychotic sublime.[2]

Such a tension between the desire to endure and the recognition that even the most monumental extensions are fleeting and impermanent has brought some remarkable cultural consequences. Andreas Huyssen has identified a particular reaction in Richard Wagner that, I will argue, has much wider cultural currency. Discussing the opposition between ephemerality and monumentality in Wagner's works, Huyssen notes that 'the anxiety produced by this tension results in a paranoid aggressive streak, which couples the insight into the transitoriness of art with images of ruin, death, and destruction. The pressures of the transitory affect the monumental itself: the only monument that counts is the one already imagined as ruin' (Huyssen, 1996, p.189). Caught between the desire for the monumental and eternal and a knowledge of the impossibility of this desire, Wagner responds by elaborating violent and

apocalyptic fantasies. While the tendency might be to see this reaction as merely the idiosyncratic expression of an aberrant psyche, it is the kind of reading that covers over the widespread presence of this discourse of ruination within debates about monumental building. Repeatedly over the course of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, exposition pavilions meant to invoke stability and permanence instead called up violent fantasies of destruction, ruination and death.

The discourse around the closing of the Columbian Exposition provides a particularly striking example of this tendency. When Chicago won the right to stage the fair, the organisers were reputed to have aimed for the grandest spectacle the world had ever seen. There was a prevailing sense, both in the United States and abroad, that while the city was an important commercial centre, it was too young and provincial to stage a significant cultural event. The designers of the fair used the rhetoric of monumentality and sublimity in order to prove the naysayers wrong in the hope of demonstrating Chicago's emergence as a world-class city. The participating architects imagined buildings on an unprecedented scale. For example, George B. Post's Manufactures and Liberal Arts Building was the largest building ever constructed to that time, three times the size of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. When the fair opened the sublimity of the buildings indeed left spectators awestruck. According to Erik Larson, 'no single element accounted for this phenomenon. Each building was huge to begin with, but the impression of mass was amplified by the fact that all the buildings were neoclassical in design, all had cornices set at the same height, all had been painted the same soft white, and all were so shockingly, beautifully unlike anything the majority of visitors ever had seen in their own dusty hometowns' (Larson, 2003, p.252). Enthusiastic about the fair's grand central square, a contemporary visitor opined that 'no other scene of man's creation seemed to me so perfect as this Court of Honor ... the aesthetic sense of the beholder was as fully and unreservedly satisfied as in looking at a masterpiece of painting or sculpture, and at the same time was soothed and elevated by a sense of amplitude and grandeur such as no single work of art could produce' (p.252).

Despite the monumental impression that these buildings made, they were nonetheless ephemeral structures. In order to speed up construction, architects decided to clad their buildings in staff – a mixture of plaster and jute that could be molded into columns and spread over wooden frames to give the illusion of stone. 'There will not be a brick on the grounds' (p.120), noted Daniel Burnham, the Director

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2   In his classic book on suburbia, *The Castles on the Ground* (1973), J.M. Richards makes a very similar point, albeit without Featherstone's cultural pessimism. 'In fact for all their distance apart,' he writes, 'geographically and spiritually, Moscow and Metroland have this in common, that architecture is to them not an art form to be accepted or rejected according to the rules of aesthetic taste. It is a symbol of what is real and tangible in an uncertain world, contributing to their environment the comforts of familiarity' (p.63).

of Works for the fair. The end of the exposition and the need to take down these provisional structures unleashed a torrent of violent fantasies. Charles McKim, one of the fair architects, noted that: 'indeed it is the ambition of all concerned to have it all swept away in the same magical manner in which it appeared, and with the utmost despatch. For economy, as well as for obvious reasons, it has been proposed that the most glorious way would be to blow up the buildings with dynamite. Another scheme is to destroy them with fire. This last would be the easiest and grandest spectacle except for the danger of flying embers in the event of a change of wind from the lake' (p.321). A writer for *Cosmopolitan* was similarly apocalyptic. 'Better to have it vanish suddenly, in a blaze of glory,' he wrote, 'than fall into gradual disrepair and dilapidation. There is no more melancholy spectacle than a festal hall, the morning after the banquet, when the guests have departed and the lights are extinguished' (p.322). Even Carter Henry Harrison, the Mayor of Chicago imagined a kind of mid-western *Götterdämmerung*. 'It sickens me when I look at this great Exposition to think that it will be allowed to crumble to dust,' he noted during his speech at the closing ceremonies of the fair. He hoped the demolition would be quick and quoted Burnham: '"Let it go; it has to go, so let it go. Let us put the torch to it and burn it down." I believe with him. If we cannot preserve it for another year I would be in favor of putting a torch to it and burning it down and let it go up into the bright sky to eternal heaven' (p.328). If it cannot stand then let it fall; indeed, hasten the fall. Annihilate the monument, drive it into non-being.

It is difficult to know what to make of these kinds of reactions. Certainly they carry an element of infantile aggression, the blind fury of a child who would destroy an object (or indeed the entire world) for frustrating her desires. In his great treatise on aggression, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, Sigmund Freud considered the economic function of this type of emotion. On the one hand he saw it as defiance and revenge – 'All right, then, go away! I don't need you. I'm sending you away myself' (Freud, 1975, p.15). But it also functioned as a coping mechanism, a strategy for accommodating oneself to loss. 'At the outset,' the child threatened with the loss of the love object 'was in a passive situation – he was overpowered by the experience; but by repeating it, unpleasurable though it was, as a game, he took on an active part' (p.15). It is a reading that resonates powerfully with N.J. Habraken's ideas about architecture, activity and violence, in which building is inextricably connected with action – an attempt to comprehend and take possession of our environment. Without the creative means to do this,

the work will be done destructively. 'It is well known,' writes Habraken, 'that if this urge for possession has no other means of expression it would rather become destructive than look on passively. A child will destroy a toy with which he can do nothing, and content himself with playing with the pieces' (Habraken, 1972, p.13).

Might then such upsurge of violent fantasies also be at the service of the 'instinct for mastery' identified by Freud and Habraken? Faced with the painful prospect of the inexorable decline of these beautiful objects, spectators responded by taking control and gaining mastery in the only way they could – by calling for that destruction themselves. Freud also shows us that aggression can have a paradoxically conservative function (Freud, 1975, p.43) and that lurking behind the calls to annihilation is the surprising urge to preserve. The prospect of the sublime monument's gradual deterioration is so painful that it sparks a desire to destroy it, enabling it to live on in memory, pristine and resplendent.[3]

What stands behind and enables both the destructive and conservative dimensions of these apocalyptic fantasies is what may be called the logic of monumentality. Ephemerality allows for transformation, even metamorphosis; it is a deeply graduated or differentiated state, one that acknowledges change and difference over time. The ephemeral object can take many different forms, can be many different things. Monumentality, on the other hand, is a binary state, allowing for only two modalities: resplendency or collapse, wholeness or ruin. The monumental object either is or is not.

While the discourse of monumentality and ruination reached a kind of fever pitch during the Chicago World's Fair, its apotheosis was still to come. With Albert Speer that monumental ruination was codified into a formal aesthetic principle. His 'theory of ruin value' turned every monument into a ruin avant la letter and his deathly Deutsches Haus transformed the pavilion into the very anti-type of the eighteenth century folly.

The Deutsches Haus
The Deutsches Haus was the German pavilion at the 1937 Exposition International des Arts et Techniques de la Vie Moderne in Paris. The Exposition was an event with a complicated history (Junyk, 2006). Organised during the Great Depression of the 1930s, its original aim was to stimulate investment, industry and trade. However, with the increasing tension of international affairs (the Italian invasion of Ethiopia; Franco's assaults

3   My thanks to Kristin Casady for pointing this out to me.

on the Spanish Republic; German rearmament) the promotion of peace and international cooperation became a subsidiary goal. The more idealistic French organisers were dismayed to discover, however, that not all of the participants supported these altruistic aims. Many of them were planning to use the Exposition as a forum for propaganda, effectively turning the fair into a competition of national identities. This is a tendency that had been developing for some time. The early fairs had had a largely commercial function. They provided a forum for the display and comparison of consumer goods and industrial products that were classified by category and nation of origin and exhibited in large international halls. However, with the growth of nationalist movements in Europe, and the widespread attempt to 'invent' national traditions, the expositions saw the increased popularity of discrete national pavilions which began to displace the more fluid, cosmopolitan exhibition spaces. These new national pavilions drew on the pavilions of the picturesque garden tradition, but this time in their guise as follies. The 'Rue des nations,' first seen at the 1878 Exposition Universelle in Paris, assembled a collection of follies as a street façade. But from this Exposition onward,

the exotic styles of the individual buildings stood in, metonymically, for the nations they represented. By the time of the Exposition Internationale, that transformation was complete. The expositions had shifted from displays of commercial wares to the display and propaganda of separate nations as collective entities, so that the pavilions themselves became avatars of the nation.

One can see this in the discussions regarding the Deutsches Haus. According to the official catalogue, the pavilion was 'meant to be an ambassador of its country, bearing witness of its artistic endeavour, and reflecting the strength and personality of the entire nation' (Fiss, 1995, p.108). These sentiments were echoed by Werner Rittich, one of the best known Nazi architecture critics, who claimed that '[t]his monument … must be the manifesto of the German way of life and cultural will … a symbol of the pride, of the strength, and of the consciousness of self' (Bartetzko, 1987, p.134). The Deutsches Haus, then, would function as a material sign of Germany's cultural renaissance and propaganda for a re-forged German identity. It sought to embody and broadcast the health, might and permanence of the Third Reich to the entire world.

Figure 1.3: The Rue des Nations, Exposition Universelle, Paris, 1878.

In order to do this, Albert Speer adopted the language of monumentality. This is evident, first of all, in the building's sheer size. The largest structure at the Exposition, the Deutsches Haus literally looked down on the other pavilions. And as Speer makes clear in his memoir, this was not only an aesthetic decision but an ideological statement. According to Speer:

> ' The Soviet Russian and German pavilions were to be placed directly opposite one another on the fairgrounds; the French directors of the fair had deliberately arranged this confrontation. While looking over the site in Paris, I by chance stumbled into a room containing the secret sketch of the Soviet pavilion. A sculpted pair of figures thirty-three feet tall, on a high platform, were striding triumphantly toward the German pavilion. I therefore designed a cubic mass, also elevated on stout pillars, which seemed to be checking this onslaught, while from the cornice of my tower an eagle with a swastika in its claws looked down on the Russian sculptures. '

(Speer, 1970, p.81)

Figure 1.4: Albert Speer, Deutsches Haus (German Pavilion), Exposition Internationale, Paris, 1937.

In the competition of ideologies and national identities, the imposing monumentality of the Deutsches Haus signalled the triumph of National Socialism, and sought to inspire awe at its sublime might. 'My architecture represented an intimidating display of power', wrote Speer, 'my buildings were heavy and menacing, constructed, so to speak, with too much muscle on them' (cited in Scobie, 1990, p.40). Speer's muscle-bound warrior presented a frightening spectacle of martial vigour that made a profound impression on the spectators of the Exposition. Amédée Ozenfant reported overhearing groups of French youth impressed by the building: '"Smashing! You can see those people have got a Chief!" Here is another lot: "Why can't we do the same? What are we waiting for? Heil Hitler!"' (Ozenfant, 1937, p.242). Spectators of the Deutsches Haus were led to believe in the superiority of the regime that created it.

Indeed, the Third Reich sought not only to establish its sublime might but also its venerability, arguing for the continuity of the Greco-Roman past and Nazi contemporaneity. Sometimes this was talked about as the continuity of cultural values. 'Hitler believed that the culture of the Greeks had reached the peak of perfection in every field', Speer later reflected. 'Their view of life, he said, as expressed in their architecture, had been "fresh and healthy." One day a photograph of a beautiful woman swimmer stirred him to enthusiastic reflections: "What splendid bodies you can see today. It is only in our century that young people have once again approached Hellenistic ideals through sports. How the body was neglected in earlier centuries. In this respect our times differ from all previous cultural epochs since antiquity"' (1970, pp.96–97). As the embodiment of both physical and cultural health, modern Germany was the heir of classical antiquity, it was thought. But sometimes the connection between ancient Greece and contemporary Germany took stranger forms. According to one current of Nazi ideology, the Germans literally were Greeks, or more accurately, the ancient Greeks had been Germans. In his memoirs, Speer discusses Hitler's belief in a shared German and Greek identity: 'By the Greeks he meant the Dorians. Naturally his view was affected by the theory – fostered by the scientists of his period – that the Dorian tribe, which migrated into Greece from the north, had been of Germanic origin, and that therefore its culture had not belonged to the Mediterranean world' (Speer, 1970, p. 97). The Germans, then, were not merely the bearers of privileged classical values but the actual descendants of an idealised ancient race.

The rhetoric of Speer's architecture picked up and embodied this belief in the continuity of Greece

and Germany. It did this by deploying the language of classicism. This is evident in the building's allusions to the classical temple: its strong horizontals and verticals, its large-cut stones, fluted piers, ceremonial entrance steps, mosaics and muscular Roman eagle. Two groups of Hellenic statues by Josef Thorak were there to draw the spectator's mind back to the halcyon days of ancient Greece. This connection was further reinforced by the discourse surrounding the pavilion. Its guidebook, written by prominent Nazi art critics and officials, denied that German classicism was 'mere slavish copying' and insisted that the similarities sprang from a world-view shared with the ancients: 'The reason for the fundamental harmony of our buildings with those of the Ancient World is a similar attitude towards building as such' (Fiss, 1995, p.108). Far from being an upstart regime, the Deutsches Haus made a claim for the longevity, even the eternity, of the Third Reich's values.

Yet despite its pretention to embody permanence, health and might, the Deutsches Haus was inevitably unable to support these ideals. Architectural historian Dieter Bartetzko has written extensively on the architectural references of the German pavilion of 1937. For him the Deutsches Haus alludes to several different funerary monuments, with the 'direct model of the pavilion' being the Munich Ehrentempel (Temple of Honour), a key monument in the 'Nazi death cult,' built to house the graves of Nazi party members killed in the putsch of 1923 (Bartetzko, 1987, p.136). Further, it also refers to an ancient Egyptian burial complex, identified by Karen Fiss as the complex of King Djoser at Saqqara (Fiss, 1995, p.109). As Bartetzko writes: 'The frontal tower of the pavilion of 1937 is a monumental and brutal transcription of these temples, or rather of these mausoleums. Beyond its imposing character, beyond all of its self-conscious calls to antiquity or Schinkel, it manifests the taste for death of the Nazi system. The frontal tower appeared like a funerary monument and the hall like a megalomaniacal sarcophagus' (Bartetzko, 1987, p.137). Far from calling to mind the sunny and healthy days of ancient Greece the Deutsches Haus transported its spectators into the realm of death.

Not only did the pavilion building move from health to death, but so did Thorak's ideal sculpted figures, and in at least two ways. Both are captured perfectly in a pithy statement made by a contemporary observer of the Exposition, Christian Zervos, editor of *Cahiers d'art*. Zervos described the figures of Third Reich sculpture as 'beings carved out for sport, struggle, violence; depth is missing' (Ades, 1995, p.52). The first part of this statement shows us one modality of death: the classical Nazi subject as its inflictor. As Zervos observes, these

are beings created for struggle and most often they appear in attitudes of aggression, swords raised in mid-thrust, or brooding preparation for violence. But there is also another modality of death, gestured towards in Zervos' account of the Nazi subject's missing depth. Here the Nazi is not the agent of death but rather its victim – he is himself dead. This is precisely what we see in the figures guarding the entrance to the Deutsches Haus. For the art historian Dawn Ades they lack all 'signs of human sensibility or specific individual being' (1995, p.53). Far from these figures being signs of vitality and health, they are complete ciphers, empty vessels, dead.

How can we explain the uncanny contradiction between the putative aims of the building and its actual form? While what stands behind this is certainly a kind of generalised Nazi necrophilia (Bartetzko's Nazi 'taste for death'), it is also a consequence of the logic of monumentality. We can see in the *Deutsches Haus* a radicalized version of the desire to destroy in order to preserve that we witnessed in the discourse on the closing of the World's Columbian Exposition. This is evident if we look at the 'theory of ruin value,' the aesthetic system that underwrites all of Speer's work of this period. Speer commented:

> ❛ The idea was that buildings of modern construction were poorly suited to form that 'bridge of tradition' to future generations which Hitler was calling for. It was hard to imagine that rusting heaps of rubble could communicate these heroic inspirations which Hitler admired in the monuments of the past. My 'theory' was intended to deal with this dilemma. By using special materials and by applying certain principles of statics, we should be able to build structures which even in a state of decay, after hundreds or (such were our reckonings) thousands of years would more or less resemble Roman models. ❜
>
> (1970, p.56)

Speer then notes that while working on the Zeppelin Field in Nuremberg he prepared a 'romantic drawing' showing 'what the reviewing stand on the Zeppelin Field would look like after generations of neglect, overgrown with ivy, its columns fallen, the walls crumbling here and there, but the outlines still clearly recognizable,' a perspective that Hitler himself found 'logical and illuminating' (p.56). According to Mark Featherstone, 'Speer's ruin value can be seen as an architectural representation of an ideology that sought to trade the temporality of life for the eternity of death' (2005, p.302). For Featherstone:

'Insofar as Speer's theory of construction sought to mime the building projects of Greece and Rome, and therefore align the future ruins of Nazi Germany with the cultural superiority afforded these dead civilizations, it is possible to understand the structure of Nazi ideology in terms of a science fiction that aimed to achieve eternal life through the monumentalisation of death. That is to say that Speer's project encoded the notion that Nazi Germany could only achieve immortality through the pursuit of endless ruination. Only the absence of life would achieve the eternal presence demanded by the regime's necrophilic leadership. '

(p.302)

Faced with the inevitability of transience and forgetting, Speer could only build the Thousand-Year Reich in the eternal kingdom of death. In contrast to the buildings of the Chicago World's Fair which were built in order to be used and only later became the objects of destructive fantasies, Speer's buildings were not designed primarily with life and use in mind, but were conceived, from the outset under the sign of death, as decaying ruins. As an avatar of the nation, Speer's building was always already a corpse. And in this respect it must be considered a radicalisation of the paranoid aggressivity discussed by Huyssen. For in contrast to Wagner, in whose work violence is an index of the tension between monumentality and ephemerality, the Deutsches Haus stands as a monument to a sado-masochistic worldview that sees violence and death as the very fabric of the universe.

Back to the Future

In the years since the Second World War there has been a wholesale turn away from monumentality in art and culture. The reasons for this shift have been extensively (and humorously) catalogued by Huyssen:

The monumental is aesthetically suspect because it is tied to nineteenth-century bad taste, to kitsch, and to mass culture. It is politically suspect because it is seen as representative of nineteenth-century nationalisms and of twentieth-century totalitarianisms. It is socially suspect because it is the privileged mode of expression of mass movements and mass politics. It is ethically suspect because in its preference for bigness it indulges in the larger-than-human, in the attempt to overwhelm the individual spectator. It is psychoanalytically suspect because it is tied to narcissistic delusions of grandeur and

to imaginary wholeness. It is musically suspect because, well, because of Richard Wagner.

(1996, pp.189190)

Deeply suspicious of this degraded monumentalism, the artists of the late twentieth century moved in the opposite direction, developing a wide variety of ephemeral art practices, whether performance art, landscape art or site-specific work. This period also saw the return of the ephemeral pavilion. Instead of permanence and monumentality, these pavilions once again began to explore transitoriness and absence.

Perhaps the most notable collection of such pavilions was commissioned by London's Serpentine Gallery. Since 2000 the gallery has commissioned leading international architects to design pavilions which are sited in the park for a three-month period. These structures can be seen as a return to an eighteenth-century tradition of the folly. Liberated from the rigors and demands of permanent construction, the participating architects have designed experimental and whimsical structures that seek to push the boundaries of architecture while encouraging sociability, imagination and play in the spectators and users of these spaces. In what seems to be a self-conscious nod to the folly tradition with its roots in the *papilio*, the inaugural pavilion building by Zaha Hadid was a reinvention of the tent.

Subsequent pavilions would explore other forms of ephemeral architecture, the highpoint coming in 2009 with the cloud-like structure designed by Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa of the leading Japanese architecture practice SANAA. An aluminum roof supported on the slenderest of columns, the pavilion looks like a postmodern descendent of the Turkish kiosk. According to the architects, 'the Pavilion is floating aluminium, drifting freely between the trees like smoke. The reflective canopy undulates across the site, expanding the park and sky. Its appearance changes according to the weather, allowing it to melt into the surroundings. It works as a field of activity with no walls, allowing uninterrupted view across the park and encouraging access from all sides. It is a sheltered extension of the park where people can read, relax and enjoy lovely summer days' (Serpentine Gallery Pavilion, 2009). Making use of asymmetric composition, winding paths, water and lighting effects, Sejima and Nishizawa have extended the eighteenth-century picturesque tradition.

In their description of their building tropes of liquidity predominate. In contrast to the heaviness and solidity of monumental architecture, the building refuses to stand still. It melts and flows, changing from

Figure 1.5: Zaha Hadid, Serpentine Gallery Pavilion, 2000. Courtesy of the Serpentine Gallery. Photograph: Hélène Binet.

Figure 1.6: SANAA (Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa), Serpentine Gallery Pavilion, 2009. Courtesy of the Serpentine Gallery. Photograph: Nick Guttridge.

one moment to the next. Further, this structure seeks not to convince, awe or terrorise, but to inspire reverie. Like the folly, this pavilion is a room for dreaming. This air of enchantment was captured by Julia Peyton-Jones, Director, and Hans Ulrich Obrist, Co-Director, of the Serpentine Gallery, who noted that 'Kazuyo Sejima and Ryue Nishizawa's design embraces the parkland around the Serpentine Gallery as never before with an extraordinarily innovative design, which reveals the subtle play on light and perception so characteristic of their work. This Pavilion will be a wonderful addition to London's landscape this summer. It is our dream come true' (Serpentine Gallery Pavilion, 2009).

Another recent pavilion takes the liquidity and ephemerality at the heart of Sejima and Nishizawa's structure further still. Developed for the 2008 Zaragoza World Expo, the MIT-designed Digital Water Pavilion not only takes metaphorical inspiration from water, but actually uses the element as one of the structure's main building materials. The only solid element of the pavilion is the roof – a 400mm thick structure covered with water which is supported by moveable pistons which can bring it up or down. The walls of the structure itself are made entirely of water and digital technology makes them interactive. Using high-speed computer-controlled solenoid valves, the walls can be configured to display text, patterns or images, or to respond dynamically to input from sensors. Drawing on the homology between water and

digital code immortalised by *The Matrix*, Carlo Ratti, head of MIT's SENSEable City Laboratory, describes the pavilion thus: 'The opening and closing of valves, at high frequency, produces a curtain of falling water – a pattern of pixels created from air and water instead of illuminated points on a screen. The entire surface becomes a one-bit deep digital display that continuously scrolls downward' (MIT Digital Water Pavilion, 2013).

Like the 2009 Serpentine Gallery pavilion, MIT's Digital Water Pavilion takes inspiration from architectural history and reinterprets it for the present. In comments that resonate with eighteenth-century landscape architect Jean-Marie Morel's assessment of the key role of water in building and design, William J. Mitchell, head of MIT's Design Laboratory and former dean of architecture at MIT, has noted that: 'Water has long been recognized as one of the most dynamic and engaging elements of urban public space. For centuries, architects have shaped and directed it by means of channels and pipes, nozzles, valves, and pumps. The technology of digital water walls, and its pioneering application in Zaragoza's Digital Water Pavilion, update this tradition for the digital era. Going forward, new combinations of sensor technology, embedded intelligence, networking, computer-controlled pumps and valves and other new technologies open up the exciting possibility of urban-scale, precisely controlled, highly interactive water' (MIT Digital Water Pavilion, 2013).

Figure 1.7: Clips of the MIT Digital Water Pavilion (Zaragoza World Expo, 2008) on YouTube.

Moreover, like the structures that sat in Morel's parks, MIT's pavilion is a profoundly ephemeral building. 'The design for the water pavilion grew out of a central challenge,' noted Carlo Ratti. It poses the question: 'How to make fluid, reconfigurable architecture?' (MIT Digital Water Pavilion, 2013). The use of new elements and technologies allows for a radical re-imagining of many of the verities of architectural practice. 'This capability enables architects to challenge many traditional ideas about architectural form,' writes Mitchell. 'Doors, for example, need not have fixed locations. When you walk up to them, water walls can open like the Red Sea for Moses, and then seamlessly close behind you.' (MIT Digital Water Pavilion, 2013). No longer constrained by fixed elements, the Digital Water Pavilion raises the possibility of fluid, mobile buildings, metamorphosing at will. 'The Digital Water Pavilion illustrates how buildings of the future may change their appearance and form from moment to moment, based on necessity and use,' says Ratti. 'It is not easy to achieve such effects when dealing with concrete, bricks and mortar. But this becomes possible with digital water, which can appear and disappear' (MIT Digital Water Pavilion, 2013). And indeed, this ephemerality applies not only to the appearance and form of the building but to the very presence of the building itself. It has been designed so that the pistons can lower the roof all the way to the ground, at which point the building disappears altogether.

These new temporary pavilions represent a decisive step away from the monumental structures which dominated pavilion building for so much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Deeply ephemeral and devoted to whimsy and pleasure, they forsake the obsession with disappearance and the psychotic sublime to which it all too often gave rise. Yet, instead of merely being the opposite of the monumental tradition, perhaps buildings such as the Digital Water Pavilion and the Serpentine Pavilions of Hadid and SANAA represent a move beyond this kind of oppositional thinking. They should be seen as a kind of *Aufhebung*, bringing together monumentality and ephemerality; a kind of anti-monumental monumentality. For Andreas Huyssen this is 'a monumentality that can do without permanence and without destruction, that is fundamentally informed by the modernist spirit of a fleeting and transitory epiphany, but that is no less memorable or monumental for that' (Huyssen, 1996, p. 198). Nomadic installations and ephemeral events, these pavilions have been disseminated and memorialised by contemporary forms of media. Lasting mere moments, the reverie and pleasure they inspire guarantee them a long life in the archives of memory.

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AT THE BOTTOM OF THE GARDEN: THE CAFFEAUS OF VILLA ALBANI

Jane Lomholt

This essay addresses the history and design of a pavilion at the Villa Albani in Rome. Built in 1764 by the architect Carlo Marchionni, possibly to a design by the client, the antiquarian Cardinal Alessandro Albani, this is a caffeaus (or coffee house, to offer a rough translation) featuring an eleven-bay semi-circular portico of Doric order. The taking of coffee after dinner had become a popular pastime and some, who could afford it, built special pavilions in their gardens for this purpose. Pope Benedict XIV, for instance, had a caffeaus built in his garden at the Quirinal Palace some twenty years earlier where he could withdraw from the formalities of courtly life. For Cardinal Albani, the caffeaus also served as an extension to his Casino, where his vast collection of sculptures, busts and basins was displayed. With the aid of his librarian, the German scholar and writer Johann Joachim Winckelmann, Albani displayed his immense and unique collection of art and antiquities in a way that served to underline his own scholarship, wealth and position of affinity with Rome. The Villa and its splendours were not to be missed by the Grand Tourists. The essay situates this exceptional pavilion in the wider context of his Villa, whose gardens and buildings today lie in various stages of disrepair and are closed to the public, except by private invitation.

Keywords: pavilion, Villa Albani, Caffeaus, Carlo Marchionni, Winckelmann, art collection.

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Abstract

This essay addresses the history and design of a pavilion at the Villa Albani in Rome. Built in 1764 by the architect Carlo Marchionni, possibly to a design by the client, the antiquarian Cardinal Alessandro Albani, this is a caffeaus (or coffee house, to offer a rough translation) featuring an eleven-bay semi-circular portico of Doric order. The taking of coffee after dinner had become a popular pastime and some, who could afford it, built special pavilions in their gardens for this purpose. Pope Benedict XIV, for instance, had a caffeaus built in his garden at the Quirinal Palace some twenty years earlier where he could withdraw from the formalities of courtly life. For Cardinal Albani, the caffeaus also served as an extension to his Casino, where his vast collection of sculptures, busts and basins was displayed. With the aid of his librarian, the German scholar and writer Johann Joachim Winckelmann, Albani displayed his immense and unique collection of art and antiquities in a way that served to underline his own scholarship, wealth and position of affinity with Rome. The Villa and its splendours were not to be missed by the Grand Tourists. This essay situates this exceptional pavilion in the wider context of his Villa, whose gardens and buildings today lie in various stages of disrepair and are closed to the public, except by private invitation.

To the north of Rome, just outside the Aurelian walls on via Salaria, lies what is considered to be the last Roman *villa suburbana*. It is not an ancient villa, as one might expect; it is recent, built in the mid-1700s by cardinal Alessandro Albani (1692–1779), the eminent scholar and collector of antiquities, and nephew of Pope Clement XI. Its location on the old salt road was well chosen, within easy reach of his palazzo inside the city on via Quattro Fontane and only fifteen miles from Tivoli, where both Villa d'Este and Villa Adriana were rich sources of antiquarian artefacts at the time, and indeed, were excavated by Albani himself (Leppmann, 1970, p.204).[1] It was ideal for the middle-aged man's *villeggiatura*. The countryside was beautiful, the rolling hills covered with olive groves and vineyards interrupted occasionally by picturesque clusters of scattered hamlets. From its very beginnings, the villa

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1   Both Villa d'Este and Villa Adriana were owned by Cardinal Albani's distant relative by marriage, the Duke of Modena.

– grounds, gardens, buildings – were studded with the finest and largest collection of statues, masks, basins and bas-reliefs that became the highpoint of every young man's (and some women's) visit to Rome on his Grand Tour. Visiting the cardinal at his villa in 1770, Charles Burney, the English musical historian noted that the villa was located in a place of great beauty; he wrote that it was 'new and fitted up with infinite taste – it is full of the most precious remains of antiquity,' adding that the house was cleaner than any he had seen in Italy.

Burney gives the pavilion special attention: 'the semicircle or coffeehouse [is] elegant and full of fine statues and bas-reliefs, among them some Etruscan with musical instruments described by Wynkleman [sic]' (p.148). A century later Henry James praised the villa for retaining much of its original charm. The surrounding countryside did not go unnoticed by James either, when he wrote: 'The light today is magnificent; the Alban Hills of an intenser [sic] broken purple than I had yet seen them – their white towns blooming upon it like vague projected lights' (pp.228–9). Not until the turn of the nineteenth century did industry and development encroach upon this idyll. Today the surrounding neighbourhood has grown so dense that it is hard to envisage the distant hills behind the apartment blocks and office buildings without the prompts offered by old etchings and paintings. Asleep and all but forgotten, the villa (including its pavilion and gardens) lies in semi-dereliction with no apparent plans for upkeep or a future restoration.

Inspired by a recent visit, this essay explores the Villa Albani as the architectural realisation of a conceptual project developed by cardinal Albani over some four decades. The focus here, however, is on the 'pavilion at the bottom of the garden,' or the *shed at the bottom of the garden*, as common parlance has it. Albani's project was carried out in collaboration with others, notably the architect Carlo Marchionni and the German art historian and nascent archaeologist Johann Joachim Winckelmann. Closed to the public, access is occasionally granted by the owners, the Torlonia family, following application. Although superficial information about the villa is relatively abundant on the Internet, finding more in-depth, scholarly investigations and referenced literature is another matter. There is little in English; much is in Italian, but the most is in German, following perhaps the significant involvement of Winckelmann, who was Alessandro Albani's protégé, librarian and companion.

One of the main sources is *Forschungen zur Villa Albani*, edited by Herbert Beck and Peter C. Bol (1982), a volume with contributions by various scholars,
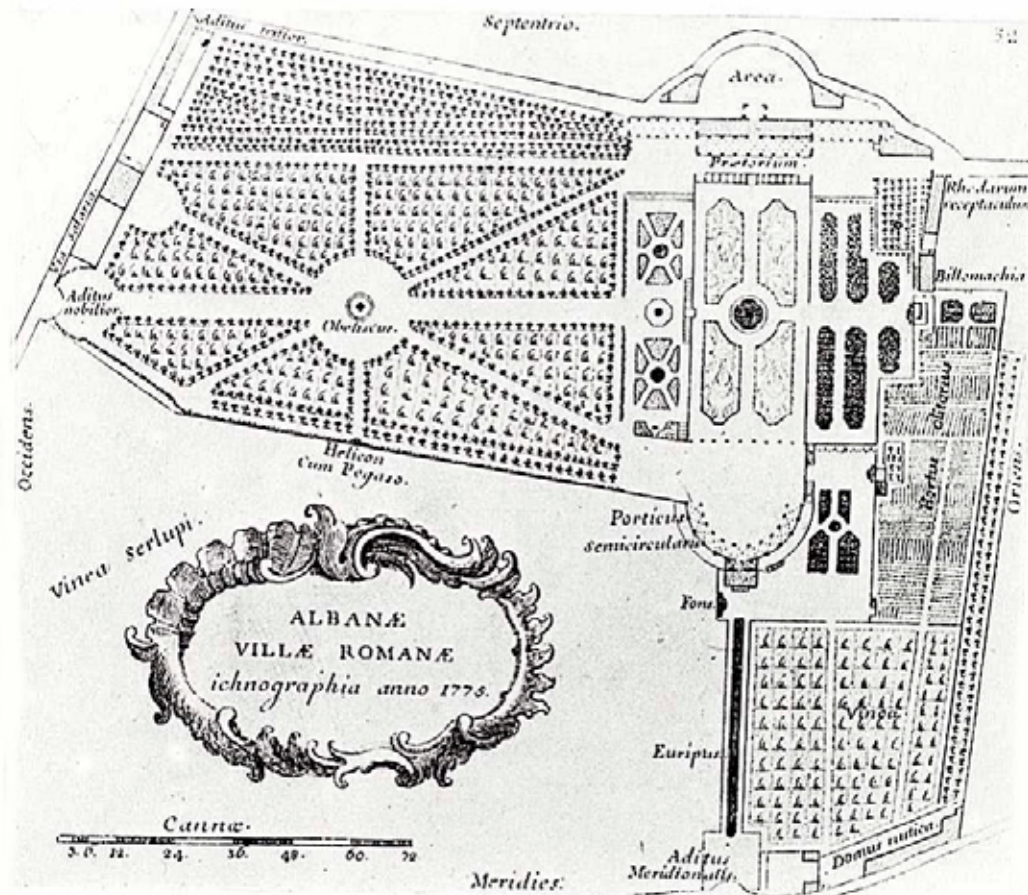
Figure 2.1: Plan of Villa Albani, Domenico Magnan, 1775.

among them, Steffi Röttgen who has examined archival material of Albani's transactions and Winckelmann's copious multilingual correspondence, crafting a detailed biography of the villa. The texts raise a number of questions, however, and introduce ambiguities that warrant further examination regarding the project. Also curtailing research and a more comprehensive study of the villa is the fact that much documentation, including several drawings and some letters of relevance are scattered over various European and American libraries, public and private archives and museums.

Biographies are helpful, but only up to a point. Carl Justi's biography of Winckelmann, *Winckelmann und seine Zeitgenossen* ([1867] 2002), concentrates on the man's life and times (1717–68) in his native Prussia and his thirteen-year sojourn in Rome where he enjoyed the successive patronage of three significant cardinals: cardinal Archinto, who initially encouraged Winckelmann's conversion to Catholicism and his move to Rome; cardinal Passionei, who was at one time head librarian at the Vatican; and cardinal Albani, who of the three had the strongest influence on Winckelmann's life and was himself influenced by him. Justi's biography is based on excerpts from Winckelmann's correspondence and other sources, which are unfortunately not cited. Still, his is the main

text and key to understanding the subject's complex character. A later English biography, *Winckelmann*, by Wolfgang Leppmann (1970), is heavily reliant on Justi. Neither biography contributes to an understanding of Winckelmann's influence specifically relating to the Caffeaus.

Dionigi Strocchi's Latin biography of Albani (*De Vita A. Albani Cardinalis*, 1790) is referenced by later authors, such as Röttgen in her chapter, 'Alessandro Albani' (Beck and Bol, 1987), and Leslie Lewis in her book, *Connoisseurs and Secret Agents in Eighteenth Century Rome* (1961), which deals exclusively with Albani and his friend Baron Philipp von Stosch. Justi's biography of Winckelmann contains a chapter devoted to Albani's life. Again, however, none of these texts shed much light on the Caffeaus.

Joachim Gaus's biography *Carlo Marchionni, Ein Beitrag zur römischen Architektur des Settecento* (1967) mentions the architect's personal relationship to Albani; but gives frustratingly little detail of what this may have been. However, that relationship was significant enough for Albani to have been godfather to Marchionni's son. Gaus states that Marchionni was directly involved with the design of the villa and its pavilion, yet while the book contains some drawings to this effect, there are no details or descriptions of the work, its progression

or the ornamentation and furnishing. Some of this information can be found in Winckelmann's letters to friends and acquaintances, relevant passages of which have been quoted by authors in other texts. But in his copious writing, Winckelmann never mentions Marchionni, and so apportioning authorship of the villa remains uncertain.

The garden pavilion (its structure and ornamentation, its significance and use) might be seen as a separate study within the scholarship associated with the villa. Yet, because the pavilion is like an ornamental extension of the villa, it still needs to be examined in regard to the larger architectural landscape. What follows here is a presentation of the pavilion in its larger context in order to help bring to life, for an English-speaking audience, cardinal Alessandro Albani's tremendous architectural and intellectual undertaking. It demonstrates how the often dismissively referred to 'shed at the bottom of the garden' can assume a form that embodies erudition and narrative, producing a structure rooted in classical precedence and reflecting a world view, to which Winckelmann's highest praise, "edel Einfallt und stille Größe" [noble simplicity and quiet grandeur], might well apply.

To the urban explorer, Villa Albani first appears as an enclosure, a tall perimeter wall upon which political and cultural posters are stuck, graffiti is scrawled and plaster spalls. The trunk of a long-dead tree is embedded in it, signalling a moribund villa in the present day. Following the wall to the north, around the corner into via Ada, one will see that it gives way to the back of the western, side portico of the main building – the Casino, as it is called – its yellow ochre and white plasterwork contrasting sharply with the grimy grey of the wall. Here a tall metal gate is today's private entrance to the villa, a security camera mounted discretely on one of the two columns that hold the gate. Although the Casino and one of the service buildings are uninhabited, there are signs of upkeep and life in another. Above the spikes of the gate can be seen the projection of the *porte-cochère* and the rooms above it at the back of the Casino. . This architectural element with its north-facing balcony marks the beginning of an axis which passes through the Grand Gallery on the *Piano Nobile*, across the sunken *parterre de broderie*, and on to the exedra of the pavilion to the south.

The Caffeaus, as the pavilion is called, can be viewed by either circumnavigating the entire block or by retracing one's steps down via Salaria. On the southern corner where the road is intersected by a small cul-de-sac side street, via di Villa Albani, the wall curves inward,

Figure 2.2: The lodge of the Caffeaus, Villa Albani, 2009. © Jane Lomholt

becomes higher and is corniced. Separated into bays by shallow pilasters, this concave arc is open at the centre with two fine, square columns of travertine marking the garden entrance to the estate. There are large urns with dried agave spears atop the pilasters, but the tall, travertine pillars, ancient and elegant, are decorated with carved, weathered herms and surmounted by sphinxes. Through a tall, rusting iron grille, one glimpses the garden beyond, laid out with clipped hedges and an avenue of trees. A central verge of sparse brown grass is punctuated at intervals with the nude vestiges of rose bushes. This east-west axis focuses on a tall obelisk crowned by the Albani-Chigi emblem; it stands in a circular piazza surrounded by ancient statues in various states of decay, some with limbs or parts that are wired to their bodies or missing altogether. In the far distance, the axis terminates at the so-called Jupiter Aedicule. On my visit, I was surprised to hear bird song and the pleasant trickling of unseen fountains from within the walls.

Around the corner, at the end of via di Villa Albani, the terrain drops sharply, and steps lead down to another street, which finally allows the pavilion to be seen, squarely, from mid-level. It is a two-storey, pedimented lodge with a loggia at ground level situated in a courtyard below this street. The building sits incongruously against the hardly perceptible semicircular portico above at the level of the parterre. Despite its air of dereliction, the lodge is imposing, a classical building lost in time and space. Of three bays expressed by four pilasters which are heavily rusticated at the lower level, the central bay is pulled forward slightly, an architectural nod to the *porte-cochère* on the north side of the casino.

At ground level, this protrusion is expressed by a tall, Serlian arch with Tuscan columns, leading into a loggia (the *Porticus Romae*) and terminating above in a stone balcony, where an arched doorway, decorated with swags and a mischievous mask, leads to the interior space of the upper ground level. Strong metal-wire screens cover the loggia openings at lower level, while the corresponding window and door openings above are closed with fragile wooden slatted shutters. Framed, grimacing masks are embedded in the render of the façade above the openings as well as in the centre of the tympanum of the pediment. Engraved on the architrave of the building are the words: *ALEXANDER TORLONIA V P* [*vir princeps*] *RENOVAVIT*.

In former times, the courtyard served as the southern entrance to the villa, but now it is closed
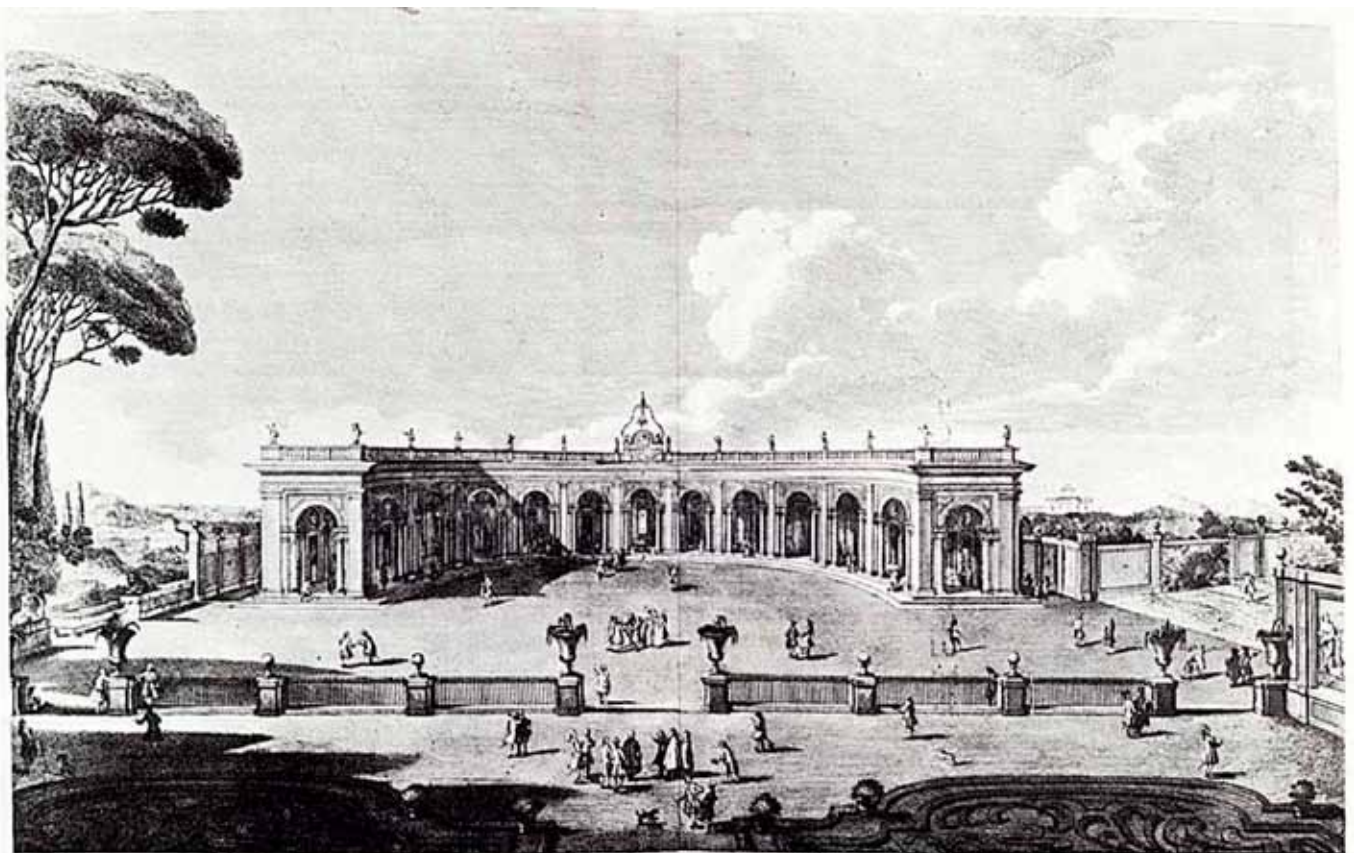

Figure 2.3: Semi-circular portico of Caffeaus by Francesco Panini (after 1780).

off by rusty railings and a firmly secured gate. A large, elaborately decorated alcove in the courtyard's western wall is filled by an encrusted sculptural monument and fountain, the *Fons Larvae*, the Mask Fountain.[2] The frame of the alcove consists of two bas-reliefs of life-sized Roman soldiers placed above framed masks of equal width. Standing just proud of the wall on either side of the fountain are two Ionic columns. In the centre of the courtyard, a commanding granite colossus depicting Amphitrite (Röttgen, 1982b, pp.153–9)[3], goddess of the sea, reposes against what appears to be a compliant calf. To both sides, in deep niches of the retaining walls, are masks of longhaired, bearded Tritons. Now remote from her domain, Amphitrite looks out at a mundane urban drive that gives access to a series of lock-up garages, which in more recent times has replaced the magnificent cascades (*Fons Euripi*) that once flowed from beneath her.[4]

From within the gardens above, the pavilion assumes its relatively familiar image, a semicircular portico, recognised from photographs, prints and plan drawings.[5] Tuscan columns are arranged with pilasters in the Serlian manner, the taller supported by two smaller, in the outer arc of the portico, dividing it into eleven bays. The acroterion at the apex of the pitched roof of the lodge is visible above the balustrade of the lower semicircular roof. The width of the exedra equals the width of the Casino; the pattern of the columns and pilasters of the exedra corresponds to that of the nine-bay Ionic columns and pilasters of the Casino, though there the height is much greater, further emphasised by its elevated position. The arms of the

exedra reach out in welcome, and a few small, round metal tables and chairs invite the visitor to linger. In the deep shadows of the vaulted portico, classical statues of deities and other mythological characters slowly achieve definition and animate the scene.

A retainer opened for me the double wooden door, which leads into a small, oval-shaped space, stark and funerary. The room beyond, the Canopeum, is dark and musty, and the kindly man opened the floor-length wooden shutters at either side, letting in light and a cooling breeze. As if by magic, the vaulted room appears to double in extent. Two steps lead up to another set of doors and into yet another room. This is the room of the balcony, the *Diaeta*, which Justi states is the actual '*Caféhaus*'.[6] Sadly, it is now used as a storeroom. A large table in the centre is piled with apparently insignificant objects, and discarded pieces of furniture are stashed against the walls. There is no trace of Clérisseau's mooted wall paintings of classical landscapes in either room (McCormick, 1990, pp.100–101), little trace of painted walls at all; the plaster is flaking. The shutters are again closed, the key is turned in its lock.

Giambattista Nolli's *Pianta di Roma* of 1748 provides a sense of how the pavilion was originally situated. It shows a large parcel of land on via Salaria designated as belonging to His Eminence Cardinal Alessandro Albani. This land already had structures on it: a group of buildings along via Salaria, a roofed portico to the north, and directly to the south, at the bottom of a garden, a semi-circular wall. Albani bought the land in 1747, so Röttgen surmises that it was already laid out as a garden and that these structures were pre-existing (Röttgen, 1982a, p.63). An early design by Marchionni extended the buildings along via Salaria into a formal composition, but the design was not executed. In later drawings Marchionni refers to them as the 'old casino' and there are vague indications of them on some of his sketches. The design of the villa that followed responds strongly to the two porticos. William Collier suggests convincingly that the north portico was actually incorporated into the new Casino, which was then built around, behind and above it (p.340). The given levels of the land have been important, the design making interesting use of them, possibly even contravening what nature has provided. Innumerable drawings testify to Marchionni's involvement in the project, but it is generally acknowledged that he worked closely to Albani's own design ideas, with Winckelmann professing

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2   In the alcove of the fountain, a disembodied head (mask) appears above the heavy growth of ivy and sculptural encrustations that fill most of the niche. See plates 119 and 124, as well as figures 224, 243 and 244 in Beck and Bol (1982).

3   In a letter dated 19 October 1765 to his friend Schlabendorf, Winckelmann enthusiastically writes: 'Der Herr Card. hat einen weiblichen völligerhaltenen und liegenden Colloßalischen Fluß von Tivoli mit 16 Büffel-Ochesen holen lassen, welcher über die Mündung der Cascata gesetz ist...' (Röttgen, 1982, p. 158). However, Carl Justi (2002, p. 28) states that the statue of Amphitrite was brought from Tivoli by six oxen (' ... ward die Amphitrite durch sechs Büffel herüber gefahren.')

4   Amphitrite is anchored, so to speak, by a reclining Neptune (analogous to Poseidon, Amphitrite's mate) in a niche at the north end of the parterre below the Casino terrace. The Tritons were the offspring of Amphitrite and Poseidon.

5   A number of comprehensive plan drawings of the villa by Domenico Magnan, 1775/76, are published in Beck and Bol (1982). A later plan drawing by Percier and Fontaine ([1809 [2003], p. 50, plate 2) does not show the gardens west of the parterre, but includes a 'key' for locating various structures.

6   Justi (2002, p.293) does not mention the Diaeta, but states that the 'Caféhaus'' was appended behind the 'Canopus' ('… dem "Canopus", dahinter wurde um dieselbe Zeit das Caféhaus [sic] angehängt').
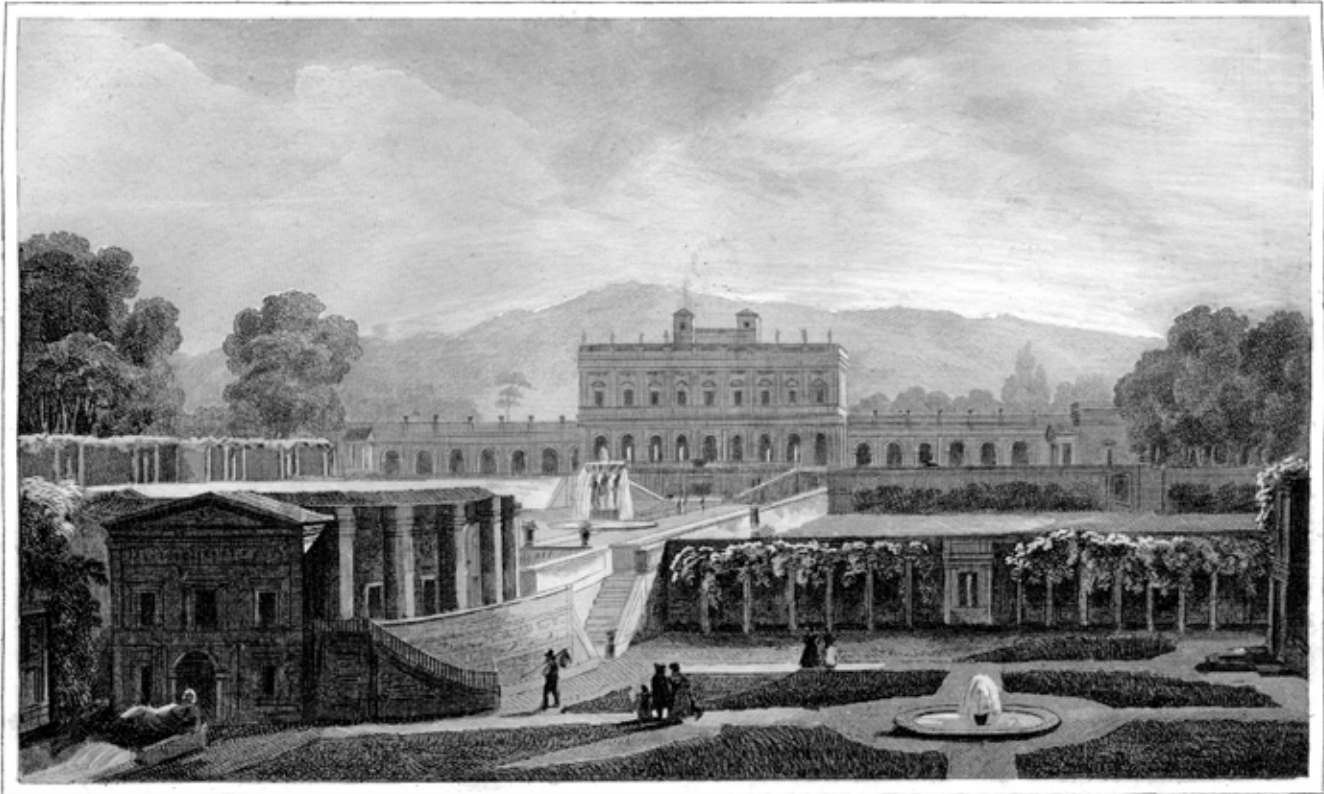
Figure 2.4: Southeast view of Villa Albani with Caffeaus, early nineteenth century (Bouchet and Aubert) © Jane Lomholt

to a friend that Albani himself was the sole architect of the villa (Justi, 2002, p.292).[7]

A new garden layout and general landscaping is credited to Giambattista Nolli (Lomholt, 2012, p.50), the steeply sloping land to the south levelled to enable building the semicircular portico, which was finished in 1753. The appended, south-facing building, the lodge, was of a later date, most probably as late as 1764, when Winckelmann wrote to a friend that the cardinal has 'hung' a large building (the Caffeaus) off the semicircular portico. He added that this new room, like the gallery, is of marble. Presumably, he is referring to the Grand Gallery of the Casino, which was completed a year or so before this later addition (Röttgen, 1982a, p.104).[8] Röttgen also refers to – but does not identify – a contemporary text on Roman art by Giovanni Gaetano Bottari, published before the addition was built; this mentions a room behind the semi-circular

portico on the north-south axis, which was furnished with seven Egyptian statues.[9] It is probable that this earlier room is a gallery built in conjunction with the semi-circular portico, finished in 1753, and that this is the same as the one there today.

When Pope Benedict XIV visited Villa Albani in the autumn of 1753, 'work on the villa' was well advanced (Röttgen, 1982a, p.65). 'Villa' in the Italian context, of course, refers to an estate, not a single building, so 'work on the Villa' is ambiguous and could refer to any part of the whole or the whole itself. As work on the Casino first started around 1755, presumably Röttgen's reference is to the north and south porticoes, the gardens and the deployment of statuary. The pope's attendant Abbot Bracci wrote to a friend that this was 'a villa gallantly designed and decorated with many thoughtful antique monuments including statues, busts of eminent men and philosophers, colossal heads, bas-reliefs and such', which were the envy of more famous villas in Rome (Röttgen, 1982a, p.65, n.11). In other words, the exact state of the pavilion is uncertain at the time of the pope's visit. However, it is certain that the portico itself was finished in 1751, and it is probable that the additional room and the furnishings and ornaments were in place by the time of the visit.

Commercial coffee houses were common in eighteenth-century Rome. However, like their English

7   Winckelmann writes that Albani is the 'einzigen Baumeister der Villa'. Gaus puts it another way, saying that no one would doubt Marchioni being ascribed as the architect of the Villa, but that it is difficult to determine what his specific contributions were, adding that he spent his days with the construction work but increasingly concerned himself with details (Gaus, 1967, pp.28–9).

8   Röttgen refers to a letter by Winckelmann, dated 7.12.1764, in which he writes, 'Der Cardinal hat in seiner Villa hinter dem runden Portico ein groß Gebäude angehänget, wo er einen Saal lassen, welcher, sowie die Galerie von Marmor ist....'

9   Röttgen (1982a, p.104) mentions an untitled publication from 1763.

counterparts upon which they were modelled, they had little in common with the private, intimate and elegant garden pavilions of the great houses where coffee, tea and chocolate could be imbibed at leisure in the afternoons; or to where one could simply retreat from the formalities of duty and responsibility (Coulton, 2012, pp.43–65). In 1731, for instance, Fabrizio II Colonna commissioned the architect Niccolò Michetti to reorganise the west wing and façade of his family's palazzo on the Piazza dei Santi Apostoli in Rome, adding a pavilion there. Michetti had just returned from five years in Russia as Court Architect to Peter I, which no doubt gave him valuable experience and contributed to his 'highly original' design.[10] Michetti's addition is a one-storey square tower placed on the roof of the south-western corner of the expansive palazzo. Initially referred to as the *padiglione*, the descriptor of 'Coffee House' was applied to it later. Integral to the palazzo, the Coffee House is expressed externally through its height and façade treatment. From on high, the western façade of this light and airy room addresses the city (with a view down the street to the Palazzo Muti, the home of the Stuart Pretender), while its opposing façade addresses the inner courtyard garden and in the near distance to the east, the Palazzo Quirinale of the popes. A roof garden extends to the north.

Stoschek describes the coffee house of the Palazzo Colonna as a one-storey pavilion which sits on top of a two-storey corner building, forming a large, well-lit room. There are tall windows on all four sides, the three to the west arranged in the Serlian manner (p.98). Although the interior of this elegant Roman baroque reception room has a square plan, the corners are cut by arches and inward-curving arcs supported by marble columns, reshaping the appearance of the room so that it was octagonal. The ceiling arcs are hollowed out, admitting light from lunettes above neighbouring windows, revealing scallop shells within the oval frames. The room is richly decorated. The walls are covered with marble panels and gilded stucco, and there are antique statues and bas-reliefs. Above some doors and windows are stucco *tondi*, and finely painted pendentives can be seen throughout. The ceiling is dominated by a large gilt-framed fresco by Francesco Mancini entitled *Storie di Amore e Psiche*, showing Psyche and Cupid after their innumerable trials, making their way to Mount Olympus, immortality and marital bliss. Against a heavenly background peopled by gods and cherubs, Psyche is carried aloft by Hermes while Cupid at her feet carries Hermes' staff. Great attention was given to the details of the room, as can clearly

be seen, and although various artists are mentioned in connection with its ornamentation, there is no information about how it was used.

Ten years later, in June 1741, the new pope, Benedict XIV, instructed the architect Ferdinando Fuga to design a pavilion in the garden of the Quirinale Palace. The location of the pope's pavilion is to the north of the formal garden where an earlier structure appears to have been situated. Similar to the Caffeaus of Villa Albani, that of the Quirinale (built ten years earlier) overhangs a sheer drop, but in contrast to it, an insignificant door leads to a basement or cellar. The north elevation (the back) bears no semblance to the 'back' of the Albani Caffeaus, which has its own rich story. Fuga has designed a surprisingly restrained three-bay, single storey pavilion, simply articulated with shallow Tuscan pilasters and profiled cornicing. The two side bays are extruded from the centre by as much as the width of the bay, yielding a double square floor plan, and together, the two bays provide a frame for a central, elevated terrace. The front and centre side elevations of the bays have long, pedimented windows with seating consoles below. The receding centre bay has three tall French doors, separated by shallow pilasters, with semicircular fanlights above. These doors open into a vaulted entrance hall, referred to as a portico, a closed portico. On the opposite (back) side of the portico are three corresponding doors, the central one opening onto a balcony, originally providing views out over the city, now limited by the encroachment of neighbouring buildings.

The two inner chambers are relatively small but with high, ornate ceilings and rounded corners. Decorated in pale pastel colours, the walls are divided up by gilded stucco frames within which appear paintings of religious themes by famous artists of the time, among them the sought-after portrait painter Pompeo Batoni and Giovanni Paolo Panini (whose *veduta* of Santa Maria Maggiore clearly shows Fuga's exuberant baroque work). The rooms were furnished with relatively casual furniture, comfortable chairs, sofas and small tables, as befitting a garden pavilion. The chamber to the right differs from that to the left in that it has a fireplace, complete with hearth brush and bellows. This may be seen as an attempt by the pope to emulate the fashionable English 'coffee house', the term he himself used, reflecting an image of 'Englishness' as translated to Rome (Stoschek, 1999, p.145). Stoschek comments that the fireplace utensils were no doubt sent from England, but the furniture was 'in the French taste'.

Because the pavilion was to serve as a retreat for the pope, away from the formalities required by his official status, the Caffeaus was a place where etiquette was

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10   Transcript of English translation given in Micalizzi (2003, p.18).

abandoned. Although he held private audiences here, it was specifically intended for his own pleasure and ease. He enjoyed walking in the gardens, breathing the fresh air, and then retiring to the pavilion alone or with his ambassadors or closest aids. Coffee was undoubtedly served in there, Stoschek says, brought from the kitchens of the palace, but the pope himself, by his own admission, preferred chocolate (p.148).

The papal pavilion could well have been lost from public memory (it is not open to the public) had it not been for one significant political event – the reception there of Charles VII of Naples (Charles V of Sicily) in November 1744 and Panini's record of it in his controversial painting, *Charles III of Naples Visiting Pope Benedict XIV in the Quirinal Caffeaus* (1746). Dressed in gold coloured velvet with diamond buttons, Charles rode through the Porta Pia into the city. Led by the pope's own Swiss Guard and accompanied by 50 officers in dress uniform and 480 cavalry soldiers, he proceeded to the Quirinal Palace. He was received by the pope in private in the right-hand chamber of the Caffeaus, the more informal room. The audience lasted one hour, after which the King declined refreshment and left.[11] In his painting, Panini takes liberties. He shows the pope seated in the left-hand chamber, awaiting the King, who is shown with entourage on the terrace at the centre of the painting. As Joseph Rykwert noted about this painting, he has also significantly altered the architecture of the pavilion, perhaps in critique of Fuga's design (pp.341–2). Panini emphasises scale, proportion and architectural detail, which Fuga had intentionally judged inappropriate for this type of building. It is curious that Panini altered the room in which the audience took place. The meeting between the two rulers was politically sensitive. The choice of the room to the right, with its tokens of domesticity, may have been specifically chosen in an attempt to maintain etiquette between the two rulers but at the same time, to disassociate Pope Benedict from political implication in the King's controversy with Austria. It was an official visit in the guise of informality.

As the drinking of coffee (tea and chocolate) in a garden pavilion became fashionable, many existing pavilions, including the roof pavilion of the Palazzo Colonna, as well as other previously existing garden pavilions, became referred to as the 'coffee house' or 'caffeaus'. The caffeaus located its owner in a social context, signalling an awareness of style and fashion,

wealth and education. It provided an environment for the display of fine art, as well as specially crafted porcelain, and presented a refined but casual backdrop to the art of conversation. No doubt, it also served as a place where learned discourse took place, where art itself could be discussed while referring to examples that were readily at hand. The word 'caffeaus' was a neologism, a word made up to refer to pavilions that were for the most part on private grounds. It was an imprecise, generic term, used at this time in these contexts; it was not a building type.

In discussing the etymology of the term, Stoschek refers to a 1741 diary entry by the Abbé Ludovico Francesco Valesio, which she cites in her introduction (p.2), connecting this information with her examination of the terms used to refer to a villa garden pavilion (Stoschek, 1999, p.141). Although 'caffeaus' was known and used, Stoschek suggests that Valesio's entry is the first time the term appeared in print, but adds that it also appeared on a contemporary plumber's invoice. 'Caffeaus' (without the accent) was applied to Pope Benedict's pavilion at the laying of the foundation stone. The term Coffee House was applied to the pavilion at the Palazzo Colonna after this time. One finds minute variations in spelling that tend to reflect the authors themselves, their nationalities and the bases of their research. Thus the variants of the following terms may be equated: Cafféaus (with lower or upper case, with accent or not) and coffee house (with lower or upper case, with or without hyphen, or as one word). Justi refers to the *Caféhaus*. Thomas McCormick uses the compound form, coffeehouse, in his own language.[12] Stoschek, writing in German, uses *Caffeaus*, without accent and with upper case, as one does in German recognition of all nouns, proper or not. Beck and Bol's volume uses *Kaffeehaus*, the compound German word, made up of the words for "coffee" and "house". *Cafféaus* is used in some Italian texts, as is *caffraus*. Charles Percier and Pierre François Léonard Fontaine merely use the French word, *café*, as we know it today, which simply refers to the drink but bears none of the history or more exotic connotations of the made-up terms.

Percier and Fontaine describe the setting of the Villa Albani Caffeaus, following their visit there at the end of the eighteenth century, saying, 'The café is preceded by a vestibule and a "circular gallery", where the walls are decorated with statues, columns, vases and antique bas-reliefs. This building which is situated in the most

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11   For details of the visit, its complicated etiquette and interpretations of the meeting place, the Caffeaus, see Stoschek (1999, pp.163–72). Stoschek also discusses Panini's painting of the event and his re-design of the building in the painting.

12   McCormick (1990, p.100), in connection with his brief but detailed discussion of the possible commission given to Clérisseau to decorate an interior room in the Albani pavilion.

beautiful position within the villa, […] dominates a long cascade formed by discharging the waters of the parterre' (p.48). Their description manages to convey a strong appreciation for not only the building and the art, which was of acknowledged high acclaim, but also the situation of the pavilion.

Another plan by Domenico Magnan, which illustrates the Caffeaus of the Villa Albani, avoids the word altogether, using only Latin terms. He has entitled the drawing *ALBANAE VILLAE ROMANAE PORTICUS SEMICIRCULARIS ICHNOGRAPHIA*. The drawing shows the semicircular form of the portico with an outer (unroofed) concentric corridor on either side, the left leading to the wooden side-shutters of the *Canopeum* and a narrow staircase down to the *Porticus Romae*; and the right, to the opposite side shutters and a small, internal circular staircase, presumably giving access to the roof. While the *Canopeum* is marked as such, the room referred to as the coffee house proper is labelled *Diaeta*, implying diet or dietary regime in Latin. The oval entrance space between the portico and the *Canopeum* is not named but clearly defined on the drawing. In the mid-1800s, it was believed that the *Canopeum* had a connection to canopic jars, but there is no evidence of this ever having been the case. However, it does suggest that the *Canopeum* was considered to have a funerary aura. Justi states simply that '*Canopus* [sic]' is the same as the 'Egyptian cabinet' (p.293).

The Canopus at Hadrian's Villa is a long rectangular body of water, richly decorated with statuary around its edges and with the semi-circular Serapium grotto behind it. The construction of the Canopus most probably dates to sometime after 130AD, the year Hadrian's young lover, Antinous, drowned in the Nile; it is possibly Hadrian's private architectural response to his deep public sorrow. One can only guess at what might have happened on the Nile, but one possibility is that Antinous 'sacrificed his life for that of the Emperor's'. This assertion by Carcopino is not singular, and he underpins his claim by associating Antinous' death and apotheosis with the cult belief in salvation (pp.151–2). John Ward-Perkins writes that the Canopus at Hadrian's Villa, 'with its formal lake and Egyptianizing sculpture … was a suggestive evocation, not a direct copy, of the famous sanctuary [of Serapis] near Alexandria after which it was named' (pp.14, 109). The Graeco-Egyptian god, Serapis, was associated with resurrection and, by inference, with death. At certain times, he was conflated with Osiris – as was Antinous. A statue of 'Antinous as Osiris' was once located in the 'Vorraum der Galleria del Canopo' at Villa Albani, but it is now in the Munich Glyptothek (Allroggen-Bedel, 1982b, p.367).

It is likely that the Canopeum and its setting at Villa Albani may also be a 'suggestive evocation', in the words of Ward-Perkins, of the Canopus at Hadrian's Villa. No doubt cardinal Albani felt a certain affinity with Hadrian, whose grounds he had excavated over decades and whose treasures he had to some extent liberated. He was referred to by some as the 'Hadrian of his century' (Howard, 1992, p.27). Although there is no hint of Albani having male lovers, the figure of Antinous in various guises received much praise by art critics, including Winckelmann, and there were numerous depictions of Antinous at Villa Albani. In the Grand Gallery of the Casino, on axis with the Caffeaus, embedded in the wall facing the semicircular portico, is a large, full-figure bas-relief, Youth with Horse. At the bottom of the relief the name 'Antinous' has been added. The young man is nude, his riding cloak over his left arm, his right hand holding the bridle of a horse. This work has been restored (Albani was also known as 'restorer in chief'), as were many of Albani's sculptures, and is of uncertain provenance. Possibly the head of Antinous was chosen to replace a missing one. Another Antinous relief is the better known portrait-relief, slightly smaller than the former, embedded in the chimneybreast of the neighbouring room, which was designed for the portrait and named after it. It is credited with having been excavated at Hadrian's Villa in 1735 and acquired by the cardinal the following year, but its provenance has been called into question (Vout, 2007, pp.93–118). Whatever the truth of the matter is, this does not alter the eighteenth-century perception that it is a relief from Hadrian's time, found at his villa, and therefore it carries meaning accordingly.

The deployment of Antinous figures, as all pieces of art at the villa, were specific, and Winckelmann no doubt played an active part in these decisions. Agnes Allroggen-Bedel emphasises the Egyptian theme at the Caffeaus. She refers to the *Diaeta* (a term she only uses once) as the '*Galleria del Canopo*', furthermore, she identifies Magnan's *Canopeum* as the 'Vorraum der '*Galleria del Canopo*' (Allroggen-Bedel, 1982b, pp.367–8.), the anteroom of the Gallery. In other words, the nomenclature of the two spaces is not consistent. The book's 'Konkordanz' ['Index of Art Works and Their Location'] lists a number of Egyptian statues and busts as having been displayed in the anteroom, including a statue and several busts of Osiris, a statue of Isis, and a statue of Antinous as Osiris (see above). But Allroggen-Bedel points out that today much of the art throughout the villa is so differently deployed ('… so grundlegende anderes') or missing altogether, that it is hardly possible to approach the concept of the cardinal

without reconstructing his original collection and its positioning.[13]

Elizabeth Schröter has examined the Villa Albani as '*Imagio Mundi*'[14] and gives compelling insight into what may have been Albani's over-arching narrative, the tapestry upon which he and Winckelmann continually embroidered. She sees the ceiling fresco, *Parnasus*, by Anton Raphael Mengs, in the Grand Gallery of the Casino, as dominating the entire mythic-historic-cosmological tableau; it is the fix-point of the project, with Apollo, depicted here surrounded by Mnemosyne and her daughters, as the 'helmsman' and the protector of Rome. In the oval salon, preceding the Grand Gallery, is a ceiling fresco by Antonio Bicchierari showing the central and dominating figure of Aurora (Vigilantia) pointing with her left hand to the dark edge of the oval where Night with her two children, Death and Sleep, can be seen. As Aurora, the main figure announces the arrival of Apollo the Sun, and as Vigilantia, she contemplates and anticipates night, sleep and death. The figure not only heralds what is to come, but foreshadows the theme that is portrayed in the Canopeum.

The ornamentation of the semicircular portico, the Canopeum and the Diaeta displayed Roman mythical personae and events, many elided with their Greek counterparts. Represented in fine sculpture, though often restored, the statues, reliefs and other works of art were placed in dialogue with one another and with their narrative correspondents in the Casino. The statues of ancient Greco-Romano deities, gods of the zodiac, who had served Rome or had won a place in Roman hearts, were assembled in the portico. Each arch was home to a major figure: Apollo as the cosmic ruler of Rome, at the centre, directly across from Mengs' *Parnassus*; Aeschlepius, Apollo's son, called 'the healer', who delivered Rome from the plague of 193 BC, stood to his right; next to him were Juno, then Diana, Pallas Athena (Minerva), and finally Mercury. To Apollo's left stood Jupiter, his father and the supreme ruler of all gods, then Venus (the mother of Aeneas, the mythical founder of Rome), the venerable Hercules, followed by two lesser figures, Thetis (the mother of Achilles, seen again on a sarcophagus relief in the *Porticus Romae*), and finally Bacchus, who was greatly

admired by the Romans. Mars, the father of Romulus, was placed under the same arch as Apollo, but in a less prominent position. This pantheon gives Rome its pre-Christian religious foundations and aligns the planets of the cosmos.

These statues are saluted by those of Rome's mortal but deified forebears in the Grand Portico of the Casino at the other end of the garden. With entrance doors into the Casino at the centre of the portico, Augustus stands centrally to the left, adorned only with a wreath of oak leaves, and on either side of him are Tiberius and Lucius Verus, both in armour; to the right, in the middle, stands Trajan, with Hadrian and Septimus Severus on either side of him. Schröter suggests that these were meant to represent the virtues that lay at the foundation of an idealised Imperial Rome.

The pavilion at the bottom of the garden, the Caffeaus, carries meaning beyond its architectural value. Like the Casino, it is also a portrayal of the spirit of Rome, and inextricable from the broader narrative unfolding at Albani's villa. As the Casino 'at the front' was the entrance and the beginning of the narrative, so the pavilion 'at the back' was the exit, and the inevitable conclusion. The north-south axis formed by these two structures passes through the Oval Salon with the Vigilantia fresco and its only statue, a seated figure of Apollo. The entrance to this room leaves no doubt about the theme of the narrative; above the door is the inscription, *ALEXANDER ALBANUS CARDINAL ROMANO ANIMO INSTRUXIT A.D. 1757*. The Grand Gallery follows, with the *Parnassus* and the 'Antinous' relief. Across the garden, beyond a central fountain, through the semicircular portico with Apollo, is the Canopeum and the Egyptian sculptures, where Vigilantia resonates (in her contemplation of death). At the lower level the axis is supported by the *Porticus Romae*. In Albani's time, a seated *Dea Roma* reigned in the loggia, attended by Claudius and Augustus at her sides. The axis leads to the courtyard with its forbidding masks and the stony silence of Amphitrite. In former times the axis would have disappeared in the flow of the aptly named Euripus, that body of water whose strong currents and tidal waves were unpredictable and sometimes violent, a reminder of the Nile. The mythical references and the undertones of uncertainty, overseen by the blind eyes of the masks, lend a meditative and cautionary air to the courtyard. One is reminded of humankind's mortality; but the endurance of *Roma eterna* is still in the balance, perhaps due to the intercession of Antinous.

Winckelmann was murdered in Trieste in 1768, and cardinal Albani died ten years later, an old man, nearly blind. Having no interest or understanding of the

13 Allroggen-Bedel (1982a, p.303): 'Was der heutige Besucher antrifft, ist etwas so grundlegende anderes, daß erst nach einer Rekonstruktion des Ursprünglichen Bestandes und seiner Aufstellung das Konzept der Sammlung des Kardinals erkennbar wird.'

14 Schröter (1982) suggests that the Jesuit scholar Contuccio Contucci, friend to both Albani and Winckelmann, most probably influenced the cosmic perspective of the narrative.

villa project, or perhaps simply due to financial need, Albani's heirs sold off treasures piecemeal immediately after his death. A month later, 56 pieces, some of them priceless, were bought by Giovanni Battista Visconti, who succeeded Winckelmann as Director of Antiquities at the Vatican. Succeeding Winckelmann as Albani's librarian, the Jesuit scholar Stefano Antonio Morcelli, recorded in 1785 an inventory of 677 pieces of antique artwork. At the end of the century, Napoleon Bonaparte's troops plundered the villa, possibly in retaliation to the Albani family's resistance to French occupation and their support for Pope Pius VI. Five hundred and eighteen pieces of antique artwork were dismantled, crated and prepared for shipment to Paris, where many can be found today. Some found their way to Munich. Due to prohibitive shipping costs, relatively few works have been repatriated. Upon his purchase of the villa in 1866, Prince Alessandro Torlonia carried out extensive repairs to the Casino, Caffeaus and gardens but, sadly, it has remained closed to the public since then.

The villa, once a magnet drawing in the famous, the rich, the learned, the talented, now stands spiritually mutilated and physically crumbling, a *memento mori* to all and to Rome. Alessandro Albani devoted his long life to the study and collection of ancient art and invoked all that he knew and that he had, here, in honour of Rome. This once dashing and dapper young man served in various capacities as valued attaché to the Vatican, both at home and abroad; as an older man he was sought by the many seeking to benefit from his acquaintance. Through his beneficence and his grand architectural project, Albani placed himself (and the Albani name) firmly *in* Roman soil, in the Roman spirit, as Hadrian had done, and before him, Pliny, Cicero, and many others. It validated his position for posterity, in the spirit of Rome, *Romano Animo,* as he had intended.

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FOLKLORIC MODERNISM: VENICE'S GIARDINI DELLA BIENNALE AND THE GEOPOLITICS OF ARCHITECTURE
Joel Robinson

This paper considers the national pavilions of the Venice Biennale, the largest and longest running exposition of contemporary art. It begins with an investigation of the post-fascist landscape of Venice's Giardini della Biennale, *whose built environment continued to evolve in the decades after 1945 with the construction of several new pavilions. With a view to exploring the architectural infrastructure of an event that has always billed itself as 'international', the paper asks how the mapping of national pavilions in this context might have changed to reflect the supposedly post-colonial and democratic aspirations of the West after the Second World War. Homing in on the nations that gained representation here in the 1950s and 60s, it looks at three of the more interesting architectural additions to the gardens: the pavilions for Israel, Canada and Brazil. These raise questions about how national pavilions are mobilised ideologically, and form/provide the basis for a broader exploration of the geopolitical superstructure of the Biennale as an institution.*

Keywords: pavilion, Venice Biennale, modernism, nationalism, geopolitics, postcolonialist.

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Joel Robinson

Abstract

This paper considers the national pavilions of the Venice Biennale, the largest and longest running exposition of contemporary art. It begins with an investigation of the post-fascist landscape of Venice's Giardini della Biennale*, whose built environment continued to evolve in the decades after 1945 with the construction of several new pavilions. With a view to exploring the architectural infrastructure of an event that has always billed itself as 'international', the paper asks how the mapping of national pavilions in this context might have changed to reflect the supposedly post-colonial and democratic aspirations of the West after the Second World War. Homing in on the nations that gained representation here in the 1950s and 60s, it looks at three of the more interesting architectural additions to the gardens: the pavilions for Israel, Canada and Brazil. These raise questions about how national pavilions are mobilised ideologically, and form/provide the basis for a broader exploration of the geopolitical superstructure of the Biennale as an institution.*

The Giardini della Biennale are among the more remarkable architectural spaces in Venice, not least because they make up the greenest area of the city. These gardens have served as the main grounds of the Venice Biennale since 1895, though the shape of this architectural landscape has continued to change from one era to the next. As the world's oldest and largest international art exposition, the Venice Biennale long predates the present-day proliferation of such biennial and triennial 'mega-events' (Roche, 2003), and differs from those newer ventures in that it utilises freestanding buildings to separate exhibitions according to the nationality of participating artists. While several histories of the Biennale have been written, almost nothing meaningful has been said about the architectural infrastructure of this institution, or indeed

Figure 3.1: Main avenue of the Giardini, looking northeast, and showing the Spanish pavilion in the foreground, the Belgian and Dutch pavilions behind the trees, and the Central Pavilion (the main exposition venue) at the far right. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.2: Viale Trento, or the secondary avenue of the Giardini, looking southeast, and showing (from right to left) the Swiss, Venezuelan and Russian pavilions. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

about the ideological foundations of the landscape in which this most prestigious and well-attended exposition of contemporary art is situated.[1] This infrastructure consists of thirty-odd national pavilions, which were built (and often rebuilt or refaced) in a staggered fashion over the course of the twentieth century. Each of these is owned and administered by a nation, and both the architecture and the art-work exhibited therein are inevitably bound up with a projection of national identity.

1   As the study of biennial culture or 'biennialogy' expands, Venice's Giardini and its pavilions are becoming a topic of interest. In the little amount of time since this paper was presented at the Open University's 2012 Association of Art Historians conference, more attention has already been paid to them. In 2013, for instance, Diener & Diener Architects organised an exhibition called *Common Pavilions*, which showed photographs of the pavilions taken by Gabriele Basilico; each picture was accompanied by a personal reflection on the pavilion by an architect or other commentator chosen for the task. This has generated further interest, and led in turn to the publication of an exhibition and catalogue of photography, *Pavilions and Gardens of the Venice Biennale: Photographs by Gabriele Basilico*, curated by Adele Re Rebaudengo (2013).

What makes these pavilions exceptional is not just that they were built over one-hundred-odd years in – of all places – Venice. (In the modern era, this was surely one of the least welcoming cities for any kind of building that smacked of foreignness or newness.) They are more permanent than the quickly erected, ephemeral structures that formed their counterparts at the universal expositions and world's fairs. Unlike those national pavilions, which nonetheless served as a model for what one finds at Venice, the Biennale pavilions have for the most part remained; they are fixtures there, which define a particular sense of place, not unlike temples or follies in landscaped gardens. To be sure, a few of the pavilions have been restored or reconstructed from scratch, whether out of pragmatic necessity or due to a change in the way a nation sees itself. After all, 'national identity is always under construction,' as architectural historian Raymond Quek (Quek, 2012, p.209) reminds us; and just like at the world's fairs, the form of these ambassadorial edifices (each adorned with its flag) needs to match up with the most current image of the nation.

Figure 3.3: View looking south toward the British pavilion converted from an older 1897 tea pavilion in 1909 by Edwin Alfred Rickards, and decorated with the banners of the installation *English Magic* (2013) by Jeremy Deller. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.4: View looking east toward the French pavilion designed by Faust Finzi in 1912. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.5: View looking southwest toward the German pavilion originally designed by Daniele Donghi as a Bavarian pavilion in 1909, and rebuilt by Ernst Haiger in 1938. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

The key difference between world's fair pavilions and those at Venice's international exhibition of art, then, is that the latter have largely persisted – and have persisted in such a way that they might be said to tell the story of this place. Yet, because these structures have a longer history, as part of a landscape that has witnessed so much change and additional building over the decades, they are a lot more difficult to discuss than buildings that have been constructed for a specific event, in a specific year. Studying the pavilions of a particular world's fair, for instance, offers a more controlled object of inquiry. That might explain, at least partially, why the world's fairs and their pavilions have generally received so much more critical attention (Greenhalgh, 1990; Rydell, 1993; Tenorio-Trillo, 1996; Schrenk, 1999; Mattie, 2000; Morton, 2000; Storm, 2010; Geppert, 2010). Nevertheless, it is the very fact that the Biennale pavilions are implicated in a complex narrative that has now been unfolding for over a century, which makes them so intriguing, and worth a closer look.

The Biennale pavilions are worth investigating for the national image that they project, but also for what they contribute to the concrete fabrication of a supposedly 'international' space for art. Not to be fooled by the rhetoric of international cooperation and peace that was so much a part of the world's fairs, though, one should approach this architectural landscape critically, with a view to digging a little deeper than the stated aims and intentions of the Biennale organisers.[2] Worth considering here is the extent to which its network of national pavilions might reveal, in the sphere of culture, what the geographer Jane Margaret Jacobs in her ground-breaking book *The Edge of Empire* (1996), calls 'the embedded unevenness of power, which is the legacy of imperialism' (p.157). Critics are no doubt aware of how the Biennale 'is marked in its very architectural structure by the inequalities of the colonialist world order' (Madra, 2006, p.526); but precisely how this geopolitical unevenness is manifest in the Giardini is what needs to be explained.

That the Biennale and its national pavilions present a moral dilemma is undeniable. This is evidenced in the intense criticism that has mounted against it since the late 1960s. Its pavilions have been seen as symbolic structures, rooted in an ethos of nation building, imperial expansion, and fascist bellicosity. Although its organisers sought to distance the Biennale from

2   The world's fairs engendered some of the great myths of modernity, providing the world with a 'proof' of the idea that national borders (and differences of any kind) could be overcome through 'peaceful' commerce and culture, which would in turn facilitate cooperation on the global scale; being modelled on the internationalism of the world's fairs, the Venice Biennale is rooted in this false consciousness.

Figure 3.6: Northeast façade of the Israeli pavilion, designed by Zeev Rechter in 1952.
Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.7: North façade of the Canadian pavilion, designed by Enrico Peressutti of BBPR in 1958.
Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.8: East façade of the Brazilian pavilion, built by Amerigo Marchesin in 1964, and based on the original 1959 designs of Henrique Mindlin, Walmyr Amaral and Giancarlo Palanti.
Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.9: View looking east toward the Egyptian pavilion, originally known as the pavilion of the Arab Republic of Egypt (RAE), and included among the exhibition spaces of the north wing of the *Padiglione Venezia*, designed by Brenno Del Giudice in 1932. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.10: View looking west toward the Venezuelan pavilion, designed by Carlo Scarpa in 1956. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

this reputation after the Second World War, with the usual claims that art was above politics, it eventually reached a critical turning point, and found itself deeply unpopular among counter-cultural circles during the Vietnam War. In the summer of 1968, for instance, artists boycotted it and student protesters threatened to burn down its pavilions, forcing the police to stand guard over the Giardini, and eventually close the exposition.[3] Since then, diatribes against the Biennale's national organisation have become such a cliché that artists, curators and critics (too many to name here) are now effectively beginning to defend it instead; the position is that the national structure of this exposition has inspired a number of site-specific projects that address the geopolitics of the Biennale, and which invite debate about the contemporary problems of nationhood, migration, borders and subalternity, and indeed the complicity of architecture in more abstract, cultural forms of violence.

Curiously, though, it has not been architects showing work at the Biennale of Architecture (occurring in Venice's Giardini in alternating years since 1980), which would seem a more likely occasion for a critical interrogation of the ideological nature of this built landscape, but artists showing at the Biennale of art (including, Hans Haacke, with *Germania*, in 1993; Santiago Sierra, with *Wall Enclosing a Space*, in 2003;

Antoni Muntadas, with *I Giardini: On Translation* in 2005; Steve McQueen, with *Giardini* in 2009; Alfredo Jaar, with *Venezia, Venezia*, in 2013), who have done most to catalyse discussion and debate. In spite of the recent interest that artists have generated in the architecture of this place, however, there has still been little scholarly treatment of these pavilions. Beyond a passing and pedestrian consideration of them by authors whose main interest is obviously the exposition itself (Alloway, [1969] 2010), the pavilions and the architectural landscape of the Giardini remain largely untouched in the academic literature.[4] The following can only be a foray into this territory, which will no doubt be followed by more rigorous treatments.

National identity in a changing post-war landscape

This paper homes in on the phase of building that occurred in the Giardini after the Second World War. While the early twentieth-century pavilions of the established colonial powers are more familiar, the pavilions of nations that were 'latecomers' within these grounds are lesser known. There were two significant developments in this period. One, modernist architecture became the language of choice, as opposed to the predominantly classicizing, art nouveau or national romantic vocabularies of earlier

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3   Archival photographs of the summer 1968 occupation of the Giardini by police and protesters provide some insight into how this architectural landscape became such a fraught space between May and July. In protest against the presence of police, artists boycotted the exposition, and the public scribbled slogans on walls, such as 'LA BIENNALE E FASCISTA'. Vittoria Martini (2005) quotes the kind of slogans heard in and around the grounds of the exposition in 1968, e.g., 'Biennale of capitalists, we'll burn your pavilions!'

4   The point here is that the pavilions have not been examined in terms of the broader landscape of the Giardini, though it is to be admitted that some of them have received individual attention. Marco Mulazzani's *I Padiglione della Biennale di Venezia* (2004) documents all of the pavilions, but it remains a guidebook, which treats each building separately, much like the recent Diener & Diener project, *Common Pavilions* (2013). Likewise, Richard J. Goy's *Venice: An Architectural Guide* (2010) lists the pavilions, usefully providing names of architects and dates of construction (and renovation), but stopping far short of any sustained analysis.

Figure 3.11: View looking southeast toward the Uruguayan pavilion, converted from a storehouse in 1958. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.12: View looking north toward the Australian pavilion, designed by Philip Cox in 1988. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.13: View looking west toward the South Korean pavilion, designed by Seok Chul Kim and Franco Mancuso in 1995. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.14: View looking west toward the Japanese pavilion, designed by Takamasa Yoshizaka in 1956. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

decades; modernism (in art and architecture alike) was promoted as a universal language suited to an exposition that had international pretensions. Two, it was during this period – the 1950s and 60s – that the first pavilions for nations with colonial histories were built, thereby breaking a dominion that had been exclusively European (with the exception of the American pavilion built in 1930); this further helped to propagate an international image of the Biennale. What, however, was the broader significance of these seemingly positive developments? In what ways did they serve to diversify architectural modernism, or suggest alternative modernisms? To what extent did they distance the Biennale from its murkier bedrock in an age of empire – in an era of nationalism and dictatorship – and open up a new chapter in its history?

In responding to these questions, this essay will look in particular at three of the more intriguing pavilions built here after World War II – namely, those for Israel (1952), Canada (1958) and Brazil (1964). Curiously, each of these 'post-colonial' nations used a different kind of architectural modernism here, in keeping with the images that they might have wanted to project in this transnational (or even supranational) context. Admittedly, all three have very different colonial histories, in which relationships between indigenous peoples and white settlers of European ancestry have played out very differently. Even so, these pavilions might nevertheless be studied together inasmuch as their nations occupied a largely peripheral location with respect to the imperial culture of the European metropole. Other non-European nations with colonial pasts, whose pavilions were added to the Giardini in the post-war era, included Egypt in 1952, Venezuela in 1956, Uruguay in 1960, Australia in 1988 and South Korea in 1995. Noteworthy, too, was the addition in 1956 of Japan – a former imperialist aggressor, but

one that had been tamed if not exactly colonised by American interests after its inhumane pulverisation by two atomic bombs.

It is with great interest that one might begin to investigate the different national identities that these

pavilions have projected, and are perhaps continuing to project, in this ostensibly international context – a context, it must be remembered, that is tainted by the nationalism, colonialism and fascism of modern European history. Attributing specific ideological and/ or aesthetic intentions to the nation-states, institutions or architects involved in the construction of these pavilions, however, is not without difficulties. One must proceed cautiously, even when it seems quite transparent that there is a strong correlation in these buildings between the image that they assume and the political system of the nations for which they were built. Finally, in endeavouring to consider a selection of post-war pavilions alongside one another, this paper seeks to investigate how these new structures served to recast the architectural landscape of the Giardini (now taken in their entirety), against a backdrop that saw the decolonisation of Europe's former possessions, the consolidation of the United Nations, and the escalation of the Cold War. Each pavilion may tell its own story, but when studied together, a more intricate choreography might be discerned.

Before examining what these pavilions reveal about the image of their respective nations within the transnational arena of the Giardini, it would be useful just to recall some of the existing literature on nationalism and national identity in modern architectural culture (McNeill and Tewdr-Jones, 2003; Jones, 2011; Quek, Deane and Butler, 2012). Here, the architectural historian Lawrence Vale's classic study *Architecture, Power, and National Identity* ([1992] 2008) is particularly helpful. Vale makes a critical distinction between three categories that are normally blurred by the monolithic term *national identity*. The first is the *personal identity* of the statesperson or governmental body commissioning the project, which might dictate its design, or at least intervene in that process somehow; the second is the *subnational identity* of a group that may compete for validation of its own architectural representation above that of other groups assimilated under the nation-state; and the third is *supranational identity*, or 'identity in the eyes of an international audience' (p.60) – the image that a nation wants to project to the world at large or when building abroad.

When looking at architecture of the kind found in Venice's Giardini, all three of these elements will need to be borne in mind, especially as exposition pavilions are typically designed to downplay differences and tensions between these. But rather than aiming to reconstruct a universal meaning, which does not exist for the simple reason that meaning is fluid, one should seek to lay bare the power struggles and competing interests manifest in any attempt to convey national identity. Vale writes: 'Although there may be some well-intentioned search for a unifying national symbol, normally the choice of symbol, if examined, reveals other structural, social and economic tensions' (p.54). After exploring these tensions in regard to the three above-mentioned pavilions, the broader significance of the post-war architectural landscape in which they made their appearance can be addressed.

There is one further point to be made here though, for attendant on any discussion of national identity in architecture is the question of whether local vernacular expression, or a language that is more meaningful internationally, should be pursued. Of course there is a third way, which consists in the impulse to reconcile these two seemingly contradictory pursuits. Taking his cue from the philosopher Paul Ricoeur's essay 'Universal Civilization and National Cultures' ([1955] 1965), and using a term coined in 1981 by Alexander Tzonis and Liane Lefaivre, Kenneth Frampton (1983) theorised a 'critical regionalism,' pointing to post-war practices that he took to be resisting the homogenizing pressures of architectural modernism. Regionalist positions like Lewis Mumford's have been used to critique modernism from the very beginning, but it has only been in the last couple decades, with the rhetoric of globalisation, that the debates over locally inflected architectural practices in the face of an ostensibly flattening uniformity have intensified (Colquhoun, 1997; Nalbantoğlu, 2000; Eggener, 2002; King, 2004; Perera, 2010; Richards, 2012), and that it has been recognised – contrary to the dominant narrative – that the regional or vernacular has in fact always been 'a constitutive part of the modern' (Umbach and Hüppauf, 2005, p.23).

Given that the image of a nation (or nations) is at stake in Venice's Giardini, one could reasonably assume that the question of how to reconcile the global and the local, i.e., internationalist and regionalist vocabularies, has been paramount whenever a pavilion has been built here. These tensions too, then, need to be borne in mind here, as does the fact that the Giardini – as will become apparent – are not any specific place at all, but a transnational diplomatic limbo of sorts; segregated from the city's older fabric, they are a liminal or heterotopian space, or what the ethnologist Marc Augé (1995) refers to as a 'non-place.' Such a deracinated place is of course physically incompatible with any regionalist engagement with locality; this non-place would appear to prevent the pavilions from being anything other than what Frampton derogatorily calls 'scenographic' façades. However the conflict of 'universal civiliation and national cultures' has been dealt with here, one suspects that the British critic Lawrence Alloway may have been correct when

Figure 3.15: View looking east toward the Israeli pavilion, such that it appears behind the American pavilion. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

– deliberating over the 'folkloric, classicizing, and international' styles present within these gardens – he dismissively conjectured that 'perhaps all the pavilions are, to some extent, folkloric' (p.140).

Israel's Bauhaus Vernacular

Israel applied for a spot in the Giardini just two years after the partition of Mandate Palestine. Officially opened in 1952, its pavilion scuppered earlier plans from the late 1940s for what would have been named a Palestinian pavilion.[5] Remarkably, that same year also saw Israel's adversary, Egypt, enter the Giardini. Egyptian artists were among the first non-Europeans to show work in the main exposition palace of the Biennale, almost from the very beginning; but the Arab Republic of Egypt (RAE) had now obtained its own permanent space. Still, this was inside the Padiglione Venezia, a large generic classicizing structure dominating the island of Sant'Elena (across the canal from the main grounds), which had been designed by the Venetian Brenno Del Giudice under the fascist regime. The Israeli pavilion, by contrast, was a free-standing entity built by an Israeli architect, Zeev Rechter. Not coincidentally, it is located next to the pavilion of the United States, which was the first country to recognise Israel's sovereignty. The pairing is as significant as the disjunction in style is conspicuous.

5   The proposal for a Palestinian pavilion was advanced again in 2002, but as the Italian government did not recognise this nation, it was rejected, and reported in the press as verging on anti-Semitic provocation. See Jean Fischer (2009), who recounts a number of the strategies since used by curators and artists to intervene in the institutional infrastructure of the Biennale's architecture so as to give the question of Palestine a greater voice.

Figure 3.16: View looking east toward the American pavilion, designed by Williams Adams Delano and Chester Holmes Aldrich in 1930, showing part of a site-specific installation above the pediment called *Triple Point* (2013) by Sarah Sze. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Unlike its neighbour, built in a nationalist Colonial Revival language just prior to the emergence of the 'international style' in America, the Israeli pavilion seems to proclaim the post-war triumph of architectural modernism over classicism. The pavilion for the United States is noteworthy not just because it was installed in the Giardini under Benito Mussolini's dictatorship, but because it reveals how in 1930 it was still possible to build public monuments in a style that harked back directly to Thomas Jefferson's neoclassical house on the Monticello estate. By the 1950s, however, the so-called 'international style' was the preferred language for the construction of

Figure 3.17: View looking west toward the Swiss pavilion, designed by Bruno Giacometti in 1952. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.18: View looking north toward the Austrian pavilion, designed by Josef Hoffmann in 1934, and restored by Hans Hollein in 1984. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

important public buildings and diplomatic structures in the North Atlantic sphere, including the new United Nations Headquarters in New York, designed by Wallace Harrison and Max Abramovitz. Somewhat anachronistically, though, the Israeli pavilion does not resemble the 1950s modernist gravitas of the UN building so much as it does the lightweight Bauhaus experiments of the 1920s.

Indeed, compared to the other pavilions built during this decade (e.g. Bruno Giacometti's ground-hugging brick-clad Swiss pavilion, 1952; or Takamasa Yoshizaka's elevated monolithic *béton brut* Japanese pavilion, 1956), Israel looks highly incongruous. It is even more of an anomaly than was Josef Hoffmann's 1934 Austrian pavilion – usually acknowledged as the first modernist building in the Giardini, but still very classical in its symmetrical plan and elevation. With its unadorned white walls, flat roof and lightweight and asymmetrical trapezoidal shell, cut open in one corner to allow for a glazed porch defined by *pilotis*

(and with its three split levels, curving stairwells and suggestion of a Corbusian *promenade architecturale* on the interior), the Israeli pavilion is a curious throwback. It is a throwback to the 1920s and specifically to

Figure 3.19: View looking east toward the Israeli pavilion. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.20: View looking west toward the Israeli pavilion. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.21: Interior view of the Israeli pavilion, with part of a site-specific installation in the foreground called *The Workshop* (2013) by Gilad Ratman. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

the kind of thing seen at Stuttgart's legendary 1927 Deutscher Werkbund exhibition on the Weissenhof housing estate. The pavilions at this exposition modelled prototypical dwellings, and showcased the new building style, five years before Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson used the space of New York's Museum of Modern Art to canvass modernism as the 'international style,' i.e., a style befitting America's incipient image of itself as a global capitalist superpower.

In the 1930s, this new building style had been transplanted from Germany to Mandate Palestine, in what the historian Daniel Monk has called 'an aesthetic occupation' (Monk, 1994 and 2002). This style was practised by a circle of avant-garde architects, who were reacting against earlier efforts to formulate an authentically Jewish architectural expression there, and which they saw as resulting in an unsatisfactory Orientalizing eclecticism. They were all trained in Europe and sympathetic to the Zionist cause. Among them was Rechter, the architect of the Biennale pavilion. Originally from the Ukraine, but educated in Rome and Paris, Rechter is considered one of the seminal figures of Israeli modern architecture. In 1949, just two years prior to the Biennale commission, he had won the highly prestigious competition to build Jerusalem's International Convention Center, the Binyenei HaUma, or Building of the Nation as it is commonly known. With this project, as well as Tel Aviv's national courthouse and Mann Auditorium, and a number of kibbutzim and residential blocks, he contributed to the definition of modern Israeli architecture as it is known today.

What was in America being promoted in the late 1930s and 40s as the 'international style,' then, was being presented as a vernacular in the emergent state of Israel. It was not just the Tel-Aviv circle, though, which construed this as a regional language specific to the culture and climate of the Middle East. The Nazis also identified the modernist vocabulary of flat roofs and white walls with the Mediterranean, and specifically Palestine, as a well-known 1934 photomontage attests. This image was publicised as propaganda by the Nazis, who were eager to lambast the architectural modernism of the Stuttgart Weissenhofsiedlung as Semitic, foreign, un-German; they did this by visually transposing this estate to a foreign Mediterranean landscape replete with Arabs and camels, so that the message of the photomontaged image was clear: modernism was alien to Germanic culture. By mid-century, then, the new building style had in the Palestinian context assumed the look of a 'bauhaus vernacular' (Monk,

Figure 3.22: View looking north toward the Czechoslovakian pavilion, designed by Otakar Novotný in 1926. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

1994), and was closely linked with a burgeoning Israeli nationalism.[6]

This not only explains the seemingly anachronistic presence of a 1920s Bauhaus vocabulary in the post-war gardens of the Biennale, but also shows how the new state of Israel sought to capitalise here on the vernacular *and* international associations of its pavilion. The use of an international modernist language in the Israeli pavilion is thrown into sinister relief when seen next to the pavilion built in 1926 for Czechoslovakia, similarly positioned in proximity with those European nations that vouched for its legitimacy; this was an equally young and conflicted state at the time, and the architect of its pavilion, Otakar Novotný, employed a pared-down quasi-functionalist aesthetic to communicate progressive democratic and social ideals in this supranational setting, which entirely belied the subnational identities of Czechs and Slovaks. By contrast, though, the Israeli pavilion, wholly foreign to the utopian moment of the Weimar Republic and the Bauhaus culture that it casts a superficial glance back at, is void of any such ideals; it is all image or instrument, for the much less benign task of imposing Zionism on the map of Palestine at a particularly critical moment, when the fledgeling state of Israel was engaging in conflict on all of its borders.

This is no longer just the 'aesthetic occupation' of which Monk writes. Since this structure now physically occupies the supranational space of the Biennale rather than Palestinian land, it might be more apposite to see it as a form of 'symbolic violence.' It performs a

6   The term 'bauhaus vernacular' was only coined recently by Daniel Monk (1994) and Gilbert Herbert (1995); but architects of the Chug would surely have realised they were vernacularizing modernism; for other critical views on this process in Israel, see Alona Nitzan-Shiftan (1996) and Amir Peleg (2002).

Figure 3.23: Canadian pavilion, showing part of an installation called *Music for Silence* (2013) by Shary Boyle.
Photograph: Joel Robinson.

symbolic violence inasmuch as it denies the existence of this region's subnational identities. On the surface, then, this is an architecture that bespeaks the freedom, openness and universality of the 'international style,' *i.e.*, the 'American style.' Yet, it is disingenuous to talk of style here, as if it were something untainted and innocent of politics. For while the Israeli pavilion may not appear as belligerent as the classicizing monumentalism that infiltrated the Giardini under fascism, its enlistment in a form of cultural imperialism (not to say cultural genocide) is not dissimilar.

Canada's Indigenous Primitivism

From the very beginning, Canada had artists showing work individually at the Biennale. It only officially entered as a nation in the same year as Israel, albeit inside the main exposition palace at first (Paikowsky, 1999).[7] It did not acquire its own pavilion till 1958, when funds for building it were provided as part of the Italian government's 'peace settlement' (Reesor, 1995, p.17). In high contrast with Israel, Canada had been relatively autonomous as a nation for some time – since 1867 to be precise, when a self-governing confederacy was established. Even so, the location of Canada's pavilion on San Antonio's Mount (named after

Figure 3.24: View looking east toward the Canadian pavilion, which was built immediately southwest of the British pavilion.
Photograph: Joel Robinson.

one of the churches that was demolished here to make way for these public gardens) next to – or rather in the shadow of – the British pavilion, is a reminder of its perpetual colonial standing, and the fact that prior to this Canada's participation in international expositions was largely underwritten by its place in the empire.

Like the Israeli pavilion, whose placement behind the American pavilion was every bit as telling, the Canadian pavilion was initially bound up with the question of this country's national sovereignty. To be sure, this was obviously more of a cultural sovereignty, vis-à-vis threats that were now perceived to be coming from south of the border rather than across the Atlantic. As others have observed (Reesor, 1995; Paikowsky, 1999; Sabatino, 2007; Moreno, 2010; Diggon, 2012), the

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7   In contrast with the other case studies here, namely the pavilions for Israel and Brazil, there is already a body of literature on Canada at the Venice Biennale, some of which touches on the pavilion and its reception in the media; see Carol Harrison Reesor (1995), Sandra Paikowsky (1999), Valentine Moreno (2010) and Elizabeth Diggon (2012). However, only Michelangelo Sabatino (2007) really describes the architecture of the pavilion.

Figure 3.25: View of the entrance to the Canadian pavilion.
Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.26: View from the interior courtyard of the Canadian pavilion. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Canadian pavilion cannot be discussed without close reference to the so-called Massey Report, written in 1951 with a view to laying out the tactics of cultural protectionism, and spelling out the significance of the arts in the projection of Canada at home and abroad. Several passages in this report are quite remarkable, inasmuch as they specify for instance that, in addition to military defences, 'our cultural defences equally demand national attention; the two cannot be separated' (quoted in Paikowsky, p.9).

The man who headed the Royal Commission on National Development of the Arts, Letters and Sciences, which is the body that had produced the Massey Report, was no less a diplomat and figure of power than Vincent Massey. During the Second World War, he had served as the country's delegate to the League of Nations, and when Canada first started participating in the Biennale, he was not only chair of the National Gallery in Ottawa (between 1948 and 1952), but also Governor General. This is worth bearing in mind when considering that the Canadian pavilion was realised under the aegis of the National Gallery. For, while it is generally acknowledged that the degree of involvement of the National Gallery (and more generally, the federal government) in the design and building of the Biennale pavilion was fairly minimal, it cannot have been completely negligible.

This pavilion is unique in that it was not designed by a national (like most of the venues up to that point), but left to Italian architects, and specifically Enrico Peressutti of the Milanese firm BBPR. BBPR, whose other members included Lodovico Belgiojoso and Ernesto Rogers, had banded together in the early 1930s to serve the fascist state's corporatist vision for architecture and the city, before disabusing itself of that ideology, after its founding member Gian Luigi Banfi was murdered in 1945, in the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria. Peressutti designed a modestly sized pavilion, fitting the plot that was offered. It integrates different materials – a concrete pillar in the courtyard, inclined iron beams, and walls of brick, wood and glass. More unusual though is its vaguely helical plan, organised around a large tree that had to stay there by law. It is surely the least orthodox structure in the Giardini, and quite likely 'a reaction to the monumental and imperialist impulses of the architecture associated with Mussolini's Fascism and to

Figure 3.27: View looking southeast toward the Hungarian pavilion, designed by Géza Maróti in 1909. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.28: View looking east toward the Finnish pavilion, designed by Alvar Aalto in 1956. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

the surrounding neoclassical pavilions', as has recently been suggested (Drouin-Brisebois, 2011, p.78).

The Canadian pavilion is among a number of post-war structures in the Giardini that is typical of a gradual shift away from the internationalist rhetoric of 1930s modernism, toward regionalist positions, and a consideration of the specific context or culture of a place. Regionalist inclinations were not entirely new in the Giardini, as the Secessionist character of the Hungarian pavilion (1909) and the Byzantine aspect of the Greek pavilion (1932) demonstrate; but these were eclectic historicist in style, and likely perceived with disdain by the more progressive architects that designed pavilions here after the War. One of the more exemplary post-war indications of a progressive regionalism here, for instance, is Alvar Aalto's Finnish pavilion (1956); with its walls painted in the colours (blue and white) of that country's flag, this is a deeply nationalistic albeit abstract reinterpretation of the wooden vernacular of Karelia, a region fought over

between the Finns and Soviets during World War II. Like the 'bauhaus vernacular' of the Israeli pavilion, though, this is once again a strangely transplanted regionalism. It has nothing to do with the context of Italy or Venice, of course; rather, it is all about supranational projection, with a form of scenography or image-making that is introduced here because it is deemed to be representative of national identity.

As one of the more peculiar works of architecture in the Biennale grounds, Canada's pavilion has generated comparatively more interest than most of the other buildings in the Giardini. One of the points of debate here concerns the intentionality of its image. With its octagonal footprint, and its conical elevation of criss-crossing beams, it has been seen as the cliché of an 'Indian' *teepee* or *wigwam*, albeit using the techniques and materials of industrialised Europe.[8] This was certainly recognised at the time, with the critic Lisa Balfour of the *Montreal Star* complaining that because 'it imitates the lines of an Indian wigwam' (Balfour, 1966), it could not have been a less satisfactory space for displaying art (and paintings in particular); she was no less critical in her article for *Maclean's* magazine, 'Our Image in a Venice Wigwam' (Balfour, 1966, p.72). Nor was this image lost on commentators outside Canada; in 1968, Alloway wrote rather condescendingly that 'Canada has built an intricate wigwam out of glass and wood' (Alloway, 2010, p.141).

It is only in the more recent scholarship that positions about whether and how intentional this was are conflicted, with Sabatino drawing on BBPR's interest in vernacular expression, indigenous traditions and a primitivist aesthetic in his account of Canada's 'Wigwam in Venice' (the title of his 2007 article), and Elizabeth Diggon pointing to the lack of concrete evidence for this inference (in her insightful 2012 dissertation examining the diplomatic and cultural objectives of Canada at the biennials in Venice and São Paolo). Yet, the absence of hard testimony that the National Gallery or Peressutti himself sought to mobilise indigeneity in the pursuit of a national image does not at all make this a crude hypothesis, as Diggon suggests it does (p.11). On the contrary, the Massey Report, which counseled the development of a regionalist language in architectural culture, actually gives credence to the suggestion that this pavilion was meant to convey aboriginality.

Moreover, when one recalls how Canada had already been concerned with representations of 'Indianness'

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8   Although 'First Nations' or 'First Peoples' are generally the preferred terms used to refer to Canada's indigenous populations, 'Indian' is actually still the legal appellation used by the Canadian government.

and 'Indian' relations as early as the 1893 Chicago World's Fair, and had indeed already been putting aboriginal culture on display at such expositions so as to promote tourism, the Biennale pavilion's resonance with native building traditions seems less of an accident. (It was certainly no accident at Montreal's Expo '67, less than a decade later, in the designs for the Canadian pavilion and the Indians of Canada pavilion). Although Peressutti was Italian, one can conceivably imagine him considering the origins of the pavilion typology in the mobile tents of Roman and Crusader times, and appreciating the analogy between these Eurasian structures and North American nomadic dwellings, with which he would certainly have become acquainted on trips to Ottawa and New Jersey, where he had lecturing responsibilities (Sabatino, p.6). Yet, it hardly matters at any rate, for the evidence is clear enough that the wider populace did in fact perceive a wigwam in the Canadian pavilion, and take this as the image that Canada wanted to project.[9] One of the other images that comes to mind, especially when seen next to the classicizing structure of the British pavilion, is that of a fortress on the colonial American frontier.

Rather exotic in the Venetian context, the primitivism of this pavilion was, upon its construction, either praised or mocked. Interestingly, though, it was not questioned (just as the indigeneity mobilised at world's fairs was not questioned) in light of the Canadian government's unspeakable record of cultural genocide, its expropriation of indigenous lands, its prohibition on certain cultural and spiritual practices, and its ruthless assimilationist policies. Without the least concern for the deeper politics of representation here, one journalist merely observed: 'It is rather as if three teepees had been pushed together to form the core of a combination post-office, souvenir stand, and service station somewhere near the U.S.-Canada border' (Hale, 1966). Artists and curators, for their part, have continued to whinge more about the tortuous space of its galleries, which were not at all like the standard 'white cube' for displaying work. Not until 1995 did the government even select a First Nations artist to represent Canada in its modernist teepee.

In contrast with Israel, the Canadian pavilion does not (at least not in such a blunt way) put indigenous

identity under erasure, in favour of that of the settlers. Rather, this construction appears to colonise the representation of 'Indianness,' reducing, homogenizing or essentializing one aspect of aboriginal building tradition, and projecting a form of primitivism onto that nomadic type of architecture. To what end does it do this though? If the Canadian pavilion cannot be accused of eliding indigeneity, it is perhaps instead what the historian Kim Dovey, writing about attempts in the Australian context to construct something that might be called an aboriginal architecture, has called a 'signifier of reconciliation' (Dovey, 2000, p.5). This would be, in other words, a 'signifier' that serves to displace or silence any questions about what a richer, more polyvalent aboriginal identity might be, and absorb the markers of that identity into a Western narrative, which ultimately serves to validate hegemonic relations.

Brazil's Tropical Modern

The Brazilian pavilion was originally designed in 1959 by the firm of Henrique Ephim Mindlin, Walmyr Lima Amaral, and the Italian émigré Giancarlo Palanti, but only realised in 1964, under the direction of the Venetian Amerigo Nino Marchesin.[10] Unlike the Israeli and Canadian pavilions, several hands were involved here (nationals of both Brazil and Italy), and the building might be said to register this intercontinental exchange. Of the architects involved, Mindlin and Palanti were well-established, having struck up a partnership in 1955. Mindlin was a prolific architect, but outside Brazil was best known for his canonical survey *Modern Architecture in Brazil* (1956), introduced by Siegfried Giedion and published in German, French and English, with a view to broadcasting the nation's contribution to architectural modernism for an overseas readership. Before relocating to Brazil in 1946, Palanti had studied and taught at Milan's Polytechnic, practised with formative and influential rationalists like Franco Albini, and worked on the magazines *Domus* and *Casabella*. The choice of these architects, then, could not have been more suitable.

Latin American participation in the Biennale could of course be a topic of study in itself, illuminating how nations in this particular region utilised culture in the

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9   The fact that the Canadian pavilion is still seen as a wigwam, moreover, is evidenced in Josée Drouin-Brisebois' catalogue essay for the 2011 Canadian pavilion, and in the architectural conservator Dinu Bumbaru's short reflection on the Canadian pavilion in *Common Pavilions* (2013), where he writes that it offers 'an evocative hybrid between the First Nations' movable houses and the brickscapes of cities and industries seamlessly connected to the gardens in a way that is distinctive yet respectful of the neighbours.'

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10   Mindlin was a prolific architect, but outside of Brazil is perhaps best remembered for his two-decade survey *Modern Architecture in Brazil* (1956), introduced by Siegfried Giedion and published in German, French and English, with a view to broadcasting the nation's contribution to architectural modernism overseas. Palanti was a well-established architect prior to his move to Brazil in 1946, having graduated from and taught at Milan's Polytechnic, practised with rationalists like Franco Albini, and worked on the magazines *Domus* and *Casabella*.

Figure 3.29: View looking east toward the Brazilian pavilion, from the bridge linking the Giardini to the island of Sant'Elena. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

construction of national identity. Quite predictably, the more influential or wealthier nations acquired representation early on, with others joining only afterward. Argentina was the first to participate, from as early as 1901; Brazil and Mexico only showed artwork from 1950, Venezuela from 1956, Bolivia and Cuba from 1966, Columbia from 1968, and Chile from 1974 (when the Biennale was mobilised to protest the regime of Augusto Pinochet).[11] None acquired their own pavilions, though, until after the Second World War. Venezuela, a resource-rich nation in the grip of a dictatorship, was the first to build its pavilion in 1956. Uruguay was granted permission to convert an existing storehouse for use as its pavilion in 1960. Brazil, with its socialistic democracy under threat by Cold War plotting, completed its pavilion just before the military coup of 1964. Brazil's was the last of the pavilions to be built here prior to the radicalism of the late 1960s and 70s, which led to a hiatus in construction till the end of the century, at which point Australia and South Korea acquired pavilions.

Like many of its continental neighbours, Brazil had obtained its independence long ago, in 1822 to be exact. By the time it built its pavilion in Venice, then, there was no question of needing or wanting to assert sovereignty, either political or cultural, as had been the case with Israel and Canada. Yet, there was the

Figure 3.30: View looking west toward the rear of the Brazilian pavilion and gardens. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

question of national identity, which had been an on-going point of concern among Brazil's elite, and which acquired different answers in architectural form, from the classical through the neo-colonial to the modernist. From the first great international expositions, Brazil had been keen to exhibit its modernisation to the world, and sought to build its own autonomous exposition buildings for this purpose. At such events, Latin American countries sought to project European civilisation and progress, even while the reality was that 'they were placed in ambivalent locations, closer to the colonial pavilions than to the European countries, and were asked to display exoticism and originality to satisfy the demands of the mass spectacle' (Dussel, 2011, p.604).

11   Only much more recently, starting in the 2000s, have Peru, Paraguay, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Puerto Rico, Panama, Haiti, and Honduras begun to participate.

Figure 3.31: View looking east across the Sant'Elena Bridge toward the Brazilian pavilion, with the Padiglione Venezia just visible behind it. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.32: View looking south across the gardens of the Brazilian pavilion, with the Padiglione Venezia on the left. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.33: View of the beam dividing the interior galleries of the Brazilian pavilion, showing the installation of the exhibition *Inside/Outside* (2013), curated by Luis Pérez-Oramas and including the work of Max Bill, Lygia Clark, Hélio Fervenza, Odires Mlászho, and Bruno Munari. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.34: View of the beam defining the entrance to the interior galleries of the Brazilian pavilion. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

By the 1930s, with its Old Republic now toppled, Brazil was being increasingly romanticised as a 'land of the future' by European artists and writers (Zweig, 1941). It was perceived as a liberal utopian *tabula rasa* of new possibilities. As such, it attracted high numbers of immigrants and curious visitors. Incidentally, it was the Italian émigré and entrepreneur Francisco (Ciccillo) Matarazzo Sobrinho who would in 1951 establish Brazil's own international, large-scale, recurring exposition, the São Paolo Bienal – the second of its kind after the Venice Biennale. With the visits of Le Corbusier in 1929 and 1936, and architects like Rino Levi, Gregori Warchavchik, Roberto Burle Marx, Lúcio Costa, Oscar Niemeyer and Affonso Eduardo Reidy pioneering the new building style, the sway of Beaux-Arts classicism and neo-colonial academicism receded (but not without a fight), and Brazil began to absorb architectural modernism, to the point that this has been perceived as the nation's vernacular style; nowhere else did modernism 'achieve the scale or depth of dissemination across social strata that it reached in Brazil' (Lara, 2009, p.48). As in Israel then, modernism had been long accepted as a national style by the time Brazil built its pavilion in Venice; but this was a very different kind of modernism.

In the Giardini, the location of the Latin American pavilions seems to have been more the result of where there was leftover space. Venezuela was allocated a rather central plot of land, on one of the main axes, between the Russian pavilion and the recently built Swiss pavilion. The pre-existing structure that became the Uruguayan pavilion was situated in a rather unpropitious area, as one might expect, on the bank of the canal that divides the main gardens from the island of Sant'Elena. In the original plans, the pavilion for Brazil was meant to double as a bridge that would cross the canal, thereby connecting the main grounds with the island. In the final design, Marchesin appears to have retained its character as a kind of passage if not a

bridge, but repositioned the building; he placed it solidly on the island itself, and on axis with both the older bridge and the central ingress of the Padiglione Venezia.

Unlike the Israeli and Canadian additions, which rejected the classical symmetry of the early twentieth-century buildings as too autocratic, the Brazilian pavilion is exceptional in being the only post-war structure to recuperate symmetry. Two rectilinear volumes – the front one smaller than the rear one – are bisected by an imposing concrete U-shaped beam; this marks the ingresses at front and rear, divides the exhibition space into four rooms, connects the outdoor areas at either end, and reinforces the pavilion's axial alignment with the pared-down rationalist façade of the building behind it. This symmetry is also characteristic of Sant'Elena's Austrian and Greek pavilions built in 1934, positioned so they are facing each other at either end of the Padiglione Venezia. Even so, by virtue of its conspicuously awkward location blocking the monumental vista of the latter, Brazil's post-war pavilion would seem to take up an agonistic relationship vis-à-vis the fascist texture of the Giardini, which is especially pronounced here. About this relationship, the artist Regina Silveira (2013) contends that this pavilion 'ended up turning its back to them [the neighbouring pavilions], while completely destabilizing the classical spatial arrangement they bore to each other.'[12]

In its severity of form, Brazil's exhibition building approaches a post-war Brutalist version of the nearby Austrian pavilion, which is similarly rectangular in plan, skirted at the top with glazing, and bisected by an open-air corridor. Its affinity with certain concrete structures built in Brazil around this time –such as Lina Bo Bardi's MASP, or Museum of Art São Paolo (1956-68) – has also been noted. Yet, the only *béton brut* here is in the cornice and the visually arresting horizontal beam, which is otherwise tempered by a façade decorated with the vertical wooden slats that would normally appear imprinted in the unpolished concrete surfaces. Historical photographs suggest that it was originally clad – at least at the rear – with rustic tiles or bricks, where a white plaster only appears now. Glazing – originally clear, but now replaced with frosted glass – stretches around the ceiling of the larger volume to the rear. The terracing and reflective pools that are discernible in the plans, but which today only hint at the hard landscaping and the kind of planting that was intended for the site, are another frank reminder of what has sometimes been referred to in the literature

12 Incidentally, around the same time (between 1962 and 1968), Carlo Scarpa similarly destabilised the equilibrium of the central pavilion's façade, with a series of screens that disrupted its fascist symmetry.

Figure 3.35: View looking northeast toward the central section of the Padiglione Venezia, immediately behind the Brazilian pavilion. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.36: View looking northeast toward the Austrian pavilion. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.37: View looking southeast toward the Greek pavilion, designed by M. Papandreou and Brenno Del Giudice in 1934. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

as Brazil's alternative of 'tropical modernism'.[13] (This, however, is in spite of the fact that the pavilion boasts none of the more stereotypical features of Brazilian modernism, including sun-breakers, or *brises-soleil*, and the curvilinear surfaces popularised by Niemeyer.

The discourse on the tropical in architectural modernism dates to the 1950s, but even before this architects had sought to reconcile the modernism of Bauhaus teachings and Le Corbusier's 'five points' with regions of the world exhibiting very different topographic and climatic traits, and where different forms, materials and techniques had been used. Brazil in particular developed an indigenous modernism that looked inward as much as outward, anticipating the later debates over *critical regionalism*.[14] Where its neighbours still looked largely to Europe (and more recently, the United States) as the exemplar of international modernism, architects here aspired to a hybrid regionalism. Behind this, in part, was the utopian dream of sociologist Gilberto Freyre ([1933] 1964), whose vision of a racial democracy – however naïve – pointed the way to a very different configuration of sub-national identities (predominantly aboriginal and black) in art and architectural culture, where these were indeed celebrated and mobilised in the service of mid-century nationalism.[15]

Contrasting the pavilions of Venezuela and Brazil at the 1939 World's Fair serves to bring this distinction into the spotlight. Venezuela had commissioned the local New York firm Skidmore, Owings and Merrill (SOM) to design its 'international style' pavilion. The result communicated nothing of this country's complex multiculturalism. By contrast, Brazil enlisted Costa and Niemeyer to show off the hybridism of its newly invented architectural tradition. This 'tradition,' as scholars have argued, was an avant-gardist language that simultaneously responded to climatic and topographic

circumstances, and looked back to the Brazilian baroque of the eighteenth-century. The latter was a particularly calculated manoeuvre; it meant that the modernists' claims to reflect Brazil's rich architectural history and mixed cultural identity were that much stronger than those of their academic competitors working in the Beaux-Arts or neo-colonial languages (Lara, 2002).

In the Giardini, roughly two decades later, Venezuela also employed a non-national, the Venetian architect Carlo Scarpa, to design its pavilion. Like the several other buildings that Scarpa built for the Biennale in the 1950s, this series of interpenetrating volumes reveals a post-war Italian preoccupation with the 'organic' architecture of America's Frank Lloyd Wright, who was revered as the harbinger of a more democratic architectural language in the wake of fascism. Like the World's Fair pavilion, it projects an unspecific placeless identity; but this, of course, is a particular kind of identity in itself. It communicates that Venezuela is part of a progressive international community, which is ironic (or perhaps not ironic at all) because it was a military *junta* at the time. Brazil, which would seem the better candidate for inclusion in such a community prior to the 1964 coup, does not neglect its ethnic diversity. It attests to that country's indigenisation of modernism, signaling a hybridity that is not just an aesthetic descriptor but arguably a means for dislodging 'the structures that place central cultures above the peripheral' (Hernández, 2002, p.83), and demonstrating this for the world.

Folkloric Geography in the Giardini
Having introduced three of the more remarkable buildings added to the Giardini in the post-war era, consideration can now be given to the broader significance of this evolving patchwork of pavilions. Writing about these pavilions in his book, *The Venice Biennale, 1895-1968: From Salon to Goldfish Bowl*, the critic Lawrence Alloway observed how they fall into three stylistic categories: 'folkloric, classicizing, and international' (p.140). By the end of his brief two-page survey of the pavilions, however, he seemed unimpressed with such categories, not to say unimpressed with an architecture as banal as nationalism itself, and concluded: 'In truth, perhaps all the pavilions are, to some extent, folkloric' (p.140). *Folkloric* is of course the adjectival form of *folklore*, defined as the traditional stories, beliefs and customs of a people or community, which have come down to them through generations.

The *folkloric* would seem to be Alloway's dismissive catch-all for a host of more familiar terms in

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13   For a discussion of tropical modernism in the Brazilian context, see Aleca Le Blanc (2012); for a more general account of the discourse of tropical architecture as it emerged in the 1950s, see Hannah Le Roux (2003). As Le Blanc explains, there were critics of tropicalism; but the Brazilian modernists exploited its exoticism in the promotion of their work overseas, fusing it with architectural modernism to broadcast national identity.
14   Citing Keith Eggener's (2002) critique of critical regionalism, Fernando Luiz Lara (2009) suggests that Brazil's vernacular modernism is the opposite in that it is not something theorised in the metropole and imposed, from the centre to the periphery, but emerges in the latter, adapting modernism to the locale rather than adapting the locale to modernism, in 'a much more complex process of transculturation' (p.42).
15   On the topics of cultural miscegenation and Brazilian nationalism in the 1930s, see Styliane Philippou (2005).

architectural history, including *national romantic*, *historicist*, *eclectic*, *populist*, *vernacular* and *regionalist* – all of which have usually been construed as *other* to the internationalist aspirations, streamlined appearance and democratic affectation of modernism. Yet, unlike these terms, which may suggest erroneously that identity is somehow innate, the term *folkloric* actually seems the most honest and accurate, in that it calls attention to the fundamentally 'invented' or 'imagined' character of nations and identities (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983; Anderson, 1983). It underscores how architecture participates in the building of the traditions and narratives that are central to the formation of nationhood (Bhabha, 1990). The *folkloric* does not refer so much to a style, then, as to the coded aspect of the architecture. This is what Umberto Eco (reflecting on the pavilions of Expo '67 in Montreal) called the secondary function of architecture as a communicative medium, an instrument for the construction of meaning and identity (Eco, [1987] 1997, p.204).

Curiously, however, Alloway does not see modernism in any privileged light, but submits that it may just be another variety of the *folkloric*. The pavilions of Israel, Canada and Brazil appear to corroborate this view. The question that now arises (having worked through the case studies) is whether Alloway's term *folkloric* might feasibly be extended to the Giardini as a whole, inasmuch as this architectural landscape is also coded. To be sure, this is not at all to impute any grand design to this place. It has already been pointed out that the national pavilions were built here at different times, and often renovated in later years, meaning that there could never have been any masterplan of the kind that was used to lay out the universal expositions. Even so, it would be disingenuous to see this landscape as a hodgepodge, haphazardly formed over the last century. By homing in exclusively on the 1950s though, when most of the post-war buildings appeared, one can inquire into how far the introduction of pavilions built by post-colonial nations (in a modernist language inflected by regionalist concerns particular to the nation) served to reconfigure this transnational space, and give rise to a (potentially) different narrative of global order.

To determine the extent to which the architectural script of the Giardini was rewritten during this time, it would be helpful to sketch this landscape as it stood prior to mid-century. This was not just any landscape of course. Not only had it been laid out under the imperial rule of Napoleon Bonaparte in 1807, after the deposition of Venice's Most Serene Republic and the destruction of a vast ecclesiastical heritage in the city's Castello district. Following the Risorgimento, these gardens became a locus of civic pride and nationalist sentiment, visible in the statuary that was accumulating there. Founded in 1895, the Biennale took after – albeit on a smaller scale – the universal expositions that were then being staged throughout Europe, and which engendered the not innocuous 'fairytale' that national borders can be transcended by 'peaceful' exchange, be it commercial or cultural.[16] The first Biennale pavilions were those of Europe's chief powers, many of whom had already hosted their own grand expositions, and were thus very aware of the capital to be gained by building national pavilions at these kinds of events.

From the beginning, the Giardini were an eclectic space, and one of the few in Venice where modern architecture could take root. They were some distance from the older Gothic fabric of the city, and could therefore become a cradle for what the historian Shearer West called a new 'post-Republican "modern" Venice' (West, 1995, p.407). The majority of early twentieth-century pavilions were built in a classicizing or national romantic language, which had already been utilised in the universal museums of the nineteenth century; but given that these were garden pavilions rather than civic monuments, the more experimental Art Nouveau had also been an option, especially as Liberty was being proposed in some quarters as the young Italy's official national style. With the ascendancy of fascism, the gardens were used to propagandise Mussolini's imperial ambitions, faintly echoing Napoleon's own motivations. By the time of Hitler's state visit to Italy in 1934, which included a tour of the Giardini, the austere classicism of the newly proclaimed Empire had been used to rebuild the main exposition palace and construct the Padiglione Venezia on the other side of the canal.

When the Biennale resumed after the interruption of the Second World War, this landscape and its pavilions were perceived as tainted by fascism, and an imperialism that was increasingly ostracised as a drawn-out process of decolonisation began. Unlike the big universal, colonial and empire exhibitions of the past, where the pavilions of colonies often featured alongside those of imperial powers, the Biennale had included very little representation of the colonies; fine art was still perceived as something only Europeans (or non-Europeans trained under Europeans) were capable of making. Even after the war, when a token number of post-colonial nations were allocated space in the Giardini for their pavilions, the premise was that it was

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16   Interestingly, the British filmmaker Steve McQueen, on the occasion of showing his thirty-minute two-screen projection *Giardini* at the 2009 Biennale, used the term 'fairytale' to describe this architectural landscape.

Figure 3.38: Central pavilion, formerly known as the Exposition Palace 'Pro Arte', originally built in 1894 but redesigned (in its current form) as the Italian pavilion by Duilio Torres in 1932. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

Figure 3.39: View looking northeast toward the south wing of the Padiglione Venezia, and showing the Romanian pavilion. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

the art of their settlers rather than their indigenous populations that would be represented there. Only in the 1990s did that change. In the meantime, though, the Biennale largely ignored an emerging postcolonialist critique, and instead participated – inadvertently or knowingly – in the neo-colonialist cultural politics of the Cold War.

The way in which the Biennale of the 1950s was embroiled in propagandistic exertions that equated artistic and intellectual freedom with the capitalist West has recently been studied by Nancy Jachec (Jachec, 2007). Under Mussolini, the state had usurped control of the Biennale. As such, when the Christian Democratic government rose to power after the War, it was able to marshal this institution against the encroachments of a radical left-wing on the one hand, and on the other, utilise it with the aim of consolidating Western Europeanism after the isolation that Italy had suffered under fascism. This had the effect of pitting the ostensibly progressive and international art of countries with membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) against the ostensible cultural stagnancy of the Soviet-dominated Eastern Bloc. It was by no means an ideologically neutral institution, then, which saw the entry of new pavilions into the Giardini over the next two decades. The sociologist Ulrich Beck's turn of phrase that architecture is 'politics with bricks and mortar' (Beck, 1998, p.115) is probably nowhere more applicable than here.

Echoing the words of Homi Bhabha in *The Location of Culture* (1994), the historians Gülsüm Baydar Nalbantoğlu and Wong Chong Thai define an architecture of postcolonialist substance as 'a space of intervention into those architectural constructions that parade under a universalist guise and either exclude or

repress differential spatialities of often disadvantaged ethnicities, communities, or peoples' (Nalbantoğlu and Thai, 1997, p.7).[17] However, the post-war appearance in the Giardini of a number of token pavilions dedicated to postcolonial countries does not constitute a 'postcolonial space' in these terms, but instead makes up what might be called a folkloric geography. For, as Patricia Morton writes in 'The uses and abuses of human geography' (2011), in regard to world's fair pavilions, architecture has not only represented 'geographically-located difference as historically immutable and fixed,' but 'has often employed geography indiscriminately and monumentalized racial and cultural difference in the service of nationalist and imperial regimes' (p.805).

Although the post-war Giardini projected a more inclusive, democratic, egalitarian image, and endeavoured to rub out everything that tarnished the first half-century of the Biennale, theirs is still fundamentally an 'imperial internationalism' (Mazower, 2009, p.191). This is a term that the historian Mark Mazower has used to describe the founding ideology of the United Nations, which for all its anti-colonialist rhetoric effectively existed to preserve the hegemonic relationships and imbalance of power that defined the older global order of the early twentieth century. Art is perhaps nowhere more tainted by this form of imperialism than at ostensibly international events such as the Biennale, and the architecture of display

17 Homi Bhabha's oft-cited formulation of postcolonialism is that of a discourse that might 'intervene in those ideological discourses of modernity that attempt to give hegemonic "normality" to the uneven development and the differential, often disadvantaged, histories of nations, races, communities and peoples' (Bhabha, 1994, p.171).

in Venice's Giardini, like most spaces for the 'civilizing rituals' that Carol Duncan (1995) has theorised in connection with the West's grand universal museums, has been largely conservative in orientation and far from ideologically neutral. As Chin-Tao Wu observes in regard to such events: 'In postcolonial times […] when military occupation is no longer acceptable or legitimate, it is the absence of force rather than its presence that marks out hegemonic domination, in particular in the sphere of art and culture' (Wu, 2007, pp.384–5)

One might suggest that the value of these gardens and pavilions today – usually so unremarked upon – consists in how they can be made to illuminate the role that architecture has played in 'imperial internationalism.' After all, the geopolitics of architecture are quite pronounced in this supranational setting – that is, once one begins to ignore the festive atmosphere of the Biennale, and ponder the significance of its buildings. For better or worse, the moment for burning these pavilions down has long passed, and the Giardini are now a part of a global heritage industry, visited by throngs of tourists, and just barely guarded against decay by the various ministries that preside over them. Still, there is a responsibility to look at this place more closely, and to understand how the essentially *folkloric* aspect of the architectural modernism of its pavilions might serve to expose the folkloric geography of this place, and decentre or provincialise modernism in the interests of a more cosmopolitan perspective.

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FROM THE WORLD'S FAIR TO DISNEYLAND: PAVILIONS AS TEMPLES
Jaimee K. Comstock-Skipp

This paper explores the visual culture of recreated temple structures in the entertainment settings of international exhibitions and Disneyland. It examines the material and conceptual construction of temple mythology in world's fairs and amusement parks through the reproduction – or rather, simulation – of Egyptian, Mayan, Aztec, Cambodian and Hindu structures. Disneyland in southern California has been interpreted as the hybrid descendent of the world's fairs and colonial expositions, the result of continuities and ruptures within the exhibitionary and entertainment traditions of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Some of the architecture in the Adventureland section of the park can be likened to the pavilions of the colonies in French and British expositions, especially those from the late nineteenth century through to 1939. The creators of the Temple of the Forbidden Eye in Disneyland's Indiana Jones Adventure *ride from 1995 have claimed they were directly inspired by images of temples published in* National Geographic *magazines of the 1930s. A skim through these attributed sources of information turns up period photographs from world's fair temple-pavilions. The paper posits that the Disney temple accordingly exists as a simulacrum: a copy for which there is no original. The author nonetheless traces its overlooked formal and conceptual precedents in American, French and British reproductions of Aztec and Mayan temples and palaces, ancient Egyptian temples, and the Cambodian Angkor Wat temple compound. In the colonial villages of expositions, the pavilions of Mexico, Egypt and Indochina were rendered as regional temples with archaeological displays inside them. In response, this paper addresses the question: what is a pavilion when it takes the form of a temple?*

Keywords: pavilion, Disney, world's fair, temple, amusement park, colonialism, Orientalism.

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Abstract

This paper explores the visual culture of recreated temple structures in the entertainment settings of international exhibitions and Disneyland. It examines the material and conceptual construction of temple mythology in world's fairs and amusement parks through the reproduction – or rather, simulation – of Egyptian, Mayan, Aztec, Cambodian and Hindu structures. Disneyland in southern California has been interpreted as the hybrid descendent of the world's fairs and colonial expositions, the result of continuities and ruptures within the exhibitionary and entertainment traditions of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Some of the architecture in the Adventureland section of the park can be likened to the pavilions of the colonies in French and British expositions, especially those from the late nineteenth century through to 1939. The creators of the Temple of the Forbidden Eye in Disneyland's Indiana Jones Adventure *ride from 1995 have claimed they were directly inspired by images of temples published in* National Geographic *magazines of the 1930s. A skim through these attributed sources of information turns up period photographs from world's fair temple-pavilions. The paper posits that the Disney temple accordingly exists as a simulacrum: a copy for which there is no original. The author nonetheless traces its overlooked formal and conceptual precedents in American, French and British reproductions of Aztec and Mayan temples and palaces, ancient Egyptian temples, and the Cambodian Angkor Wat temple compound. In the colonial villages of expositions, the pavilions of Mexico, Egypt and Indochina were rendered as regional temples with archaeological displays inside them. In response, this paper addresses the question: what is a pavilion when it takes the form of a temple?*

Opened in 1955, Disneyland in southern California has been interpreted as the hybrid descendent of world's fairs. It is the result of continuities and ruptures within the exhibitionary and entertainment traditions of colonial expositions and amusement parks in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries (Weinstein, 1992; Çelik and Kinney, 1990; Urry, 2002). In the Disneyland setting, Frontierland, Adventureland and Tomorrowland radiate from the Sleeping Beauty Castle nucleus. It is similar to the segmentation of the early colonial expositions, where sections devoted to technology and progress contrasted with the pavilions

of the empire's colonies in the anthropological sections. Some scholars make the connections between specific expositions and the layout of Disney parks explicit. For Elting Morison, writing on the social, political, and intellectual history of the United States, a Disney theme park is an 'arresting mutation in [a] long sequence...thought of by its creators as a continuing or permanent world's fair' (p.73). Scholar of world's fairs Tony Bennett (2004) points out the function of past international exhibitions as places to see and be seen, allowing visitors to internalise the linear trajectory between savagery and civilisation. But Disney takes this line and gives it another dimension in the name of fantasy. Disneyland architecture in Adventureland echoes the pavilion building at expositions but imbues it with a plot. With an emphasis on narration and fantasy, Disneyland invites visitors to step into stories, so that the guests are made to feel as though they are in a cinematic experience, taking part as 'actors in a film that will only be made in their minds' (Thomas, 1995, p.16).

In studies linking world's fairs to Disneyland (Steiner, 1998; Francaviglia, 1999), scholars seldom give an extended analysis of one park's features or specific examples. Taking a different approach, this paper will examine a particular ride at Disneyland, called the *Indiana Jones Adventure: Temple of the Forbidden Eye*, built in 1995 and situated within the Adventureland zone. The ride's site is that of a simulated archaeological dig in the fictional area of Lost Delta, India. The year is 1935, and Indy has arranged for tourists (i.e., visitors to Disneyland) to enter the temple and partake of three gifts offered by the god Mara: a drink from the fountain of youth, glittering gold, or eternal knowledge. However, visitors must not look into the eyes of the 'double-crossing deity lest they take a detour to doom,' as the ride's 1930s-styled news reel cautions along with ride safety information prior to embarkation on Jeep transport vehicles. But of course the visitors do, and an animatronic Indiana Jones must come to their aid to rescue them from fiery pits, snakes, and finally a gigantic rolling boulder.

The queue for the ride is a marvel and entices visitors to inch along patiently as they wait hours just to experience the three minutes and twenty seconds of the ride's duration. The line area includes extraordinary and interactive details of artefact and architecture. But taking one ride in miniature proves to be too big a task to study, particularly one with such strong connections to a movie franchise. Taking this into account, it is hoped the reader will understand the decision here to forgo any mention of the films, and to focus instead on the constructed temple façade that serves as the

ride's entrance and narrative setting (Figure 4.1). This paper will interpret the conspicuously Indic temple (henceforth termed the 'Disney temple') of the *Indiana Jones Adventure* as the inheritance of the vernacular or colonial pavilions – what might be called 'temple-pavilions' – at world's fairs. The pairing of world's fair pavilions and the Disney temple does not suggest an intentionality on the part of the ride's creators. It will uncover the Disney temple's conceptual borrowings from the earlier ephemeral structures of international expositions spanning 1851–1939. The study will move both chronologically and thematically, beginning with an overview of the temple-pavilions according to the nations or regions they are meant to represent, and progressing to a description of the Disney temple and the issues that arise when such structures assume the guise of temples in fairground and entertainment settings. Finally, the question of what a pavilion is when it takes the form of a temple will be addressed. Articulating the commonalities between the Disney temple and the Orientalist pavilion temples of specifically Victorian roots vocalises prevailing British, French, and American stereotypes hovering around the word 'temple.'

From the outset, it must be emphasised that the temples under discussion here are *constructions* in all senses of the word, not functioning centres of spiritual

Figure 4.1: The Disney temple (Temple of the Forbidden Eye). Photograph: Jaimee K. Comstock-Skipp.

devotion. Certainly, they are architectural spaces, but more so they are Orientalist fabrications that are products and producers of mediated information. Explicit here, then, is a critique of the Disney enterprise as extending the carelessness of colonial traditions: neither imperial empire nor Disney corporation heed the politics involved in representing the architecture of different cultures and religions in entertainment settings. With a nod to the pioneering study *Colonising Egypt* (1988), in which Timothy Mitchell examines the way British exhibitions constructed the rift between fantasy and reality, this paper's focus is on the way the Disney temple and the temple-pavilions use interiors and exteriors to play with fact and fiction. Interpreting the Disney temple as a descendent of past fairs' temple-pavilions and exhibitions, in turn modelled on authentic world temples, the separation between original temple and its translation is not easily delineated. But Mitchell declares that it is not useful to distinguish the fake from the real in the context of fairs and exhibitions. Instead, emphasis ought to rest on the *system* itself in which the real and the representational intersect, overlap, and function as constructions.

Temple-pavilions: 1851–1939

Although the temple-pavilion has its provenance in some of the more eclectic structures that appeared in landscaped gardens of the eighteenth century, the kind of structures being discussed here date from the age of universal exhibitions when fairs were conceived as self-confident assertions of colonial expansion and Empire. Selecting 1939 as a cutoff point has been made in deference to the scholar Neil McKenna who notes a change in the fairs of the postwar period (1999). To him, World War Two was the death knell for the early types of exhibitions. No fairs were held as war raged, and those afterward heralded a different era. Thus the temple-pavilions of this study are from an earlier colonial age when the rhetoric of progress and civilisation went largely undisputed and unquestioned.

The Mexican, Egyptian, Indochinese, and Indian temple-pavilions between 1851 and 1939 explored in this study are from the heydays of Empire celebrations, such as the Great Exhibition of 1851 in London; the 1867, 1878, and 1899 Exposition Universelles in Paris; and the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition and 1933 Century of Progress International Exposition in Chicago. The designers of the temple-pavilions were competitive and sought to outdo themselves and others within the same fair and from one fair to the next. More often than not, the temple-pavilions were constructed to speak on behalf of another culture and heightened this culture's exoticism relative to

the location in which the fair was based (typically Paris, London, or Chicago). These temple-pavilions mask the conflicts of national representation beneath their solid --yet ephemeral-- structures. Fair and park architectures possess extraordinary powers of representation when they reference regions and religions. India could be represented as a Hindu temple or a Mughal mosque; Mexico could be rendered as pre-Columbian (Aztec/Maya) or post- Hispanic (Spanish colonial); Egypt could be depicted as ancient and Pharaonic or Islamic. What is common to all is that this diversity gets elided in the selection of one national form to represent, externally in cement and plaster, the entirety of a nation. As Mauricio Tenorio-Trillo points out, 'styles [are] identified as national at certain historical moments' (p.98). But the pavilion-temples in colonial fair settings contain a twofold nationhood: they symbolise not only the wealth of the country of origin but also the might of the particular imperial power laying claim to it. What follows are condensed accounts of the dominant styles of exposition temple-pavilions by geographic location so as to trace a lineage from these to the Disney temple.

Egypt

In the case of Egypt, the decision to frequently use a temple in exhibitionary displays, and not a mosque, is telling. It illuminates the religious and political concerns debated in the British empire during the nineteenth century. Ultimately, Egypt's importance was deemed to lay in the distant past. Ancient Egyptian temples were thought to be 'dead' architecture in contrast to the Islamic architecture that embodied the living faith of Muslim members of Egyptian society (Çelik, 1992, p.39; Crinson, 1996, p.70). The Egyptian temple-pavilion in the Paris 1867 exposition (Figure 4.2) was designed as 'a living lesson in archaeology' (Tenorio-Trillo, 1996, p.99). The temple was not merely embellishment but reinforced the orientalist notion of Egypt's glory as existing in the past. The French Egyptologist Auguste Mariette created the monument as an idealised synthesis of Egyptian archaeology to combine Philae temple parts and polychrome decorations from the temple exterior of Abydos (Upper Egypt) and within the tombs at Saqqara (Lower Egypt). This Egyptian temple-pavilion caused one fair-goer to report feeling 'surprised and uprooted when I first encountered this temple which seemed to belong to the banks of the Nile' (Çelik, 1992, p.116). In the interior were display cases of artefacts, sculptures, jewels from the latest archaeological expeditions, as well as five-hundred mummy skulls (Aimone and Olmo 1993).

Egyptian temple-pavilions of the early exhibitions appear as pastiches of different elements from all

Figure 4.2: Exterior of the Egyptian pavilion-temple in the Paris 1867 exposition.

over Egypt but later try to heighten authenticity by recreating sections from one temple, as in the 1889 exposition of Paris. This was perhaps due to fair visitors' increasing familiarity with Egypt's real temples in the height of Thomas Cook's 1870s tourism packages. A portion of the Luxor temple complex was reconstructed in Chicago in 1893. The Egypt exhibit for the Paris Exposition of 1900 featured a façade derived from the Temple of Dendur containing reproduced funerary chambers of many different dynasties within. The Egyptian exhibits in the Louisiana Purchase Exposition (1904) were actual objects brought from the Cairo Museum but also included reproductions of artefacts, tableaus, mannequins, and a reconstructed tomb setting to present ancient Egyptian civilisation (Fox and Sneddeker, 1997, p.186). The trend continued in 1933 with Chicago's colourful Egyptian temple-pavilion. At the 1935 Exposition Universelle et Internationale in Brussels, 'traditional' or 'authentic' regionalism in the Egyptian pavilion blended with exoticism, 'turning these pavilions into architectural forms of invented traditions' (Findling and Pelle, 2008, p.278) perhaps due to the influence of art deco. Art deco's reformulation of the architectural motifs derived from these cultures, as opposed to direct replication, reconfigured disparate geographic and temporal traditions of the past to suit the whims of the present. As the appeal of art deco historicism grew, with its particular affinity for Egyptian and ancient Central/South American elements, claims to historical authenticity inversely dwindled. Thus the authenticity and accuracy of temple-pavilion reproductions in fairs after 1939 might have no longer been popular, suggesting that art deco influence was one factor that brought about the temple-pavilions' decline.

Latin America

Even before art deco emerged in the 1920s, the European and American publics in the late-nineteenth century had paired interests in Central and South American and Egyptian history and archaeology. An important distinction separates the Egyptian from the Latin American temple-pavilions. Whereas the Egyptian ones were mainly done by French architectural planners, Mexico was responsible for representing itself to Europeans and Americans hungry for exotic themes, and so Mexican designers seized upon indigenous architectural forms. Tenorio-Trillo confirms that there was 'no way to portray the [Mexican] nation in an Indian-like [indigenous] fashion without causing controversies' (p.99). Catholics for one were against the connections to paganism implied by the erection of pre-Hispanic structures. The 1889

Exposition Universelle's inclusion of an Aztec dwelling alongside a Mexican pavilion in Paris was motivated by the popularity of the Egyptian temple-pavilion of the Exposition Universelle in 1867. The 1889 Aztec architecture was adapted to suit modern architecture, to achieve an 'improved imitation' and 'fruitful appropriation' while still maintaining its accuracy and authenticity to cultural forms (Tenorio-Trillo, 1996, p.103). Visitors did not always approve of the temple-pavilion forms, be they modifications or reproductions, and the 1889 reconstruction of a stone temple that should be back in Mexico left one visitor with a feeling of discontent, dismissing it as false and ugly (Aimone and Olmo, 1993).

At the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, the Mexican temple-pavilion incorporated replicas of Yucatan ruins out of papier-mâché, with the prerequisite research for their design being done by the archaeologist and Mayan specialist E.H. Thompson. 'Cast into staff in Jackson Park and garnished with tropical plants,' the reproductions of Uxmal offered the people of North America 'their first opportunity to study the artefacts' (The Columbian Exposition, Digital Library database:). Within the structures, pieces of sculpture and Quiragua stone idols from Copán were reproduced. Within the adjacent Peruvian exhibit, there was a miniature Ancón graveyard with mummies and funerary objects as well as 'strange dried human heads prepared by the Jivaros Indians' (Bancroft, 1893, p.550).

At the 1929 Ibero-American Exposition in Seville, the 'Art-Deco-Mayan' Mexican pavilion-temple was hailed as the best example of a national pavilion (Findling and Pelle, 2008, Seville 1929–30 entry). Designed by the Mexican architect Manuel Amabilis, it was a Maya-styled building that could not be claimed to be an accurate copy of an existing ancient source due to its art deco elements. Within, sculptures and copies of Toltec and Maya stelae made no pretense to being originals. There was a 'conscious effort [on the architect's part] to synthesise the pre-Hispanic styles with modern construction techniques and uses of space' (Tenorio-Trillo, 1996, p.199). Pre-Hispanic architecture was adapted to suit modern comfort and construction, culminating in the 1939 San Francisco International Exhibition where fantasy overtook the factual, resulting in a pavilion-temple of Maya-moderne influence. In it, 'twin Mayan-cum-Cambodian Elephant Towers that seemed to derive from both Oriental precedent and early skyscraper zoning studies flanked the entrance' (Rydell, 1984, p.86).

Prior to the 1939 temple-pavilion incorporating art deco elements, Chicago's Maya Temple of 1933 returned to its 1893 predecessor derived from Uxmal.

In *The Official Guide: Book of the Fair,* it lauds the 'exact reproduction of one section' from a Mayan Temple in the Yucatan (Century of Progress International Exposition, 1933). This temple-pavilion was a romantic and exotic retreat from the Great Depression (Ganz, 2008). This time the anthropologist Franz Blum of Tulane University led an expedition to Uxmal in Mexico to make casts of a nunnery there to aid the construction and design of the temple-pavilion. Inside, visitors could again view artefacts and shrunken heads as in the Peruvian exhibit of 1893, also continuing the appeal of the macabre initiated by the mummy skulls of the 1867 Egyptian pavilion-temple in Paris. This morbid fascination extended to the Indiana Jones ride's temple of 1995 wherein skeletons leer at visitors from shadowy corners; however, their placement here in the Disney temple serves no didactic purpose, whereas the shrunken heads and mummy skulls purportedly did.

Temple-pavilions recreated from molds and casts and that are of a single recognizable structure have equally valid claims to authenticity and veracity as the Disney temple, whose form has been said to be derived from period 1930s photographic and journalistic records (more on this later). Both invoke citationary and circuitous traditions: the temple-pavilions' forms and contents get passed down in a process of replication and duplication. But a paradox arises: as the chain of transfer gets longer, as in the Uxmal Mayan temple model reproduced at the 1893 and 1933 fairs, the temple form could be interpreted as losing and gaining authenticity. It loses it when the temple-pavilion gets too removed from its inspirational source, but gains it when placed in the span of recreated temples such as those of the temple-pavilions. As Edward Said posited, second-order knowledges can become unquestioned facts as they get passed down: 'truth...becomes a function of learned judgment, not of the material itself' (Said, 1979, p.67).

The historian of world's fairs Robert Rydell interprets the 1933 Mexican temple-pavilion in Chicago as the 'Century of Progress Exposition's answer to the Angkor Wat reproduction at the Paris colonial fair' (Rydell, 1984, p.83), reflecting the tendency to amalgamate anything non-European. The Indochinese temple-pavilion becomes interchangeable with the Latin American temple-pavilions. The nations hosting the fairs, as well as those nations participating within them, competed with each other to include and outdo previous temple-pavilions in their layouts, irrespective of their cultural origins. The Mexican temple-pavilion was not only in dialogue with the Egyptian temple-pavilions, but also the Indochinese.

Indochina

France extended its colonial empire in Southeast Asia in the 1860s. The appeal of Angkor Wat, the ancient imperial capital in what is Cambodia today, was described as early as 1858 by the French explorer-adventurer Henri Mouhot. The temple precinct would be emulated in world's-fair pavilions, and came to symbolise the broader geographic region of French Indochina. The earliest instances of Indochinese temple-pavilions are at Paris's Exposition Universelle of 1878. Cambodia was present in reproductions of the Phnom Penh temples and models of Khmer sculpture. This 1878 exposition provided a preview of what would turn into the Musée Guimet with objects from India, China, Japan, and Indochina. It was created to 'protect and highlight an aesthetic patrimony' (Aimone and Olmo, 1993, p.229). Just as these objects from a vast region were lumped together based on their shared 'orientalness,' artistic details in the Indiana Jones ride similarly combine archaeological elements from various regions. Within the Disney temple there are reproductions of Mesopotamian water goddesses from Mari in Syria, copies of Buddhist and Hindu sculptures derived from Indic sources, and a mural of the demonic deity Mara painted in the Calendar Room rotunda inspired by Ajanta cave paintings. But unlike the nascent Musée Guimet that sought visitors' attention for didactic purposes, the reason for the excessive detail in the interior sections of the Disney temple is to entertain and entice otherwise impatient visitors to walk a quarter mile to the loading dock to start the ride. Thus, 'because the journey takes place indoors [...] architecture *is* the attraction [...]. The building is both the story and the means of telling it' (Marling, 1997, p.114). So too did Angkor Wat reproductions at world's fairs have a twofold formal and functional purpose, with the building's regionalist architecture on the outside serving as a display venue for the objects inside.

Paris's 1889 exposition included a Phnom Penh pavilion inspired by Khmer art, and included the famous monumental ensemble of Angkor Wat. 'The Pagoda of Angkor' was part of the Pavillon de Cambodge in the Invalides section and contained sculptures from casts taken on site (*1889: la Tour Eiffel* 1989). The 1900 Paris exposition was dominated by a towering model of Angkor Wat that would appear again in the 1906 and 1922 Marseilles expositions and in the 1931 International Colonial Exposition in Paris. This 1931 Angkor Wat temple-pavilion (Figure 4.3) spatially dominated the fair, taking up a tenth of the Vincennes site. Lauded for its accuracy and stature, the replica was 'probably the most impressive colonial pavilion' (Findling and Pelle, 2008, Paris 1931 entry). For all its

Figure 4.3: Exterior of the Indochinese pavilion-temple at the 1931 exposition. 'The copy of the Temple of Angkor Vat at the International Colonial Exposition in 1931, Paris'.

authenticity, however, the historian of American popular culture, taste, and architecture Pat Morton has studied this structure, and reminds us that 'the very process of translating non-Western cultures into representations that were legible to Western audiences produced hybrid, impure images' regardless of the professed maintenance of accuracy (Morton, 1998, p.84).

Despite differences in source material and geography, the temple-pavilions and the Disney temple combine fact with fiction. Outside of the fantastical realm of the ride's narrative and seemingly grounded in reality, the art director of the Indiana Jones ride Skip Lange has stated that the influence for the Disney temple came from *National Geographic* magazines of the 1930s. In a televised interview from 1995, Lange has said that the designers of the project would 'look at things and see, oh! That's what the temples looked like in India and Cambodia and things like that so that we are really seeing this as accurate[ly] as possible' ('The Making of Disneyland's Indiana Jones Adventure'). Early concept art and drawings for the ride used Cambodian architectural forms, and ostensibly substantiate this claim.

Amusingly, though, a skim through National Geographic magazines – the attributed sources of information – turns up period photographs from world's fair temple-pavilions, along with images of real temples amidst jungle encroachment in locations ranging from Chichen Itzá ('Unearthing America's Ancient History,' July 1931), Uxmal ('Yucatán, Home of the Gifted Maya,' November 1936), and Angkor Wat ('Along the Old Mandarin Road of Indo-China,' August 1931). Some Indic temples appear in the pages of the feature article 'Temples of India' from November 1909 (Figure 4.4). A closer examination of the Disney

temple architecture reveals, though, that the Disney temple is most like the Tamil Nadu Hindu temples of Mahabalipuram (the Shore Temple) and Vardaraja at Kanchipuram, neither of which appear in National Geographic publications between 1898 and 1948. Given

Figure 4.4: Photograph of 'The Palace of Seven Stories, or Sat-Mahal- Prasada, at Polonnaruwa.'

that National Geographic magazines include reportage on things historical and contemporary, publications contain photographs of both temple-pavilions as well as real temples rooted in their original settings. The Disney temple derives its accuracy from a tautology. It is interpreted as being accurate because its source material defines itself as accurate. But as Marling reminds us, because the Disney temple setting:

> ' doesn't exist, [it] cannot be faulted for inaccuracy. But it seems real, anyway: an evocative composite of Mayan and Cambodian details, lost in an impenetrable jungle of Disney foliage, swathed in Indy's jerry-rigged scaffolding, and brought into temporal alignment with the rest of Adventureland (and *The African Queen)* by repeated references to the 1930s and the ragged end of empire. ... It is the most architectural of all the Disney attractions, telling its story and achieving its dramatic impact through a carefully orchestrated sequence of interior and exterior spaces. '
>
> (Marling, 1997, p.113)

As the conscious or unconscious inheritor of traditions laid down by the pavilion-temples, Marling is correct to mention the 'Mayan and Cambodian details' influencing the Disney temple, as were discussed earlier. Outwardly, though, the Disney temple bears the strongest affinity to Hindu temples in Tamil Nadu. As such, the architectural representation of India in colonial displays will now be discussed.

India

Within Indian pavilions, displays of goods were housed in reproductions of Mughal architectural forms rather than pavilion-temples derived from the Hindu, Buddhist, or Jain traditions. Theories of Indian architecture were put forward in the nineteenth century, with classifications aligning architecture to ethnography and religious affiliation (Metcalf, 1989). The categories of 'Hindu' and 'Muslim' became affixed to structures as well as peoples. The Mughals were thought to have inherited Hindu greatness so that their architecture subsumes the developments of earlier and contemporary Hindu building styles. These studies interpreted India's Mughal period as the architectural pinnacle of the region, in part because of the British tendency to hold Islam in higher regard than other faiths due to its being closer to Christianity and therefore more comprehensible and acceptable to British architectural scholars (Prakesh, 2007, p.121).

Although there was no Indian temple-pavilion in the London Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886, the photographic representation of India in displays there resonates with the Disney temple. In the photographs, India is represented as timeless, unchanging, dotted with jungles, natives, village bazaars and removed from the hectic life outside (Mathur, 2007, p.11). Two-dimensional image and three-dimensional mock temple are constructed to allow the beholder to adopt the perspective of an early explorer encountering the temple for the first time. The monument arises overgrown with jungle vegetation that conceals and reveals the structure beneath the vines. In 1886 the term 'pictorial and picturesque India' was created to meet the demand for scenes of temples, mosques, tombs, and palaces using techniques of the romantic sublime. The picturesque becomes a 'residual aesthetic' of imperial visual regimes that gets adopted by the Disney temple (Mathur, 2007, p.13).

Disney and Empire

Through its insertion into the pavilion-temple chronology, the Disney temple appears outdated and not a little politically incorrect with its references to Empire and co-option of colonial 'residual aesthetics.' In his treatise 'The Precession of Simulacra' (1981), Jean Baudrillard defines a simulacrum as a copy that depicts things that either had no reality to begin with, or that no longer have an original. The Disney temple exists as a simulacrum: a reproduction from which there is no ancient original, but a re-imagined temple-pavilion evoking those of the world's fairs. It is a copy of a copy, and as Astrid Nordin's study of the Shanghai Expo (2010) points out, the temple-pavilion within 'the world/fair works through recycling, revival, and reuse that, as a rem(a)inder, is not new' (Nordin, 2012, p.116).

The Disney temple's formal and conceptual precedents are in the colonial reproductions of Aztec and Mayan temples and palaces, ancient Egyptian temples, the Cambodian Angkor Wat temple compound, and photographs of India delineated above. It is not a copy of anything in particular, but evokes elements found within all of the above temple-pavilions. Emphasizing appearances and exteriors, both temple-pavilion and Disney temple secularise the sacred in cross-cultural appropriations of architecture at world's fairs and in the amusement park. But the Disney temple also stands outside the didactic Enlightenment drive of temple-pavilions from the modern period because it is of the postmodern (here implying the cinematic) period.

Whereas temple-pavilions claimed to be representations, the Disney temple is a simulation. Applying Nordin's thinking, it 'is not a question of imitation, duplication, or even parody, but of

substitution. As a consequence, the real will never again have a chance to produce itself, but is replaced by a 'hyperreal' where there is no distinction between the real and the imaginary' (Nordin, 2012, p.108). Disneyland's 'Riders of the Lost Ark' experience this confusion of reality and fantasy when they buckle their seat-belts on a thrill ride 'in which guests ...participate, not watch' (Thomas, 1995, p.15). Within the attraction's story, the constructed façade of the Disney temple serves as the ride's entryway and mood setter; it is quite falsely but entertainingly presented as having been rebuilt by Disney Imagineers, who have brought the temple piece-by-piece from India to Disneyland. In recreating 'the entire temple complex down to its last, deadly detail [...] they have reconstructed it so exactly that they have imported the original curse!' ('The Making of Disneyland's Indiana Jones Adventure' 1995). One begins to detect the layers of purported authenticity that make it difficult to distinguish the concepts of original from copy in the Disney temple. The Indiana Jones ride creates an immersive environment where 'fiction becomes fact,' as stated in the 'Eye on the Globe' flicker within the ride. Its cinematic appeal seeks to 'put *you* in one of [George Lucas's] films [...]. You are not watching a movie being made [...] you are living the movie' ('The Making of Disneyland's Indiana Jones Adventure' 1995).

Roland Barthes's essay 'Myth Today' (1972) helps articulate the temple-pavilions as the formal and conceptual precedents of the Disney temple. It suggests, for example, how temples can function to make myths and fictions while simultaneously operating in discourses of truthfulness and authenticity. An inverse relationship appears: the temple-pavilions are thought to be created with a certain objectivity and scientific accuracy, as opposed to the Disney temple that promotes fantasy and personal experience. In this respect the present may be a privileged moment, permitting comparisons and connections between these two types of temples. Because they share similar form and content, the Disney temple's emphasis on fantasy debunks the legitimacy and accuracy of the temple-pavilions, just as the Disney temple also gains legitimacy and authenticity through its association with the temple-pavilions.

The temple-pavilions and the Disney temple can be analyzed as operating in Barthes's system of myth-making to combine the factual and the fictional. Barthes defines myth as a type of speech that need not be confined to oral presentation (Barthes, 1972, p.109). This ambiguity allows one to articulate the Disney temple and temple-pavilions as signifying myth itself, whether it be through a fantastical plot (as in the

Disney temple) or a nation's reading of world history (a temple-pavilion). The temples are composed of multiple signifiers (forms), but they have a fixed amount of signifieds (concepts) to convey. When Barthes states 'a signified can have several signifiers' (p.120), this can elucidate how concepts linking the temple-pavilions are recycled through multiple exterior forms. This indeed appears to be the case with the Disney temple and the temple-pavilions: although they take various forms, such as the reproduction of Egyptian, Mayan, Aztec, Cambodian, and Hindu structures, the finite concepts evoked by them remain constant. What temple-pavilions and the Disney temple share is a sense of the ancient and the timeless; an age manifest in worn exteriors; interiors housing archaeological displays to emphasise the distance from yet proximity to the past; and the inclusion of macabre features such as mummies and shrunken heads. All recur as details in the construction of such spaces.

The Decline of Temple-Pavilions and the Dawn of the 1995 Disney Temple

Enumerated by Neil McKenna, the ostensible decrease of international exhibitions (and ensuing decline in temple-pavilions) took place for a variety of reasons. The thrill of encountering the Other lost its appeal due to technological innovations in the newsreel, cinema, news media, photography, and wireless services which made the 'thirst for visual knowledge and novelty [quenchable] by means other than a visit to an exhibition' (McKenna, 1999, p.25). As early as 1924, celebrations of empire were beginning to appear forced and artificial given socialist revolutions and rumblings of colonial resentment (McKenna, 1999). Notions of what exactly constituted 'French' or 'British' society, for example, were getting increasingly fragmentary and complex. By the Paris 1937 exhibition, an 'unpleasant feeling of tension, suspicious hostility' permeated the fair and the older exhibitionary messages of 'peace and progress [were] over' (Findling and Pelle, 2008, p.294). It also might be ventured that the art deco adoption and appropriation of temple architecture in quotidian architecture outside the fairgrounds made its inclusion inside redundant, its meanings hollow.

Postwar decolonisation also played a role in the decline of temple-pavilions. India received its independence in 1947, and when other countries followed suit British and French colonial exhibits could not be displayed. In the postwar period the social and military failures of the imperial past were felt; no longer could the grandiloquent claims of progress, the brotherhood of nations, and international cooperation be made. During the Cold War, the largest pavilions

of the Montreal Expo '67 were allotted to the Soviets and the United States; not the colonies (Findling and Pelle, 2008, p.320). Lastly, and of particular interest, with its creation in 1955, 'Disneyland would undermine the appeal of world's fairs in the United States by performing on a permanent basis many of the roles previously played by the international expositions of one or two years' duration. But in 1962 [...] Disneyland was less a threat to world's fairs than a model to be emulated' (Findling and Pelle, 2008, p.327).

By way of conclusion, it might be asked what kind of pavilion has been discussed in this study. Three defining features can be delineated, all of which take into account the material forms and abstract concepts on which the temple-pavilion is predicated. First, in world's fairs ancient temples were interpreted as 'dead' structures of 'lost civilisations' that ignored the contemporary populations of the regions in which they were found. The *Guidebook to the Chicago World's Fair: A Century of Progress*, regarding the Mexican pavilion copying a Mayan temple, stated that 'descendants of the Mayas yet live, in Central America, but the civilisation of their ancestors has vanished' (Century of Progress International Exposition, 1933, p.64). The pavilion architects promoted the ancient over the contemporary in form as in concept, just as Imperialism effectively constructed the colonised culture as decaying and dying in order to cast itself as a salvaging force for that culture's heritage.

Second, the age of the 'real' temples in overseas locations, which had inspired the temple-pavilions, is greater than 600 years. Fair and park architects did not give precise dates. In sum, temple-pavilions and the Disney temple are atemporal. As an example of this, the narrative of the Disney temple shares the phrasing of earlier guidebooks by proclaiming that 'after 2000 years the lost Temple of the Forbidden Eye has been unearthed' ('The Making of Disneyland's Indiana Jones Adventure' 1995), even though its architecture is clearly derived from Chola dynastic forms dating to the eleventh century. Such imprecise chronologies reinforced the temples as timeless and disconnected from the progression of history, objects existing in what Anne McClintock (1995) calls anachronistic space: forward movement is possible in geographical space but it is a backward movement in historical time.

Third, there was an emphasis on romantic discovery by European and American anthropologists and archaeologists. In the same 1933 guidebook to the Chicago fair mentioned above, the Mayan temple has been 'torn from a thousand years' jungle growth [...] it is an exact copy of a building in Yucatan ten centuries old' (*Official Guide: Book of the Fair* 1933). Although

written decades later in 1995, the official Disneyland website picks up on this 1930s style of speech to trigger similar concepts. Visitors to the *Indiana Jones Adventure* are invited to 'journey back to 1935, discover ominous ruins deep in the dense jungles of India's Lost Delta, [...] and uncover evidence that the overgrown temple is not entirely benign' (*Indiana Jones Adventure*, Disneyland website). It continues: Adventureland is a place where:

> you can experience the thrill of exploring exotic lands, where every step of the journey is a foot further into the unknown. To that end, the outposts are reminiscent of the Victorian expeditions embarked upon by famous travelers such as Sir Richard Francis Burton, David Livingston [sic] and Isabella Bird Bishop ... not to mention everyone's favorite archaeologist [Indiana Jones]
> (Indiana Jones Adventure, Disneyland website).

Disney's insertion of the fictional hero Indiana Jones into a list of historical explorers is telling. Temple reconstructions in entertainment settings confuse verisimilitude in reality and fantasy. This confusion has prompted some scholars to denigrate the Walt Disney Company's ideological underpinnings, and to identify the seemingly innocent veneer of the Adventureland section that houses the Indiana Jones ride 'as the location of Disney's most surreally colonial attractions [...] [and] colonial fantasy of Disney's making' (Warren, 1999, p.116). Deborah Philips has analyzed it using the terms of literary genres, equating it with travel and exploration narratives. For Philips, 'the pith-helmeted explorer is a colonial figure who constantly reappears in various guises, most familiarly as Indy. The narrative of colonisation of unknown landscapes is perhaps the most recurrent at the theme park' (1999, p.101). Takayuki Tatsumi charges Disneyland with privileging and embracing Adventureland in its centre, therefore also embracing a 'racist discourse of hardcore orientalism' (Tatsumi, 2009, p.317). But there is a symbiosis between culture and ideology. Disney feeds off of popular culture, and so shapes society as much as society assists in shaping it. Similarly, as was stated earlier, the temple-pavilions are products and producers of cultural knowledge, and connected to imperial projects in their representations of cultures and regions. Since the Disney temple seems to thematically pick up where those temple-pavilions praising empire left off in 1939, might Disney be complicit in some degree with colonialism? How might such a colonisation be defined? How is it enforced? These larger issues, alas, are beyond the scope of this

present paper, but it is hoped that a conversation can emerge to address these issues.

Exotic architecture at world's fairs and exhibitions in the late-nineteenth and early- twentieth centuries served to create and maintain an appreciation for a physical empire on foreign shores (Armstrong, 1992–93, p.207). Peripheral colonies directly fuelled the economy of the metropole. Compared to earlier temple-pavilions extolling the economic benefits of the colonies through pavilion displays, the Disney temple's evocation of empire is also connected to the American economy. Quoting a phrase from the scholar of cultural production and consumption Sharon Zukin, Disney architecture in general proves that 'architecture is important, not because it is a symbol of capitalism, but because it is the capital of symbolism' (Zukin, 1991, p.231). Temple-pavilion architecture is abstract at the same time as it is concrete. With regards to the Disney temple, Marling refers to the Indiana Jones ride as a confused inversion of the everyday and the extraordinary: 'in Adventureland in 1997, the urban experience became a metaphor for the jungle. Or vice versa' (Marling, 1997, p.114). At present there is another reciprocal transfer occurring between extant ruins of historical civilisations and Disney's crafted ruins. Archaeological sites have influenced rides in theme parks just as these very sites have become like theme parks, given the draw of tourism to the regions. Despite some fundamental differences in purpose and context, the temple-pavilions and the Disney temple enable visitors to question the zones of fact and fake, to look at the similarities and the differences between the two worlds of fantasy and reality so that they realise how each one is embedded in the other.

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THE MARKHAM MOOR *PAPILIO*:
A PICTURESQUE COMMENTARY
Karolina Szynalska

This text offers a commentary on a little-known yet remarkable structure along the UK's A1 road, originally built as a roadside petrol station with a canopy in the form of a hyperbolic paraboloid. The author demonstrates the affinity between the architecture of pavilions on the one hand, and on the other hand, some of the more modest or minor architectural functions that were innovated in the modern period. One of the few 'hypars' left over from post-war Britain, its butterfly-shaped canopy is a reminder of older etymological roots of the term pavilion. *It also raises questions in the present-day about the conservation of recent architectural heritage that was perhaps only ever meant to have temporarily alighted on the landscape.*

Keywords: pavilion, Sam Scorer, service station, hyperbolic paraboloid, picturesque, ruin.

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Abstract

This text offers a commentary on a little-known yet remarkable structure along the UK's A1 road, originally built as a roadside petrol station with a canopy in the form of a hyperbolic paraboloid. The author demonstrates the affinity between the architecture of pavilions on the one hand, and on the other hand, some of the more modest or minor architectural functions that were innovated in the modern period. One of the few 'hypars' left over from post-war Britain, its butterfly-shaped canopy is a reminder of older etymological roots of the term pavilion. *It also raises questions in the present-day about the conservation of recent architectural heritage that was perhaps only ever meant to have temporarily alighted on the landscape.*

One of the most curious and dramatic roadside structures to have been built in modern Britain is a canopy along the A1 at Markham Moor, in Nottinghamshire. It was built between 1959 and 1960 by the Lincoln architect Sam Scorer and the engineer Dr Kalman Hajnal-Kónyi – a Hungarian émigré based in London.[1] Given that this was a petrol service station, it was designed to be seen from a speeding motorcar. In keeping with a lot of building around this time, similarly oriented around the automobile, it augurs a new experience of landscape and architecture. While its fantastic form shares something with the architecture of pavilions in the twentieth century, it is no longer meant to be viewed and contemplated along perspectival sightlines, as with one of those architectural curiosities in a picturesque garden, but experienced according to the tempo of the mid-twentieth century motorway.

Given the etymological roots of the word pavilion (derived from the Latin *papilio; pāpiliō, papiliōn-*), and the shape of the Markham Petrol Station resembling a butterfly frozen in flight, it could be said to fall under the typology of the pavilion. Technically speaking, however, this is a hyperbolic paraboloid, or a 'hypar' for short (Scorer, 1961; Booth, 1997). Scorer and Hajnal-Kónyi would also employ the hypar in their design for

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[1] Scorer was a member of the Lincoln Car Club and drove a succession of E-Type Jaguars with EVL1 on the licence plates. He was remembered by I. Wells (2003) for chairing the East Midlands Victorian Society AGM dressed in motor-bike leathers. A RIBA bibliographical archive file notes that he often protested against speeding limits.

Lincoln's St John the Baptist Church in the early 1960s, redefining the place of worship in an ultra-modern architectural language that nonetheless revived the more ancient notion of the pilgrim's tent (Hodgkinson, 2010, n.d.; Church of St.John, Lincoln, 1966).

For all their rigid concrete construction, hypars were actually experimental structures more emblematic of the movement and transience implicit in the word *papilio*. They embodied the ideals of engineering efficiency, and offered an exciting and tangible sense of lightness (Boyd, 1958, p.295). Hypars gave an impression of hovering in space and contradicting the laws of gravity. At Markham Moor, the thin concrete cantilevered shell is 75 mm thick – which is proportionally thinner than the shell of an egg. During a period when the architectural standardisation of petrol stations was occurring, no doubt as an aid to product recognition, Scorer and Hajnal-Kónyi's example is unique by virtue of its technical innovation and individual design.

In post-war Britain, concrete shell technology was widely used as a method of roofing over even comparatively routine buildings, i.e., more pedestrian structures lacking in the expressive flamboyancy of the Markham Moor structure (Saint, 1991). This was because steel was only available through a rationing system devised by the government. A concrete shell used less steel than its alternative steel truss. The engineer Robert D. Anchor – author of a comprehensive 1996 review of this building method from 1945–65 – thought that 'fashion also played a part in design, and no self-respecting architect at this time would be without a shell roof job' (Anchor, 1996, p.381). Even so, concrete butterfly roofs are a rare species, and Markham Moor is one of few extant hyperbolic paraboloid shell structures from the 1950s and 1960s.

The fashion for hyperbolic paraboloids can be attributed in part to the popularity of Felix Candela's experimental buildings in Mexico (Faber, 1963). The mathematical principles of their geometry were understood years before, but advances in *in situ* shell concrete structures made it more exploitable. Their construction calculations were relatively comprehensible. The double curved surface is generated by straight lines. This property makes it fairly easy to construct with a formwork of straight planks. Hypars transferred the emphasis of architecture to the surface. The shape is a continuous plane developing from a parabolic arch in one direction to a similar, but inverted, parabola in the other. The main idea is that these structures behave as two systems of arches, one in compression and one in tension.

Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2: Sam Scorer and Kalman Hajnal-Kónyi, Markham Moor Petrol Station, 1959-60. Published in *The Times*, 9 April 2003. Reproduced with permission from Paul Scorer.

Robin Boyd, an Australian architect and critic, hoped that these types of structure might have marked 'the beginning of warmer collaboration between architecture and engineering' (p.295). At the end of his 1958 article, 'Engineering of Excitement,' which celebrated new advancements in concrete shell structures, Boyd wrote: '[t]he exciting buildings are in fact most significant because they are not expressions of mass-production techniques, they are anti-universal' (p.306). Even so, as others observed, they were 'economical to erect, flexible in use and sculpturally exciting' ('Pioneer Architect', 1969). Functionality and economy were the buzzwords of post-war architectural discourse. Perhaps it is somewhat ironic that such an ordinary thing as a service station came to adopt this kind of structure, which might seem a lot more frivolous than pragmatic; but it is testament to the arbitrary beginnings of architectural types.

By 1965, when structural steel had become more readily available, 'architectural fashion had moved on' (Anchor, 1996, p.389). Hardly mentioned in the literature on post-war architect in Britain, the Markham Moor service station never entered the canon of concrete shell buildings. Incidentally, it is less well-known than those contemporary rudimentary American petrol stations documented in Ed Ruscha's photographic work, *Twenty-Six Gasoline Stations* (1962), which exhibits the above-mentioned standardisation of this roadside architecture type. Nor does it feature in Paul Graham's seminal photo-essay, *A1 – The Great North Road* (1983), which features images of standard petrol stations and standard Little Chefs along the A1, but quite remarkably leaves out the Markham Moor building. Perhaps it was not emotionless or monotonous enough?

Since the 1980s, the building has housed the ungainly addition of a square-shaped Little Chef restaurant. When in 2003 this was scheduled for demolition by the Highway Agency, the Twentieth-Century Society stepped in, and with the help of campaigners from across the country, proposed that it be a listed building – 'Britain's only architecturally important Little Chef' (Wainwright, 2004, n.p.). In 2012, just after the restaurant boarded up the premises, English Heritage gave it Grade II status. Fortunately, the canopy and four structural supports remain intact and uncompromised by the building added beneath; yet this eccentric shelter is slowly deteriorating, not unlike the melancholic ruins amidst greener landscapes. At Markham Moor, it

is as if the pavilion type, having migrated into everyday architecture of the kind seen in Ruscha photographs, allowed for a degree of experimentation that is normally at odds with such banality, only to have the banality of dereliction and vandalism overtake it in the end.

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ON PENELOPE CURTIS'S *PATIO AND PAVILION: THE PLACE OF SCULPTURE IN MODERN ARCHITECTURE*

Brian Hatton

This essay is an engagement with Penelope Curtis's book Patio and Pavilion *(2007) and it expands on the significance of some of the points made there. Hatton explores the relationship between the artwork (mostly examples of sculpture) and the architectural stage where it is displayed, which is often a pavilion. This binary of container and contained is deconstructed in the work of a number of architects or artists, from Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's 1929 Barcelona Pavilion through to the glass pavilions of Dan Graham, where the pavilion itself is the primary object of display.*

Keywords: pavilion, sculpture, installation, display, Penelope Curtis, Mies, Dan Graham.

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This essay is an engagement with Penelope Curtis's book Patio and Pavilion *(2007) and it expands on the significance of some of the points made there. Hatton explores the relationship between the artwork (mostly examples of sculpture) and the architectural stage where it is displayed, which is often a pavilion. This binary of container and contained is deconstructed in the work of a number of architects or artists, from Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's 1929 Barcelona Pavilion through to the glass pavilions of Dan Graham, where the pavilion itself is the primary object of display.*

In her book *Sculpture 1900–1950* (1999), Penelope Curtis described changes in where sculpture was thought to belong in the modernist era. Rather than as a public art, sculpture came to be regarded as best experienced in an intimate ambience – best of all in *studio* itself, as in Brancusi's den in Paris, now part of the Centre Georges Pompidou. Alternatively, sculpture left the building altogether for the park. The studio might be seen as an antecedent to 'installation', where a work expands to fill its housing, while 'park works' would mutate during the 60s into 'earthworks'. Such works, as Rosalind Krauss pointed out in her essay 'Sculpture in the Expanded Field' (1979), are not modes of monument or 'landscaping', but occupy a new category of structural location - a location which Robert Smithson termed 'site', in dialectic relation to the 'non-site' of the gallery. Such locations cannot be identified with traditional sites of significance; for today, as art theorist Thierry de Duve has observed, 'there are no more sites' (De Duve, 1993, pp.25–30). Moreover, even where a work is called 'site-specific', it may colonize its 'host' indifferently, ignoring, or - in artist Gordon Matta-Clark's works - subverting its significance. We may say of such works that they occupy the physical but not the symbolic space of architecture. Likewise they elude the gallery, and for this reason an entire category of artwork has appeared in recent years, which can never (except as documentary record) be brought into a gallery or museum. Meanwhile, the museum itself has become more like a park, an evolving

Figure 6.1: Dan Graham, *Pavilion Sculpture II*, 1984, aluminum, glass, and mirrors, Moderna Museet Sculpture Park, Stockholm. Photograph: Joel Robinson.

ambience of common representations, where works and wandering visitors find themselves reflected in unassigned encounter.

Some intermediate forerunners to this new condition are the subject of Curtis's recent book, *Patio and Pavilion* (2007). Here, she examines sculpture's waning yet occasionally still significant role within or around twentieth-century architectural settings, and shows how one remarkable effect of modernist exhibition of sculpture has been to initiate a space for the object's withdrawal in favour of a public re-presented to itself as attendant subject in the reflexive ambience of the vacated pavilion itself. Curtis opens her observations with Georg Kolbe's figure *Morning* (1925), poised on the Barcelona Pavilion's pool, reflected among what Robin Evans (1997) called 'Mies' Paradoxical Symmetries'; and closes with Dan Graham reflected in the two-way mirrors of his *Two Adjacent Pavilions* (1978–82). Between these images, figures and subject positions of sculpture, building, artist, architect and beholder are shown as becoming shifting doubles of each other as the ratio of 'host and guest' alters through a range of situations.

In her opening studies - which take as their subjects Mies and Kolbe, Persico and Fontana, Eliel Saarinen and Carl Milles – Curtis considers cases where architects chose sculpture for their buildings, to add 'something that the architecture alone could not provide', and 'for its difference from their architecture' (Curtis, 2007, p.7). Thus, even as architects sought to resolve it in traditional terms of complementarity, a question of the specificity of art entered, and a question, too, of hierarchy or priority. Was sculpture to serve a setting, or should it be viewed in settings built to serve it? In the second half of her book, Curtis turns to museums and gardens designed as settings for sculpture – for example, Mies's Museum *for a Small City* project of 1943, Cullinan Hall of 1958, and the Berlin Nationalgalerie of 1968; Philip Johnson's MoMA sculpture garden of 1953; Carlo Scarpa's Gipsoteca Canoviana of 1957; the Sonsbeek pavilions by Gerrit Rietveld (1955) and Aldo Van Eyck (1965); and Peter and Alison Smithson's *Patio and Pavilion* project, with Nigel Henderson's sculpture and print for the Independent Group's 1956 exhibition *This Is Tomorrow*.

Yet each of these projects claimed their own autonomy, especially where freestanding open-plan elements became in effect sculptures in their own right. Here, Curtis remarks, 'the essential ability of sculpture and architecture to complement one another is demonstrated, rather, in their collapse into one another' (2007, p.9). Moreover, with its scattered junk objects among artworks in a 'backyard shed', the

Smithsons' *Patio and Pavilion* realized the Independent Group's project for a 'Parallel of Art and Life', while its aluminium fence reflected visitors into becoming participant subjects in a place designed 'to include every visitor as an inhabitant' (Peter and Alison Smithson, cited in Curtis, p.135). Thus, moves to distinguish specificity in each art led paradoxically to what Thierry de Duve (1983) named as the theme of Dan Graham's Mirror Performances – i.e., 'The Critique of Artistic Autonomy'.

Rather than trace crises of autonomy in the 'expanded field' of site-specific works, Curtis stays with the 'non-site' of the gallery, to attend to what may at first seem a minor phenomenon - the pavilion. Yet, 'minor' can hardly describe what was, in Abbé Laugier's 'primitive hut', a foundational myth of modern architecture, and became in the Barcelona Pavilion, its epitome. For, what emerges in *Patio and Pavilion* is how the open plan became both lens and stage, so that every presence entering it became both object and subject of aesthesis. Within and around the 'primitive hut' pavilion, the open plan made of architecture's minimal mode a site for sculpture's potential as performance. The sculpted figures in the MoMA garden, Curtis writes, 'punctuate and articulate a blank open space broken up by occasional blocks and screens. [They] reveal its spatial layering… as if… in a model theatre.' (p.75).

When Laugier wrote his *Essai* (1753), buildings were aswarm with sculptures – caryatids, herms, atlantes – that displayed architecture's enframing role in schemes of art. Then, after Lessing's claim, in *Laokoon, oder über die Grenzen der Mahlerey und Poesie* (1766), for the specificity of each art, sculpture was increasingly detached from buildings; the eminent adornment of beaux-arts walls became theatrically deep relief. The nineteenth-century formalist Adolf Hildebrand was concerned to confirm relief in planar, not three-dimensional space. He criticized Canova's Maria Christina tomb (1805) for detaching its figures from the plane of the monument. 'So long as a three-dimensional figure is seen primarily as cubic, it is still in the initial stages of its formation. Only when it works as a plane, although still cubic, does it acquire artistic form; that is, only then does it mean something to the spatial imagination' (Hildebrand, [1893] 1994, pp.227–9). When describing how this ideal spatial image emerged in a three-dimensional figure, he sited it, as it were, in a vitrine or aquarium, by imagining it between two parallel panes, so that its outermost points touch the glass. 'The figure then occupies and describes a place of uniform depth, within which its component parts are arranged. Seen from the front through the glass, the

figure is coherent, first as an identifiable object within a uniform planar stratum, second as a volume defined by the uniform depth of the general volume' (p.251). Even a three-dimensional sculpture is viewed by Hildebrand as a multiple relief, as if sliced by glass layers, from which depth or space recedes: 'The total volume of the picture ... consists of a number of such imaginary strata placed one behind another in a series and again made coherent as one appearance of uniform depth.'[1]

Certainly, notable use was made by some twentieth-century artists of a cage or vitrine, either as poetic micro-stage, or to frame an object as form in the way described by Hildebrand. Alberto Giacometti did both; in a surrealist work like *The Palace at 3am* (1932), then in paintings, and in his sculpture *The Nose* (1947). Francis Bacon repeatedly twisted his turbulent figures within projected vitrines/cages. With Joseph Cornell's boxes, no less interesting is how their 'museum rooms' relate to Donald Judd's concerns with boxes stacked in series but to Judd's expansion of the vitrine to a nineteenth-century glass and iron building in his SoHo museum, and to the 'extended pavilion' of his Marfa Chinati Foundation. As for Philip Johnson's house, its vitrine framed not only figures by Elie Nadelman and Giacometti but the highly self-performed figure of Johnson himself. Curtis perceptively remarks that 'abstract architecture is well-suited to (or even requires) figuration'; but, noting the careful photos of Johnson at his window on a grey day, bare trees reflected in the glass across his balefully 'existential' gaze, we can suggest further that, like a lens, the vitrine pavilion dilated the figuratively posed persona that flourishes in a media-saturated age, and which in Andy Warhol's serialized clichés, became 'iconic'. And Warhol recognized this; for he took care on visiting the house to have a photo taken of himself in Johnson's pose – from outside, with him staring from within, greyly out through the glass wall.[2]

In Curtis's book, the vitrine appears most spatially engaged in the Canova museum, where four perlucid prisms overlap in perspective in a wing itself sky-lit by re-entrant vitrine lanterns, revealing itself to a visitor moving among the sculptures as itself a larger, enframing vitrine. Other of Curtis's examples appear as variants on a vitrine. Dan Graham, self-photographing, stands amid mutual reflections in the two-way mirrors of his *Two Adjacent Pavilions*, which recede in parallel planes like the panes described by Hildebrand. And

Van Eyck's pavilion would present, if its parallel and permeable walls were glass, a vitrine for Hildebrand's ideal model of relief. Yet here Curtis finds 'a sense that the sculptures detract from the pavilion itself'. Thrown into relief by the pavilion are not the sculptures, but its visitors' figures as they wander through Van Eyck's 'kaleidoscopic and labyrinthine' spaces (Aldo Van Eyck, cited in Curtis, 2007, p.124).

Among Curtis's case-studies, however, it was Mies who most consistently developed a spatial ideal as if drawn from Hildebrand's vitrine model. From the mid-1920s, Mies turned from architecture as figure (as in his 'expressionist' glass skyscrapers of 1920) to conceiving architecture as a frame for the figure. In this he drew out an implication in August Schmarsow's redefinition of architecture as 'creatress of space'. The figure no longer is the building (its surface now becoming 'ground') but what it frames: space. Framed, and indeed staged - for it thereby opens a 'clearing' for a new event. What this was to be was impossible to determine by functional analysis. Hence the significance as 'symbolic form' (to use Erwin Panofsky's term) of the 'open plan'; and, as Curtis shows, the tactical value of figurative sculptures, which in Mies's drawings enter as a general or null signifier for a an unknown subject amid a transcendent but unassignable *Stimmung*.

A consequence was Mies's turn in his interior drawings and montages to stage-design, nearly always in central perspective, with the furthest plane, as in Hildebrand's model parallel to the foremost picture plane; and between them, like isolated culisses slid out onto a bare stage, a few sparse planes and figures; the planes are abstract paintings, or wood or stone screens, the figures are always statues. Mies wrote in a 1943 essay titled 'New Buildings for 194X' published in *Architectural Forum* that in a 'garden [open-plan] approach to the display of sculpture', 'interior sculptures enjoy an equal spatial freedom, because the open plan permits them to be seen against the surrounding hills. The architectural space thus achieved, becomes a defining rather than confining space' (cited in Curtis, 2007, p.59). For Mies, the furthest plane was landscape, or a low wall with sky or woods beyond. Or, the landscape was a wall, as in his montage for the Resor House (1937–9), which places us within and looking out through a panoramic glass wall at a vista of mountains, continuous but for four slender vertical cuts like the 'zips' in Barnett Newman's paintings. It may be that Mies's autumn 1947 MoMA exhibition, which showed the Resor montage, influenced Newman's start in early 1948 on his austerely abstract colourfields. Moreover, in relation to the idea of the figure in an open-plan sculpture pavilion becoming the beholder,

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1   Hildebrand's model of phenomenal layers anticipated ideas developed by Colin Rowe and Robert Slutzky in their 1983 essay 'Transparency, Literal and Phenomenal.'

2   A sustained analysis of Johnson's house was made by Jeff Wall in his 1985 essay 'Dan Graham's Kammerspiel'.

Hans Namuth's photographs of viewers in Newman's exhibitions are remarkable. Backs to the camera, absorbed in the 'abstract sublime', they resemble those mountain wanderers in Caspar David Friedrich's paintings. It is as if the summit brink has become the pictureplane, or as in the Resor House, the glass wall between us and the mountains. As if to confirm this, Namuth made a photograph of Newman double-exposed onto his own painting, so that it is as if we have gone around to the other side of the pane, where we see him looking at us, out through a glass wall.[3]

An ultimate reflexive version of vitrine-as-stage, albeit not discussed in Curtis's book, might be Dan Graham's *Performance Audience Mirror* of 1978. Here, performer and audience are both alternately figure and ground, but are framed neither as actor on a Serlian stage nor as object in a vitrine for contemplation by a sovereign subject. Nor can either adopt Friedrich's or Newman's position of a wanderer beholding a sublime beyond. Graham, standing before a mirror which, as scenae frons, reflects the audience to themselves, describes first himself and then the audience. Then, turning his back to the audience to see them and himself in the mirror, he repeats his descriptions, but now via the mirror's reflections. As the alternating descriptions go on, they induce a behavioural feedback, conjoining performer and all audience subjects in a loop of response and anticipation; until, as De Duve (1983) put it, 'the here and now are produced by the experience whose precondition they are…The identity of the performer is a projection whose "place" is the audience, and vice versa'. The Serlian stage and open plan are mobilized in an open loop where relief is cast into relief, and common awareness made a figure in the round whose frame of reference is no longer a vitrine but intersubjective time.

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3   In fact, there was one explicit project to place abstract expressionist painting within a Miesian glass pavilion, namely Peter Blake's project for a gallery devoted to Jackson Pollock, exhibited at Betty Parson's gallery in New York in 1950. On this subject, see Eric Lum's 1999 essay 'Pollock's Promise: Towards an Abstract Expressionist Architecture'.

FASCISM, MIDDLE-CLASS IDEALS, AND HOLIDAY VILLAS AT THE 5TH MILAN TRIENNALE

Flavia Marcello

With the diffusion of architectural modernism in the first couple decades of the twentieth-century, exposition pavilions presented new and daring forms, and tested structural possibilities and innovative materials. In some cases, the form and function of these pavilions reflected idealised versions of society, which could combine entertainment, tourism and propaganda. In this context, pavilions became integral to a constructed discourse of national identity and culture. This function was crucial for fascist Italy, where the aestheticisation of politics was integral to the consent-building process and where architects played a central role in Fascism's mission to transform Italian society. Through an analysis of prototype holiday homes from the Milan Triennale of 1933, it is argued that these pavilions manifested a nexus between four inter-related elements: 1) the technology, forms, materials and ideals of modernity; 2) the Mediterranean architectural tradition; 3) the socio-economic reforms of the fascist regime; and 4) the central role of the emergent middle classes in fascist political life. As examples of Italian Rationalist architecture, they combined the 'international' aspects of modernism with Italian regionalism and tradition. They applied modern technology to construction systems and materials, and incarnated the belief that architecture could act as an engine for social change. As physical manifestations of an idealised lifestyle, they cemented the position of the new ruling middle class, reflected the aspirations of the lower middle classes and offered a sense of opportunity to workers wanting to improve their lives.

Keywords: pavilion, fascism, Milan Triennale, exposition, housing prototype, middle classes.

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Abstract

With the diffusion of architectural modernism in the first couple decades of the twentieth-century, exposition pavilions presented new and daring forms, and tested structural possibilities and innovative materials. In some cases, the form and function of these pavilions reflected idealised versions of society, which could combine entertainment, tourism and propaganda. In this context, pavilions became integral to a constructed discourse of national identity and culture. This function was crucial for fascist Italy, where the aestheticisation of politics was integral to the consent-building process and where architects played a central role in Fascism's mission to transform Italian society. Through an analysis of prototype holiday homes from the Milan Triennale of 1933, it is argued that these pavilions manifested a nexus between four inter-related elements: 1) the technology, forms, materials and ideals of modernity; 2) the Mediterranean architectural tradition; 3) the socio-economic reforms of the fascist regime; and 4) the central role of the emergent middle classes in fascist political life. As examples of Italian Rationalist architecture, they combined the 'international' aspects of modernism with Italian regionalism and tradition. They applied modern technology to construction systems and materials, and incarnated the belief that architecture could act as an engine for social change. As physical manifestations of an idealised lifestyle, they cemented the position of the new ruling middle class, reflected the aspirations of the lower middle classes and offered a sense of opportunity to workers wanting to improve their lives.

Introduction

This paper explores the relationship between the pavilions of the Housing and Living Exhibition (*Mostra dell'Abitazione*) of the 5th Milan Triennale of 1933 and the ideology of Italian fascism. It argues that these pavilions were manifestations of a constructed discourse of a uniquely fascist socio-political identity and culture. Furthermore, it determines that they assumed the form and function of an idealised middle-class lifestyle and consumer culture, which was made possible by the social, political and economic reform encapsulated in

Corporativism or the Corporative State.[1] Although the Milan Triennale was independently organised, it fulfilled a staunchly political function. Indeed, the artist Mario Sironi (who together with architect Gio Ponti curated the event) considered its exhibition spaces as 'identical to the transformed space of political representation brought about by Fascism' (Schnapp, 2004, n.p).

Italy in the 1930s witnessed the emergence of a new architectural style. Educated between the tradition of their classical forebears and the radical newness of more recent Futurist ones, Italy's young architects were also influenced by recent seminal works from outside Italy, such as Le Corbusier's *Esprit nouveau* pavilion and Konstantin Melnikov's USSR pavilion at the Paris International Exposition (1925), as well as Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's German Pavilion at Barcelona (1929). Between 1930 and 1933, the Italian Rationalist movement in architecture came to the fore. Much to the joy of architects like Giuseppe Terragni and Giuseppe Pagano, and critics like Pier Maria Bardi, Mussolini in effect declared Rationalist Architecture the official 'Art of the State.'[2] As histories of modern Italian architecture have made evident, this architecture distinguishes itself by its integration of the aesthetics, techniques and spatial configurations of European Modernism with a uniquely Mediterranean approach to form, planning and materials resonating with the nationalist elements of fascism.

The *Mostra dell'Abitazione* consisted of 25 pavilions. These were housing prototypes destined for all members of fascist society: from artists to aviators, from scholars to skiers, from factory foremen to their workers.[3] They offered the sense of a domestic setting for the emerging 'new man,' thanks to fascism, regenerated and totally integrated into the community

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1   The corporative state can be defined as 'a system of institutional arrangments by which capital and labour are integrated into obligatory, hierarchical and functional units (corporations) recognised by the state, which become organs of self-government […] as well as the basis for participation with other corporatively organised interests in policy decisions affecting the whole society (Corporative parliament).' See Cannistraro, 1982, p.138. An exhaustive contemporary account is offered in Pitigliani, 1933.
2   'La quinta triennale di Milano solennemente inaugurata dal re', *Il messaggero*, 11 May 1933, p.1. See also Pagano, [1934] 1989, pp.108–13.
3   These pavilions have been discussed by authors such as Doordan (1988, pp.113–21) whose analysis, focuses on them as architectural objects within the trajectory of Italian Rationalism, and as important milestones in the development of each architect's personal explorations. Ciucci (1989) and De Seta (1989) talk about the position of Triennales within the wider debates going on at the time. See also Gregotti (1976, p.18).

(Griffin, 1998, n.p). This new male (with his wife and future family) was the member of a re-invented middle class, or even the progenitor of a new ruling class that would ensure the perpetuity of the fascist state (De Felice, 1999, pp.53–5). This paper focusses on the domestic settings of holiday and weekend homes because their position – slightly removed from the public everyday sphere – allowed for a more fluid context for idealisation. For large amounts of the population, leisure time had only just been made possible by the socio-economic reforms of the regime. Hence, to give prominence to holiday homes was an evident political move.

Corporativism and aesthetic culture

Corporativism came into being between 1925 and 1929. It was a uniquely Italian (and fascist) economic policy and was presented as a 'Third Way' between Capitalism and Communism. Born of a fusion between syndicalism and authoritarian nationalism, it was tied to new models of hierarchical organisation made manifest during World War I. These were latched onto by middle class officers in the search for both a solution to the perceived problems of liberalism and a more active role in political society. Founded in 1930, the Ministry of Corporations acted as an economic parliament with its own councils and assemblies made up of employer/worker organisations for industry and crafts, agriculture, banking, internal communications, commerce, transport, and the arts professions (Cannistraro, 1982, pp.138-9).[4] The Triennale was principally concerned with showcasing achievements of the first and the last of these, and the 1933 edition fell within the high point of corporative experimentation, thus emphasising the need for its successes to be given material form.

As many scholars have demonstrated, Italy of the inter-war period was at the forefront of the aestheticisation of politics, where images of power and the power of images were inextricably woven together (Falasca-Zamponi, 1997, pp.185–91). This uniquely twentieth-century phenomenon brought artists, politicians, social philosophers and (even) journalists into a common political discourse that was played out in various material and non-material forms.[5] Fascism had set itself the task of transforming Italian society, and great emphasis was placed on art, spectacle and ritual as essential elements in fascism's transition from

movement to regime. The participation of citizens of every class in this public spectacle, on the 'stage' of newly created cityscapes, cemented their position in a new political community that accommodated them all. This era was also defined by new consumption trends that depended on both the development of a market economy, new modes of production and distribution and new technologies for the reproduction and diffusion of image-based media (Falasca-Zamponi, 1997, p.185).

In this arena 'the complexities of the Italian past played themselves out against the fascist agenda for the Italian future' (Berezin, 1997, p.41) along a line drawn, by the regime itself, between the spectacle of politics and the spectacle of consumption (Falasca-Zamponi, 1997, p.186). Exhibitions became a form of 'Advertising in Three Dimensions,' and British architectural journals held up the Milan Triennale as an example where they (the authorities) were able to build things that elsewhere could only be imagined (Gloag, 1933, p.109). The Milan Triennale was an exhibition of modern industrial and decorative arts that displayed material goods to the public as readily accessible items while the pavilions constituted a 'stage' on which a new middle-class lifestyle, made possible by fascism, was played out. This operated on two levels: for the newly-emergent ruling (middle) class, it acted as confirmation of their values and their role in political life; for workers and the aspiring middle classes, it brought what was previously unattainable within reach.

The crisis of the class system was an aid to the forces of totalitarianism in Italy and was used to help build consent. In the first instance, it targeted what each class lacked, and then focussed on the disadvantages avoided through the sense of day-to-day security that Fascism, for better or worse, could provide (De Felice, 1999, p.51). Fascism gave the middle class the impression that they played an active and important role in political life whilst enjoying the material benefits of socio-economic reform (Arendt, 1976, p.11). Fascism as a movement was the expression of the desires of the emerging middle classes who, as a result of World War I and the nationalist movement, saw an opportunity to take a stronger political role and replace the established *bourgeoisie* with a new ruling class (De Felice, 1999, pp.30–31).

As the regime's power consolidated in the mid-twenties and found its height in 1935–6 with the Ethiopian campaign (and the establishment of Empire), the middle classes felt properly recognised as protagonists in national life. Throughout the years of the liberal democracy and during the early phases of Fascism, this 'non-class' had expressed the (real)

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4   See also Pitigliani, 1933, pp.101–10; Gregor, 2005, pp.128–36.
5   Marinetti's Futurist movement and the *Voce* circles in Florence were prime examples. See Berezin, 1997, p. 39; and Antliff, 2002, pp. 148-69.

sensation of being kept on the margins of political and economic issues. Once Mussolini had risen to power against the working classes at one end and the industrialists and plutocracy on the other, he championed the moral wealth of the new, empowered middle classes and a set of values founded in God, the Fatherland and the Family (Venè, 1988, pp.41–2). At the same time, the lower middle classes were offered concrete forms of mobility and aspiration.

The *popolo* (or working class) was to be: first, kept at a distance from Communism; second, reminded of their essential role within the means of production; and third, given an improved quality of life by a benevolent state. Firstly, strikes and blockouts were abolished whilst the trade union movement was slowly dismantled and replaced with syndicates and federations that significantly weakened their power. Secondly, workers' leisure time was placed under the control of subsidised para-governmental organisations known as *opere*, which also provided social assistance and insurance for its members. There was one each for: ex-servicemen, mothers and infants, youth, and workers for whom the *Opera Nazionale Dopolavoro* (National After-Work Circles) provided spaces where power could be directly transmitted to the bodies, gestures and daily actions of the workers (Pitigliani, 1933, pp.234–6).[6] The *Dopolavoro* was also responsible for the physical and moral improvement of its members and differentiated itself form pre-existing company-based organisations by being national and under state control.[7] Party-organised leisure time, therefore, gave the impression that its very existence owed to fascism, and that the working classes could show gratitude through consent. Thirdly, and most importantly, they were given the impression that the reforms of Corporativism placed a middle-class lifestyle within their reach.

These three developments worked together to give the *popolo* a 'consciousness of common interest' and a sense that the party provided for them and their families: a small price to pay for the subordination of the individual to a national collectivism within the ethical state (Fogu, 2003, p.25). Corporativism was not just an economic reform policy that helped save Italy from the detrimental effects of the 1929 Crash, which were being felt more sharply in other industrialised nations (Castronovo, 1987, p.18); it synthesised the material and spiritual values of the Italian race, allowed the country to industrialise according to its

own traditions, and mandated changes in collective behaviour. It allowed both for a redefined relationship between individuals and the state, and for the triumph of a new set of (middle-class) values to underpin the type of social transformation that allowed each class to progressively improve their lot. Moreover, it gave the new ruling (middle) class a reference point for ideas about the political role of intellectuals and the role of culture more generally in the new, fascist society (Ben-Ghiat, 2001, pp.101–2; Pitigliani, 1933, pp.216–22).

Exhibitions and pavilions of the fascist period

During the 1920s and 30s, exhibitions realised by the Italian state were an integral element of the processes and techniques of building consent; they lent material consistency to ideology, through interventions in social space (Lefebvre, 1997, pp.44-45). These exhibitions were placed under varying degrees of Party control and had a range of different themes: social, historical, artistic, architectural, industrial, and commercial. They were staged with the decisive and indispensable contribution of the artistic and architectural professions, with the aim of promoting fascism. The latter was done through a combination of entertainment, tourism and propaganda. All of these were vital to a constructed discourse of Italian identity and culture.

Because they were originally independently organised trade fairs, the political charge of these exhibitions (including the Triennale) was not as overt as, for example, the famous *Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista* (1932). They were, however, political in the sense that they were now conceived – along with almost every other kind of aesthetic, cultural or economic event – as an opportunity to exalt the successes of fascist society. The president of the Triennale, for instance, who was Giulio Barella, clearly acknowledged its political role; in a personal telegram to Mussolini, he described it as:

> the clear affirmation of modern Italian architecture and modern Italian decorative arts whose future glories must surpass the glories of the past as your excellency wills it to be in all areas of national activity.[8]

From 1934, these exhibitions were put under the auspices of the Ministry for Industry and Commerce, and by 1936 were directly funded by the Ministry for

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6   On this subject, see Foucault, 1980, pp. 150–2; and De Grazia, 1981, pp. 34–8, 52–7, and 128–30.
7   Indicators of increased amounts of organised leisure time are reflected in the exponential growth of members from 1926 (300) to 1932 (9367).

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8   Telegram from Giulio Barella to Mussolini dated 1/11/33. ACS SPDCO (Archivio Centrale dello Stato, Segreteria Particolare del Duce. Carteggio Ordinario) B. 231 f.1809.

Corporations.[9] Like their more political counterparts, they created a scenario where industrial production, decorative arts, and the pavilion as architectural object, struck a balance between 'sensory-visual stimulation and mental-visual projection' (Fogu, 2003, p.128) The didactic function of these exhibitions and pavilions was also at the forefront of the propagandistic aspect of fascism, and constituted a kind of 'invisible' but clearly tactile campaign to promote a (now attainable) lifestyle. The Triennales, therefore, took the idea of fascist historic agency –usually reserved for Mussolini in more politically charged exhibitions such as *Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista* (Fogu, 2003, pp.138–9) – and placed it in the hands of design and industrial production. This way, each class, whether emergent or otherwise, could find within them a proof of their own agency.

The Milan Triennale

In 1933, the fifth edition of the 'International Triennial Exhibition of Modern Industrial and Decorative Arts and Modern Architecture' was moved from the industrial Lombard town of Monza (just north of Milan) to Milan's Parco Sempione, with a shift in focus from decorative arts and industrial production to architecture.[10] This shift was brought about by the more prominent position taken up by Rationalist Architecture as the 'Art of the State,' together with the revolutionary image of fascism embracing broader modern ideals. Together with the Venice Biennale and the Rome Quadriennale of Art (founded in 1931), the Milan Triennale created a trio, which 'reviewed [Italy's] forces in the field of the plastic arts,'[11] and acted as a medium for change. That is, through the Triennale, architects, artists, technicians, and writers were seen as having the power to change – once more – the face of Italy (Pica, 1957, p.25).

Although some might want to argue that the modernist adventure was over in Italy by 1933, this was only true of 'official' or institutional architecture (with the notable exception of Terragni's 1936 *Casa del Fascio* in Como). Within the realm of exhibition architecture, this was certainly not the case. Writing in *Quadrante*, Bardi (an art critic and champion of Rationalism) spoke of the timeliness of the 5th Triennale occurring as it did hard on the heels of the lively and active debate over 'coherent architecture' (Bardi, 1933, p.3). As late as 1939, Anna Maria Mazzucchelli wrote in *Casabella*: 'The origins of new architecture in Italy remain confined to the chronicles of Exhibitions and Fairs … which remain, for architecture, only an account of lost genius' (1939, p.6; see also De Seta, 1989, p.248). For its editor, Pagano, exhibitions were the:

> demonstration, par excellence, of levels of taste, a test of coherence, they are the testimony of a degree of civilisation [and] … when carried out with a strict programme and coherence, educate the masses and their aesthetic sense.
>
> (Pagano, 1937, p.6)

The 1933 Triennale was a hallmark event in the history of modern Italian architecture where, according to Bardi, Rationalism and Tradition made faces at each other like children in a schoolyard (Bardi, 1933, p.5); Ponti felt that these rival camps had, instead, achieved a perfect synthesis, as he explained in several articles. It was also a manifestation of a particular discourse of Italy's changing class identities and their positions both within socio-political reform and the processes of building consent. Art and Industry, Family and the State were four cornerstones of Fascist society that came together at the Triennale. Sironi and Ponti (who had also worked together on the 1927 and 1930 Monza exhibitions) oversaw the creation of 35 different structures with the involvement of twenty-three nations and over 120 artists and architects. The exhibits were of two types: the 'documentary,' held in the purpose-built permanent pavilion built by Giovanni Muzio - the *Palazzo dell'Arte* – and the 'practical and demonstrative' (Pagano, 1933, p.2), a set of ephemeral structures arranged along a picturesque pathway within a park-like setting (Figure 7.1).

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9   See the letter to Giuseppe Bianchini from the Duce's personal secretary in ACS SPDCO B. 231 f.1809 and Regio Decreto Legge 29/1/1934, n. 454; and Triennale President Barella's correspondence with Duce's personal secretary dated 30 August 1934 in ACS SPDCO B231, f.1809. L 21/12/1931 n. 1780. Conversione in legge del RDL 25/6/31 n. 949 concernente la istituzione di un Ente autonomo denominato 'Esposizione triennale internazionale delle arti decorative ed industriali moderne e dell'architettura moderna,' in *Gazzetta ufficiale*, 6/2/32 n. 30. By 1937 its financing was a joint affair between the ministries of the Interior, Corporations and Finance. See letter from Osvaldo Sebastiani to Ciano Foreign minister dated 8 July 1937 in ACS SPDCO B. 231 f.1809. See also Pica, 1957, pp. 56-60, and Curtis, 2008, p. 29.

10   The Milan Triennial Exhibition of Modern Industrial and Decorative Arts and Modern Architecture developed out of the biennial International Exhibition of Decorative Arts originating in Monza in 1923. These exhibitions had a distinctly local flavour, arranged according to regions and showing traditional handcrafts. After three editions, the State endorsed the exhibition and decided that it be run every three years, and in 1930 it was renamed the International Triennial Exhibition of Modern Industrial and Decorative Arts. The exhibits became more 'national,' and began to be organised according to techniques. See Pica, 1957, pp. 53-9.
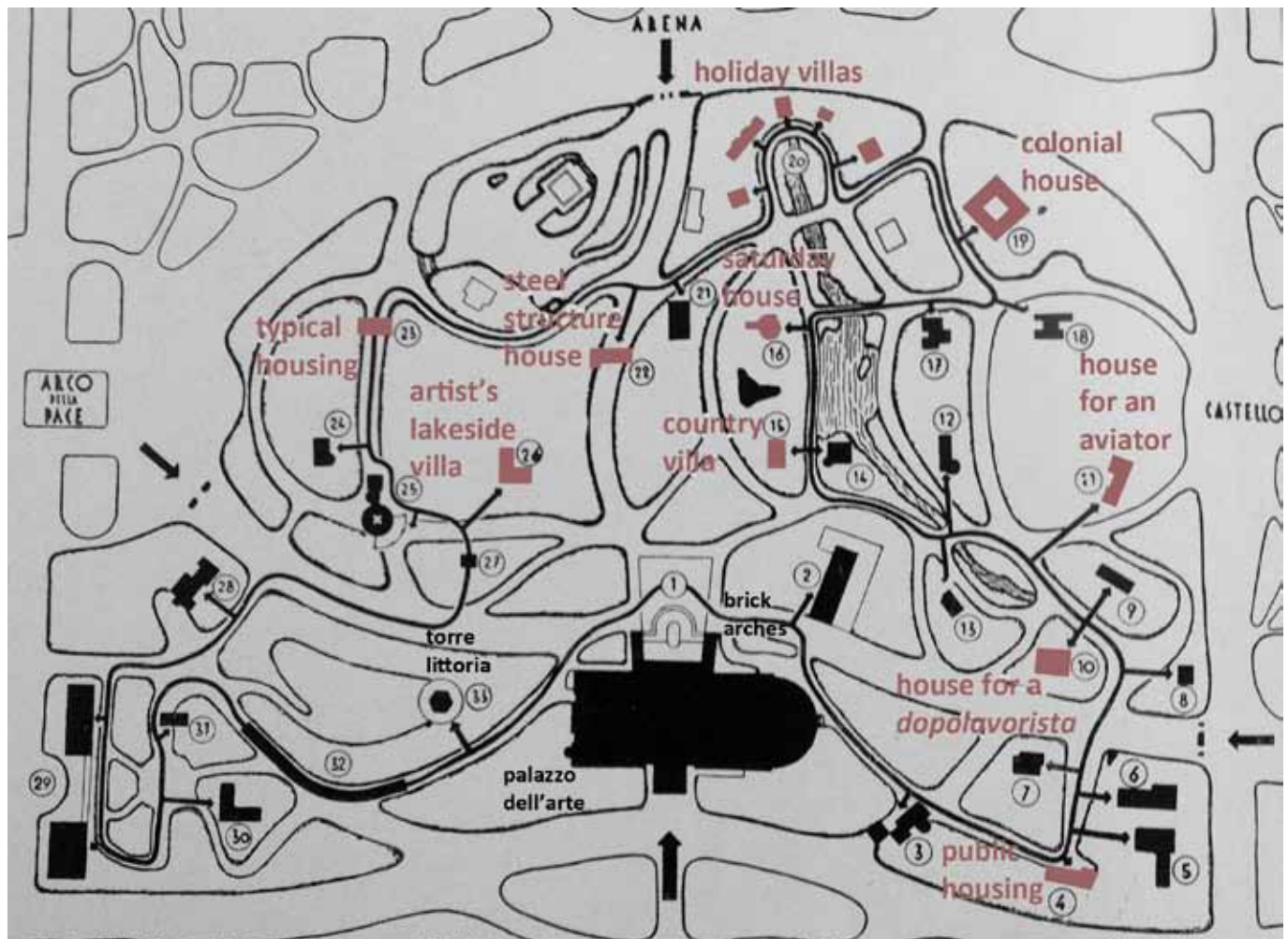
11   *Il messaggero*, 11/5/35.

Figure 7.1: Map of the park and its pavilions. From *Domus*, May 1933, 230. Copyright Editoriale Domus S.p.A. Rozzano, Milano, Italy. Shading and annotations by the author.

The 'documentary' section consisted of the Painting and Sculpture Exhibits (including a vast cycle of frescoes by Sironi, which have now been lost), seven sections devoted to the Decorative and Industrial Arts, a Transport Exhibition (which included the first architect-designed train carriage), an exhibition dedicated to antique bronzes, and finally the International Exhibition of Modern Architecture, which was curated by Agnoldomenico Pica. This last featured panels by twelve of Europe's leading Modernists, including the Futurist Antonio Sant'Elia, who had died in 1916 (Pica, 1957, p.59).[12]

The temporary pavilions of the 'practical and demonstrative' section were divided into five sections: the Press Pavilion, the Sacred Art Pavilion, the Art School Pavilion, the Exhibition of Floriculture and Gardens, and finally the Exhibition of Modern Housing and Living (or *Mostra dell'Abitazione*). These pavilions were designed by Italy's leading Rationalists: Terragni, Pagano, Piero Bottoni, BBPR and the team of Gino Pollini and Luigi Figini. This last section consisted, in

itself, of twenty-five separate structures offering 1:1 scale housing prototypes as previously employed at the Monza Biennale of 1930. Both the Monza and Milan exhibitions were modelled on the *Weissenhofsiedlung*, the housing village built for the *Deutscher Werkbund* exhibition in Stuttgart (1927), and the *Deutsche Bauausstellung* in Berlin (1931), which was entitled *Wohnung unsere zeit* (Living for our time).[13] Neither of these models, however, had featured any holiday homes.

Like Pagano, Ponti believed the aim of the Triennale's architectural exhibitions was to bring the knowledge of architecture to a wider public. Reports in the press stated that the Triennale made the 'supreme mystery' of artistic creation available to a wider audience.[14] Modern architecture was going through a period of great conceptual, stylistic and technical transformation, driven by 'a civic and social evolution, that is already intensely being enacted, for which the life needs of the various classes are being refined' (Ponti, 1933a, p.2). The resulting new aesthetic would have vast repercussions on the 'habits and customs of today' because modern

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12 The Breda ETR 300 train carriage was designed by Ponti and Pagano.

13 See Pommer & Otto, 1991; and Kirsch, 1989.
14 *Il messaggero*, 11/5/35.

architecture was 'the mirror of today's civilisation, habits and customs,' and the pavilions on display would constitute 'the rules and regulations for tomorrow's architecture' (Ponti, 1933a, p.2).

Architecture was, therefore, a social art, and the exhibition was not just aimed at professionals, who were well aware of what was happening, but at the public. This was in order to 're-educate the ruling classes on the subject of architecture, which is essential to sustain the livelihood and to the glory of this social art' (Ponti, 1933a, p.2). Ponti is of course referring to those sectors of the pre-WWI middle class who had embraced fascism to become its ruling class. However, the range of housing types demonstrates that this public necessarily encompassed aspiring middle classes and workers alike. This is confirmed by Bardi, who proclaimed that real opportunity for architectural renewal lay in solving the problems of worker housing, and that architects should 'Reach out to the People' (p.6)[15] – a conscious quotation of the *Dopolavoro* slogan. Further, their presence was demonstrated in the *Casa del Dopolavorista* designed by Luisa Lovarini, one of the period's very few female architects.

Holiday homes and attainable lifestyles

The pavilions of the *Mostra dell'Abitazione* can be loosely grouped by type, class or context: holiday homes, family homes and professional homes; luxury middle-class homes, aspiring middle-class homes and worker housing; seaside, countryside or alpine homes. The predominance here of non-urban settings is indicative of the contradictions inherent in fascist social and economic policies. This contrasted with the inevitable pull to the cities due to increased work opportunities, primarily in the construction sector because of all the new roads and building, and in the white collar work-force due to the burgeoning bureaucracies of the party machine and the many new institutions set up to further transform and maintain the new society. Versions of the new, secure middle-class lifestyle afforded by fascism were manifest and presented architecturally, through efficient planning, healthy access to the outdoors and new technology in materials with just the right mix of traditional elements to give each pavilion a distinct Italian identity.

Some pavilions were targeted specifically to professionals belonging to the new ruling middle class: the *Casa di campagna per un uomo di studio* (Country House for a Scholar) by the Roman team of Luigi

Moretti, Mario Paniconi, Gino Pediconi and Mosè Tufaroli, for instance, and the *Casa dell'Aviatore* (House for an Aviator), complete with hangar, by Cesare Scoccimarro[16], as well as the two Villas for Artists that will be further discussed below. The homes for professionals featured integrated artworks which, like the architecture, merged modern themes, subjects and styles with the traditional techniques of bas relief, mural and mosaic. This gave the impression that 'the modern Italian architect regards mural decoration as essential to modern domestic architecture' (Yerbury, 1933, p.221). The works of prominent artists such as Sironi, Lucio Fontana, Arturo Martini and Pietro Chiesa were destined to be as ephemeral as the pavilions themselves, and stand, on the one hand, as testimony to the mutual respect existing between artists and architects of the time and, on the other, as emblems of the elevated status of the professional class and the corporation to which they belonged (Campiglio, 1995, p.77).[17]

Houses for families predominated, and these took on a particular redolence during the fascist regime. The family unit - one of the key features of Italian society – became ever more important as the regime further consolidated its consent base in the mid-thirties. Apartment types for new middle-class family life were showcased in pavilions such as the *Casa in struttura d'acciaio* (Steel Structure House), the *Casa di campagna* (Country Villa) and the *Casa Coloniale* (Colonial House); these were examples that, however efficient in their use of space, always included a servant's room.[18] The inclusion of a servant's room also indicated an elevated status and quality of life for the new middle class, which had been made possible by fascism's unique economic policies. Poor teenage girls from rural backgrounds had an opportunity to move to the city to serve those more affluent middle-class families. These examples consolidated the role and importance of the new ruling middle class in actively abetting and maintaining the fascist *status quo* (Figure 7.2).

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15 This was a point also noted by the German author writing on the Triennale in the *Wasmuths Monatshefte für Baukunst*, who immediately attributed the slogan to Mussolini.

16 This new individual was personified by Italo Balbo, a Fascist who had risen out of his modest middle class background into the highest ranks of the Party and who had recently become a household name with his double-crossing of the Atlantic by plane in 1933.

17 Artworks include: *The Lovers*, a ceramic bas-relief by Lucio Fontana on the Saturday house for newlyweds, a fresco by Angelo del Bon and an equestrian satue for the villa-studio for an artist, a fresco by Marcello Nizzoli for the lakeside artist villa entitled *Sporty life by the Lake*.

18 The architects were: Pagano, Renato Camus, G. Mazzoleni, G. Minoletti, Giancarlo Palanti and Franco Albini for the *Casa in struttura d'acciaio*; Fiocchi, Lancia, Marelli and Serafini for the *Casa di campagna*, and Luigi Piccinato for the *Casa Coloniale*.

Figure 7.2: Advertisements from *Domus* showing middle class commodities: His Master's Voice Radio, Fiat Ardita 'Goes out and conquers', Cova furniture, Algidus refrigerators, 4711 cologne, Cristallo Securit. From *Domus*: September 1933, xix; November 1936, n.p.; October 1933, iv; April 1933, 222. Copyright Editoriale Domus S.p.A. Rozzano, Milano, Italy.

Examples of homes for the lower middle classes were offered by Virgilio Vallot's *Casa Media* (Average Home) and Carlo Daneri and Luigi Vietti's *Abitazioni tipiche* (Typical Housing). The latter, a four-storey pavilion, presented an eighty square-metre apartment on each floor, planned in different ways to cater for: a bachelor, young families and a professional's apartment that included an office with living quarters above. These examples sit neatly in the middle, projecting the aspirations of the lower and working classes to move up, or reminding of achievements for those who had climbed there, thanks to the opportunities offered by the Corporative State. Finally, the working classes were given low-cost options that supposedly matched the refinement and dignity of their higher class equivalents in the *Villetta di costruzione economica* (Small Low-Cost Villa) and the *Casa di campagna in legno* (Timber Holiday House), as well as a range of six different apartment types in the *Gruppo di elementi di case popolari* (Elements of Worker Housing pavilion) by Enrico Griffini and Piero Bottoni. This would further drive home the regime's commitment to the lower classes, the *popolo*, with whom Mussolini kept daily

'contact' through live speeches, radio and newsreels (De Felice, 1999, pp.62–3) – these homes were, in a sense, his 'word made flesh'. In his speeches – e.g., 'Discorso agli operai di Milano' – he gave workers a sense of agency, glorifying their labour as contributing to the nation's greater good and aligning their role as producers with that of industrialists and employers (Gregor, 2005, p.136). Meanwhile the *Dopolavoro* looked after their social security and their leisure time.

The Triennale, therefore, could not avoid the question of public housing, which Ponti defined as 'a civil and social problem of great importance closely connected to both technical and economic problems' (Ponti, 1933c, p.361). That was not good enough for the provocative Bardi, for whom one *casa popolare* was insufficient. Polemically, he denounced the Triennale as an exhibition for 'the fat *bourgeoisie* who are the enemies of taste' (Bardi, 1933, p.6), without really looking at the wider efforts of both Ponti and Bottoni in the area of worker housing. However, the Elements of Worker Housing Pavilion he refers to had six different apartments, for use by anyone. Though sponsored by the *Istituto di Case Popolari* (State Housing

Agency), it included an exhibition area of master plans and projects for new developments targeted towards industrialists and *entrepreneurs* in order to incentivise private development (Ponti, 1933c, p.363). Bottoni himself even produced a short film emphasising the 'functionality, independence, intimacy and hygiene' of these salubrious, modern and light-filled homes that he designed.[19]

The holiday homes of the *Mostra dell'Abitazione*

Unlike similar demonstration homes and villages in Germany (and for that matter those built in the United States either by industrialists or organisations such as Better Homes America), half of the examples at the Triennale were holiday homes (Blaszczyk, 2000, pp.179–80). Varying in size and type, they catered for all classes and professions, were designed for lakesides, seasides and mountains (for summer trekking or winter skiing), and ranged from the sumptuous Holiday House for an Artist by the Lake, designed by Terragni and an association of young architects known as the Como Group,[20] to the modest Cabin for Twelve Skiers, designed by Luigi Piccinato.

The peninsular geography of Italy meant that the seaside and other recreational landscapes like mountains and lakes were within easy reach of most. Those who could not afford to buy a holiday home rented, and those who could not afford to rent went on day trips with bicycles, trains or other means of transport. Children were regularly sent to state-subsidised 'marine colonies' for the summer; these were organised by the Opera Nazionale Balilla (Fascist Youth Organisation) as part of the policy to train and mould the next generation. Increased leisure time brought about by economic reform, the introduction of the *treno popolare* (essentially third-class carriages), which offered state-subsidised ticket discounts and a wider accessibility to vehicles thanks to thriving industry, meant that excursions and/or holiday homes

were becoming popular, in both senses of the word (Venè, 1988, pp.241–8).

Exposure to sun, air and nature was closely tied to the Modernist ideas of health and hygiene advocated by other European architects, and also tied in with fascist propaganda around physical well-being and an assurance of the continuity of the race. This is summed up by Ponti, who began his description of the Triennale's holiday villas thus:

❛ We love greenery, the sun, air, water, light and movement more directly [than the previous generation] and with a greater confidence in body and in spirit. With hygiene, travel, running, sports, mountain climbing, sailing, driving, and with today's lighter clothing we can receive a solar education to give life to our skin and our muscles. ❜

(Ponti, 1933b, p.292).

This also ties in with the discourse of class and consent, as it showed that Italy could shrug off the pre-existing notion that a holiday home by the sea was solely for the upper or educated classes. In other words, those pre-war *bourgeois* ruling classes made powerless and redundant by fascism, in order to make way for a new emergent group that would ensure the regime's perpetuity. For Ponti and his contemporaries, the pre-war *bourgeoisie* had reduced the holiday home to a 'ridiculous *villette*,' made to look like a play castle with all manner of bas reliefs, family crests and saints in niches and, furthermore, designed by draftsmen and engineers lacking in aesthetic competence (Ponti, 1933b, p.291). He questioned the *bourgeoisie* as to whether they were not ashamed of masquerading as nobility in this way?

Ponti's generation, disgusted by this older idea of the holiday home, demanded something more sincere. It demanded simple dwellings that 'are what they are (which is very lovely)'; moreover, they should be built quickly, cost little and, most importantly, 'serve our healthy desire for an independent life in contact with nature' (Ponti, 1933b, p.292). Thus architects could address the social and economic problem of housing and thereby demonstrate to the public the diffusion of good taste (p.292). Ponti and Bardi agreed on both these points. Bardi declared the era of the private upper middle class villa to be finished. The architecture of the time consisted in worker housing, barracks, hospitals and Regime architecture such as the *Case del Fascio*, the local Fascist Party Headquarters (Bardi, 1933, p.6). In sum, he denounced the *bourgeoisie*, supported the regime's commitment to architecture for the

19 'Una giornata nella casa popolare' was filmed just days before the demolition. Written and directed by Bottoni and using Triennale workers as actors, this 32-minute film depicted a 'Day in the Life' of the workers and how it had been improved compared to typical living conditions. Bottoni later showed it at a Popular Housing Conference in 1936, thus proving that the 1933 example had not done much to improve conditions. See http://bottoni.dpa.polimi.it/fr_archiviopatr.htm & http://bottoni.dpa.polimi.it/Bottoni_opere/Film_giornata.htm (accessed 1/1/13).
20 The members of the Como Group (*Gruppo* comasco) were: Mario Cereghini, Adolfo Dell'Acqua, Pietro Lingeri, Gabriele Giussani, Gianni Mantero, Oscar Ortelli and Carlo Ponci.

popolo, and confirmed the role of the architect in fascism's overall mission of social transformation.

Seven examples have been chosen for discussion below, so as to illustrate the pivotal role envisioned for housing among the three classes of fascist Italy, and how they assisted in building and maintaining consent. Two of these prototypes were built for the new ruling middle class, which had 'deposed' the *bourgeoisie* - the *Casa del Sabato per gli sposi* (Saturday House for Newly-Weds) by BBPR and Piero Portaluppi, and the *Casa di vacanze per un artista sul lago* (Artist's Holiday Villa by the Lake)

by Giuseppe Terragni and the Como Group. The other five examples of holiday homes – designed by Enrico Griffini, Piero Bottoni and Eugenio Faludi – responded to the aspirations of the lower middle classes who aimed to move up in society, or to the working classes, the *popolo*, who were meant to stay securely in their place albeit with an improved way of life.

The Saturday house for newlyweds

The *Casa del Sabato per gli sposi*, or Saturday house for newlyweds (Figure 7.3), was a little 'love-hut'
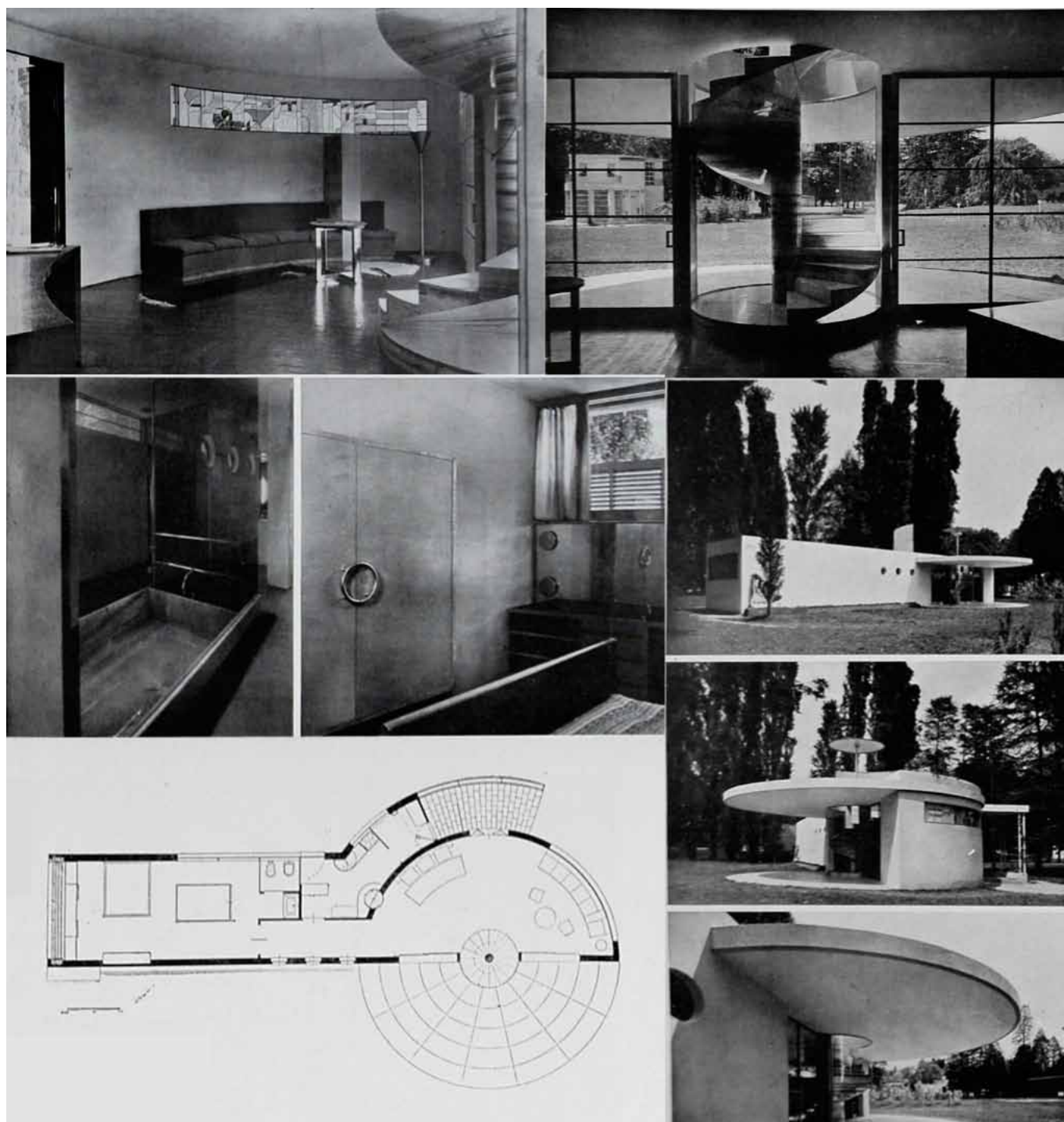
Figure 7.3: BBPR with Piero Portaluppi, Saturday House for Newly-Weds. Interior views showing stained glass window, spiral stair, built-in bath and bedroom. Exterior views showing planar wall with *bas relief* and terrace. Plan. From *Domus*, August 1933, 419-11. Copyright Editoriale Domus S.p.A. Rozzano, Milano, Italy. Montage by author.

originally destined as a garden pavilion for the ample grounds of an old castle. It was designed by the young firm of BBPR (Gianluigi Banfi, Lodovico Barbiano di Belgiojoso, Enrico Peressutti, and Ernesto Nathan Rogers) in association with the well-respected Milanese architect and academic Portaluppi. Located just north of the Palazzo dell'Arte, its principal space was a bedroom complete with its own marble-lined pool, en-suite bathroom, remote-controlled windows and a feature wall of 'Miesian' smoked glass for privacy – an arrangement pioneered by German architects Hans and Wassili Luckhardt.[21]

The planning principle was strictly functional: the bedroom merged into a semi-circular living area giving out onto a terrace of equal size while a compact kitchen and servant's room with fold-down bed wrapped around the back. Dominating the living space was a 'Corbusian' spiral stair of sumptuous pink marble leading to a rooftop where a mechanical umbrella provided shade from the Mediterranean sun (Campiglio, 1995, p.72).[22] The villa was decorated with a stained-glass strip window of abstract, geometric forms by artist and designer Pietro Chiesa.[23] Entitled *Nostalgias of the Countryside* this stained glass was an allusion to the romanticised view of rural life constructed by Party propaganda to counteract the inevitable internal migration to the cities brought about by the mobility of the lower middle class and the increase in white collar jobs, particularly in the civil service (Chelz, 2011, p.226).[24] This strange juxtaposition of an old-fashioned rural myth on the one side, and a projection of the future on the other, was typical of the many interwoven contradictions of the fascist period, where party propaganda sent out different messages according to the audience (Castronovo, 1987, p.19).

On the villa's main planar wall was an erotic ceramic bas-relief entitled *The Lovers* by sculptor Lucio Fontana. It had what Pica described as a 'plastic' relationship to the architecture while making an obvious reference to the activities (sanctioned by marriage) that were occurring inside (Campiglio, 1995, pp.73–6). Alongside the specially executed artworks and the sumptuous

travertine and marble were industrial linoleum floors, high-tech appliances and mass-produced furniture. Ponti describes the projected clients as an 'elegant couple' who desire a space that is 'flexible and relaxed' and at the same time 'intimate and refined' (Ponti, 1933d, p.410).

It was an idyllic domestic space 'merged with nature, like a light-filled nest bathed with affectionate shadows' (Ponti, 1933d, p.410) where young couples could procreate in peace while their children were either at a marine colony or doing gymnastics at their nearest *Casa Balilla* (Fascist Youth Organisation). The fact that it was a 'Saturday' house was also very significant. While this was time off, it was not identical to the more recent concept of the weekend, because this was time designated for party-related activities. Indeed, Saturdays exemplified the regime's systematic intrusion into private time, which contributed to the making of a fascist self (Griffin, 1998, n.p.; Venè, 1988, pp.163–7). This couple were like the Adam and Eve of the next generation of fascists, born into the new society and thus expected to be fully accepting of it.

The artist's lakeside holiday villa
For the Triennale, Giuseppe Terragni headed a group of Como architects to design a lakeside holiday villa for an artist and his family, the *Casa di vacanze per un artista sul lago* (Figure 7.4).[25] This was located just north of Ponti's steel construction, the Torre Littoria. Terragni's villa was articulated through two double-storey volumes connected via a portico. It emphasised purity of space and connection with the exterior. Access to views and orientation towards the sun were paramount. The living spaces faced the lake to the south while the double-height studio, enclosed by a wall of glass bricks, faced north. The one constructed in Milan's park was built in lightweight-timber framing and therefore ephemeral, while the more permanent version, destined for an island site in Lake Como, was to be of reinforced concrete. Although one of the more bespoke examples, it juxtaposed off-the shelf modern materials such as linoleum and glass bricks with more traditional materials such as marble flooring and brickwork.

Ponti described it as 'clearly avant-garde' and 'leaving aside any traditional element' (Ponti, 1933d, p.542). It was avant-garde in its approach to spatial division on the interior (sliding doors and walls, divider furniture) and on the exterior (more sliding windows, translucent materials, porticoes and balconies). The National Institute of Fascist Architects' journal *Architettura*,

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21   My thanks go to my colleague Dr. Astrid Roetzel for her assistance with the German translations of 'Die Mailänder Triennale. Internationale Ausstellung für Kunstgewerbe und Architektur', *Wasmuths Monatshefte für Baukunst*, 17 (1933), p. 295.
22   According to Campiglio these elements were direct references to Mies and Corbusier.
23   Chiesa was artistic director of the design firm Fontana Arte and worked closely with Ponti for many years. See Chelz (2011), p.215.
24   The window was a scaled-down version of a larger body work executed for luxury ocean liners.

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25   The other members of the group were: Mario Cereghini, Adolfo Dell'Acqua, Pietro Lingeri, Gabriele Giussani, Gianni Mantero, Oscar Ortelli and Carlo Ponci.
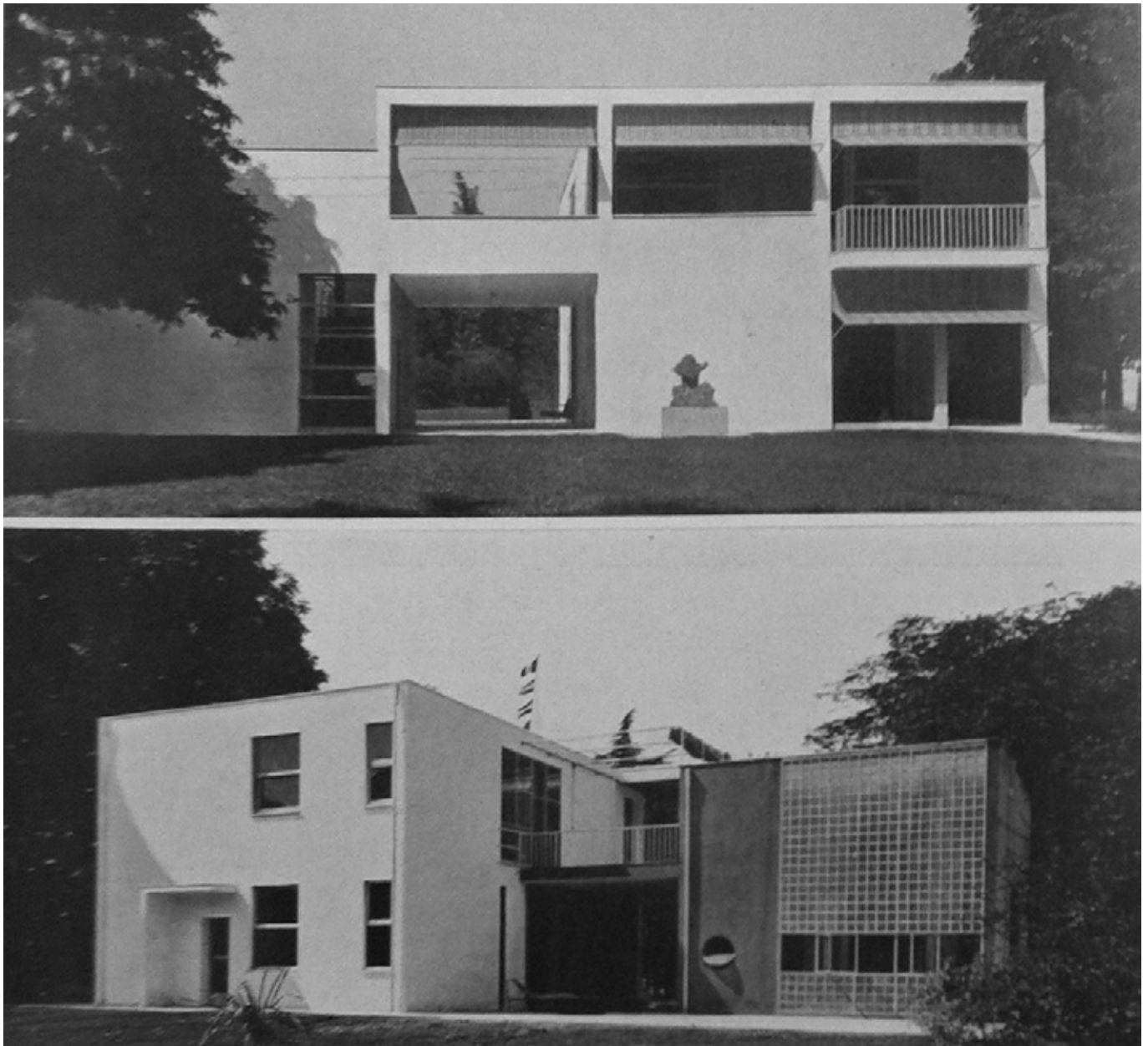
Figure 7.4: Giuseppe Terragni and the Como Group, Artist's Lakeside Villa. Photographs of front and back façades. From *Domus*, October 1933, 536. Copyright Editoriale Domus S.p.A. Rozzano, Milano, Italy.

however felt that the portico and the inclusion of a fresco by Marcello Nizzoli, were still appropriate for a more party-sanctioned architecture.[26] Entitled 'Sporty Life by the Lake,' the fresco was located under the portico, and showed in a classicizing manner three male and three female figures playing tennis and practising the high jump. Sport fed into the overall modernist ideal of health and outdoor living, but it was also an integral element of the fascist party's policies of social re-organisation especially in relation to youth.

The inclusion of two houses for artists – the other being the famous *Villa-studio per un artista* (Villa-Studio

for an Artist) by the team of Luigi Figini and Gino Pollini – highlighted the essential role artists played in communicating fascist ideals, as passionately expounded by Sironi in his *Manifesto of Mural Art* of 1933 (Sironi, 1933, pp.10–11). The *Villa-studio* was considered to be the architectural expression of the *Quadrante* programme, which called for Rationalist architecture to meet the challenge of reconciling the processes of modern (Northern) functionalism with the forms of traditional (Italian) classicism (Doordan, 1988, pp.116–19). Terragni's villa, like the *Casa del Sabato*, reaffirmed the position of the artist as a new and modern (fascist) professional who, alongside his family, was making his own contribution to a fascist future. Corporativism allowed for artists to syndicate with other professionals such as lawyers, architects and engineers, thus firmly establishing their position in society, and

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26 Artist, designer and architect Nizzoli is most famous for his work with Olivetti. His involvement with the Triennale began with the first Monza edition of 1923 and culminated in the famous Salone d'Onore of 1936.

Architetti Enrico A. Griffini, Eugenio Faludi, Piero Bottoni - Milano - Colonia di case per vacanza alla Triennale - Planimetria generale:
1. Casetta al lago; **2.** Casetta di mezza montagna; **3.** Casetta di montagna; **4.** Casetta al mare; **5.** Casetta di campagna; **6.** Spiaggia.
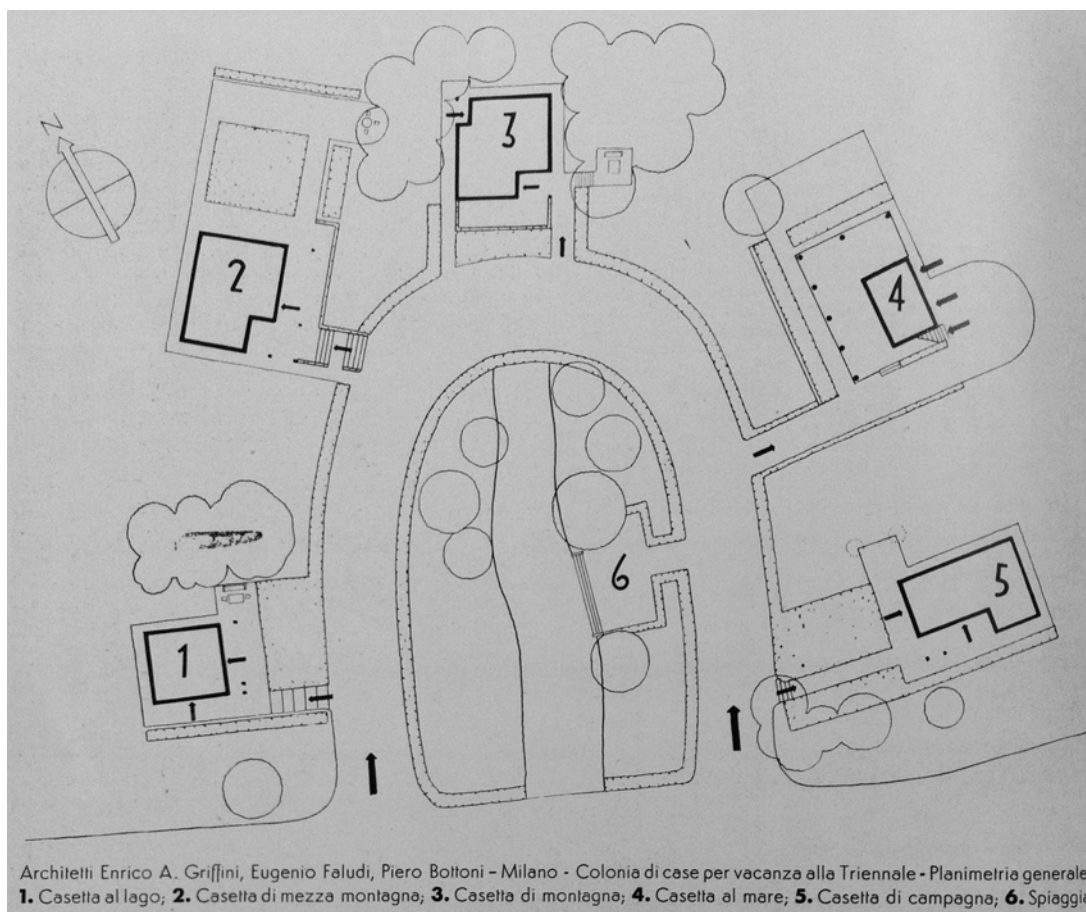
Figure 7.5: Plan of Layout of holiday villas showing horseshoe arrangement. Key: 1. Seaside/Lake Villa, 2. Mountain Villa, 3. Alpine Villa, 4. Beach Villa, 5. Country Villa, 6. Artificial Beach. From *Domus*, July 1933, 292. Copyright Editoriale Domus S.p.A. Rozzano, Milano, Italy.

Holiday homes

Nestled at the top of the Parco Sempione, just above the *Casa del Sabato*, this group of five modest villas (aptly named *cassette*, which literally means small, cute houses) was designed jointly by Enrico Griffini, Piero Bottoni and Eugenio Faludi (Figure 7.5). (Bottoni, whose long-time experience in designing social housing was already on display in the *Elementi di case popolari* pavilion in the park's south-east corner, had the opportunity to apply his expertise to holiday homes here.)[27] To reach this part of the exhibition, visitors turned left off the main path of the Triennale proper. There, they found five small houses, each meticulously landscaped. Laid out in a horseshoe shape, with an artificial beach at the centre, the arrangement was

not unlike a suburban *cul de sac* and thus befitting to the picturesque English landscaped garden style of the park's overall layout.

This villa grouping catered for the full range of recreational landscapes. There was one house for each of the following: the lakeside or seaside, lower mountains, an alpine setting, the beach, and the countryside. Their sizes ranged from the modest *Casetta al Lago* (Lake Villa 1), at 47.4 square metres, to the three-bedroom *Casetta di mezza montagna* (Lower Mountain House 2), at 92.7 square metres. By comparison, the Artist's Lakeside Villa was twice the size at approximately 200 square metres, while the *Casa del Sabato* – only accommodating a couple and their servant – was 68 square metres. Roughly the same size was the Alpine Holiday House 3, which boasted three bedrooms. Compared to the luxurious Saturday House and expansive Artist's Lakeside Villa, these homes were relatively cheap to purchase – from as little as the equivalent of £15,000 in the 1930s for the little Countryside House 5, and up to £35,000 for the two-level Beach Villa 4 (Venè, 1988, pp.104–5, 111–15). The magazine *Domus* emphasised this as one of the many virtues of these homes, while the cost of the more bespoke examples was omitted.

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27   Bottoni, like many of his Rationalist colleagues – Alberto Sartoris, Adalberto Libara, Figini & Pollini - had a long-time interest in social housing and wrote numerous articles on the subject. He also presented papers at various planning and housing conferences, curated exhibitions of social housing both for the VI and VII Milan Triennales of 1936 and 1939, and continued with his activities and interest in this area in the post-war period.

Figure 7.6: Enrico Griffini, Piero Bottoni and Eugenio Faludi, Seaside/Lake Villa 1. Exterior photo, plan, interior view of sleeping area from living room with doorway to kitchen and bathroom on left. From *Domus*, July 1933, 293. Copyright Editoriale Domus S.p.A. Rozzano, Milano, Italy.

Driving their cost down was the fact that these villas could be built in a speedy 8–14 days. Like the Elements of Worker Housing pavilion, these villas demonstrated modernism in their efficient plans, which included adjoining terraces and living spaces oriented to daylight. Each boasted a separate kitchen and bathroom, which was a mark of civilisation (Venè, 1988, p.16).[28] A high percentage of the urban lower classes had just moved to the city from peasant villages, and were accustomed to a single space for living and cooking, and since only twelve per cent of the urban apartments they moved into had running water and separate bathrooms, they had to accept shared facilities or public washrooms (Venè, 1988, p. 14, 19–20). As a way of keeping costs down even further, the architects employed simple construction methods like timber frame or masonry, which could in some cases be self-built. Only the occasional detailing disguised the fact that these villas were made entirely out of cheap, mass-produced

28 This is also reflected in the proliferation of high-cost colour advertising for bathroom fixtures in *Domus* and other journals of the time.
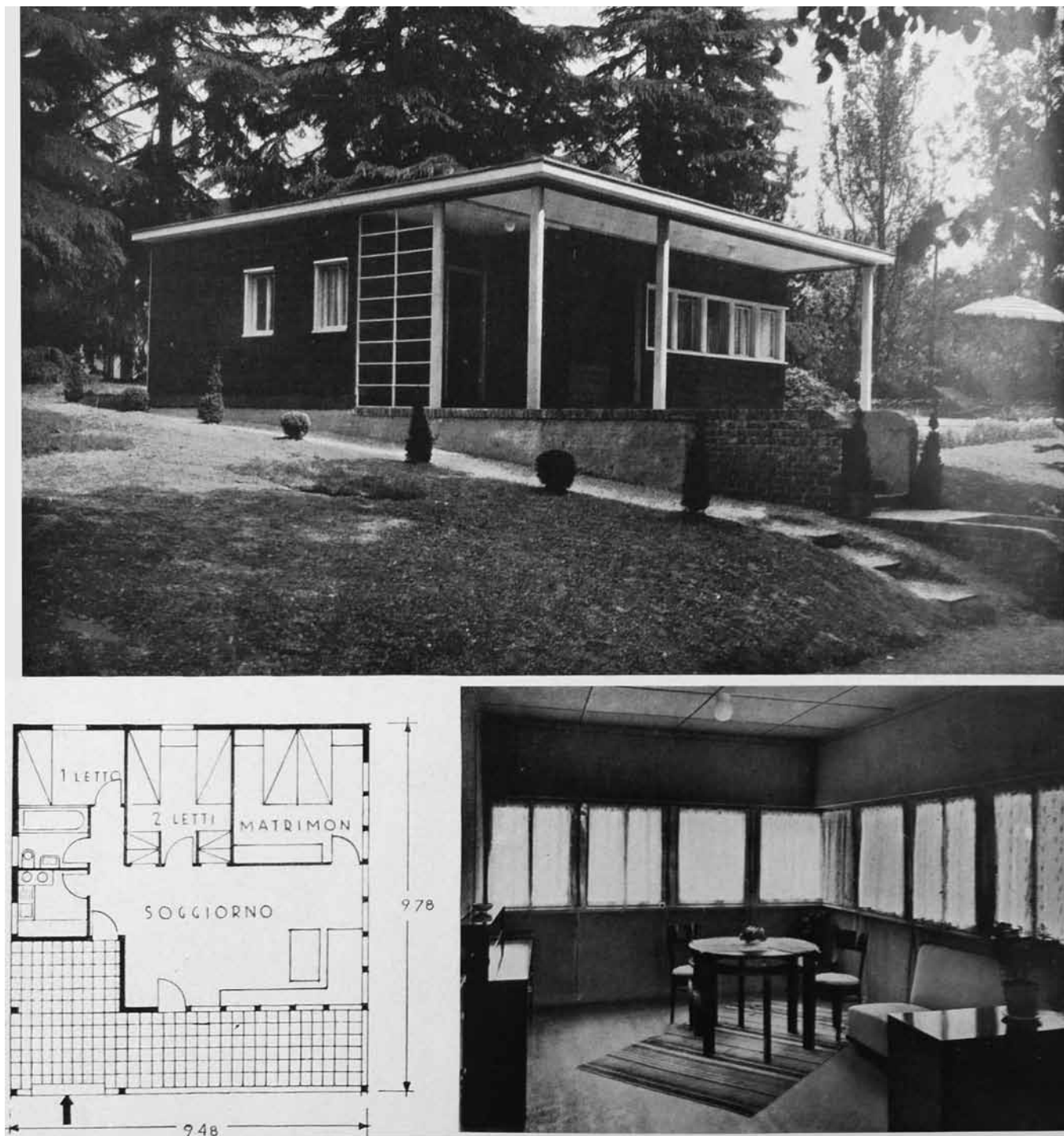
Figure 7.7. Enrico Griffini, Piero Bottoni and Eugenio Faludi, Mountain Villa 2. Exterior photo, plan, interior view of living areas with corner window. From *Domus*, July 1933, 294. Copyright Editoriale Domus S.p.A. Rozzano, Milano, Italy.

materials like fibre-cement, linoleum and rubber. German architects visiting the Triennale noted that the thorough attention given to standardisation, and the functionalist influence from beyond the Alps did not detract from their cosiness and friendly balance.

The first example encountered was the compact *Casetta al Lago* (Figure 7.6). At a very spare 47.4 square metres, this demountable home took only eight days to build. Intended for the lakeside, it could also be built at the seaside if desired. An accentuated feeling of space was created by using curtains to divide the living and sleeping areas so that light could stream in from three directions. The cheerful façade and the semi-enclosed terrace bestowed a sense of both intimacy and openness at one and the same time.

The next two examples were *casette* for families holidaying in the mountains. The first – the *Casetta di mezza montagna* (Lower Mountain Holiday House 2) - was essentially a square plan with windows wrapped around its main corner and the terrace acting as both entry space and continuation of the living room (Figure 7.7). The second - the *Casetta di montagna* (Alpine Holiday House 3) - was laid out along a rectangle with a more distinct separation between the living and
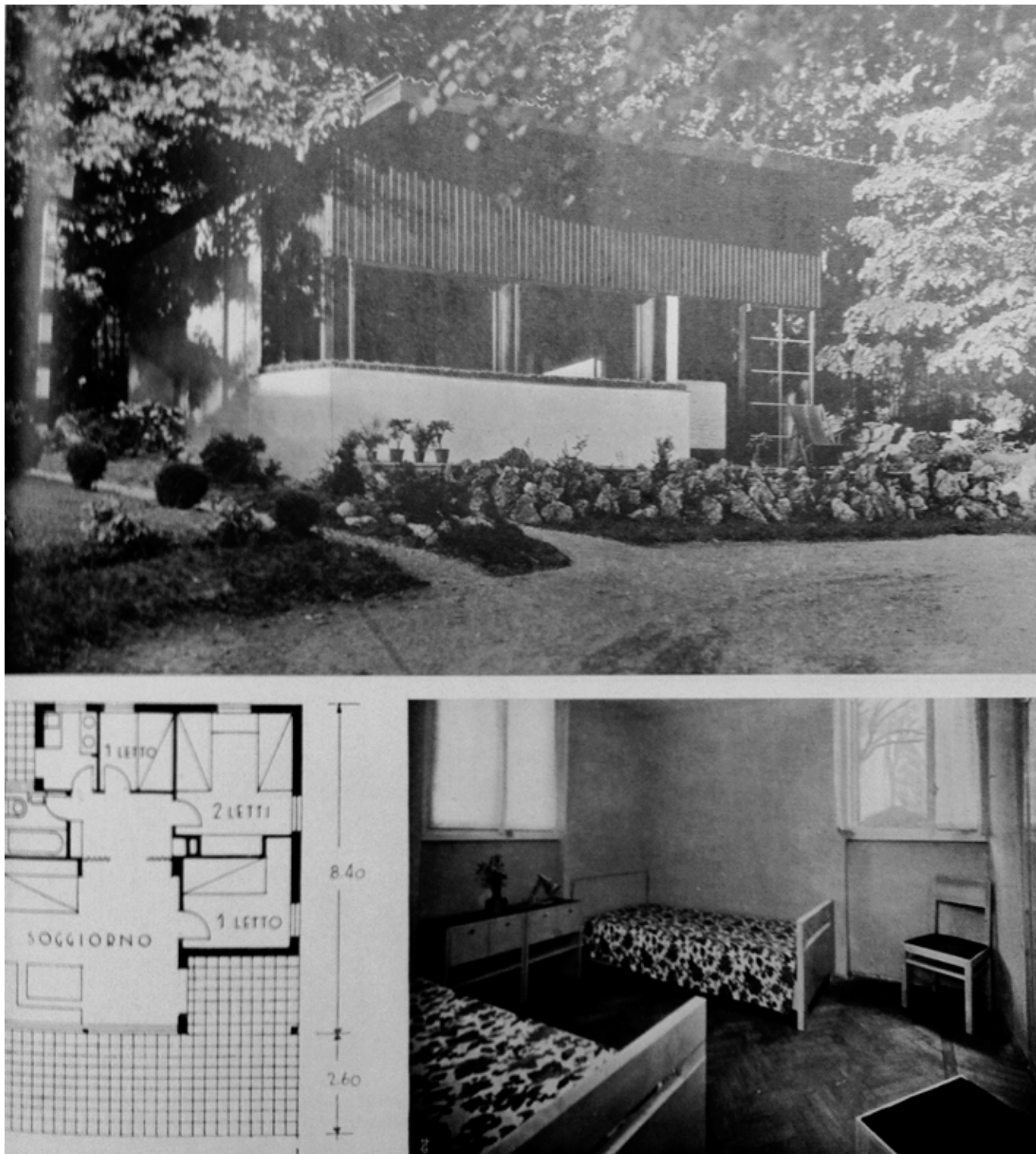
Figure 7.8. Enrico Griffini, Piero Bottoni and Eugenio Faludi, Alpine Villa 3. Exterior photo, plan, interior view of twin bedroom. From *Domus*, July 1933, 295. Copyright Editoriale Domus S.p.A. Rozzano, Milano, Italy.

sleeping areas (Figure 7.8). Though smaller by about 25 square metres, the latter actually appears more spacious with a generous 20 square metres of L-shaped terrace, which merges with the living room. It is also distinguished by its timber floors, sloping roof and heating (for climatic reasons), and the inclusion of a servants' room.

The *Casetta al mare,* or Beach Holiday House 4 (Figure 7.9), was arguably the most striking of the group and stood out for its modern, Corbusian form, and its

innovative construction system, featuring the use of steel and a proprietary panel system called *Magnesilite* (Morganti and Tosone, 2009, p.1069). Designed for a sunny seaside location and elevated on *pilotis*, this villa presented a dominant rectangular prism with a void carved out to form an elevated terrace under which the garage and servant's room were located. Again, new industrial materials such as rubber, linoleum and glass bricks were utilised alongside more recognisable Mediterranean elements like ceramic tiles, stucco

Figure 7.9: Enrico Griffini, Piero Bottoni and Eugenio Faludi, Beach Villa 4. Exterior photo, plan, interior view of living area showing extent of natural light. From *Domus*, July 1933, 296. Copyright Editoriale Domus S.p.A. Rozzano, Milano, Italy.

render and a timber pergola. But however modern it was, its plan was quite conventional, illustrating a clear separation between services, living area and bedrooms.

The *Casetta di campagna* (Country Holiday House 5) was intended for a rural setting (Figure 7.10). It had its more bespoke (and expensive) equivalents in the *Casa di campagna per un uomo di studio* (Country House for a Scholar) by Paniconi and Pediconi, and in the *Villa di Campagna* (Country Villa) by the Milanese group of Mino Fiocchi, Emilio Lancia, Michele Marelli and Giuseppe Serafini (Figure 7.11). Like the seaside villa, it took an elementary rectangular prism and carved out one corner to form a terrace, which was sheltered by a pergola. The terrace acts both as an entry point

to, and an extension of, the living area, placed at the centre of the plan with services on the left and bedrooms on the right. Here, the ceramic tile cladding and its simple, almost vernacular, form appears familiar, while the fluidity of the plan, the rubber flooring and the emphasis on light all makes it modern. Like the nostalgia induced by Chiesa's stained glass windows in the costlier villas, this home extolled the virtues of rural life and country living, which were also used to justify and promote the creation of new towns such as Sabaudia and Littoria.[29]

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29   On the topic of Italian new towns, see Millon, 1978, pp. 326-41; Burdett, 1981; and Ghirardo, 1989.
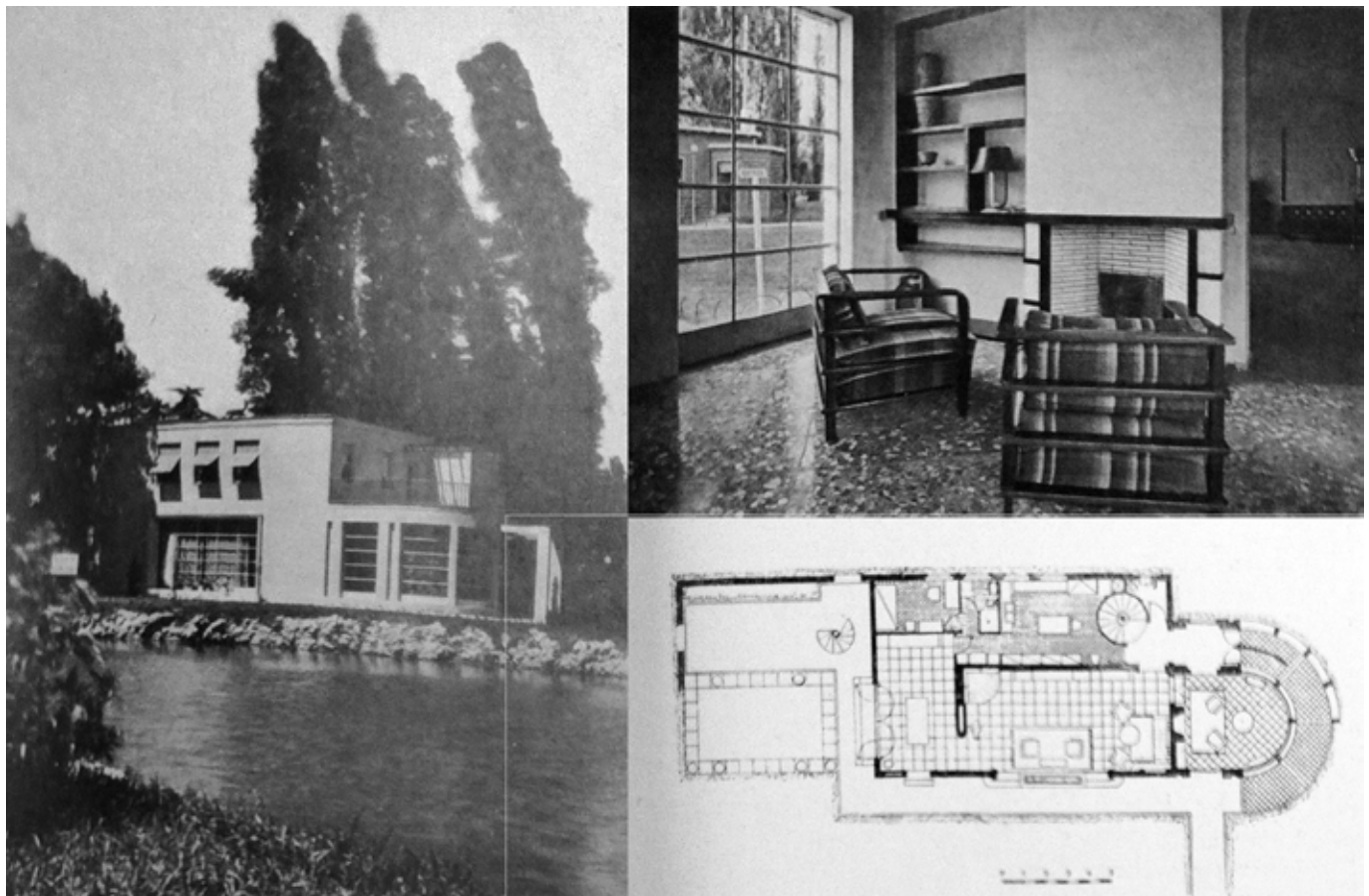
Figure 7.10: Enrico Griffini, Piero Bottoni and Eugenio Faludi, Country Villa 5. Exterior photo showing care in landscaping, plan, interior view of dining area with door to kitchen and bathroom on left. From *Domus*, July 1933, 297. Copyright Editoriale Domus S.p.A. Rozzano, Milano Italy. Montage by author.

Like the two examples that were discussed above (namely, the Saturday House and Artist's Lakeside Villa), these five villas (or *Casette*) presented a successful combination of traditional elements with modern approaches and technologies. They remained true to Rationalism and at the same time fulfilled their political function. While the Saturday House and Artist's Lakeside Villa acted as a kind of benchmark for the constructed discourse of the identity and culture of the new fascist ruling class, the central message of the five villas was to debunk the belief that holiday homes were only for that plutocratic *bourgeoisie* whose private interests had, before the revolution of fascism, been so well served by liberal democracy. This belief was to be replaced with a conviction that fascism allowed this privilege to be collectively enjoyed through the application of modern technology, the dedication of architects, and the advent of a new fascist society. This meant that holiday homes of varying size and cost, equal in dignity and efficiency to their more expensive counterparts, were now commercially and materially available. The intended protagonists of the new holiday homes were families bringing up the new generation of fascists, and who wanted to ensure that children had ample access to sun, air and greenery.

Conclusion
The pavilions of the *Mostra dell'Abitazione* at the 5th Milan Triennale of 1933 did much more than showcase the virtues of modern architecture and industrial production. Each example represented four inter-related elements that were at the foundation of fascist Italy's constructed discourse of identity and culture. These were: 1) the technology, forms, materials and ideals of modernity; 2) the Mediterranean architectural tradition; 3) the socio-economic reforms of the fascist regime; and 4) the role of the middle classes in political life.

In various measures, these pavilions are all lost examples of Italian Rationalist architecture, which was known for its successful merging of modernist principles with the Mediterranean tradition. Efficient plans, access to natural light, simplified structure, and industrial materials such as steel, rubber and linoleum, all stood for the social and economic ideals of modernity, progress and health. These new materials sat happily alongside pergolas and terraces, as well as finishes of stucco, tile, brick and marble, which were more characteristic of nationalist identity and pride.

As domestic settings of middle-class life, these ideal housing prototypes acted as a lever for all
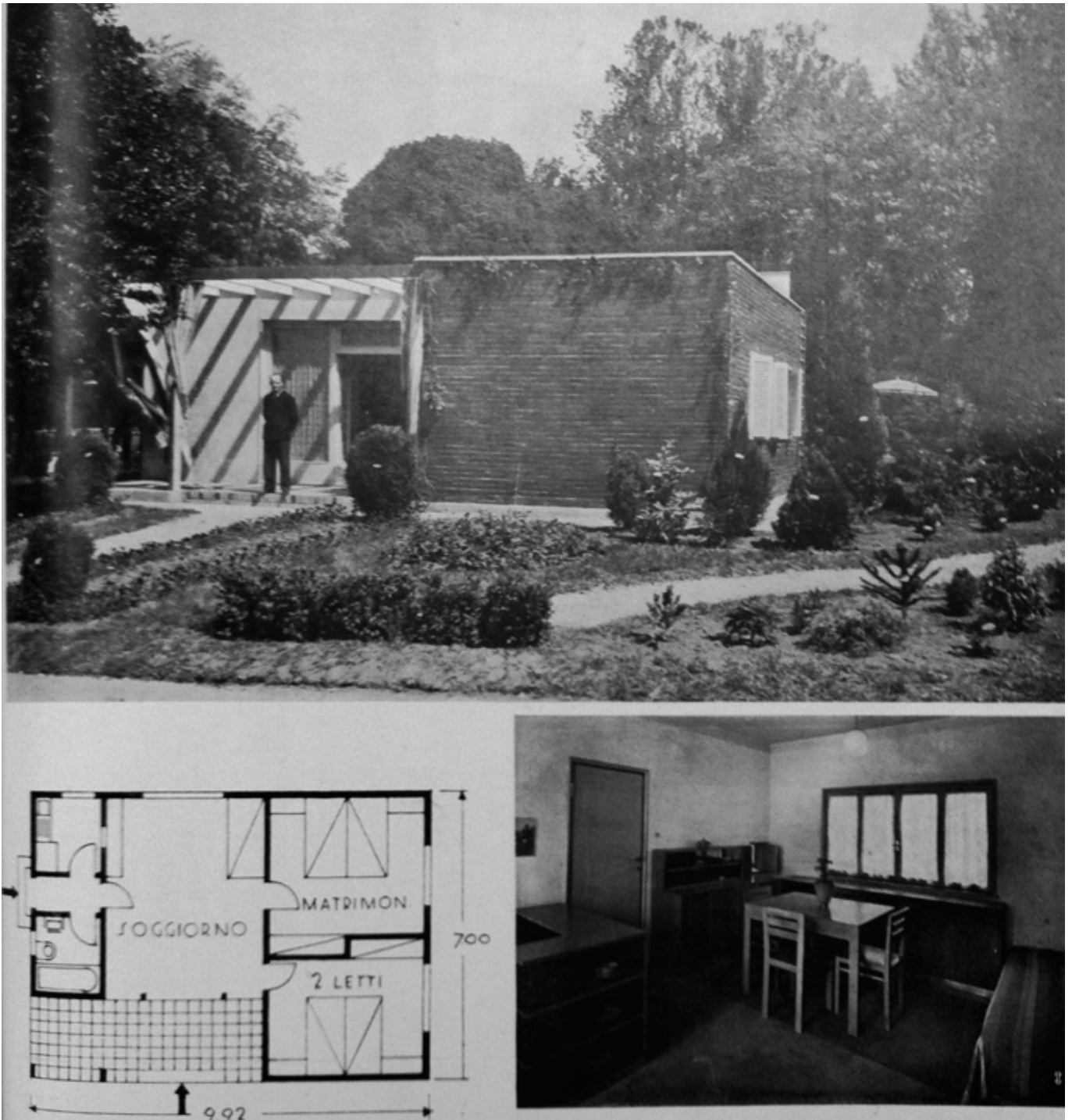
Figure 7.11: Mino Fiocchi, Emilio Lancia, Michele Marelli and Giuseppe Serafini Country Villa. From *Domus*, August 1933, 413 & 415. Exterior photograph showing bucolic setting, interior view of living room, ground floor plan. Copyright Editoriale Domus S.p.A. Rozzano, Milano, Italy. Montage by author.

echelons of society. They were manifestations of both a constructed discourse of a uniquely fascist socio-political identity and culture. These pavilions assumed the form and function of an idealised middle-class lifestyle and a consumer culture which lies at the heart of a decorative arts exhibition such as the Triennale. All this was made possible by the social, political and economic reform encapsulated in Corporativism or the Corporative State, and helped at the same time to mitigate any sense of the real loss of personal freedom.

The *Casa del Sabato* by BBPR and Portaluppi, and the Artist's Lakeside Villa by Giuseppe Terragni and the Como Group were cradles for a new ruling middle class that had 'deposed' the *bourgeoisie*. Here they played out their leisure time in clean, luxurious and modern homes that at the same time respected tradition and cemented their previously denied political role within the new Italian society. The five examples of holiday homes designed by Griffini, Bottoni and Faludi were aimed at the lower middle classes, with

their aspirations to move up, and at the working classes, the *popolo*, who were to stay securely in their place albeit with an improved way of life. With the opportunity to holiday in modest, efficient, light-filled villas, the aspirational middle classes were assured of the possibilities of social mobility and the positive effects of fascist reform alike. The lifestyle of the *popolo*, meanwhile, was vastly improved such that they could take a break from work and enjoy Mussolini's populism 'made flesh' in neat, attainable and dignified holiday homes.

Coming together at the Triennale, then, were the four cornerstones of Fascist society: Art, Industry, Family and the State. These were expressed architecturally through pavilions that spoke of Modernist ideals, Italian tradition, social mobility and economic reform. This was what made Italian architecture between the wars unique, and this is what made the 5th Milan Triennale such a politicised event. In sum, its villa pavilions made manifest at a 1:1 scale the role of architects – conscious members of the new ruling class – as arbiters and active protagonists in fascism's revolutionary mission to transform Italian society.

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'A BAZAAR IN THE COLISEUM': SOUTHEAST ASIAN HANDICRAFTS IN NEW YORK, 1956

Jennifer Way

This essay reconstitutes the meaning and significance of places, objects and people associated with an unstudied pavilion displaying handicrafts at the Southeast Asia Rehabilitation and Trade Development Exhibit held in the New York Coliseum from 25 June to 29 June, 1956. Paying particular attention to correlations between the pavilion and the general features of Orientalism as defined by Said, I focus attention on the 'tent-like enclosure' and its contents that featured in the Coliseum. This pavilion, I argue, aimed to display 'oriental objects' in an environment that was to appear natural and convey the spirit of the places where they were made; it was to have 'the atmosphere of an oriental bazaar'. The objects consisted of handicrafts that renowned American industrial designer Russel Wright collected during a recent trip he made to Southeast Asia on behalf of the U.S. State Department's International Cooperation Administration. The ICA contracted Wright to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a multi-year programme to produce and export handicrafts from there to the United States. At issue are ways the 'tent-like enclosure' established and modulated relations between Southeast Asia, Vietnam and the United States within an Orientalist framework emphasizing American authority, hierarchical distinctions regarding places, objects and people as well as types of belonging linking people to objects, and salvage, supplementation and adaptation. Much of this amounted to a process of domesticating Vietnam for America. Vietnam, which the U.S. State Department as well as Wright perceived to need American assistance, entered the domestic economy where it would contribute to enriching the homes of the American middle class.

Keywords: pavilion, Southeast Asia, handicraft, New York Coliseum, Orientalism, Cold War.

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Abstract

This essay reconstitutes the meaning and significance of places, objects and people associated with an unstudied pavilion displaying handicrafts at the Southeast Asia Rehabilitation and Trade Development Exhibit held in the New York Coliseum from 25 June to 29 June, 1956. Paying particular attention to correlations between the pavilion and the general features of Orientalism as defined by Said, I focus attention on the 'tent-like enclosure' and its contents that featured in the Coliseum. This pavilion, I argue, aimed to display 'oriental objects' in an environment that was to appear natural and convey the spirit of the places where they were made; it was to have 'the atmosphere of an oriental bazaar'. The objects consisted of handicrafts that renowned American industrial designer Russel Wright collected during a recent trip he made to Southeast Asia on behalf of the U.S. State Department's International Cooperation Administration. The ICA contracted Wright to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a multi-year programme to produce and export handicrafts from there to the United States. At issue are ways the 'tent-like enclosure' established and modulated relations between Southeast Asia, Vietnam and the United States within an Orientalist framework emphasizing American authority, hierarchical distinctions regarding places, objects and people as well as types of belonging linking people to objects, and salvage, supplementation and adaptation. Much of this amounted to a process of domesticating Vietnam for America. Vietnam, which the U.S. State Department as well as Wright perceived to need American assistance, entered the domestic economy where it would contribute to enriching the homes of the American middle class.

This essay reconstitutes the meaning and significance of places, people, objects and images associated with an unstudied pavilion that displayed handicrafts at the Southeast Asia Rehabilitation and Trade Development Exhibit held in the New York Coliseum from June 25 to June 29, 1956. The 'tent-like enclosure' aimed to present handicrafts as 'oriental objects in an atmosphere natural to them, which would communicate the spirit of the places where they were collected' and also point to where they are sold in Southeast Asia,

namely, 'an oriental trading place' (Fleishman, 1956, p.72). Renowned American industrial designer Russel Wright collected the handicrafts during a recent trip he made to Southeast Asia on behalf of the U.S. State Department's International Cooperation Administration (ICA). This organization contracted Wright to evaluate the feasibility of establishing a multi-year programme to produce and export handicrafts from there to the United States. In what follows I consider how Wright's activity in Southeast Asia and especially in New York City, along with the purpose, appearance and location of the pavilion, prompted Wright, the pavilion's designers and American government officials and press, to consider the pavilion 'oriental.' Also, I explore why they characterised its contents as antithetical to contemporary American culture yet extremely well-suited to serving the needs of the American middle classes in their everyday lives and homes.

First, though, it is necessary to explain my approach to the material. The nature of references to ethnicity, civilization, technology and culture that explicitly or tacitly compare the United States and Southeast Asia in the primary documents I studied - articles about the Southeast Asia Rehabilitation and Trade Development Exhibit, reports and ephemera from American and South Vietnamese governments respectively, and texts that Wright and other American designers as well as cultural commentators authored - compel me to contextualise them in regard to Orientalism. In 'The Designer as Economic Diplomat: The Government Applies the Designer's Approach to Problems of International Trade', 1956, Avrom Fleishman explains that showing 'oriental objects' in the pavilion advanced Wright's aim to associate handicraft not simply with places in Southeast Asia where it was made but especially with sites where it could be purchased there. Of importance is that by evoking the atmosphere of 'an oriental trading place' (pp.68–73), the pavilion linked sites of trade in Southeast Asia to the centre of an American city that was world famous for integrating international and domestic commerce. I contend that this developed within an Orientalist framework emphasizing American authority. It underscored similarities along with hierarchical distinctions between the United States and Southeast Asia that supported American ideas about Southeast Asians' need for salvage and Southeast Asians' ability to satisfy American middle class lifestyle and home decorating tastes and desires.

Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) serves as the touchstone for Orientalism in this paper because cultural historians who study American interests in

Asia during the Cold War period from about 1945 to the early 1960s treat it as a foundation for their scholarship. This scholarship serves as a point of departure for my research. For example, following the publication of *Orientalism* in 1978, the United States was substituted for Said's focus on Europe's relationship with the Middle East. In particular, Douglas Little showed 'how orientalism made its way into U.S. popular culture' chiefly through 'images of the Middle East and other parts of the Third World' that circulated in *National Geographic*' (p.10). While still emphasizing the United States, Christina Klein shifted the location and subjects of Orientalism from the Middle East to Asia in order to examine how 'the Cold War made Asia important to the United States in ways that it had not been before' (p.5). In *Cold War Orientalism: Asia in the Middlebrow Imagination, 1945–1961*, she explained that during this 'distinct cultural moment' American cultural producers created 'stories, fiction and nonfiction that took Asia and the Pacific as their subject matter' (p.2), encompassing ideas about 'integration – international and domestic' and the 'forging of bonds between Asians and Americans both at home and abroad' (p.16). My research builds on this scholarship by moving the geography of American Orientalism from Asia to Southeast Asia. Furthermore, in focusing on Vietnam I am able to identify how material and visual culture relating to U.S. State Department aid programmes active there and throughout the region participated in American Cold War imperatives in ways that intersected with the lifestyle needs of the American middle classes that Wright and his staff stressed.

Putting forth this argument develops more fully the very brief reference that Robert Haddow makes to Wright's activity in Southeast Asia in his book *Pavilions of Plenty, Exhibiting American Culture Abroad in the 1950s* (1997). Whereas Haddow mainly focuses on American government-sponsored exhibitions of vanguard art, industrial products and home goods in Europe, I consider how material and visual culture participated in the politics of the Cold War developing in another region of the world. I show that for Americans, Southeast Asian handicrafts reflected agendas constitutive of those politics and served as a cultural resource that, according to American tastemakers, many Americans needed at home.

By highlighting Wright as one such tastemaker I do not mean to imply that he operated alone or acted autonomously. However, I do concentrate on Wright because in large measure, researching the ICA programme especially where Vietnam is concerned involves dealing with documents he wrote or that draw attention to or encompass his activity. Consequently,

Wright's presence and agency in my narrative reflect this aspect of my research along with my attempt to convey his professional concerns as these included his status as a major figure of American design and representative of United States State Department programmes and staff on whose behalf he worked with Southeast Asian handicraft artisans and American trade specialists and businessmen.

American interests in Southeast Asia and the Republic of Vietnam

At the outset we must revisit the political context in which the pavilion developed. Following the departure of the French and the political division of Vietnam in 1954 along with the subsequent founding of the Republic of Vietnam, or South Vietnam, in 1955, the United States Operations Mission to Vietnam (USOM) aimed to help the new Southeast Asian nation bolster its political autonomy and establish economic stability as a way to counter its vulnerability to communism. 'The United States is proud to be on the side of the effort of the Vietnamese people under President Diem to establish freedom, peace, and the good life', the U.S. State Department reported in 1956 (Robertson, 1956, p.973). That same year, Senator John F. Kennedy explained that the Republic of Vietnam held significance as 'the cornerstone of the Free World in Southeast Asia' with an 'economy … essential to the economy of all of Southeast Asia' (pp.617–618).

Between 1955 and 1961, the ICA dedicated more than 700 million dollars to support personnel from the United States government and American business and design worlds in establishing economic pathways linking the United States and Southeast Asia. Their efforts included working with small industries and craftsmen to raise the quality of Southeast Asian products and locate markets for handicraft in the region and in the United States. In 1955, a Hoover Commission report criticised American foreign aid for not directly aiding the craftsmen of so-called underdeveloped countries. In response, and in relation to the United Nation's earlier 'Handicrafts Marketing Survey' (ECAFE, 1951), the State Department summoned American industrial designers for help in completing surveys of handicraft in different countries, and Russel Wright was one of those called into action. He was a renowned industrial designer voted, in 1952, President of the Association of Industrial Designers. Many Americans knew him as the creator of 'The American Way', a popular, mass produced and distributed line of home furnishings. Wright did more than produce vessels and utensils for American tables, counters, and shelves. In 1951 he and his wife Mary published *Guide to Easier Living*, a book that now

Figure 8.1: Russel Wright, 'Gold Mine in Southeast Asia', Interiors 116 (August, 1956), p. 94.

reads as a pre-Martha Stewart guide for middle class Americans in organizing their homes.

The ICA hired Wright to visit Taiwan, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand and Hong Kong to survey and make recommendations regarding the potential to produce handicraft items there for American domestic markets and report on the possibility of exporting crafts to the United States.[1] Between November 1955 and February 1956 Wright made the trip together with craft expert Ramy Alexander and fashion designer Josette Walker. In Vietnam, Wright and his colleagues observed people making pottery, handloom textiles, needlework, baskets, silk weavings, wood furniture and lacquerware at sites ranging from cooperatives to semi-mechanised factories, schools and refugee camps. Moreover, Wright latched onto what he termed 'The Refugee Problem' (Wright, 1956, p.96). Following the division of Vietnam in 1954, hundreds of thousands of people had left their homes to migrate from north to south before the border closed during May of 1955. According to the State Department they fled the communist Viet Minh. Many did so aided by what the U.S. Navy called

Operation Passage to Freedom, and the United States distributed funds to help integrate these refugees. Consequently, refugees, with handicraft artisans numbering among them, featured as the subjects of the ICA's economic aid programmes in South Vietnam, which emphasised their resettlement.

Upon his return to the United States Wright submitted a report to the State Department and published an article in *Interiors* magazine entitled 'Gold Mine in Southeast Asia' about the possibilities he saw for a successful handicraft export programme. The first page featured a black and white photograph (Figure 8.1) of a young handicraft artisan weaving a basket in a refugee camp (p.95). The caption for another stated, 'Refugees in a Vietnam camp, weaving mats. There are between 500,000 and 800,000 refugees in Vietnam eager to work but with little to do' (p.100). None of the captions for photographs appearing in the article identified their artisan subjects by name. Instead, together, photographs and captions along with the main text characterised the handicraft artisans as a productive workforce having diverse craft skills. In this capacity they represented many others having the same aptitudes who collectively met the aim of the U.S. State Department – to interest American business in commissioning, marketing and distributing their handicrafts as upscale housewares intended for American middle class homes. Achieving this would strengthen the sovereignty of the new Republic of South Vietnam and bolster its status as an emblem of 'the Free World in Southeast Asia' (Kennedy, 1956, pp.617–8). According to Fleishman, it would 'help the individual artisans and small enterprisers by expanding their markets, while allowing them to continue their traditions of work and life' (p.72).

Ultimately, Wright managed the establishment of several handicraft centres in Southeast Asia, including in Saigon, mounted trade shows and department store exhibitions of handicraft in the United States, and designed materials for furnishing middle-class American homes that he named after places in Southeast Asia. By 1958, when hopes had dimmed for the success of handicraft exports from Vietnam to America, Wright proposed a 'Handicraft Programme for Tourism' in Vietnam. He established the 'Russel Wright Program Silk Screen Workshop' in Saigon the next year and oversaw its teaching of color, design and printing.

On 'an encounter which is already political and economic'

Nick Crossley reminds us that for Said, '[k]nowledge and imagination of the East does not arise out of nowhere or out of a neutral intellectual encounter';

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1   These activities are detailed in the documents of Box 44 of the *Russel Wright Papers*, Special Collections Research Center, New York, Syracuse University Library.

rather, it develops from 'an encounter which is already political and economic. It arises in a context of material and political domination and is shaped by that context' (Crossley, 2005). According to Said, especially during the nineteenth century and in the encounters of its imperialism and colonialism, Europe's power to shape everyday life in the Middle East and delimit the ability of Middle Easterners to act, know and represent themselves and their families,

Figure 8.2: Russel Wright, 'Gold Mine in Southeast Asia', *Interiors* 116 (August, 1956), p. 100. [The original captions read: 'Left: In the Coliseum exhibition: Vietnam straw hats and baskets. Right: Messrs. Wright and Alexander in a Vietnam jungle watching the ages-old method of dye-pounding black Chinese brocade silk.']

communities and nations served as a foundational feature of its Orientalist dominations. If we shift to the mid-twentieth century and consider how the United States engaged with Southeast Asia, we find that the former's knowledge about and power over the latter's people, culture and nations was not solely 'regulated first by the local concerns of a specialist', as Said indicated had occurred in regard to Europe and the Middle East (p.45). Rather, already, that is, before American specialists arrived in Southeast Asia, the 'general concerns of a social system of authority' (Said, 1978, p.45) operating out of Washington D.C. in the context of Cold War anxieties organised relations between the United States and this region, especially following from American military involvement in Korea earlier in the decade. Conversely, Said's reference to a system underpinning Orientalism throws into relief the array of American State Department aid programmes intended to shepherd, for example, Vietnam towards a democratic government that would assist its burgeoning citizenry lacking resources and skills not to mention homes sustain themselves economically. The ICA determined the kinds of assistance the new nation needed, especially refugees attempting to resettle there, and then it proceeded to provide material resources and staff, with the latter treating American interests and previous practices as standards that the region, including its handicraft artisans, would follow.

To his service for the ICA Wright brought significant experience in domestic handicraft production and distribution. For instance, he had designed product lines of high quality for the American middle classes

through his nationally recognised firm.[2] During the fall of 1940 his American Way housewares line retailed as the 'first comprehensive group effort of its kind among industrial designers, artist, craftsmen, manufactures and retailers in the home furnishings industry'.[3] It gave Wright knowledge of how to strategise linking the production of handicraft to its intended consumption by middle class Americans. Its publicity explained:

' Where individual regional craftsmen are discovered whose work meets 'American-Way' design and merchandise standards, examples of their work will be chosen. In cases where outstanding skills are present, lacking only a proper quality of meeting merchandising needs and requirements, craftsmen will be supplied with suitable designs in terms of their own expression, to be produced in sufficient quantities for national distribution [4] '

The emphasis the housewares line placed on craftsmen designing wares expressly to satisfy the interests of a national market anticipated Wright's approach to organizing handicraft production and trade in regard to Vietnam. There, he would advocate teaching artisans to make what Americans would recognise as Vietnamese. 'The best way we evolved to have the Asian small producer make things that Americans would want to buy was to have Americans design the products'. Thus, instead of 'poor copies of

2 Oversize Box 21, *Wright Papers*.
3 Oversize Box 21, *Wright Papers*.
4 Oversize Box 21, *Wright Papers*.

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73). In two respects, Wright's attention to questions of marketing coincided with what industrial designer Don Wallance described as '[a]n increasing demand for well-designed and well-made products for modern living [that] has opened up new possibilities for the small industry aiming at a quality market' (p.82).

He modelled the profile of the industrial designer as the American cultural figure emerging as best-suited to integrate the creation with the marketing of handicraft within a complex network of resources and expectations. As Wallance explained, '[f]rom the initial conception of the product to its use by the ultimate consumer, a complex of interrelated activities is brought into play – market appraisal or analysis; product analysis, design, and development; technical research; cost analysis; materials specification and procurement; tool and die making; organization of production facilities; training of workers; choice and preparation of distribution channels; planning of promotional activities' (p.39). What is more, the multi-layered managerial and governmental and non-governmental aspects of Wright's duties coincided with changes in foreign diplomacy including expectations that diplomats must deal with an expanded depth of problems and wider range of tasks. The State Department summarised, 'We need people who can deal with complex economic problems, financial problems, scientific problems, legal problems, informational problems, geographic problems, politico-military problems, and a variety of other specialties' as well as 'generalists', 'men and women who can deal with a wide range of problems' (Livingston, 1954, p.762). In short, the purview of diplomacy was changing. According to the State Department, 'Diplomacy is becoming less concerned with relationships among governments and more concerned with relationships among peoples. Fundamentally, our most valuable and dependable alliances are rooted in this people-to-people relationship' (Livingston, 1954, p. 763). Meanwhile, industrial designers and those who studied their field noticed an increasing tendency for the American government to use designers 'in any type of investigation, and it is here spelled out in what is perhaps its largest context, the field of international trade' (Fleishman, 1956, p. 24). After all, according to Fleishman, 'Nations may disagree on politics, tariff and disarmament, but the language of fashion and design is universal. So is the problem of making a living and learning a business' (Roe, 1956, p. 41). The latter sentiment dovetailed with Wright's appraisal of what Southeast Asians could provide Americans. 'What we want to impress on the Asians…is that America will buy something other than tourist souvenirs from the Orient. We will suggest they make fewer clay Buddhas and incense burners and more tableware, furniture, straw mats and hand-woven fabrics' (Roe, 1956, p. 41).

To ensure the existence of a healthy market for 'well-designed and well-made products for modern living' (Wallance, 1956, p. 82), Wallance urged industrial designers to pay attention to marketing as much or even more than design of a product. 'Because the products of these firms generally represent the most advanced approach in their field and have not yet received widespread consumer acceptance, successful marketing requires creative merchandising methods and informed and sympathetic sales people' (p. 82). At the Southeast Asia Rehabilitation and Trade Development 'two large vinyl plastic tents' intending to 'help the village artisans and small enterprises that make the products find a market while continuing the best of their traditional crafts and patterns of living'.[14] Questionnaires that Wright gave to attendees - 'leading department store executives, import-export companies and manufacturers' - and that he 'analyzed at the end of the show to indicate preferences at the buyers' level'[15] also epitomised creative merchandising intended to elicit the interest of 'sympathetic sales people' who would be willing to import and distribute handicraft from Southeast Asia for American consumption. From them, Wright identified 'at least 52 potential customers' (Hoffman, 1958, p.15), and he used information from the questionnaires to prepare proposals for individual nation projects in Taiwan and Cambodia, respectively.

Ultimately, retailers presenting housewares at the exposition 'had a complaint to register against the highly touted Russel Wright Asian exhibit'. Apparently, it failed to provide ways for buyers interested in purchasing handicrafts to do so during the exposition. 'Instead, they were referred to representatives who could explain the background and finer qualities of a work, but could not take an order or provide the name of a source for the goods' (Okell, 1956, p.20). The complaint underscores that Wright treated evaluating the performance of 'the atmosphere of an oriental bazaar' (Fleishman, 1956, pp.68–73) as a key component of his 'creative merchandising' (Wallance, 1956, p.82) of Southeast Asian handicraft, keeping in mind the 'general concerns of a social system of authority' (Said, 1978, p.45) back in Washington D.C. In this respect, Wright's first task was to pique the interest of potential trade and business and then he would follow through by gathering information and additional responses. These procedures Wright had shaped with the approval of the ICA.

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14 'Caution is urged in U.N. Aid role', 1956, p. 50.
15 Ibid.

'A bazaar in the Coliseum'

The 'tent-like enclosure' (Fleishman, 1956, p.72) displaying handicrafts served as the primary means with which Wright enticed trade and business representatives to become interested in Southeast Asia. Moreover, through a two faceted process of domestication, it cast Southeast Asia as different from the United States yet also subservient to and able to meet American domestic interests.

One facet of domestication involved establishing that Southeast Asian handicraft originated from and belonged to somewhere other than the United States, namely, the 'orient'. For example, in writing about the pavilion, Fleishman noted that 'Mr. Wright wanted to show the oriental objects in an atmosphere natural to them, which would communicate the spirit of the places where they were collected' (p.72). Fleishman indicates that Wright associated 'oriental' handicraft with a place where it existed and from where Wright collected it. An additional implication is that the place where handicrafts belonged in 'an atmosphere natural to them' differed in 'spirit' from mid twentieth century America, which presumably was unnatural for them. In this context, the 'oriental' pavilion both conjured an environment intended to attract the curiosity of American 'widespread interest in the alien and unusual' (Said, 1978, pp.39–40) and simulate 'an atmosphere natural to' 'oriental objects' that differed from the larger surroundings.

In regard to Orientalist devotion to 'the alien and unusual', Wright's statements about 'oriental objects' include many references highlighting their differences from contemporary American objects, for example, based on their manufacture. 'Most striking of all,' Wright remarked in regard to pottery sites he visited in Vietnam, 'was a shot of potters who, lacking the wheel on which clay usually is revolved, made wheels of themselves in a fashion' (Pepis, 1956, p.39). In this example Wright implies that in contrast to the manual or machine-driven wheel preferred in the U.S, in Southeast Asia potters must cobble together even an approximation of these tools.

Additionally, Wright wrote about places where he collected handicraft by dwelling on differences between them and an American environment and an American sense of space and place. To this point Fleishmann noted about the pavilion in the Coliseum that '[b]y carefully placing the pottery, metalwork and other small objects on low tables, the designers caught the predominantly horizontal spirit of an oriental trading place without being literal' (p.72). Fleishman alerts us to ways that the presentation of handicraft in the pavilion advanced Wright's intention to root 'oriental objects'

not simply in sites where artisans made it but especially in places where it became available for purchase and distribution. Interestingly, to create the pavilion Wright worked with two young East Coast designers who had strong international professional interests. Romaldo Giurgola, who taught at the University of Pennsylvania, was born in Italy and had worked there as a designer. Muriel Emmanuel has summarised Giurgola's designs as treating 'architecture as a continuous progression based on historical precedents' (pp.285–7). Paul J. Mitarachi trained at Harvard and then designed exhibition installations in the United States and El Salvador. Although neither Giurgola nor Mitarachi had visited Southeast Asia, perhaps each man's interest in building traditions outside North America helped them collaboratively evoke 'an oriental trading place' conjuring 'the atmosphere of an oriental bazaar'(Fleishman, 1956, pp.68–73).

As a result, the site served to root handicraft and its makers autochthonically, that is, as if occurring naturally in and belonging somewhere, in this case, the 'orient', which reciprocally designated the handicrafts displayed there as 'oriental objects'. The emphasis on bringing forth aspects of an original location for them reinforced Wright's practice of distinguishing between 'other parts of the world' and 'home'. Wright observed: 'We brought the issue home to the American market by emphasizing the craft traditions in these countries which are not duplicated in other parts of the world' (Fleishman, 1956, p.71). Notably, Giurgola and Mitarachi organised differences between 'other parts of the world' and 'home' by designing a pavilion consisting of not one but two separate yet interrelated 'tents'.

In one, 'oriental objects' and their arrangement in space connoted 'oriental' societies, cultures, people, and craft processes. The adjacent tent targeted representatives of the American home front interactively. Inside, 'conferences with various trade groups were held,' and businessmen watched 'regional survey movies' including '6,000 ft. colored 16 mm movies and slides, [and an] 18 minute movie of Vietnam' that Wright had made during his survey trip to Southeast Asia to detail handicraft materials, methods of fabrication and the appearance of handicraft for American markets (Fleishman, 1956, p.71). Respectively, the tents contrasted stasis and mobility, with handicraft objects rooted to their 'natural' environment in one, and their potential circulation via trade pathways facilitated by the U.S. State Department and American business and trade in the other. The tent with the movies and slides also connoted mobility by referencing Wright's travels. Even its design portended mobility insofar as the 'tent-like enclosure made of white vinyl

strips and scaffolding…could be easily moved or replaced in the event of a road tour' (Fleishman, 1956, p.72).

Together, the tents made up a 'bazaar in the Coliseum' connoting 'the informality of the oriental street-markets' (Fleishman, 1956, p.72) and affording 'a unique experience for members of the trade' (Fleishman, 1956, pp.68–73). To this latter point the bazaar performed the Coliseum's implicit expectation that exhibits amount to 'show business' (Palmer, 1956, p.14), that is, a spectacular presentation of the salient features of products. Also, the association of 'show' with the Coliseum correlates with the press acclaiming

the Coliseum's enormous size and number of elevators, state of the art lighting, air conditioning, infrastructure and generous seating space, all of which rendered it superbly equipped to facilitate international trade in and through New York City. In addition, publicity about the Coliseum, which opened only two months prior to the International Housewares Exposition of which the Southeast Asian Rehabilitation and Trade Development Exhibit constituted a part, estimated how much money it would take in from businessmen visiting its trade fairs.

Interestingly, despite its unremarkable international modernist architecture and the reference its name

Figure 8.3: Avrom Fleishman, 'The Designer as Economic Diplomat: The Government Applies the Designer's Approach to Problems of International Trade', *Industrial Design* 3 (August, 1956), p. 72.
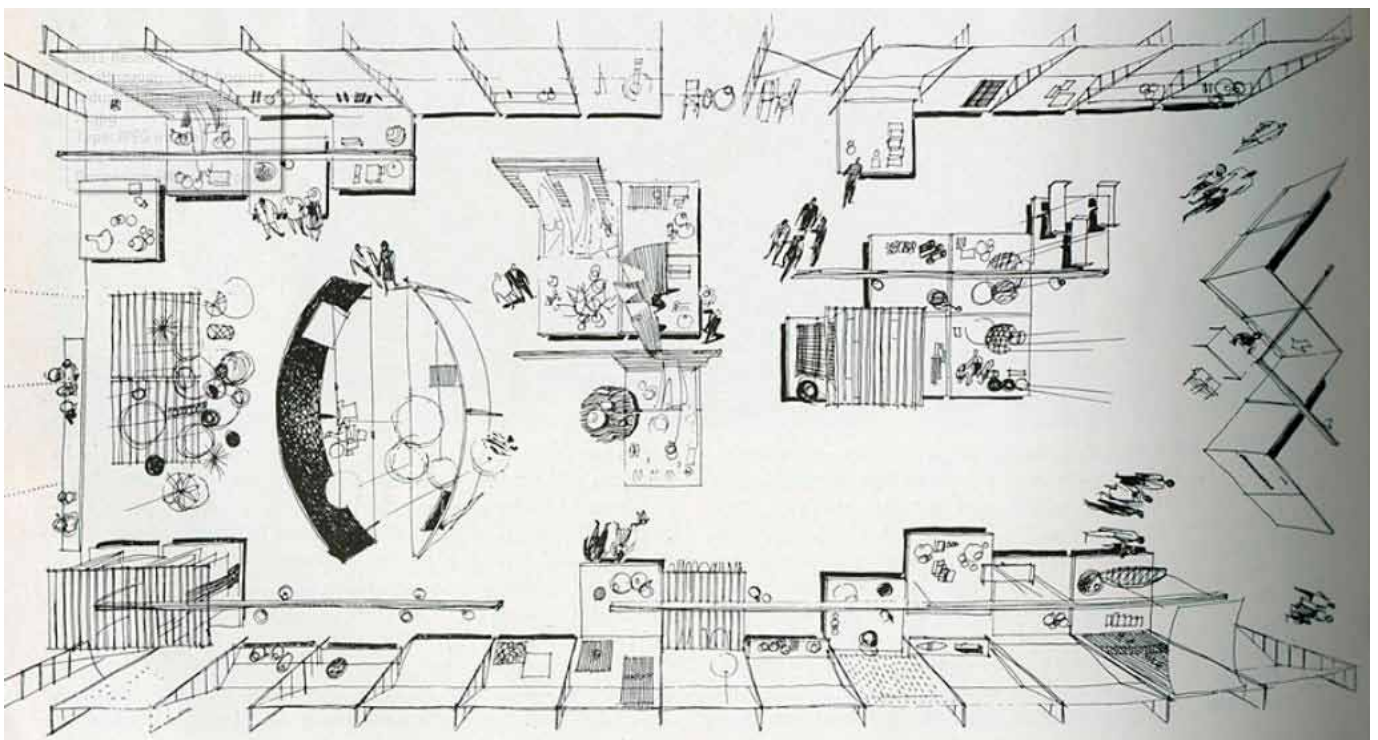

Figure 8.4: Avrom Fleishman, 'The Designer as Economic Diplomat: The Government Applies the Designer's Approach to Problems of International Trade', *Industrial Design* 3 (August, 1956), p. 73.

made to the magnificent engineering feat in ancient Imperial Rome, a writer for *Time* magazine hinted that the New York Coliseum qualified as 'oriental'. This 'Temple for Mecca',[16] 'Mecca' being a Western transliteration of the Arabic 'Makkah', called to mind large numbers of people meeting along routes of pilgrimage and trade. Yet images published in the mass print media tended not to emphasise individual exhibits. Perhaps the Coliseum's features and agenda to bring world products and commerce to New York seemed grander than photographs or drawings could capture. As a result, depictions of the Southeast Asia Rehabilitation and Trade Development exhibit are limited to a tiny black and white photograph showing the exterior of one of the tents as a dark linear armature holding a series of rectangular white vinyl strips taut along the outside and on the inside, supporting longer versions that dip downward (Figure 8.3). A larger drawing takes a bird's-eye view of a tent articulated by scratchy thin and inky black lines denoting scaffolding and aggregates of blocky and curved exhibition furniture on which generic shapes indicate handicrafts (Figure 8.4). Neither image designates areas allotted to specific places in Southeast Asia or identifies particular objects.

A second facet of domestication consisted of clarifying how 'oriental objects' differed from American objects, nevertheless, they seemed useful for, if not necessary to, American homes. These issues of difference and desire relate to key themes in Said's scholarship. For example, in the section of *Orientalism* called 'Knowing the Oriental', Said outlined how Europeans constructed their Middle Eastern subjects as 'the Orient, the Oriental, and his world' (p.40) existing in binary relationships that gave Europeans the greater power, authority and significance. Said showed that Orientalist Europe constructed its relationship with the Middle East on a perception of 'a strong and a weak partner', with Europe having the 'position of strength, not to say dominance' (p.40) over people and cultures it perceived not to change let alone develop or progress. Generally, Europeans perceived their civilization and selves as Western, changing, progressive and modern in contrast to Middle Easterners who, they asserted, remained primitive, pre-modern and unchanging. As evidenced by commentary from Wright and his colleagues, the ICA's relationship with Southeast Asia indexed 'views [of] the Orient as something whose existence is not only displayed but has remained fixed in time and place for the West' (Said, 1978, p.109). The last theme recalls the stasis

associated with Southeast Asia and mobility associated with American business and trade characterizing the contents of the respective tents in the Southeast Asia Rehabilitation and Trade Development exhibit.

The binary articulation of a modern, developing West and static, more primitive Southeast Asia nourished America's ideas about Vietnam's need for salvage, which also resonates in Orientalist thinking. Following Said's work, Ali Behdad explored how Europeans worried about Middle Eastern societies and cultures that required 'intervention for historical preservation and cultural renewal' to avoid becoming 'a deteriorated and decadent civilization' (p.715) that is no longer vital, given its apparent stasis and other differences from modern Western culture and society. Likewise, anxiety that unchecked industrialization in Vietnam could wipe out the 'native handicrafts' Wright surveyed to 'develop a profitable foreign' trade with 'these areas'[17] encouraged American ideas about managing the vulnerabilities they associated with Southeast Asia. Speaking at the opening of the Southeast Asia Rehabilitation and Trade Development Exhibit, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Henry Cabot Lodge comingled American economic development in Southeast Asia with salvage and cultural heritage: 'Economic development should not mean disrupting old cultures, uprooting people or throwing away the best heritage of the past centuries'.[18] Lodge implied that the activity of the United States in Southeast Asia amounted to activity upon its heritage. Importantly, he conveyed that insofar as Southeast Asia required economic assistance, so, too, did its heritage deserve salvage involving, in Said's terms, a relationship 'between a strong and a weak partner' (p.140). As Virginia Dominguez explains:

> We assert the need to salvage, rescue, save, [and] preserve a series of objects or forms, we announce our fear of [their] destruction, our inability to trust others to take appropriate action and our sense of entitlement over the fate of the objects. Our best liberal intentions do little other than patronize those slated for cultural salvage. (p.131).

To be sure, in reflecting on Southeast Asian handicrafts Wright seemed to promote change. 'I am impatient with all those Americans I encounter –those sentimentalists who are only interested in preserving oriental culture traditions, and art. These things are

16 'A Temple for Mecca', *Time*, 30 April 1956, vol.67, issue 18.

17 'Wright on 8-week Hunt for Designs in Southeast Asia', *Retailing*, 30 November 1955, p.4.
18 'Caution is urged in U.N. Aid role', 1956, p. 50.

dead'.[19] Nevertheless, Wright left it to himself, his colleagues and American business and tradesmen as well as politicians and diplomats to establish standards and expectations for Southeast Asian artisans, explaining, '[c]ulturally, we must help them to find and evolve their own kind of 20th century customs and expressions and adaption to our times'.[20] The ICA benefitted from Wright's efforts to adapt Southeast Asian handicraft to 'our times' because by 1958, other Americans were reporting that the region was modernizing to the detriment of native industries, as indicated by this passage from an article by Kathleen McLaughlin in *Craft Horizons* titled 'Threat of Extinction for Ancient Crafts in Asia?': 'Everywhere in Asia new factories are springing up, turning out in almost dizzying quantities volumes of household articles […] at prices far below levels the handworker can afford to meet', sparking 'speculation in various countries about the dilemma of the crafts workers and the rise of unemployment among them' (p.2). Equally at issue was the implied question of how to salvage the crafts workers' ability to find steady work, in other words, how to help them resettle. To this point, the pavilion in the Coliseum furnished a temporary exhibit promoting the long term restoration of the vitality of Southeast Asia. This consisted of aiding Southeast Asians in developing their economies by producing their native handicraft from where they resettled, which would generate a consistent flow of trade situating handicraft where it was needed – in American homes.

Adapting Vietnamese handicraft to American 'times' also converged with emerging critiques of the modern West. Writing in *Industrial Design*, Wallance summarised, 'Western man seems to have lost the capacity for making things beautifully as a matter of course. Industrial work, usually fragmentary and repetitive, does not provide the satisfaction and psychological balance that derives from making a complete object through personal skill' (p.81). The 'bankruptcy' followed from mass produced 'impersonal standardized products' made of 'sleek new synthetic materials' (pp.81–2). In a letter he wrote to Lodge, Wright indicated that Americans' needs for the 'ancient crafts in Asia' emerged from the success of 'our times'. 'There are statistics to prove that this need for the old and the handmade grows right along with the new, machine-made products'.[21] Accordingly, there is 'an expanding market for hand-made things,' and 'a real need for things that are personal in character, for accidental irregularities, for natural materials and

textures' (Wallance, 1956, p. 81–2). Wright explained:

❛ You see, because of the machine-made character of our mass-produced products, which enable us to distribute so many useful products for our living to all of our millions of people, we evolve around us a background of simplicity, and yet, also, of monotony and repetition. Therefore, we have a need for and want objects made by hand crafts about us in our homes. Products made by handcrafts have a personality and a charm which the machine-made products cannot have.[22] ❜

Wright directly linked his advocacy regarding what American homes needed to the handicraft he considered pre-technological, ancient, enduring and emblematic of Southeast Asia: 'We want handmade products from foreign countries but we want them to have the character and the personality of a particular foreign country from which they come'.[23] Wright did not consider importing American standards and material goods to Southeast Asia for the benefit of its people.

❛ We cannot hope to provide Asians with American houses, kitchens, bathrooms, or appliances … But it should not be impossible to teach them … they are more likely to improve their condition within their actual potentialities, rather than concentrating on an unhappy, piece-meal imitation of the United States. (Wright, 1956, p.96) ❜

Instead, their 'actual potentialities', according to Wright, included 'Asians' providing Americans with what the latter required: 'the great numbers of skilled handicraftsmen of the Far East can supply a goodly amount of the vast and increasing and eternal need for handicraft products'.[24] Wright flexed his authority by deciding how handicraft artisans could address the need: 'it is necessary that such products be designed for a world of which the Asian handicraftsman has little knowledge or understanding'.[25]

In addition to setting up cooperatives and training to help artisans create objects that Americans desired, in other ways Wright and his staff adapted Southeast Asian handicraft and connotations of the 'orient' to contemporary American 'times' and interests in hand-made things. For example, Wright combined modern American materials and 'oriental' cultural forms and orientations to space. Consequently, Giurgola and Mitarachi designed an 'oriental bazaar' using white

19   Box 38, *Wright Papers*.
20   Box 38, *Wright Papers*.
21   Box 38, *Wright Papers*.
22   Box 38, *Wright Papers*.
23   Box 38, *Wright Papers*.
24   Box 38, *Wright Papers*.
25   Box 38, *Wright Papers*.

vinyl strips and scaffolding. Therein, handicraft alluded to 'an oriental trading place' by dint of its horizontal organization– 'the predominantly horizontal spirit of an oriental trading place without being literal' and additional features, for instance, 'objects [were] suspended and arranged with some freedom but without the random clutter of the conventional bazaar' (Fleishman, 1956, p.72). Furthermore, the space accommodated handicrafts not only from Vietnam but also Cambodia, Thailand, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Organizationally, it was 'divided visually with a single bold color as background for each of the five nations, and with mats and fabrics hung on the frames and partitions' (Fleishman, 1956, p.72).

Also, Wright mentioned adjusting Southeast Asian handicraft to American tastes when he described that in Southeast Asia, he and his colleagues 'found an abundance of handicraft labour of the type almost extant in the USA, and many native products which can be adapted by design for American use'.[26] Wright modelled how to familiarise Americans with Asian culture when, during the same year that he had organised the Southeast Asia Rehabilitation and Trade Development Exhibit for the Coliseum, he designed a new collection of American home furnishing items. 'Esquire', which Wright created for the Edwin M. Knowles China Company, consisted of 'five patterns, one plain antique white and the others with stylized natural themes somewhat oriental in flavor'.[27] Objects that Wright displayed at the United States World Trade Fair held at the Coliseum during May 1958 exemplified additional possibilities of adaptations. 'When asked if he plans to use pure native design, Mr. Wright says, "I'm adapting designs all over the place"' (Hoffman, 1958, p.15). Since 1956, he adapted existing garments like hats and clothing by adding decoration and changing their use from labour to fashion, thus generating a 'Siamese straw hat adapted for American use and a Siamese scarf brought back to this country by Josef Walker, noted fashion designer and stylist' along with a 'Vietnamese native straw hat embroidered on the underside'.[28]

The greatest example of Wright's adaptations was Giurgola's and Mitarachi's two white plastic tents constituting a 'bazaar in the coliseum'. They calibrated the sleek white plasticity commensurate with the modern international design style of corporate Manhattan, to evoke Southeast Asia as the 'orient', a place, time and culture the U.S. State Department endeavoured to aid by establishing diplomatically

structured, economic pathways. Importantly, the pavilion normalised the Cold War in Southeast Asia based on what it omitted - visual representations portraying the actual places where the handicrafts were made, such as the refugee centres clotting the terrain in south Vietnam. At the time, American mass print media and books, such as Tom Dooley's *Deliver Us From Evil, The Story of Viet Nam's Flight to Freedom* (1960), published black and white photographs highlighting the raw surroundings of refugee tent villages filled with listless women and children signifying broken families and the tremendous human suffering of the resettlement process.

Wright mentioned it in 'Gold Mine in Southeast Asia': 'one has only to see the refugee slums elsewhere in Hong Kong, and the even sadder Vietnam camps, to realize how much remains to be done – among other things to provide employment in crafts and small industries' (p.97). At the same time, however, he maintained a trajectory of Orientalism 'premised upon exteriority, that is, on the fact that the Orientalist, poet or scholar, makes the Orient speak' (Said, 1978, p.22). Wright represented handicraft artisans as if disengaged from their present circumstances, existing outside of Western experiences and expectations concerning history and contemporaneity, and deficient in aspects of their lifestyle in comparison to Americans. From this place Wright tapped into an ostensibly timeless craft tradition that served as a point of entry for artisans into sustained contact with modern America. Accordingly, the United States would benefit when the refugee artisan realised 'that goods created by his own hands are not only useful to him but maybe of economic value in the industrialized world as well'.[29] Conversely, the Americans held, from this perspective Vietnam would profit, too. 'Instead of becoming the helpless victim of industrialization, village crafts, revitalized, could play a minor, perhaps, but active part in a new kind of over-all development' (Wright, 1956, p.96).

Conclusion

As the duties the American State Department contracted from Wright changed, so did the appearance of subsequent exhibitions of the Southeast Asian handicraft he promoted. For the United States World Trade Fair held at the New York Coliseum from 7–17 May, 1958, Wright displayed some items he collected in Southeast Asia during 1956, such as 'a conical-shaped hat worn by Vietnamese women and a basket made by 'Moi' tribes' (Emerson, 1958, p.33) along with new objects the craft workshops in Vietnam produced.

26 Box 38, *Wright Papers*.
27 'Wright Shows his New Designs', *Chicago Tribune*, 2 December 1956, WD.
28 Box 44, *Wright Papers*.

29 Box 38, *Wright Papers*.

The latter ranged from reiterations of historical forms – 'Sculpture from the Bien Hòa Cooperative School of Ceramics outside Saigon will include bronze figures reproduced from the Khmer period' (Emerson, 1958, p.33) – to a lacquered screen created by the contemporary artist, Thanh Le. Interestingly, for an audience including 'both commercial buyers and the general public on designated days' (Jones, 1958, p.1), Wright put aside references to an oriental bazaar for modernist grid scaffolding.

Something else changed. Instead of finding handicraft makers in Southeast Asia he focused on getting their products to American consumers more directly. Meanwhile, the American press paid less attention to the artisans' situation and more to Wright's status, often emphasizing his knowledge not simply about 'the Orient' but specifically about Vietnam. For example, for the fall of 1958, Wright organised an exhibition of 'art objects and handcrafts from Vietnam' for purchase that would circulate to twelve major U.S. cities, beginning with W&J Sloane in New York. Accordingly, the press emphasised that the exhibition of 'art objects and handcrafts from Vietnam' was 'selected and coordinated by Russel Wright, industrial designer. A man with a great affinity for the Orient, Mr. Wright has been associated with Vietnam since 1956'.[30] For his part, instead of referencing the items' origins in a place, way of life or people, Wright renarrated handicraft as representative of Vietnam the nation's character – 'They represent some of the beauty of Vietnamese culture …', although he did maintain its difference from American culture by pointing out 'its exotic character'.[31] Still, he did not foreground the place and time from whence the objects came or stress their fine art status. He cautioned: 'This is not a 'museum' exhibit.[32] Instead, Wright concentrated on the items' availability to middle class consumers: 'The pieces are for sale or are samples from which orders may be given'.[33] 'All articles at this exhibit can be ordered for delivery in three months. Some lacquer screens and paintings can be bought immediately'.[34]

The manner in which Wright represented handicrafts and their corresponding significance for Americans had shifted from emphasizing their belonging to the 'orient' and having the potential to enrich American lifestyles and homes, to their status as an index of Wright's authority as an expert and tastemaker for American middle class consumers. Corresponding changes in settings, from pavilions connoting an 'oriental bazaar' to a modernist installation circulating among urban anchor department stores, tell us that domesticating Vietnam was a process of change arcing from promoting the foreignness of its culture to adapting its differences to the needs and desires of American consumers and finally, bringing wonderful objects to Americans via their familiar department stores, which urged them to think not of Vietnamese homes and places but of their own. Changes in Wright's treatment of handicraft correlate with a shift in State Department concerns about the politics of a region and related refugee crises in the context of Vietnam's post-colonial status and the Cold War, towards a horizon of possibilities for American trade and business and the necessity of completing the task of shepherding a specific nation, Vietnam, into the American circle of political allies and trade partners and into the American middle class home.

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PAVILIONING MANCHESTER: BOUNDARIES OF THE LOCAL, NATIONAL AND GLOBAL AT THE ASIA TRIENNIAL

Beccy Kennedy

Responding specifically to the Asia Triennial Manchester (established in 2008), this article locates the triennial's title theme of 'Asia' within the historical and cultural locale of the city of Manchester, and considers the conceptualisation of categories such as exhibition, festival, pavilion, city and continent, and divisions of 'east' and 'west' within this cultural landscape. It offers some alternative approaches to the presentation of so-called global artworks in the local spaces of galleries and pavilions, evaluating the international tri/biennial in relation to market forces and notions of nationhood and authorship. Two case studies – the Asia Triennial Manchester of 2008 and 2011 – highlight processes of categorisation and the difficulties these present for participating artists, explored from the perspective of the author's own involvement as an academic and curator. The article compares approaches taken by curators at other such art events in Istanbul, Gwangju and Singapore, in order to interrogate the place of such large scale festivals within global cities, and to consider how to represent art from different nations, with or without using pavilions. Finally, suggestions are made as to how this background of analysis may assist in envisioning the potential creative format for Asia Triennial Manchester 2014.

Key Words: pavilion, biennial, global, local, space, city, identity, boundaries, periphery.

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Abstract

Responding specifically to the Asia Triennial Manchester (established in 2008), this article locates the triennial's title theme of 'Asia' within the historical and cultural locale of the city of Manchester, and considers the conceptualisation of categories such as exhibition, festival, pavilion, city and continent, and divisions of 'east' and 'west' within this cultural landscape. It offers some alternative approaches to the presentation of so-called global artworks in the local spaces of galleries and pavilions, evaluating the international tri/biennial in relation to market forces and notions of nationhood and authorship. Two case studies – the Asia Triennial Manchester of 2008 and 2011 – highlight processes of categorisation and the difficulties these present for participating artists, explored from the perspective of the author's own involvement as an academic and curator. The article compares approaches taken by curators at other such art events in Istanbul, Gwangju and Singapore, in order to interrogate the place of such large scale festivals within global cities, and to consider how to represent art from different nations, with or without using pavilions. Finally, suggestions are made as to how this background of analysis may assist in envisioning the potential creative format for Asia Triennial Manchester 2014.

Introduction

It is not always clear what a biennial is for. Aside from questions of whether the artworks at biennials are there to enhance public engagement with the arts, or to showcase the talents of curators and artists, there is the more specific issue of what each biennial offers within a wider global pattern of frequently staged art festivals on an increasingly large and elaborate scale. There is the scope to stop and ask what each biennial does for and of itself, in an otherwise global system of deferred biennials. In relation to the (arguably, associated) Lacanian and Derridean implications of 'the lack' (*le manqué*) (1961) and of *différance* (1968), the biennial can be encapsulated by such notions of deferred desires and differences. The biennial – a

reoccurring phenomenon – is never over as it either plods on regardless from edition to edition – or discontinues, making way for another to crop up somewhere else on the planet, creating both a display of differentiation and a throwaway deferral of cultural provisioning. To reflect on a defunct biennial seems lacking, its meaning 'deferred' because by the time one tries to decode its essence, it is in the past: no longer entertained as a cultural experience and devoid of its characteristic of self-contingency. It is perhaps more useful for biennial studies to focus on those biennials which are current, utilising the time available within the intersection of a past and a future edition and considering the one feature which does make each biennial different – their location. However, art biennials tend to be similar in their self-positioning as simultaneously global and local cultural affairs, as synchronically 'glocal,' by appealing ideologically (though not necessarily politically) to a globalised audience and to globalised, neoliberal (art) market demands, whilst locating themselves physically to a single locale. Seen in this way, we may ask, if each event is effectively global, yet located within a specific locale, how is one glocale different or more appealing than another?

The same question may be posed of the space of the urban art gallery, of how one cultural institution in a given city claims to offer to relate distinctively to

Figure 9.1: Photograph of poster installation for Taipei Biennial 2008 by Jun Yang, installed at 'Institution for the Future,' exhibition at Chinese Arts Centre for Asia Triennial Manchester 2011.

its public, potentially signalling elements of regional identity. For example, a gallery that is a 'white cube' and which stages contemporary exhibitions may differ from a smaller, independent and low-budget exhibition space, yet both offer contemporary displays that are roughly similar when compared to city galleries with Victorian roots and long established British or Dutch landscape collections. In the latter case, even though such galleries do not hold collections of works that are specific to the local region, they are not subject to the same pressures as a biennial programme when extending the promise to engage with the local. They are pressures that are ultimately about the authority of art festivals and their validity *as* art spaces, when compared to more established, institutionalised ones.

These predicaments for contexts of contemporary art are felt especially acutely outside the Northern metropoles with their traditions of public art collections and displays. Significant biennials have emerged over the last thirty years or so, that mark out novel territory for contemporary art and its international audiences, with the declared purpose of disconnecting from European museological traditions that emerged in the nineteenth century. In terms of visitor expectations of contemporary biennials, it is assumed that the Luanda Triennial in Angola, for example, is all about the locale of Luanda, as well as perhaps the nation of Angola, bringing to the fore its social, historical and cultural identities. The same seems true of the Venice Biennial in being about Venice, in the sense of underlining the importance of the city as a frequent and capacious host for dozens of national pavilions, Angola not least among them. But their circumstances set them apart. There is a general assumption that a triennial in Angola will figure the matter of local uniqueness differently from Venice, with the element of geography coming to shape displays designed to repay the interest of visitors travelling to a perceivably remote, even 'provincial' setting. For Venice, it is because the display is so 'mega' and momentous, so internationally embedded – and also so close to other attractions in Europe – that visitors will cross the globe to experience it. No matter then that the imperialist ontology of the national pavilions at Venice has become the focus of intense critical scrutiny: its footfall remains high as a tourist attraction.

The crux of the matter is that a biennial – as a creative industry – is often large enough to be visited in itself – unlike a single gallery, but it is also more one-dimensional than a city – specific in purpose, structure and *raison d'être*. It is a suspended tourist destination, a transitional art space and one which is both located and translocational; its creative vision may be transnational but it is still tied physically to a nation. Visitors want a biennial in Australia to be different from one in Brazil because they believe the world is diverse and they are willing to pay to travel and experience it. Such diversity can be found at the national pavilions of Venice or at a triennial in Angola whose purpose is 'to reflect Angolan history', (on the Luanda Triennial see: Biennialfoundation.org), but the two festivals are barely interchangeable.

The growing attraction of the biennial as a phenomenon can be interpreted as significant for its successful branding. But with a large scale exhibition which is both international and reoccurring, its identity also rests on its creative vision and its thematic value, at least for those visitors who are not simply tourists but for those who visit biennials because they work in the arts, keep personal collections of art, or are leisured 'biennial fans'. The theme navigates what the biennial is for, whether it is to challenge boundaries of art's purpose and to encounter its potential as a mobilising political force – as in the case of the last Istanbul Biennial – or to celebrate notions of a city, nation or continent, such as those 'Asian' art biennials (for example, Art Asia Pacific in Australia) or the Havana Biennial with its goal to grant a platform to art of the 'Third World.' The theme and the branding of the biennial intersect in a way which is under scrutiny by the rest of the art world with each precarious new addition. It has to stand for something worthwhile and desirable but also for something unique; the rationale for visitors to travel anywhere other than to the Venice Biennial, with its eighty-odd national pavilions, in order to see international contemporary art. The specific theme of a biennial provides a proactive focus for the selection of artists, curators and artworks whilst encouraging a dialogue for their expanded field of analysis. Sometimes, however, the general title of a biennial and its bi-annual (or tri-annual) theme become blurred or interchangeable.

This article interrogates the theme of 'Asia' as a qualifier for the identity of the Asia Triennial Manchester (first staged in 2008), by orienting and 'disorienting' it in relation to this debate about the identities of art biennials. Biennials are notable for their continuing, rapid expansion around the world, a phenomenon referred to as biennialisation, and which is addressed here through the prism of first-hand experience of its impact in Manchester. The paper examines the triennial's overriding focus on the city of Manchester, suggesting that this aspect of the naming and staging of the triennial is rather less problematic and certainly more opportune than any reference to 'Asia'. Indeed, it is arguable, in light of the newer city-

focused, unofficial pavilions at the Venice Biennial – such as the Peckham Pavilion – this sort of emphasis on regional characteristics can be deemed constructive as a way of seeing cultural difference at biennials. In my comparison of the 2008 and 2011 instantiations of the Asia Triennial Manchester, I examine the nation-specificity of the first triennial, juxtaposed with the more collective 'Asian' approach of the second, suggesting that the former equates, problematically, to the national pavilion construct whilst the latter could be construed as mistreating 'Asia' as a nation. Within the case studies of the Asia Triennial Manchester, the practical and theoretical problems involved in the curating of such 'global' art events can be highlighted, and one can suggest more localised creative methods, which could work to counter some of the difficulties surrounding the triennial's labelling and concomitant orientation.

The genesis of Asia Triennial Manchester: Protesting histories, re-orienting Asia

Manchester's first art triennial – Asia Triennial Manchester – was launched in 2008, a project whose germination and subsequent support arose from discussions between Alnoor Mitha, director of the Manchester-based arts agency, Shisha (2001–12), and the artist, musician and academic, Professor John Hyatt based at Manchester Metropolitan University. The discussions reflected wider interests in Manchester's local and global history as a dominant industrial city, whose former colonial endeavours had involved the monopolisation of raw materials (such as cotton and indigo) for trading on the growing world market and the large-scale exploitation of a labour force in the Indian sub-continent. The critical issues around that historical relationship between imperial Britain and India have frequently focused on Manchester. They were given symbolic momentum on the occasion of Gandhi's visit to the Lancashire textile factories in 1931 while campaigning for Indian liberation. After 1945, during decolonisation, the movement of communities within the Commonwealth came to establish an Asian diaspora in Britain that has continued to impact on Manchester. At a local level, Manchester's communities of Asian descent have long been integral to the city's industries and social landscape, noticeable to visitors of the 'curry mile' in Rusholme or its China town. The arts organisation Shisha, under the terms of its public funding by the (then) North West Arts Board (see Mitha, 2007), aimed to make this presence more visible in the visual arts, pursuing a specific dual aim to develop the careers of artists of South Asian descent while drawing the participation of Asian British

communities to the field of contemporary art. A complement for this work may be found in the Chinese Arts Centre, the UK's largest such organisation, as well as the development of new curricula and research focused on Asia in Manchester's universities.

John Hyatt's priority was to explore how Manchester's global, industrial history interconnected with parts of Asia, and what correlations may be drawn between the art histories of these locations and deeper colonial legacies of empire and trade. It was agreed that the first triennial, in 2008, would focus on the theme of 'protest' because this could be mapped both locally and globally onto instances of cultural or artistic resistance in relation to forms of modern, industrial or post-industrial urban structures. Additionally, Hyatt addressed the word in terms of its etymological construction, suggesting that the two syllables can be divided to form two interrelated words: pro and test, referring to test or testing and experimentation. Thus, protest, in this sense, came to mean *for experimentation*, connecting the theme appropriately, again, to a more abstract one about cultural innovation.

Further, as the discussions around the Asia Triennial took off, among curators and arts organisers, the localisation of the term protest became more entrenched, used to frame Manchester as a locus of both invention and subversion. It seemed to highlight two apparently oppositional faces of the city: its capacity for being productive materially and technologically, while rebellious and iconoclastic – whether in the associations around 'Madchester' and its cultural creativity (the independent popular music scene of the last century), or the organised struggles of working people in the city, its suffragists and Chartists, and the events of the 1819 anti-poverty protests which became known historically as the Peterloo Massacre (see http://www.peterloomassacre.org for a dedicated website).

A systematic account of these strands of meaning was given at Asia Triennial Manchester 2008's accompanying symposium, 'Protest: reflections and revolutions' (April 2008), attended widely by the festival's artists and curators, as well as academics Gilane Tawadros, Leon Wainwright and Jacques Rangasamy. The theme of protest was interrogated at length with regard to issues of place and identity. The underlying discussion on Asian art and in relation to the triennial's theme, was a sense that protest may be explored through cultural politics in the field of fine art, highlighting postcolonial and other oppositional practices in which artists from Asia have claimed equal status to their counterparts in the former metropolitan centres of the 'global North'. Moreover, these debates

themselves came under scrutiny for their apparent endorsement of the dichotomous basis for all such east and west divisions and attempts to describe their inequalities – a renegotiation of the terms of the festival that served to underscore the value of its founding theme.

This mode of public discussion continued in a dedicated space at the second Triennial in October 2011. A curatorial 'laboratory' was set up for artists, curators and academics who were invited to an informal exchange, sharing their perceptions of the festival through break-out groups and round-circle discussion. Questions were asked about the overall purpose and usefulness of the chosen theme of the Triennial – which was 'time and generation' for the 2011 edition - as well as the Asia label itself, as well as some of the tactics that had been used to market triennial events. Artists from parts of East Asia – namely Cambodia, Indonesia and Vietnam – who had contributed to the exhibition *Institution for the Future* at the Chinese Art Centre (Figure 9.1), questioned the wisdom of including at the ATM11 opening event a performance of live dance by Devika Mao at the John Rylands library. For them, the opening ceremony was crucial for introducing the Triennial event effectively and encapsulating its theme. Mao's performance, however, was a classical Indian dance ceremony, in line with the venue's exhibition *Thought Mala*. A complaint emerged that the dance itself was hardly representative of the festival as a whole, with its emphasis on contemporary visual art practice and its critical problematizing of expectations surrounding art in and of Asia, rather than classicism or indeed forms of dance. The presentation tempted a latter-day 'orientalism', it was argued, and frustrated the larger efforts of curators and artists who contributed to a festival that they hoped would signal a deliberate departure from pan-Asian spectacle and neo-primitivist taste. Although this led to articulations about the need to continually reaffirm the Triennial's more progressive foundations, there was also a sense of scepticism that a festival focused so firmly on Asia would be able to overcome the reactionary ways in which race, nationality and ethnicity has been represented in the arts in British museums. Issues, here, surrounding misrepresentation and pigeonholing were outlined in addition to concerns surrounding notions of 'inclusivity' in terms of the 'proportionality' of BME identities in the Britain – a criticised perspective which was formerly endorsed by the Thatcher government (Dewdney et al, 2013, p.201). In terms of the latter perspective, Asia Triennial Manchester came at these issues from a different place. Shisha formed during the time of the New Labour government and in response

to the *'No Difference! No Future!'* report commissioned by the aforementioned North West Arts Board (NWAB) in 1998 (Mitha, 2007, AAA). The report encouraged the diversification of cultural practices in mainstream museums through the establishment of smaller, vanguard agencies – such as Shisha – which could advise and direct tailored programmes of events focusing on the representation of BME identities. Indeed, this intention was realised within the ATM programme as Manchester galleries responded to Shisha's directorship and their focus on South Asian art.

Some of the academics present at the discussion, however, contended that a triennial cannot or should not define itself by the provenance of its artworks, and that the really powerful works would override expectations and stereotypes about the national or continental labelling that was involved in the Triennial programme, pointing perhaps to more differentiated identities. It was conceded that nonetheless the discomfort that many participating artists had felt about being associated with one another under the 'Asia' label, spoke directly to their own positions and identifications. It was further argued that aside from questions of a perceivable latter-day orientalism there are also more practical, etymological problems with these systems of categorization. The term 'Asia' is reductionist to the point where, after even the lightest of debriefings, it hardly works as a qualifier for a festival of artworks. There are over fifty countries in Asia, spanning from Afghanistan to Yemen, including all predominant organised religions, touching multiple seas, embodying countless trade routes and carrying myriad histories of empire. Running synchronically, yet somewhat dialectically in relation to such brute facts, are interpretations of what Asia constitutes as an imagined concept, or as a theme. From the perspective of a European culture maker, Asia represents something significant in that it is an alternative to Europe – which itself is a multiplex concept or site – but whose own convolution is not questioned because it is the beholder of the discourse. The continued mega presence of the Venice Biennial as a must-see art event, which scatters national pavilions of non-Western art throughout its city, does little to disrupt the core/periphery discourse as the pavilions were founded on late nineteenth century colonial fascinations for the anthropological exposition and the world fair. What is significant is the lack of reflexivity concerning what constitutes the 'self'. If a city in Europe is to hold a triennial of art from Asia, then where or what is Europe and who is Europe to make this decision? Venice disregards the potential 'official' status of its non-nation specific pavilions, such as the Internet Pavilion, the

Roma Pavilion and the Peckham Pavilion (the Palestine Pavilion of 2013 is also contentious here) and this does not help to appease its imperialistic 'cause'. Fresher, de-centred ways of representing art from different nations can perhaps be found in smaller, low-cost biennials which do not parade national pavilions.

To pavilion or not to pavilion? Selecting nations, displaying nations

The Asia Triennial Manchester 2008 worked on a smaller scale than its second manifestation in 2011, involving fewer venues and with fewer Asian countries 'covered'. As a pioneering Manchester arts event, the focus for this first instalment seemed to approach and embrace the notion of Asia literally, as a continent containing countries which would be worthwhile to 'explore' in a specifically Mancunian setting. Each gallery involved in the triennial cohort decided at an early stage to select artists from an Asian nation, agreeing that different nations should be covered by each space. This created what could critically be described as a pick-'n'-mix of Asian national exhibitions displaying across Manchester's galleries. As someone who was party to early discussions of the organisation of Asia Triennial Manchester, I do not recall the possibility of pavilions being entertained to represent different Asian nations. By pavilion I apply the etymological origins of the term and its subsequent cultural usage to refer to a kind of free standing structure – tent-like or more solid – with the (usually temporary) purpose of containing and conveying desirable aspects of culture, in this case, artworks. ATM's lack of consideration for the use of pavilions could be due to the relatively low gross budget of the triennial and its disassociation as a brand from more traditional and/or jumbo style biennials. More positively, there may have been a perception that by virtue of having a small-scale triennial in Britain committed to representing Asia, the Manchester Asia triennial became a pavilion in itself; a non-aligned festival, positioned ambiguously in relation to larger biennials in Europe (not least nearby Liverpool), that forged an independent reputation by looking to Asia. Much of the Triennial's self-perception rested on this matter of scale and geography. The prospect of installing a range of discrete pavilions in Manchester for the purpose of representing Asian nations was regarded dimly: Asia seemed both a definable context in itself and yet more than enough to reckon with for a regional city outside London. Finally, the pavilions format seemed obtuse since curators felt able to persuade the Triennial's audiences of the purpose for a critical, post-colonial reading of Asia *as* a nation. The danger is that some audiences may begin to *just* view Asia *as* a nation

through the Asia Triennial format *because* of the lack of signalling towards different nations.

However, despite the absence of self-defined national pavilions, the resulting segregation of participating artists by country at the Asia Triennial Manchester in 2008 was nonetheless, in effect, a reiteration of the arrangement of pavilions in a more established art festival. This is testament to the influence of the pavilions format, but it also suggests that the reformulation of that pattern through the Asia Triennial Manchester in 2011 provided a critical opportunity to review and problematise the frequent pattern in the larger biennials of staging national pavilions. It showed up what must come to stand as the serious failings of pavilion structured art festivals in general. Firstly, that they determine a physical sense of fragmentation and disconnectedness which ciphers an aura of incoherency and non-communication between nations as global actors. This was felt in Manchester when the first ATM struggled to overcome the disjointedness between partner galleries in the city and their difficulties of marshalling their curatorial and institutional priorities other than through a formal directorial role which no-one individual was prepared to assume, perhaps for fear of forming a hierarchical organisational structure. Secondly, by designating a particular space to the artworks of a particular nation, a scattering of pavilions seems to connote nation-ness, implying that each nation offers a distinct form of art which is so unique and differentiated from the next that it merits exposition or even exploitation. This was a scene of 'culturalism' that the Asia Triennial Manchester negotiated, such as in the expectation that there would be discernible 'Indian' qualities as compared to 'Chinese' or 'Mongolian' ones that translated into different media or examples of national cultural 'character' – a reiteration of Orientalism under local conditions and pressures for curatorial 'coherence'. Ultimately, it was felt in Manchester that such conventions for organising international artworks fail to explore contemporaneity or fluidity within exhibitory practices and models of curating, even within the framework of a themed art festival. Such unease suggests that the closer a given art biennial becomes to the methods of organisation typified in Venice's pavilion model, the more culturally and critically unreceptive they may seem.

Accordingly, at the first Asia Triennial Manchester, one of the display spaces – Castlefield Gallery – broke the nation-space mould, inviting artist groups from Singapore and Taiwan (the groups known as *Channel_A* and *p-10*) into their exhibition space and programme. Not only did these artists collaborate on the staging

of several mini symposia (one of which was open to the public), within these 'happenings' the focus was an active discussion of the global/local issue, using paper and bamboo scaffolding to write down ideas, thus forming physical artworks within the gallery and generating a continuous element of socially engaged discourse for the course of the exhibition. Within this format, artists, curators and members of the public were able to respond to the triennial's positioning – and their own location - in the context of globalisation and glocalisation. The artworks and discussions worked to contest subtly and positively the nation per venue model. In other ways, the national representation model was circumvented altogether. There was some regionally focused rhetoric surrounding some of the Asian nations represented at specific sites. Shisha – as an agency for South Asian art – were always keen to work with artists from Pakistan, Bangladesh and India. Shisha and Whitworth Art Gallery chose to work with Asian artists whom they felt to be connected with the theme of protest, or whose art would work effectively and strategically in the gallery or community spaces. Examples of this include Rashid Rana's site specific work at Rusholme job centre and Subodh Gupta's *27 Light Years* (Figure 9.2), both of which were responses to the sights, sounds and people of the local area, largely of South Asian backgrounds. Gupta's large, shiny, rocket shaped sculpture was comprised of the kind of metal kitchenware you would find in a contemporary Asian British-run restaurant, whilst the positioning of the installation outside the gallery literally pointed the way towards Rusholme – the head of the rocket suggested it would fly in that direction. This part of the triennial was called the Rusholme Project and served to launch the event in 2007, coinciding with the then better-known Manchester International Festival. It drew on the theme of Asia without fetishism. There was no suggestion here of a distinct, oriental Other; it explored the relationship between Asia and Manchester as a cohesive entity, signalling forms of glocalisation within the region.

With the second triennial, the notion of Asia – and to some extent its application to a nation – was treated less literally as an automatic qualifier for the presence of an artwork for each corresponding venue. This may have been, in part, because with the greater number of venues involved there were fewer concerns of Asian national replication and so the focus moved away from the representation of artists from Asian nations to the representation of artists per se. Additionally, it would seem that discussions resulting from the curatorial laboratories that took place in 2010 and early 2011, as well as other feedback from

audience monitoring forms per venue, had changed the perspectives and prerogatives of the venues' curators concerning how to broach the triennial's 2011 brief. Considerations of nationhood and contestations of the linguistic and geographical – as well, at times, as geopolitical – divisions of the globe into continents were not taken for granted by curators. In some cases the dynamics of these concerns were explored within the exhibitions themselves and in discussion with the artists, as, for example, at the Chinese Arts Centre, Castlefield Gallery and Madlab shows which explored issues of immigration (Figure 9.3) , the biennial project (Figure 9.1) or divided territory and exile (Figure 9.4). In other cases, artworks were less political and were identified discreetly – or not – with artists from Asian nations. The variety and quality of the planned installations (typically site-specific), and the sorts of

Figure 9.2: Photograph of sculpture at Whitworth Art Gallery by Subodh Gupta, '27 Light Years', for Asia Triennial 2008.

Figure 9.3: Photograph of ticket machine in entrance to Castlefield Exhibition – 'Life in the UK', part of Asia Triennial Manchester 2011.

unusual venues to be used (including the observatory complex at Jodrell Bank and Manchester Cathedral), as well, perhaps, as the collaborations among curators that emerged, were almost enough to somewhat distract – or even seduce – audiences from earlier questions about Asia and triennial's identity altogether. Arguably, the centrality of the Triennial's theme became secondary to the artistic content, though this did not necessarily redress the problem.

The Asia Triennial that finally emerged in Manchester in 2011 was fascinating for showing that an art festival organised by way of pavilions is most appealing when contingent on the localisation that can be made of that format. In Manchester, it was a pattern that was tried and found to be lacking, but could not be entirely rejected: without a nationally focused art festival echoing the use of pavilions in other international expositions, the public chose to focus on ideas about the Asian-ness of the event's artworks which would risk the generalisation of national identities under the heading of a single, continental identity. Some

Figure 9.4: Photograph of digital installation by Seo Hyo Jung, 'Two Koreas by Word and Image,' exhibition at Madlab for Asia Triennial Manchester 2011.

creative yet nuanced responses had then to be found in order to effectively 'cover-up' the Asian dimension since it could not be conveyed openly also without the prospect of associated stereotypes. This path of development is no doubt distinctive and grounded in the sort of historical and institutional circumstances that I have been describing for Manchester. If similar difficulties have affected Venice in its recent past, they have yet to break the surface and become apparent in a change to its established routine. Instead, criticisms have remained external to its unmatched structure. Underwritten by suppositions of nation-ness, it has yet to take away its pavilions and opt to display works from international artists together in large exhibition spaces – as at the recent Liverpool or Gwangju Biennials, which have escaped criticism about any such colonial categorisation.

The Asia Triennial Manchester evidently has little of these options available to it; it may always be saddled with the role of exploring and negotiating the matter of how to define art in and of Asia, since the weighty matter of categorisation will persist for as long as it keeps its name. If it is to maintain that focus on art and Asia then simultaneously there is a need to come to terms more fully with what is involved in presenting and encountering art *in* Manchester, in a more deliberate aim at understanding the relationship between the two. Rather than designating its art spaces to Asian nations – whether labelled as pavilions or galleries – or by otherwise clouding artists' national identities, the festival seems to be at a stage of needing to critically articulate its locality – Manchester – making this exterior to its public offer. As a set of complex practices which I have only sketched here, the localisation of the festival is constitutive to its cultural value and in defining its connections to Asia. The question now is how may the Asia Triennial Manchester come to reckon with the contradictions faced when standing as a pavilion of sorts in a world of biennials?

Towards ATM14: Disorienting divisions and flexing reflexivity
In some ways, the ontologically heterogeneous nature of the art biennial – or festival - and its capacity for scattered micro cultural governance provides the scope for representations of nations within it to be fluid and flexible. However, if a biennial's prime concern is to generate touristic revenue for its host city, then it may not want to advocate the inclusion of artists who challenge preconceptions of what art is or of how it relates to perceptions of local and global identities. As discussed above, Shisha encouraged curators and artists to explore issues of national and continental identity

– although particularly in the second Asia Triennial Manchester, 2011. At the same time, Shisha's original aims were not opposed to showcasing Manchester as an international cultural city, whose own Asian history could work to 'celebrate and create high-profile and accessible representations of Asian culture', whilst describing Manchester as 'one of the UK's largest thriving multi-cultural communities' (Shisha, 2006) In this way, the triennial could claim multiple grounds for its identity, including its position already as a global city but also its relevance to the theme of Asia in a glocal community sense.

Even so, the 'Asian' communities in Greater Manchester, many of which consist of at least second-generation migrants, do not necessarily identify themselves as Asian, nor crave the spectacle of artworks which seek to explore or convey ancestral connections. Also, often, people do yearn to see art which is in some way different to their own, everyday experiences. One solution to the complexity of countering the balance between local and global interpretations of 'Asia' is to provide the opportunity for local artists with a connection to Asia – ancestral or otherwise – to partake in the triennial. This was raised by students at a session on Asian Diasporas on the course 'An Introduction to Asian Art,' which was held at Cornerhouse in association with the Asia Triennial 2008. It would seem that if an art biennial is to be focused thematically on the subject of Asia, then it is constructive to address the concept of Asia in a way which is broad and intercultural, whilst embracing a position of self-awareness or activist reflexivity which can also be transferred in terms of the associated artistic endeavours. It means incorporating artists from Asian diasporas who want to be involved, whether they categorically refer to themselves as Asian diasporic or not. It also means including site specific artworks, such as those in The Rusholme Project, which explore a sense of the glocal and not just in terms of the locale's global, industrial history as a city but also in relation to the wider impact of this glocal character today - including other forms of global movement in a post-colonial world. Whilst both editions of the Asia Triennial Manchester have been open to interpretations of what Asia might constitute as a theme, the second triennial purposefully created the space for a dialogue concerning the difficulties and possibilities for a British festival of Asian art.

At the curatorial laboratory, it was suggested that the title of the triennial should also be open to negotiation. The answer to Asia Triennial Manchester's problematic Asian*ism* could be to encourage participation in the event from all continents. However,

the theme of the triennial would then no longer be geographically or ethnically engaged and the internationalised identity of the event would simply be implicit. The name would need to change – perhaps just to the Manchester Triennial – and the themes which are specific to each edition would navigate and anchor the direction of the curatorship. This would, of course, involve a re-branding and re-marketing of the event and there would be a danger that it would lose its legacy. Another option is to keep the title of the festival as the Asia Triennial Manchester, but to reformulate the organisation and locatedness of the event, disorienting and reorienting the structure both from the bottom-up and the top down. This could involve encouraging the participation of co-organisers and co-curators who are themselves situated in parts of Asia as well, perhaps, as arranging an overall twinning with an Asian city whose organisers could then change the last part of the title to include the city's name. The two cities, one European and one Asian, could then encourage a two way dialogue surrounding notions of city, state and continent in relation to cultural identities and the art world.

The accompanying events, such as symposiums, could also be held in multiple or dual locations, with the possibility of including tele-conferencing or the involvement of European and Asian speakers and publishers. In touristic terms, 'package deals,' could be arranged with – for example – sponsoring airline or travel agencies to encourage movement between the two cities, a little like the Singapore–Gwangju–Shanghai package offer in 2006. Whilst this would require organisation to take place on a larger (international) scale, it could also work to downsize and to broaden some parts of the administrative and decision making process. However, from a critical perspective, this could make the structure of the triennial even more like a post-Fordian, neoliberal production process for the 'operation' of what Pascal Gielen (2009) refers to as 'immaterial labour' (similar observations about the neoliberal stance of art biennials have been made by numerous critics, for example, Elkins and Valiavicharska, 2010) Drawing on both senses of the term immaterial in relation to the production of art, Gielen alludes to the decentralisation and dumbing down of the cultural cohort via the production processes of the art biennial, which also involves the presence of larger multinational corporations to provide economic feasibility to the project (such as the aforementioned travel agencies and airline companies.) This would not suit Manchester's – or the triennial's ethos and would only work to exchange narratives of neo-orientalism into neoliberalism.

One of Asia Triennial Manchester's strengths is the closeness and collaborative receptiveness of its cultural cohorts, including those artists and curators who have been involved and who are based outside of Manchester and Europe. The triennial is also receptive to change in a way, perhaps, that the historic Venice Biennial – and its entourage of national pavilions - is not. What would be impressive would be if – like the Istanbul biennial – Asia Triennial Manchester continues to reflect upon its public and ideological purpose whilst twinning with a city in Asia so that the debate concerning what Asia actually constitutes continues in a dialogue which is both reciprocal and expansive. In order to sustain the closeness of the triennial's character, the selected twin host in Asia could be a small urban or rural built environment which does not strive to be a 'global city,' but which values its own locale as a kind of micro-globe – a self-fulfilled pavilion but one which is also open to the endorsement of its facing canopies. Perhaps, moreover, this twin city should be one which – like the organisers in Manchester – does not judge success solely upon the price tag of its budget or its generated income for businesses. If the triennial wants to make a difference to public perceptions of art and culture, it needs to try not only to constructively break down the tired terminological divisions between global and local, east and west or centre and periphery, but also to address the growing awareness and unrest surrounding the concern that one per cent own the economic (and cultural) world and ninety nine per cent are subsumed by it. The biennial is not just subject to such globalised neoliberalism, it actively embodies it. All biennial locales may be glocales but that does not mean that they cannot make it their mission to counter globalisation on some level. Manchester's triennial should expand, not economically or even quantitatively, but ideologically and communicatively, working with reflexive or activist artists and curators and with themes like 'protest' so that it traverses some of the boundaries that previous biennials have created.

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HAITI'S FIRST NATIONAL PAVILION AT THE VENICE BIENNALE: ANACHRONISM OR ILLUMINATING OPPORTUNITY?

Wendy Asquith

A barrage of criticism has been levelled against the Venice Biennale's national pavilion structure in recent decades, chiefly accusing it of anachronism on account of its Western bias. Yet the tide has begun to turn, making much of this criticism sound a little worn-out. As this event increasingly attracts debuting 'non-Western' national exhibitors each year, its pavilion structure is being reassessed. Haiti was one such debutant at the 54th edition of La Biennale di Venezia held in 2011. This article explores in detail the debates raised by Haiti's national pavilion, particularly as they related to the central exhibition theme of ILLUMInations conceived by Bice Curiger, International Art Exhibition Director for 2011. It considers: how the national pavilion structure at the Venice Biennale was challenged, and how wider understanding of it was deepened through Haiti's recent participation; and what Venice's national pavilion structure can offer to a post-colonial nation such as Haiti.

Keywords: pavilion, Haiti, Venice Biennale, nationhood, ILLUMInations, postcolonialism.

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Abstract

A barrage of criticism has been levelled against the Venice Biennale's national pavilion structure in recent decades, chiefly accusing it of anachronism on account of its Western bias. Yet the tide has begun to turn, making much of this criticism sound a little worn-out. As this event increasingly attracts debuting 'non-Western' national exhibitors each year, its pavilion structure is being reassessed. Haiti was one such debutant at the 54th edition of La Biennale di Venezia held in 2011. This article explores in detail the debates raised by Haiti's national pavilion, particularly as they related to the central exhibition theme of ILLUMInations conceived by Bice Curiger, International Art Exhibition Director for 2011. It considers: how the national pavilion structure at the Venice Biennale was challenged, and how wider understanding of it was deepened through Haiti's recent participation; and what Venice's national pavilion structure can offer to a post-colonial nation such as Haiti.

❛ **il.lu.mi.nate** (*transitive verb*)
1 a: to enlighten spiritually or intellectually
  b (1): to supply or brighten with light (2) : to make luminous or shining
  c: *archaic:* to set alight
  d: to subject to radiation
2 a: to make clear: elucidate
  b: to bring to the fore: highlight… ❜

-- Merriam-Webster Dictionary

In 2011, at the 54th La Biennale di Venezia, Haiti was represented for the first time through a temporary, multiple-site national pavilion. National pavilions began to be incorporated as fixed or permanent features within this event's central landscape in 1907, less than ten years after the establishment of the Biennale. In recent decades these permanent pavilions, and the national pavilion structure more broadly, have received wide criticism for being anachronistic elements of an exhibitionary institution that otherwise considers itself a global forum for the celebration of contemporary art. Particularly vociferous among these reproaches

are accusations that the existing structure bears Eurocentric and neo-colonial tendencies, and presents a skewed view of the contemporary art world (see, for example, Baker, 2004, pp.20–25; Pastor Roces, [2005] 2010, pp.50–65).

Despite such criticisms, however, and the prolific rise of alternative exhibition platforms (with and without national components) at the international and global level, the Venice Biennale continues to attract among its debut nations each year a steady stream of mostly non-western exhibitors. Taking as its focus the debuting participation of Haiti at the Venice Biennale, this article explores the Haitian pavilion itself in detail, as well as its relation to the central exhibition and theme of ILLUMI*nations* selected by the 2011 International Art Exhibition Director, Bice Curiger. In doing so, this article considers both the issue of how Haiti's participation challenged the national pavilion structure at the Venice Biennale, and deepened our wider understanding of it; as well as the question of what Venice's national pavilion structure might offer to a post-colonial, 'third-world' nation like Haiti.

The Haitian National Pavilion of 2011

Haiti's national contribution to the 2011 Venice Biennale was an ephemeral dual site pavilion. It consisted of two parallel curatorial projects: *Death and Fertility*, which was housed in two conjoined shipping containers on the Riva dei Sette Martiri; and *Haïti: Royaume de ce Monde (Haiti: Kingdom of this World)*, located on the third-floor galleries of Fondazione Querini Stampalia. At each of these sites, separate organising groups – consisting of a curator, commissioners and a scientific committee – pursued two distinct exhibitionary projects. *Death and Fertility* was a smaller, more thematically focused exhibition that explored how a particular community of artists has meditated on the extremes of life through a recurrent engagement in their work with the Gédé: 'a family of spirits, which in the Vodou religion, embody both death and fertility' (Geminiani, Gordon and Cosentino, 2011, p.21). *Haïti: Royaume de ce Monde*, in contrast, was a touring exhibition (previously displayed in Paris and later in Miami, Martinique and Haiti) organised as a survey of 'contemporary creativity in Haiti', overlaid with a theme inspired by Alejo Carpentier's irresolute retelling of the nation's revolutionary history in his 1949 novel *The Kingdom of this World* ([1957] 2006). This more orthodox site of display along with the exhibition shown in two shipping containers were then tied together to form a national pavilion, bound by a level of joint funding, logistical organisation and an overarching discourse.

As a whole, the dual physicality and transience of the Haitian display subverted the traditional concept of the biennial pavilion as a singular national symbol – a pleasurable piece of historic architecture rooted in one position on the map of La Biennale di Venezia. Contrasting with the fixed, purpose-built pavilions concentrated at the Giardini, Haiti's exhibition sites were characteristic of the wave of more recent 'pop-up pavilions' that every second year come temporarily to occupy all manner of idiosyncratic spaces within the labyrinthine Venetian cityscape. The location of *Haïti: Royaume de ce Monde* – within the rooms of an ancestral *palazzo* that has been converted into a cultural foundation – was fairly typical of the spaces that have come to be used in recent years to host the 'pop-ups' of debuting nations or those that sporadically participate in more permanent Venetian structures. However, the shipping containers used to house the *Death and Fertility* exhibition were much more unique in this regard. Recalling the mobility previously implicit in tents and pavilions, their makeshift appearance underscored more explicitly the fleeting presence of Haiti's national pavilion in 2011, which could be packed up and moved out in a matter of hours.

The exhibition housed in this mobile structure, *Death and Fertility*, was curated by Daniele Geminiani in collaboration with Leah Gordon and presented ten sculptural works by three artists – André Eugène, Celeur Jean Hérard and Jean Claude Saintilus – who form part of the collective *Atis Rezistans*, based in the Grand Rue neighbourhood of Port-au-Prince. Each of these crude, figurative sculptures was fashioned out of recycled ready-mades and then placed within an exhibition space that was itself created from two re-purposed freight containers, positioned perpendicularly to each other to form the shape of a tau cross. When put together the exterior of these rusty, rectangular vessels – having been chosen in red and blue – carried the Haitian national colours, while the interior wall surfaces remained a rough off-white, met by a heavily scuffed floor covering. Inside, the works were installed minimally. At the entrance of the first container visitors were greeted by Saintilus' *Gran Brijit* (2010) [Figures 10.1 and 10.2], while grinning at the far end of the space was Eugène's *Dokto Zozo* (2010). In the second container Hérard's fierce triad, *The Horsemen of the Apocalypse* (2010) faced out onto the lagoon and within each space several smaller sculptural works – a trio of makeshift crucifixes and a trinity of figurative fusions – perched on purpose-built ledges at either side, staring down at passers-by like the many miniature Madonnas crammed into wall-nooks around Venice. As a whole

Figure 10.1: Jean Claude Saintilus, *Gran Brijit*, 2010, mixed media (170 x 70 x70 cm) Haiti's *Death and Fertility* site at the Riva dei Sette Martiri. Venice © Marcus Gora 2011.

Figure 10.2: Jean Claude Saintilus, *Gran Brijit*, 2010, mixed media (170 x 70 x70 cm). Photograph Leah Gordon 2011.

Figure 10.3: Killy aka Patrick Ganthier, *Croix des Bossales*, 2011, mixed media (variable dimensions) shown in *Haïti: Royaume de ce Monde* exhibition site at Fondazione Querini Stampalia. Photograph Conor McGarrigle.

then, this site was a stark intervention on the Venetian waterfront, not far from the Giardini's main entrance.

Meanwhile, away from the wide expanse at the edge of the lagoon, almost a mile in the opposite direction, was the second site for the Haitian pavilion. Curated by Giscard Bouchotte, *Haïti: Royaume de ce Monde* presented a survey of contemporary Haitian visual art. This sculptural, installation, painting, photographic, mixed media and multimedia work was displayed within the much more conventional gallery setting of the Palazzo Querini Stampalia's third floor exhibition space.[1] The eighteen artists represented were: Sergine André, Élodie Barthélemy, Mario Benjamin, Jean Hérard Céleur, Maksaens Denis, Edouard Duval-Carrié, André Eugène, Frankétienne, Guyodo, Sébastien Jean, Killy, Tessa Mars, Pascale Monnin, Paskö, Barbara Prézeau, Michelange Quay, Roberto Stephenson and Hervé Télémaque. A number of figurative sculptures – a cluster of small relic-like works, tall totemic creations, and a brightly buffed wheelchair with a reclining occupant all formed from the refashioning of salvaged

materials – by Hérard, Eugène and another founding member of the *Atis Rezistans* group, Guyodo, appeared within this pavilion site also. Additionally, there was a number of mixed media installations featured, such as Sergine André's fluorescent *Gédé Gateway no.3* (2011). Killy aka Patrick Ganthier's *Croix des Bossales* (2011) included a fleet of delicately constructed, brightly coloured boats, each containing the depiction of a different face and an enigmatic symbol. Pointing toward the viewer these seemed to offer an escape from the rest of the installation's zombie-like portraits and funereal furniture (Figure 10.3).

In another room, video works by Quay and Prézeau sat alongside a digitally printed work by Denis (an explosion of colour from which a figure begins to emerge), and the eerily empty photographic series of tent-camp dwellings by Stephenson, entitled *Haiti, The Earthquake City* (2010). Hung periodically throughout the display were a number of two-dimensional pieces, including Duval-Carrié's richly sparkling, mixed-media portrait on aluminium, *Le promenade du Grand Baron* (2010), a new untitled series by the preeminent Spiralist artist in many modes, Frankétienne, and a dark swirling polyptych by Jean, his *Gestes de courage malgré tout: Ignorance et Tourmente* (2011).

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1   Some installation shots of the Haïti: Royaume de ce Monde exhibition in Venice can be found online at: http://universes-in-universe.org/eng./bien/venice_biennale/2011/info/haiti

In choosing to structure Haiti's first pavilion as a set of two physically separate exhibitions, the Haitian committees asserted their national presence within a longer thread of internal critique, reassessment, and adaptation of the Venice Biennale's national pavilion structure. Since the 'post-colonial' decade of the 1990s, when demand grew for national representation – one which could not be met practically within the already saturated grounds of the Giardini – a pattern of more ephemeral rather than fixed national pavilions has appeared at the Venice Biennale (Wyss and Scheller, 2011, p.114). In 2011, the number of nations participating rose to an unprecedented 89 with only 30 of these being the traditional nations – mainly First World and European – that own permanent pavilions. The remaining 59 nations were represented through ephemeral sites, while a number were represented either through multiple sites or shared regional pavilions, such as those based on many artists' transnational and diasporic identities. Other national participations with more than one pavilion site at the 54th Biennale included: the former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia; the Republic of Moldova; Norway; Romania; and Switzerland. Among the shared sites were the Italo-Latin American Institute (IILA) and the Central Asia Pavilion.

Illuminating and regenerating the national pavilion?

Taking up the mantle of International Art Exhibition Director in 2011, Curiger settled on the theme of ILLUMI*nations*. As the definition quoted at the beginning of this article reminds us, illumination may be about making something knowable as much as visible. Curiger's central exhibition theme referenced this art institution's intention to do both. But by breaking down her chosen moniker into its constituent syllables and emphasising the last two, Curiger shone a particularly bright light on the contentious issue of national representation through Venice's pavilion structure.

The recent innovations of ephemerality and multiplicity, as applied to national participations at Venice, serve to respond to spatial limitations – such as those imposed by the Giardini – as well as to underline what are now widespread external criticisms in the expanding field of 'biennialogy'. Among these is the suggestion that national structures at global art events are insidiously anachronistic (Mosquera, [1992] 2002; Baker, 2004; Pastor Roces, [2005] 2010). This charge of outdatedness has been levelled at the Venice Biennale's national structure on many grounds ranging from the architecture of its permanent pavilions, to the Giardini's pan-European exclusivity and tacit imperialism. For many critics, the very division of art by nation is incongruous with the institution's various claims to be experimental and relevant to the contemporary 'global' moment.

Such criticisms have prompted the creation of various alternative international platforms for the exhibition of contemporary art. An early manifestation was the establishment of the Havana Biennial in 1984, with Gerardo Mosquera's ([1992] 2002, pp.267–37) objective – framed by way of postcolonial discourse – to support artists and curators from the 'Third World' or 'global South' who were either being excluded from existing institutional 'centres', or else compromised by exhibitions that showed up a 'Marco Polo Syndrome' with regard to its consumption of the colonial world beyond Europe and North America (Harris, 2006, pp.336–8).

The director of the 2011 Venice Biennale, Curiger, faced such charges of anachronism with brisk rebuttal, countering that architecturally, aesthetically and conceptually its national pavilions are a piece of history which provides a stimulating dialectical backdrop for exhibiting artists and curators who are considering timely questions of nationality in the contemporary moment. Attenuating her engagement of such debates further, Curiger (2010) explained:

> The term 'nations' in ILLUMI*nations* applies metaphorically to recent developments in the arts all over the world, where overlapping groups form collectives of people representing a wide variety of smaller, more local activities and mentalities.

The group of artists presented at the *Haïti: Royaume de ce Monde* site was not a discreet collective, but a diverse set of contemporary artists from an array of backgrounds whose heterogeneity seem to correspond with 'recent developments in the arts all over the world' – namely the increasing recognition for artists with transnational experience. Indeed, the majority of these Haitian artists, although many remain rooted in Haiti, have studied or lived abroad for extended periods, or belong to the large Haitian diaspora living and working in cities around the world, and ranged along a spectrum from Frankétienne or the *Atis Rezistans* to the more itinerant Stephenson.

In another sense, although it was not billed in any official capacity, Haiti's *Death and Fertility* site and its focused display of work by the *Atis Rezistans* fulfilled another element of Curiger's definition of a nation at the biennial: the localised collective. Formed in the mid-nineties this group is no stranger to the global phenomenon of the biennial, having adapted

the format in 2009 in order to found (together with curator Leah Gordon) the Ghetto Biennale, which hosted its inaugural edition in their 'downtown slum neighbourhood' on the Grand Rue (see: Ghetto Biennale, 2009). This 'germ of the future' (Savage, 2009, pp.491–95) responded to the false universality and utopianism of an art world that may promote discourses of transnational fluidity, while operating in an expanding international biennial circuit, but in reality has limited the transfer of economic inequalities and political hierarchies from the wider world.

Curiger's additions to the biennial format at Venice this year, which were intended to broaden the pavilion structure beyond national politics, were the *Para-Pavilions*. These 'large sculptural-architectural structures' were spaces in which works of art were not simply placed one beside another but *inside* one another, in order to 'foster a process of mutual inspiration and interaction' (Curiger, 2011, p.46). Although the *Para-Pavilions* provided 'more dynamic' spaces within the central exhibition, they appear at a biennial whose structural foundations have always been and continue to be overwhelmingly nationalised. Their construction through artistic collaborations is formed 'on the impulse of the curators' rather than through the 'collectives of people representing a wide variety of smaller, more local activities and mentalities,' a feature that Curiger (2011) has suggested is formative to their conception and yet has resulted in elements that are in fact indistinguishable from the wider exhibition. Particularly strong criticism of these new elements was voiced by the Biennialist collective (n.d.) who saw the *Para-Pavilions* as a retroactive attempt to neutralise and absorb extraneous criticisms into the biennial's structure.

By contrast with these, meanwhile, were the scintillating skeletal sculptures by *Atis Rezistans,* formed from the discarded frameworks of human bodies and man-made objects – the cargo filling the *Death and Fertility* site. Located on the Venetian tourist front in the disembarkation area of luxurious cruise liners, its freight illuminating and 'transform[ing] the detritus of a failing [global] economy' (Geminiani, Gordon and Cosentino, 2011, p.21), this *was* a 'meta-object' that instituted 'mutual exchange' with its environment. Many of the salvaged elements that comprised these sculptures were parcelled out from the 'First World' as charitable donations to Haiti and corporate cast-offs. Here they were creatively deployed in ways perhaps inconceivable to those who disposed of them. They demonstrate a critical perspective on the tensions between a corrosive Old World and a vibrant rebirth that can spring from the disregarded.

Reconsidering national art and identity

André Eugène is one of the artists represented at the *Death and Fertility* site and a member of the *Atis Rezistans* collective. He opened his studio off the Grand Rue in Port-au-Prince, after being repeatedly denied visas to countries outside Haiti that were hosting exhibitions of his art. Transforming his studio into the renamed *E Pluribus Unum: Musee d'Art,* Eugène explained 'It's usually always the bourgeoisie who own the galleries. But I wanted to have … not only a gallery, but it must be a museum' (2011, p.23). It is significant that Eugène has sought not only to recreate his studio in Port-au-Prince as a space for the display of art. He also presents his workspace as a de facto museum, creating a less commercial space that might officiate a history through a collection of objects presented for their national importance.

This is just one example of how contemporary artists from Haiti have tried to push viewers, gallerists and collectors beyond the historic formation of a now stagnated narrative centred on a homogenous national identity for Haitian art. The 'hypervisibility' and great acclaim with which the work of the 1940s 'first generation' of Haitian artists was exhibited internationally were key in this formation. The term 'hypervisibilty' was persuasively applied by the writer Kobena Mercer (1999) to the exhibition history of black British art, and there is much to suggest a similar saturation internationally of those artists who Selden Rodman (1980) had shown to be foundational in the creation of a Haitian national story. As suggested by the label 'first generation', it was perceived that prior to the emergence of this group Haiti had been a vacuum with regard to 'high art'; and so the art of figures such as Hector Hyppolite, Philome Obin, Rigaud Benoit, Castera Bazile and Wilson Bigaud offered a national benchmark. Yet, the premium given to such 'Haitian art' would have the effect of excluding from exhibition and historiography other kinds of visual practice from Haiti and its diaspora, as somehow outside the category of art and as inauthentic.

The ways in which Haitian art was illuminated after the 1940s always cast the same shadows. Both in exhibition and art historical writing Haitian art was overwhelmingly presented as naïve, playing its part to define negatively and reinforce Euro-American Modernism – the defining narrative of early-twentieth-century art history. Erica James – who served as founding Director and Chief Curator of The National Art Gallery of The Bahamas – in her 2008 doctoral dissertation, demonstrates that this lack of sophistication surrounding the discourse should be of concern for artists throughout the Caribbean region.

She explains that the drive behind her research was 'to find reasons behind the absence of the Caribbean in discourses that developed around the work of artists from the region when they entered global exhibition spaces' (James, n.d., p.1). At the root of her research she has responded to variously formulated perspectives that negated the very existence of Caribbean art, most notably Maurizio Cattelan's show-piece titled *The Caribbean Does Not Exist*. At a panel discussion relating to the exhibition *Global Caribbean I,* James described her research as a pointed response to 'an author from *Art in America* magazine saying, "Fine art doesn't come from the Bahamas"' (James, n.d.; *Caribbean Art World Magazine*, 2010).

In reaction to similar misconceptions and discursive absences, Haiti's pavilion sites emerged on the Venetian cityscape in 2011, asserting the unequivocal presence of contemporary fine art from Haiti. In line with Erica James's scholarly intervention, the Bahamas came hard on the heels of Haiti, with their inaugural national pavilion at the 55th edition of the Venice Biennale in 2013. Nassau-born artist Tavares Strachan, who now lives and works in New York, was chosen to represent the Bahamas in their 'pop-up pavilion' situated within the Arsenale's former sail-stretching warehouses. Of the immersive space it created, the pavilion's website suggested that:

❝ Three geographically and culturally disparate sites—the Venice Arsenale, downtown Nassau, and the North Pole—will momentarily coexist in the Bahamian pavilion. ❞

Such a momentary presence, however, no matter how innovative and triple-layered, does not ensure long-term recognition of an individual, let alone national, contemporary fine art practice. As James identified, what is needed in addition is a discursive presence which can accompany, support, document and ultimately outlive the physical presence of an exhibition and grant it further recognition.

One of the artists at the frontline of such focused initiatives among Haitian artists is undoubtedly Miami based artist and curator Edouard Duval-Carrié. Through his work he renders absurd any statement about fine art not existing in the Caribbean, and acts as a catalyst for the increasing development of understanding and debate surrounding Haitian art. Inspired by the complexity and dynamic vision of his oeuvre, a whole cohort of scholars (for example: Sullivan, 2007; Cosentino, 2004; Sharpe, 2007) drawn from a variety of disciplines, has engaged with Duval-Carrié and *Haïti: Royaume de ce Monde* was a clear development in this. Aside from including two of

Duval-Carrié's works, the exhibition was the third in the ongoing multi-exhibition project *Global Caribbean*, launched in 2009.[2] The first exhibition in this series was also curated by Duval-Carrié and in his opening statement he emphasised that when creating affirmative discourses on Caribbean art, merely demonstrating existence is not enough, since the real danger of ghettoization suggests that what is needed above all are connections to wider global art narratives:

❝ My aim with this exhibit is not just to show that these islands all have artists worthy of the appellation but more so to underline the universality of their 'regional' visions. ❞

(Duval-Carrié, 2009)

He has explained the delicate balancing act of identities that these artists are aware of as they strive to create a regional discursive presence, and yet try to avoid being isolated:

❝ Though most of the art world seems to find comfort and sound commercial directives in having a common and easily identifiable definition (i.e. Latin American art), this is exactly what many artists find too tight a shoe … particularly in this highly individualistic and diversified art world. … I feel that the national provenance of these artists is at times irrelevant even when they strive to create a discourse that could be coined as regional. ❞

(Duval-Carrié, 2009)

This ambivalence towards an easily consumable national or regional identity itself provides a fruitful critical space and a potential curatorial framing-device for Haitian art, capable of breaking old moulds. Indeed, curator Giscard Bouchotte's (2011) conception of *Haïti: Royaume de ce Monde* was a way of 'returning to the fundamental myths associated with Haiti and, without praising it, of sublimating Haiti's chaos and its possibilities.' Bouchotte's framing suggests that he recognises the importance of engaging with historic narratives and identitarian politics, particularly pertinent at a nationally structured biennial. A further reason may be found in the views of artist Mario Benjamin, who has continually pushed against myths surrounding a Haitian national art style. In a recent documentary about his practice, Benjamin (2008) set out what he feels to be the limiting expectations often held about the formal qualities of Haitian art:

2   Global Caribbean site [online], available at: http://theglobalcaribbean.org (accessed: 12/8/11).

> for a lot of people an Haitian artist is related to a certain type of inspiration, a certain type of colour, and when these things are missing, one feels uneasy and can even doubt the legitimacy of that art.

For the *Haïti: Royaume de ce Monde* exhibition, Benjamin created an enigmatic work, *Makro* (2011) comprised of neat rows of identical, mostly transparent, Plexiglas chairs embellished with digital photographs of mackerel heaps printed on their seats and backs. The work has been read as a commentary on overcrowding in contemporary Haiti (Kay, 2011). But, in the context of this exhibition, with its theme of ambivalent national identities, the piece may be read differently: for the way that it addresses the issue of easily consumed national identities assigned to artists in the exhibition, and speaks out against the tired accounts of art from Haiti underlined by dominant art historical narratives.

Another instance of this was the nearby installation by Pascale Monnin, *Royaume de ce Monde: L'ange Sacrifié* (2011) (Figure 10.4), comprising a graceful figure suspended from the ceiling, spinning on a delicate thread to face Haiti's recent presidential candidates, many of whom weave national narratives that position them as heirs to a eulogised Haitian Revolution. Monnin has explained that the spinning figure was

inspired by Carpentier's protagonist Ti Noel, who was enslaved under the French colonial regime, and who 'fights the war of independence in Haiti and yet ends up the slave of King Henri Christophe', an early Haitian monarch. Such nationally-prized myths are swathed in a romanticism which deserves to be unravelled. As Edwidge Danticat (2006) explains in her recent introduction to Carpentier's novel, 'a revolution that some consider visionary might appear to others to have failed.'

This questioning of Haitian identity and the sanctity of its founding narratives is not a drive to erase national myths, however, nor to reject completely the possibilities for national identity; indeed, many of the artworks in *Haïti: Royaume de ce Monde* are imbued with culturally specific references. But they encourage the sort of engagement that may tease apart the common construction of a homogenous Haitian identity, and so open onto questions about the legitimacy of cultural formations that seem to 'transmit national and ethnic meaning' (Jones, 2010, p.82). Monnin's angel, for example, recalls Walter Benjamin's description of the angel of history:

> His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon

Figure 10.4: Pascale Monnin, *L'ange Sacrifié*, 2011, mixed media (variable dimensions) shown in *Haïti: Royaume de ce Monde* exhibition site at Fondazione Querini Stampalia. Courtesy of the artist. Photograph: © Paolo Woods.

wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned … This storm is what we call progress.

(Benjamin, [1968] 1999, p.249)

Such resonance between *L'ange Sacrifié* and Benjamin's musings on history (incidentally, his celebrated volume of collected essays shares its title with Curiger's central exhibition) draws attention to the replayed 'catastrophes' of Haitian political history and the 'wreckage' of natural disaster. It also encourages a reconsideration of the linear narratives of art history that have formed to offer a genealogy of progression and plot a narrative for a definitive set of artists located in one part of the world. Such sequential accounts draw discourses away from a host of rich artworks, artists, movements and narratives, and Haitian and Caribbean histories of art come to suffer. In Benjamin's terms they are caught among the wreckage of progress.

Responding to ILLUMI*nation* with opacity and relation

In addition to the clear index to Walter Benjamin's writings, Curiger (2011, p.44) has cited an array of eclectic and duly international inspirations for the Biennale theme of 2011: '… from the fiercely poetic *Illuminations* of Arthur Rimbaud … to the illuminated manuscripts of the Middle Ages and the philosophy of illumination in twelfth century Persia' and more locally to the painting of sixteenth-century Venetian artist, Tintoretto, whose 'reckless search for light' adorned the opening walls of the show. As has been shown, this list of luminous connotations travelled in new directions when refracted through each of the works displayed in Haiti's two exhibition sites. Indeed, in a much more direct sense the Haitian pavilion's curatorial team responded to Curiger's central theme by quoting the words of Martiniquan writer Édouard Glissant (taken from a recent interview: 2009 cited in Curiger, 2011, p.369). These formed a substantial part of the text on Haiti's national profile page in the 2011 Venice Biennale Catalogue:

❛ When the West conquered the world, it kept repeating 'We bring civilization, we bring the light,' but it was not true. Comprehension means absorbing something within oneself. It means applying your own rules to others. I'm saying that this is not possible. I do not claim to tell you how you have to be in reference to my light system. I demand everyone's right to opacity.

The choice of this polemic statement to accompany Haiti's first national pavilion at the Venice Biennale was a significant one. Glissant's words provided a pointed rejoinder, not only to the specific ILLUMI*nations* theme at the 2011 Venice Biennale but to the broader fact of powerful institutional mechanisms at work in the modern and contemporary art world. These have an institutional influence which was demonstrated through the aptly chosen imagery of a work entitled *Marquee* (2011) which was presented by the Algerian artist Philippe Parreno. Situated above an entranceway into the central international exhibition, Parreno's light-sculpture comprised rows of brightly-glowing light bulbs akin to the decorative pulsating signs that gave New York's 'Great White Way' its luminous nickname (McQuire, 2005). The positioning of this piece in Venice drew parallels between the power and glamour bestowed through the architecture of light in the early years of theatre and the approval conferred on those whose work is exhibited by authoritative institutions in the art world. Appearance within global exhibitions has become a much sought-after rite of passage, offering commercial legitimacy for contemporary artists (Thornton, [2008] 2009, pp.45-6). Why then does the over-arching discourse surrounding Haiti's national pavilion seem so ambivalent towards participation in this illuminating spectacle? How can the Glissantian desire for opacity be reconciled with promotion on a global platform? And why should both be sought simultaneously?

The first step towards answering these questions is to clarify the meaning of 'opacité' for Glissant, a term centrally employed in his genre-defying literary work. It emerged most clearly alongside many other ideas that span his writing in *L'intention Poetique* (Dash, 1995, p.97) and has been translated as 'obscurity' in English editions of his texts (Glissant, 1989). Such a direct translation is problematic, however, since a desire for 'obscurity' – the desire to remain unknown or concealed – is hardly commensurate with the invocation of the term in the context of a major promotional initiative such as the Haitian pavilion.

Considering further that the curators of the Haitian pavilion had asserted 'everyone's right to opacity', evidently it is the terms of being seen and understood – being brought under the 'light' of biennial exhibitions – that comes to be of issue. There is a crucial distinction to be drawn between moving passively into the glow of biennial publicity, and being in active control of an exhibition's power to illuminate. This was alluded

to by Mosquera in an interview with Gerhard Haupt on the subject of participation in global exhibition circuits. He observed: 'There's a difference between trying to be an active presence in these circles and letting oneself be subordinated.' It is in response to such a history of subordination through exhibitions – to experiences of reductive explanation, being burdened with a 'myth of authenticity' (Mosquera, [1992] 2002, p.270) in contradistinction to Euro-American modernism – that the Glissantian demand for 'obscurity' is made. Further, for Glissant the concept of opacity did not function alone but was inextricably linked to – and worked in tandem with – the theory of 'relation' that he began developing in 1960s Martinique at a time when the assimilationist policies of France threatened the cultures of overseas territories. Glissant explained that 'without opacity creating cultural diversity, the ideal of relation is impossible' (cited in Dash, 1995, p.97; Glissant, 1997), to suggest that any acknowledgement of cultural difference has at the same time to recognise an inherent connectedness in our shifting identities. Such recognition causes reconsideration of how to relate to 'others' at a deeper level.

These are particularly pertinent issues within the context of a nationally-structured, global exhibition space, in which comparisons are inevitably made. As a postcolonial nation Haiti's identity and ability to relate in the broader international arena has been marred by a history of reductive symbolism. Since its revolutionary establishment as an independent nation at the turn of the nineteenth century, Haiti has been overwritten with ambivalent racial symbolism: as a synonym for either black pride or degeneracy (Jackson and Bacon, 2010, pp.7–24; Dash, 1988). In recent decades this two-sided symbolism has been reconfigured, and overt racial characterisation has been substituted by political and economic allegory, and black pride has become a revolutionary exaltation. Haiti carries the historical tagline of 'the first black republic' or 'the only nation born of a successful slave revolt'. But it has also been the target for fears of racial degeneracy, political stagnation and economic impoverishment, always exacerbated by natural disasters. The result is Haiti's reputation for being 'the poorest country in the Western hemisphere' (Botwinick, 1978, p.5; International Slavery Museum, 2007).

Not wishing to achieve visibility for contemporary art of Haiti by way of any of these symbolic identities, curator Giscard Bouchotte distanced the first Haitian pavilion at Venice from both the 'eulogizing' of 'founding myths linked to Haiti' and 'the charity it [Haiti] is being offered', most recently on account of the January 2010 earthquake:

'Before the earthquake, Haiti did not figure on the official circuits for contemporary art; today things are even more complex. In a country occupied by humanitarian aid agencies, the devastation paradoxically betrays any attempt to construct 'professional' relationships. '

(Bouchotte, 2011, p.7)

Mindful of the pitfalls of such patterns, the curatorial ambitions for each of the sites of the Haitian pavilion at Venice was 'neither solitude nor surrender': a demonstration therefore of a relationship between 'opacity' and 'relation' (Glissant, 1989). What was sought at these sites of exhibition was the possibility for Haitian artists to inhabit highly visible display spaces where they were not required to expose and essentialise themselves before an established institution or another's 'light-system', but rather could 'relate' through the complexity of their work.

It would be worth asking whether such ambitions were achieved, or frustrated, by the choice on the part of Haitian artists and curators in 2011 to participate in such a traditional event as the Venice Biennale – the oldest institution on the global biennial circuit, distinguished by an apparently unshakeable structure of national pavilions. Was this the most effective platform at which Haitian artists could promote their contemporary work, while simultaneously questioning the historical formation and expectations placed on Haitian art as a national entity? I have been arguing that it was, and that only in the context of such a self-consciously global exhibition could this localised project be realised. The historical importance of Haiti's debut at Venice can be seen by the heat and light in which it began to melt away the older art historical approaches, making way for a regenerative space of exhibition.

Melting away the old

In response to one of the most celebrated works at the centre of ILLUMI*nations* in 2011, art critic for *The Guardian* newspaper, Jonathan Jones, found the overriding message to be 'woefully apocalyptic'. Viewing the acclaimed time-telling device of Swiss artist Urs Fischer – a slowly melting, monumental wax replica of Giambologna's sixteenth-century sculpture *The Rape of the Sabine Women* (1574–83) – Jones found it to be 'representing the violence and chaos of this century' (2011). But that same chaos, when considered in relation to the Haitian pavilion, opens up further possibilities. This is chaos and destruction not as the apocalyptic end, but as a new beginning, in a new round of creation. For Glissant 'the way Chaos itself goes

around is the opposite of what is ordinarily understood by "chaotic" and that opens onto a new phenomenon: Relation … whose disorder one can imagine forever' (1997, p.133). Glissant's imagination of the world in chaos is far from any despairing pronouncement of doom; equally far, therefore, from the sort of response evidenced by Jones in his art criticism. The significance of this difference becomes clearer with a look at Glissant's notion of *Le Chaos-monde*. It emerges when he describes 'the creative unpredictability of the explosive archipelago of cultures represented by the Caribbean,' which Glissant sees as 'exemplary in th[e] creative global "chaos" which proliferates everywhere' (Dash, 1995, p.24).

If Urs Ficher's work is then read in relation to Celeur Jean Hérard's most recent series of sculptures, entitled *Zonbi,* which expresses a destructive chaos, the focus falls on the hierarchies of mainstream art histories. They may be seen as just one aspect of a regenerative process that may transform the contemporary art world. Hérard (quoted in the Haiti pavilion press kit) explained that his *Zonbi* series encapsulates the position to which he often sees Haitian artists being subjected. The title Zonbi denotes 'an individual who is under someone else's influence', and was chosen 'to represent the common point of view that large artistic institutions have of the artists in Third World countries' (2011, p.9). Fischer's piece involves the melting away of monumental candles and the meaning is complete: it signals the apocalyptic destruction of an idiosyncratic and outdated institutional system centred on one region of the globe, at the expense of its 'Others'.

Equally, such a display of chaotic destruction may be read in the work of Haiti's *Atis Rezistans*, sculptural works that have often been referred to as post-apocalyptic creations. Here the Gédé, embodying death and fertility, are already one step ahead of Jones' assessment of Venice in 2011. André Eugène's contribution to the *Death and Fertility* part of the Haitian pavilion is a smirking *Dokto Zozo* (2010) (Figure 10.5), which smiles knowingly as it sits listening through his stethoscope to the outsized phallus protruding from the black sheets of a coffin below. This is new life springing from death, certainly. While here, in and around *Dokto Zozo,* the metaphor extends as metamorphosed waste materials, the disregarded remnants of the consumed have become the fleshy matrix of stark and powerful Gédé. Through the bricolage of Jean Claude Saintilus, a worn-out child's doll is draped with rosary beads and becomes a sacred infant nestling in the arms of *Gran Brijit,* (recalling Leonardo's Madonnas of the renaissance past), who in

turn is crowned with a halo formed from a tattered umbrella bearing the flag of the United States.

Jones was not alone among critics in pronouncing a vision of doom for the Venice Biennale in 2011. I began by suggesting that it has long been challenged in art scholarship, with a focus on its chief structure of national pavilions and its marginalisation of art from outside the 'global North'. However there are some who see in its idiosyncratic system – with its recent innovation of including ephemeral and transnational elements – a model for the future. Beat Wyss and Jörg Scheller, for example, have written about the 'bazaar of Venice' that although the pavilions were 'constructed as national beacons' they are not what they were and 'today they rather illuminate the resilience of the local' (2011, pp.125-9). The pavilion format on this account may serve to open up viable opportunities for comparative – or relational – rather than global histories of art.

At the 54th edition of La Biennale di Venezia, the national structure of this event and the controversy surrounding it became a space in which Haitian artists and the associated curators could confront some

Figure 10.5: André Eugène, *Dokto Zozo*, 2011, mixed media, Haiti's *Death and Fertility* site at the Riva dei Sette Martiri. Venice. Courtesy of the artist. Photo by Wendy Asquith.

distinctly local concerns, while extending their critiques to a global audience. They addressed the potential gains and pitfalls of nurturing a national and regional identity in relation to key wider debates. It was a turn of events that demonstrated in practice that, as Caroline A. Jones pragmatically surmised, 'the pavilion component of biennial culture in Venice has proved useful' (2010, p.83). It might be better to conclude that all those who participate at the Venice Biennale have worked together in adapting the national pavilion structure. They have made it into a useful space at which to debate pertinent issues – whether of nation and identity, and matters of scale and historical memory – and thereby transformed Venice into the site rather than the object of controversy. For Haiti this meant that the death of older artworld hegemonies and myths of universalism were ritually enacted, and an oversimplified idea of homogenous 'Haitian art' could be killed off too. From the wreckage of this creative chaos, a multitude of complex practices emerged, which refuse to be contained or entirely perceived, but share a relation to a new global image under Haiti's first pavilion.

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THE DALLAS PAVILION: CONTEMPORARY ART AND URBAN IDENTITY
Michael Corris and Jaspar Joseph-Lester

In the following statement, Jaspar Joseph-Lester and Michael Corris lay out the intentions of their project for the Dallas Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013. By contrast with the national pavilions for which the Biennale is renowned, this pavilion represented a city, and was published in the form of a book rather than temporarily staged on the interior of a building. Available to visitors from a stall placed just outside the American pavilion in the Giardini (and now available here as well, by permission of the publishers), this little book is a curated selection of works and texts, intervening within the Biennale's official structure of curated national pavilions. It colourfully surveys the expansive art world of Dallas' artists, critics, curators, collectors, galleries, museums and educators, while raising questions about contemporary urban identity vis-à-vis an aging architectural apparatus such as Venice's international art exposition.

Keywords: pavilion, Dallas, city, identity, Venice Biennale, collaboration, contemporary art.

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Abstract

In the following statement, Jaspar Joseph-Lester and Michael Corris lay out the intentions of their project for the Dallas Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013. By contrast with the national pavilions for which the Biennale is renowned, this pavilion represented a city, and was published in the form of a book rather than temporarily staged on the interior of a building. Available to visitors from a stall placed just outside the American pavilion in the Giardini (and now available here as well, by permission of the publishers), this little book is a curated selection of works and texts, intervening within the Biennale's official structure of curated national pavilions. It colourfully surveys the expansive art world of Dallas' artists, critics, curators, collectors, galleries, museums and educators, while raising questions about contemporary urban identity vis-à-vis an aging architectural apparatus such as Venice's international art exposition.

❛ Every world is capable of producing its own world within itself ❜

Alain Badiou, *The Logic of Worlds*

http://openartsjournal.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/supplement-corris-joseph-lester-dallaspavilion.pdf

In every city there are a number of worlds. These worlds exist side by side yet operate under very different conditions; they serve different economies, demographics and politics. Perhaps most importantly, each of these worlds produces its own *truth* about art. With this in mind let us propose a pavilion that can contain a cross section of art worlds, a pavilion where the city is experienced through the material spaces and conceptual structures that shape our understanding of what art can be.

In April 2011, we began to explore the idea of curating a city pavilion for Dallas. The venue for this substantial exhibition would be the 2013 Venice Biennale. Needless to say, the starting point for this long-term curatorial project was not the art object, its maker, or even a particular theme for an exhibition. In contrast to the traditional national pavilions that

appear in Venice every two years, this exhibition would be a city pavilion that would take the material form of a book.

Our goal was to provide a preliminary inventory of the material and conceptual conditions nurturing contemporary art in Dallas. The Dallas Pavilion was therefore required to display autonomous locations in addition to the urban mythology, power dynamics and complex social relations that give the city its particular identity.

For two years the Dallas Pavilion developed through dialogue with a group of Dallas based artists, curators, designers and writers. We began by looking at ways to curate a snapshot of events, locations and situations that influence the way art is conceived and experienced across the city. The aim was not to produce a guide or index of the Dallas art scene but rather to reflect on both the abstract and physical structures that help to sustain the cultural life of the city.

The term *Dallas art space* was left open to interpretation; nominations included motorway intersections, cars, lecture theatres, exhibitions, events, shopping centres, offices, video festivals, galleries (past, present and temporary), museums, private art collections and unrealised proposals for large-scale land art projects. From the outset the Dallas Pavilion was intended to stand as an imaginative cross-section of the many art worlds that exist within the context of a single city.

* * *

The first pavilion to represent itself as a 'city' was The Manchester Pavilion, which was housed in a fully functioning bar in the Dorsuduro district of Venice, 2003. Not only was this pavilion a place for discussion and late night drinking, the project successfully reminded people that Manchester is a centre for contemporary art production. Similarly, The Sheffield Pavilion (2007) attached itself to Bar Margaret Duchamp, Campo Santa Margherita, only here the pavilion took the form of a book, which was given out to visitors to the Biennale for the duration of the press week.

This small series of city or location-specific interpretations of national pavilions informed some of the thinking around Project Biennale (2009), a curatorial initiative guided by Amanda Beech, Jaspar Joseph-Lester and Matthew Poole which grew out of discussions, seminars and meetings established across three groups of postgraduate Curating and Fine Art students from Chelsea College of Art (London) The University of Essex and Sheffield Hallam University.

While Project Biennale was not city or region specific, it was similarly concerned with the problem of the purpose and place of curatorial authorship.

However, rather than focusing only on the Venice Biennale, the publication resulting from this curatorial initiative took up the broader question of the increase of large-scale time-based curatorial events and their relation to the interests of capital. In other words, the Venice Biennale provided the project with a platform for exploring the paradoxical and problematic connection between critique and capital, corporate investment and national identity, and how these often opposing forces determine our experience of art.

The Dallas Pavilion builds on the work of previous city or location-specific interpretations of the pavilion, on various projects that treat the book as an exhibition space. Most importantly though, this pavilion actively plays on the way local identities are exported as a global brand. The work exhibited in the pages of this 'pavilion' both affirms and opposes a dominant image of Dallas. We may be seduced by the big sky, bling fashion and luxury department stores but we know very well that this image of Dallas culture is highly constructed, commercial and deeply conservative.

How then do the various art spaces that help to determine the production of contemporary art function critically in 'Big D'? What is the relation between the pervasive global image of the city and the local art spaces that produce culture? How is location embedded in the thinking and creative output of Dallas artists, curators, educators, museum directors and critics? These questions have emerged as the overriding concerns that shape this printed pavilion. Each of the sections in the book speaks of the complex relations between the machines of culture that operate throughout the city and the various *truths* they produce about art.

<p style="text-align:center">*　　*　　*</p>

Working against the grain of an entrenched 'authenticity' that denies society its rightful social glue, part 2 of the Dallas Pavilion stages conversations among interlocutors whom only rarely speak to each other yet have a world in common. Whatever the participants choose to install, so as to grace the wide whitewashed space of the Kirk Hopper Gallery will function as a backdrop to an intense program of debate.

The creation of a platform for dialogue is hardly a radical gesture in the context of an international biennial exhibition. For the artists, critics and exhibition organisers of the city of Dallas, however, the instantiation of artistic practice based on collaboration and public discourse may very well be novel and transformative.

Participants

CADD Art Lab, CentralTrak, Conduit Gallery: The Project Room, The Dallas Cowboys Stadium, The Dallas Museums of Art, Dick Higgins Gallery, DFW Airport, Free Museum of Dallas, Make Art with Purpose (MAP), The Tuesday Evening Lecture Series, NorthPark Shopping Center, RE gallery + studio, The Reading Room, Small Dog Studio, Tending (Blue), Terri Thornton's studio, Transmission Annual, Dallas VideoFest, West Dallas Community Centers, Barry Whistler Gallery, 301 Toronto Street, 337 Singleton Boulevard, 500X Gallery.

Figure 11.1: The Dallas Pavilion presented at the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013.
Courtesy of Jaspar Joseph-Lester & Michael Corris.

Figure 11.2: The Dallas Pavilion presented at the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013.
Courtesy of Jaspar Joseph-Lester & Michael Corris.

Figure 11.3: The Dallas Pavilion presented at the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013.
Courtesy of Jaspar Joseph-Lester & Michael Corris.

'A GLIMPSE OF ANOTHER WORLD': ZAHA HADID'S MOBILE ART PAVILION
Sophie Kazan

This review of the Mobile Art Pavilion (MAP) designed by Zaha Hadid for the fashion house Chanel considers the innovative form, materials and space of the building, and ponders the irony of its permanent installation in the grounds of Paris' Institute of the Arab World.

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'A GLIMPSE OF ANOTHER WORLD': ZAHA HADID'S MOBILE ART PAVILION

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Abstract

This review of the Mobile Art Pavilion (MAP) designed by Zaha Hadid for the fashion house Chanel considers the innovative form, materials and space of the building, and ponders the irony of its permanent installation in the grounds of Paris's Institute of the Arab World.

In 2006, wishing to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the Chanel 2.55 quilted purse, the French fashion house Chanel decided to stage a touring exhibition of artworks inspired by this vintage style handbag. An opportunistic exercise in brand awareness and promotion for Chanel, this exhibition was to feature photographs, films, sculpture, drawings, paintings and installations by twenty well-established contemporary artists from around the world. Chanel's Creative Director, Karl Lagerfeld, believed that instead of touring international art galleries, the exhibition, like the handbag, should itself be mobile, contained in its own recognisable structure, which would travel from city to city.

Lagerfeld approached the award-winning Iraqi British architect Zaha Hadid, convinced that there was nobody else for the commission. The result was the Mobile Art Pavilion (MAP), a white Taurus-shaped single-storey structure assembled from moulded plastic panels held in place by a steel frame (Figure 12.1). Not incidentally, the general effect is not unlike the quilted surface of the Chanel bag. Lagerfeld was likely familiar with Hadid's innovative approach to design, and the fact that she had already in 2000 designed a slick, transportable pavilion – the first of the annual Serpentine Pavilions for London's Kensington Park. However, unlike Hadid's Serpentine Pavilion, which updates the tented pavilions of old with a folding angular steel-framed construction, the MAP is much more curvilinear, organic and asymmetrical. Like a couture dress, it has the impact of a confident and self-congratulatory aesthetic statement.

In addition to the Venice Biennale, where it premiered in 2007, the MAP was originally intended to 'tour' five major cities: Hong Kong, Tokyo, New York, Moscow and London. It never reached the last two destinations. Each location was visited and studied in advance so that climatic and demographic factors could be incorporated into the design. The pavilion was built in an industrial zone in North Yorkshire, in northern England, and was then transported to Venice for the 52nd Biennale. Over the next several months, it was installed at the Star Ferry Car Park in Hong Kong; the National Yoyogi Stadium in Tokyo's Olympic Plaza; and the Rumsey Playfield in New York's Central Park.

In 2011 the MAP was then shipped to Paris, as it had been gifted to the Institute of the Arab World (IMA), a relevant and increasingly important museum since gaining status amongst the prestigious group of Paris' *Musées nationaux*. There, it was happily received, and permanently installed in the forecourt, in honour of the architect Zaha Hadid's Arab heritage, and to highlight the magnitude of contemporary Arab creativity (Figure 12.2). It has since become an annexe exhibition space known as *Le Mobile Art*. Ironically, though, it had now lost the very mobility that had lent it that name.

The design of the MAP can be considered in the light of a recent trend in pavilion design, which has in part developed under the aegis of the Serpentine Gallery. Since 2000 when Hadid was commissioned to build the first Serpentine Pavilion, London's Kensington Gardens have been witness to a temporary building being erected here every summer, by a contemporary architect (or artist) of international standing. In
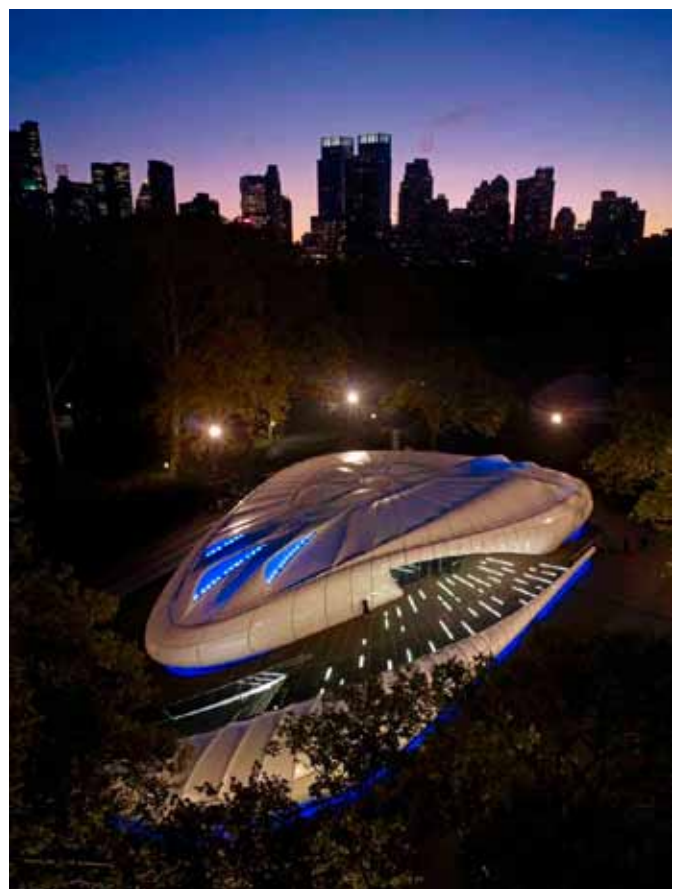

Figure 12.1: The Mobile Art Pavilion in Central Park, New York, 2008. Courtesy of Zaha Hadid Architects. Photograph: John Linden.

Figure 12.2: The Mobile Art Pavilion in Paris on the forecourt of the Institut du Monde Arabe (IMA). Courtesy of Zaha Hadid Architects. Photograph: Roland Haibe.

contrast with these structures, the MAP has more to do with the convergence between fashion and art, though it is arguably more than just a stylish and portable exhibition space. But what kind of fashion statement or work of art is the MAP, and what innovative ideas might it contribute to the design of pavilions, either in terms of exhibition spaces or mobile buildings?

Design and Structure

In recent times, travelling exhibitions have involved a lot more forward-planning. The responsibility and legal requirements of building a structure and opening it to the public is taken more seriously. In the case of a mobile structure, it must not only be easily taken apart, to be packed, transported and reassembled. It also needs to observe all of the usual health and safety requirements. The independent firm of designers and engineers, Arup Associates, which previously assisted in the construction of several of the Serpentine Pavilions, was commissioned to ensure that the MAP was built quickly, met all the regulations, and had the necessary lighting, insulation, ventilation and guttering. It was also important that, in-keeping with a pavilion, the MAP was light and flexible enough to be transported by air or sea to each destination on its tour.

The MAP has a surface area of 700 square metres. Looking at plans and elevations (Figures 12.3–12.4), its shape is not angular like a tent, but rather more like a wheel. A reception area leads onto exhibition galleries that curve around a central, rounded 65-square-metre courtyard, which serves as a space for rest and reflection. The pavilion is an experiment in the use of Fibre-Reinforced Plastic (FRP), a material that is often used in aircraft building because it is lightweight, malleable, and durable, and can withstand extreme temperatures (Figure 12.5). 700 luminous FRP panels are held in place by steel frames, each numbered for easy handling, transport and assemblage.

Although plastic is now an everyday material, and has even been used in a lot of experimental design since the 1960s, it is still relatively uncommon in larger architectural projects. In his essay 'Plastic,' written in 1957, the French philosopher Roland Barthes reflected on what was then a still relatively new invention. He regarded plastic as a magical substance, 'the stuff of alchemy' (Barthes, [1957] 1973, pp.97–9). However, he was distrustful of the artifice and veneer of plastic.

CHANEL MOBILE ART PAVILION
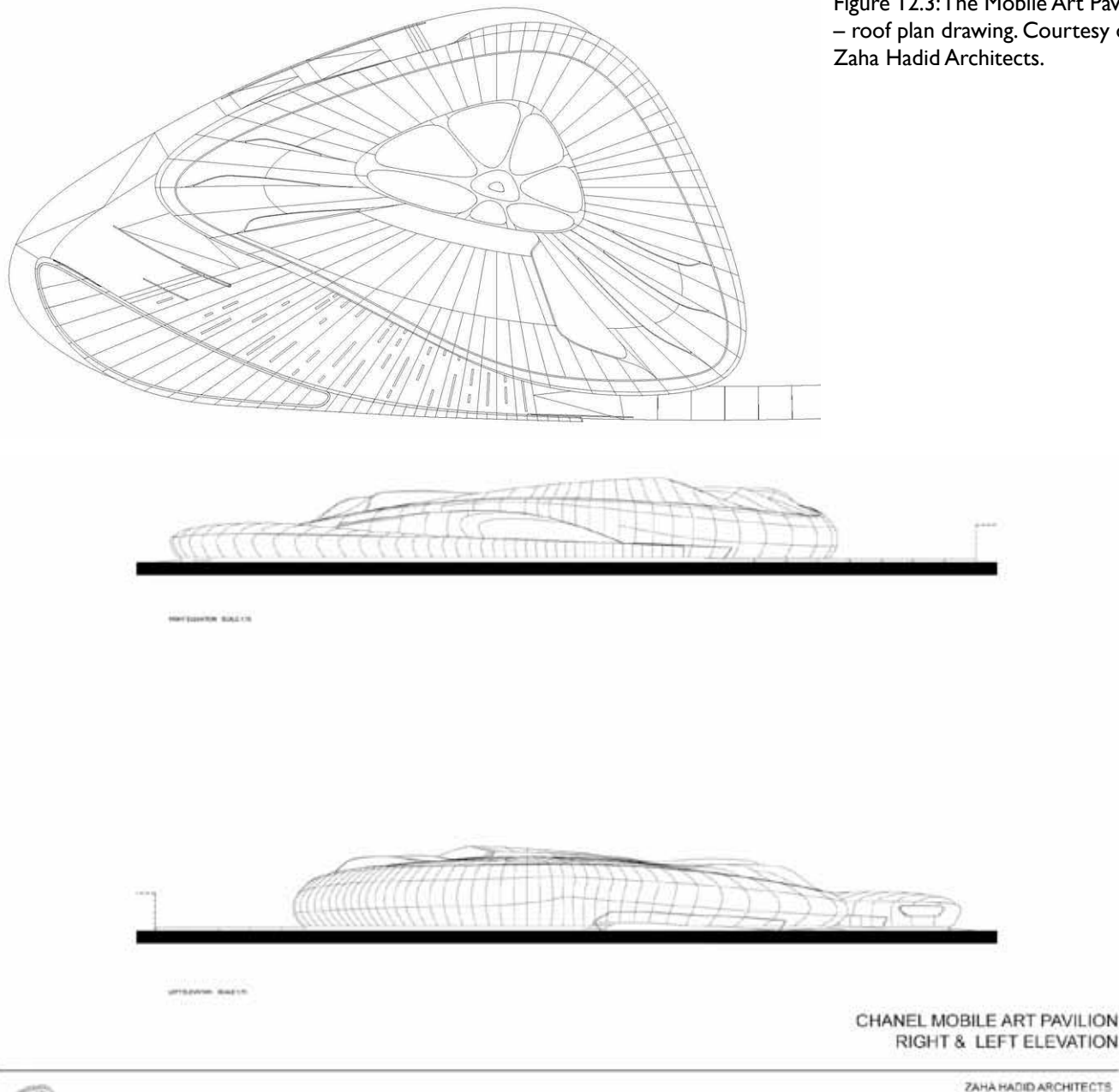RIGHT & LEFT ELEVATION

ZAHA HADID ARCHITECTS

Figure 12.4: The Mobile Art Pavilion – elevation drawing, 2007. Courtesy of Zaha Hadid Architects.

Indeed, one only has to look at the shiny white panels that appear to have been made so identically as to be slotted into the MAP's structure with such precision, and the 'other-worldliness' of the resulting structure, to understand Barthes' reservations. Though he intends to be critical of plastic, the idea of it being 'more than a substance' and embodying 'the very idea of its infinite transformation' is what makes it of such interest. This is what makes the MAP so interesting to ponder too. Seven years after Barthes wrote this, the first moon landing in 1959 meant that space-age innovation was less an unknown fear and more an exciting challenge. As a pavilion built for an international fashion house, it is indeed, to use Barthes' words 'ubiquity made visible,' and 'less a thing than the trace of a movement.' How suitable for a mobile building then!

Hadid has stated that the 'Mobile Art Pavilion is all about movement and fluidity' (quoted in Schwan, Gold, Fenton and Sheleg, 2008). Mobility, of course, is implicit in the very word *pavilion* (deriving from the Latin *papilio*, meaning butterfly). She refers to the movement of people around it, through the dimly lit concentric corridors and into its bright courtyard. The MAP has no windows, but natural light seeps through its panels from the outside, and hidden lights also play an important part in shaping the space and determining its experience. The dark, asymmetric steel beams that hold the luminous panels in place resemble pulsating arteries. 'It is an architectural language of fluidity and nature,' Hadid explains, 'driven by new digital design and manufacturing processes which have enabled us to create the Pavilion's totally organic forms – instead

Figure 12.5: Detail of the FRP panels. Courtesy of Zaha Hadid Architects. Photograph: Virgile Simon.

of the serial order of repetition that marks the architecture of the industrial 20th century' (quoted in 'Chanel Contemporary Art Container by Zaha Hadid', 2009). While the glossy white walls create a sense of cocooning enclosure, it is paradoxical here that polymers and other manufactured composites are used to get away from an industrial look, and replace it with natural shapes and lines.

The Contemporary Pavilion

Hadid was the first to design a pavilion for London's Serpentine Gallery Pavilion programme, back in 2000. So impressed by this radical reinvention of the 'accepted idea of a tent or a marquee' (website for the Serpentine Pavilion, 2000) were they that the Gallery's directors decided to make the building of a Serpentine pavilion an annual tradition, and commission a contemporary artist or architect to create a

pavilion within the grounds every summer. The MAP must therefore be seen in the light of some of the other pavilion structures that have been built here in London's Kensington Gardens over the past decade, and which have done much to showcase architectural innovation in the early years of the twenty-first century.

Two Serpentine commissions (Figures 12.6–12.7) in particular bear comparison to the MAP in the way that they structure space, and for the feeling that they create for visitors on their interiors, with the effects of light. These two examples are the 2007 pavilion designed jointly by Danish artist Olafur Eliasson and Norwegian architect Kjetil Thorsen, and the more recent 2012 pavilion, designed by the Swiss firm of Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron, together with the Chinese contemporary artist Ai Weiwei. Both structures have a circular plan vaguely similar to the MAP, and similarly explore space through line, using it almost rhythmically to guide the visitor's movement. In both instances, the designers have not only considered the structure itself, but also recognised the viewer and how he or she will experience or perceive the interior, and how light enters or is filtered into it. These two points are similarly characteristic of Hadid's MAP, and is the kind of thing whose exploration or experimentation is facilitated by pavilion design.

The 2007 Serpentine pavilion was an upward spiralling structure, which had vertical canvas-like slats or openings that broke down the conventional walls separating outside from inside. These identical slats lined the circumference of a ramp, progressively leading the viewer up from the ground, along the gallery, and onto the roof. Eliasson is an installation artist whose work often treats light, water, and temperature – appealing to the viewer's senses and thus encouraging him or her to interact with space in a more embodied manner. Whereas Hadid's use of shiny FRP integrates the MAP into a whole, and reflects the light, the surface of Eliasson and Thorsen's pavilion is broken up by vertical wall slats that bring the light inward, creating shadows on interior surfaces. This also ensures that the viewer is not confined within the space, and that the pavilion is not a simple container. While some pavilions aspire to emulate permanent buildings, focussing on the strength of their foundations or outer structures, this capitalises on the pavilion's transience and fluidity, creating a stronger sense of symbiosis with the environment, and putting importance instead on the shapes created in space. The shape of the roof in this pavilion is reminiscent of a carousel or a spinning top, and the vertical forms of its interior recall a fulcrum.

The 2012 Serpentine pavilion, conceived by Weiwei, with Herzog and de Meuron, is circular in structure,

Figure 12.6: Olafur Eliasson and Kjetil Thorsen, Serpentine Gallery Pavilion 2007. Courtesy of the Serpentine Gallery. Photograph: Luke Hayes

Figure 12.7: Jacques Herzog & Pierre de Meuron and Ai Weiwei, Serpentine Gallery Pavilion, 2012. Courtesy of the Serpentine Gallery. Photograph Iwan Baan

Figures 12.8 and 12.9: 'Zaha Hadid – Une architecture' exhibition, at the Mobile Art, Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris, 2011, Courtesy of IMA and Zaha Hadid Architects.

and experiments with the possibilities of other materials, including cork, whose colour and rough earthy feel brings excavated earth to mind. About the pavilion, Weiwei has stated: 'we tried instinctively to sidestep the unavoidable problem of creating an object, a concrete shape' (Serpentine Pavilion website, 2012). For him, the answer was to dig into the earth and create shapes in the ground, which would recall the previous structures that have come and gone before it. The pavilion's roof doubles as a shallow pool reflecting the sky; this shelters a subterranean pit, with asymmetric walls, some of which are truncated and also serve as benches. The viewer descends below 'sea level' as symbolised by the overhead pool, which reflects the sky. The pavilion sets up a dialogue between enclosure on the one hand and symbiosis with the environment on the other, between architecture and landscape. The 2012 pavilion therefore moves away from being an ornamental structure that creates a vista.

Fashionable Article or Work or Art? Experimental Structure or Exhibition Space?

Like Hadid's MAP, the 2007 and 2012 Serpentine Pavilions present the visitor with new ideas and innovative shapes. The Serpentine Pavilions encourage the visitor to think about time and movement, and offer alternative viewpoints from above or below ground level. In contrast, the MAP is a more intimate and insular structure, which detaches its visitors from the outside world, in order to 'give people a glimpse of another world' from the interior of the pavilion ('Zaha Hadid Architects: Exhibition Pavilion', 2011). It was also vital that the MAP should be a closed environment on account of the art that it holds. Therefore, MAP has a protective function, not unlike the handbag that inspired its design. Even so, like the Serpentine Pavilions, the MAP has the character of a work of art in its own right. The purely artistic quality of this pavilion was underscored by the critic Dalya Alberge, who likens Hadid to a magician: 'Hadid is ... constantly morphing and transforming. ... She uses geometry as an artistic medium to paint pictures and craft sculptures of the physical world around us' (Alberge, 2010).

In spite of its visual allure, the MAP was first and foremost designed as a functional structure or a receptacle, like the Chanel bag itself, to carry and host an art exhibition (Figures 12.8–12.9). But while a museum's exhibition space concerns itself with practical matters like the ambient temperature inside its galleries and the conservation or longevity of art works in its collection, sometimes over its accessibility to viewers, the MAP is a space in which viewers can get very close to the works of art on display. Many of the exhibitions staged here thus far have included installations or conceptual pieces that are freestanding or hang from the ceiling, or can be mounted on small pedestals.

What this means is that the MAP's environment and structure appear to dictate that it can only be an exhibition space or receptacle for contemporary art that is in no need of protection or guard. The MAP would not, for example, be able to host other kinds of exhibition, for instance those showing conventional paintings or costlier artifacts which here could not be properly protected. But then one probably would not expect any pavilion to be able to rival the traditional purpose-built museum in this function. Even so, it would seem that the MAP partly sacrifices its function as a receptacle (i.e., an exhibition space) to aesthetic form, to the sleek visual appearance that it creates.

This is not necessarily a cynical assessment, for the MAP might be seen more as a testing ground for the exhibition space of the future. Although the MAP now rests on a museum forecourt, the benefits of the mobility that it still symbolises (and the ease with which it may be transport) should not be overlooked. Looking ahead, one can imagine the MAP serving as inspiration for mobile pavilions that have the potential to bring art to marginalised communities never before 'visited' by art or culture projects. Although fixed in place now, the MAP nevertheless still serves as a model for future mobile exhibition spaces that could perhaps be built. With the fast-paced, virtual world that many now inhabit long hours of the day, could transitory, visually pleasing, made-to-measure pavilions or exhibition structures be the museums or art galleries of the future?

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DONKEY INSTITUTE OF CONTEMPORARY ART (DICA): A PHOTO ESSAY

Yam Lau

This photo-essay documents the conception and realisation of a 'mobile display unit', a kind of cabinet of curiosities attached to a donkey, and made to travel through the streets of Beijing so that the texts, works and videos displayed there were accessible to passers-by.

Keywords: pavilion, contemporary, peripatetic, exhibit, mobile, display, site-specific, China.

Yam Lau was born in Hong Kong, and is now an artist/writer based in Toronto. His creative work explores new expressions and qualities of space, time and the image through the application of painting, computer-animation and digital video. In addition, Lau has initiated a number of independent projects such as using his car (Toronto) and a donkey (Donkey Institute of Contemporary Art, Beijing, China) as on-going mobile project spaces. He is represented by the Katzman Kamen Gallery in Toronto and Yuanfen New Media Art Space in Beijing, China. Currently, Lau is professor of painting at York University Toronto.

To view the images used in this article in a larger and more detailed format, follow this link:
http://openartsjournal.org/issue-2/issue-2-galleries/article-13

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Abstract
This photo-essay documents the conception and realisation of a 'mobile display unit', a kind of cabinet of curiosities attached to a donkey, and made to travel through the streets of Beijing so that the texts, works and videos displayed there were accessible to passers-by.

DICA

DICA (Figure 13.1) is an itinerant contemporary art project based in Beijing, China. It adapts to the convention of the street peddler who meanders through Beijing neighbourhoods with a donkey selling his wares – a practice that continues today, albeit on a restricted scale. Faithful to this practice, DICA evolves 'organically' through its attempt to be responsive to the various situations that it encounters. Hence, the wisdom of DICA is gained through practical implementation instead of preconceived theoretical agendas. Looking back, I think DICA is about this meandering "passage" that weaves stories through its encounters. In this photo essay, I hope to offer the reader a taste of these encounters.

Beginning

The origin of DICA can be traced back to an afternoon in Beijing in 2008. Artist Michael Yuan and I had just met that summer and wanted to collaborate on some projects (Figure 13.2). Although of Chinese descent, we both grew up overseas (Australia and Canada, respectively) and were discovering contemporary China. At the time we were showing our work at the 798 Art District in Beijing. Tired of this gentrified area, we went across a dividing main road for an 'authentic' lunch in a traditional neighbourhood. We hung out in a makeshift type of local eatery. After having consumed quite a few bottles of beer in the intense heat of Beijing summer, Michael mentioned that he had seen street peddler with a donkey in the vicinity.

Michael's casual mentioning of the donkey must have no doubt impressed upon us as a moment of serendipity and recognition. Suddenly, an idea formed: 'Aha! A mobile art project space on a donkey'. So, The Donkey Institute of Contemporary Art (DICA) was born in a spirit of half-jest, drunken stupor, comic

Figure 13.1: DICA Logo. Courtesy of the artists.

Figure 13.2: Michael Yuen and Yam Lau at one of DICA presentations. Courtesy of the artists.

defiance and friendship. Now, as DICA enters into its third anniversary, the project has certainly encountered a fair share of challenges and obstacles, some of which will be documented below.

Once we decided to establish DICA, it wasn't until a year later, in 2009, when I returned to Beijing to implement the project. Meanwhile, Michael had decided to settle in Beijing. Below is our manifesto, a launching of a sort of declarative idiocy that DICA stands by.

DICA Manifesto

The Donkey Institute of Contemporary Art (DICA) is an initiative dedicated to supporting experimental contemporary art on the back of a donkey. Established in the Beijing summer of 2009, DICA demonstrates a donkey's spirit of steadfast oblivion. The DICA and the donkey counter all forms of calculated intelligence, promotion and profit making within the market place of contemporary art. They do so with the slowest possible speed, the most idle tactics and wandering work ethics.

Obstinate, dumb and proceeding on blind faith, DICA meanders throughout cities to meet its potential audience, whoever that might be. Yet, DICA makes no claim or appeal for recognition in these encounters. The institute lives by the charm and rhythm that is unique to the donkey's soul. In this sense, DICA is the most inhuman and radical fulfillment of the avant-garde. It posits an almost complete sort of "standing-still" that refuses to concede to anything.

For its inaugural meandering exhibition, DICA will present video works on portable monitors attached on the back of the Donkey.

驢子當代藝術協會宣言

驢子當代藝術協會致力於在驢背上為當代實驗藝術提供支援。此協會於2009年在北京成立，宣導驢子所具備的一成不變的遺忘精神。協會及其驢子採用盡可能慢的速率、以最為懶散的策略以及游離不定工作規則來反對在當代藝術市場中的各種形式的蓄謀、促銷及盈利行為。

帶著倔強、木訥以及盲目的信仰，驢子當代藝術協會穿梭於城市之間，去邂逅其潛在的觀眾，不管其觀眾為何人。然而，協會並非要尋求邂逅者們的認可，它所賴以生存的魅力與韻律是驢子靈魂中所獨有的。從這個意義上來說，協會卻是最野蠻與激進的先鋒派。它幾乎是在用一種"原地踏步"的方式來拒絕任何讓步。

在這場創始巡迴展中，協會將在由驢子背負著的可攜式顯示器上展示出視頻作品。

Yam Lau + Michael Yuen
Beijing 2009

Before the First Outings

❛ … For its inaugural meandering exhibition, DICA will present video works on portable monitors attached on the back of the Donkey … ❜

In effect, DICA is a work of assembly, of scouting and outfitting the necessary parts for the event. There is this causal, loose and contingent character to the project. In the outskirts of Beijing we met the donkey peddler Mrs Tang, who was interested in collaborating with us. Our first outing was a show of video works by Chinese and western artists. We needed to work out a number of technical challenges such as acquiring proper hardware, power supply, monitors, speakers (Figure 13.3), and mounting devices. All of which required customisation for the purpose of the project.

At the shops, I remember the incredulous faces on people when they learned about the intended use of our gears. We found Mr Ma, a leather craftsman who made saddles for horseback riding. He was involved in the design of a special harness for mounting the video monitors on the donkey. Apparently, his shop was the only saddle shop in Beijing and we found it completely by chance. I think we lucked out.

Finally, we were ready for the inaugural outing. Unfortunately, unforeseen obstacles happened and I

Figure 13.3: Speakers designed by Laoban Soundsystem. Courtesy of the artists.

began to see a different, unexpected 'dimension' of the project. The donkey and her handler Mrs Tang were 'arrested' on their way into the city to meet with us. The charge was trespassing. According to the authorities, the donkey had wandered into a prohibited area of the city. But who could say for sure? Everything, including the donkey, the cart and the goods were subsequently impounded. Even though donkey peddlers were common in Beijing and therefore this incident would have been rather routine, it was still something expatriate artists could not have anticipated. I realized that by adopting the donkey as our vehicle, we inadvertently became entangled with the sociopolitical dynamic between urban and rural Beijing. From the point of view of the donkey peddler, we experienced a taste of the daily struggle within the city. In time, we would also experience the hazard of staging (art) activities outside of official venues.

From the police station, the donkey peddler Mrs Tang called us to 'bail' them out. Based on what I witnessed at the station, I am almost certain that the arrest was a case of an arbitrary abuse of power that the authority was too happy to inflict on country folks. For despite China's recent rise as an economic power,

the distribution of wealth, knowledge and health care is extremely uneven. Privileges are mostly weighted towards urban centres. At the police station, I saw her treated almost as a second-class citizen who intruded into the city in order to get a share of the pie. On top of this, Mrs Tang was asked to submit an official written report of her activity. This demand presented yet another insult, as the authorities knew she was illiterate. In the end, I wrote the report with my passable Chinese, something I hadn't used for years. It took a while to write the two short paragraphs. Since Mrs Tang couldn't write her own name, I managed to do it for her. I remember that moment very clearly.

Later, we found out that the DICA website, designed to broadcast the itinerary of the project, was banned in China almost as soon as it was launched.

DICA 2009
After these initial hurdles, DICA was finally ready to go. We ended up working with Mr Wang (Figure 13.4), a donkey handler who lived three hours (donkey speed) Northeast of Beijing. Like many migrant workers, he came from a neighbouring province to look for work. Normally Mr Wang employed the donkey to pull bricks.

Figure 13.4: Yam Lau and Mr. Wang. Courtesy of the artists.

I liked Mr Wang a lot. He always seemed content, relaxed and stoic. I liked his nameless donkey as well. He was a healthy and well-treated animal: content, relaxed and stoic.

For our first outing, we started with a bit of meandering towards the neighbourhood where the idea of DICA was first conceived. We picked a lively intersection, a popular thoroughfare where one can find a variety of shops and small food stalls conveniently stationed. At around dusk, the traffic began to pick up when locals returned from work and residents came out to stroll after dinner. Crowds began to gather around the donkey and the video monitors. Surely, most people were at first puzzled about the meaning of the activities. Fortunately this curiosity led them to start a discussion. At first, the locals and the people from the art-world who came to see the event formed two separate groups. Eventually a spontaneous street party broke out within the vicinity of DICA (Figures 13.5-13.6). The groups began to mingle. We ate barbecue-skewered meat with noodles and drank beer on the street well into the night. Later, I learned that quite a number of stalls had sold out their stock of beer. DICA had bolstered the local economy.

Figure 13.5 (above): DICA first outing. Courtesy of the artists.

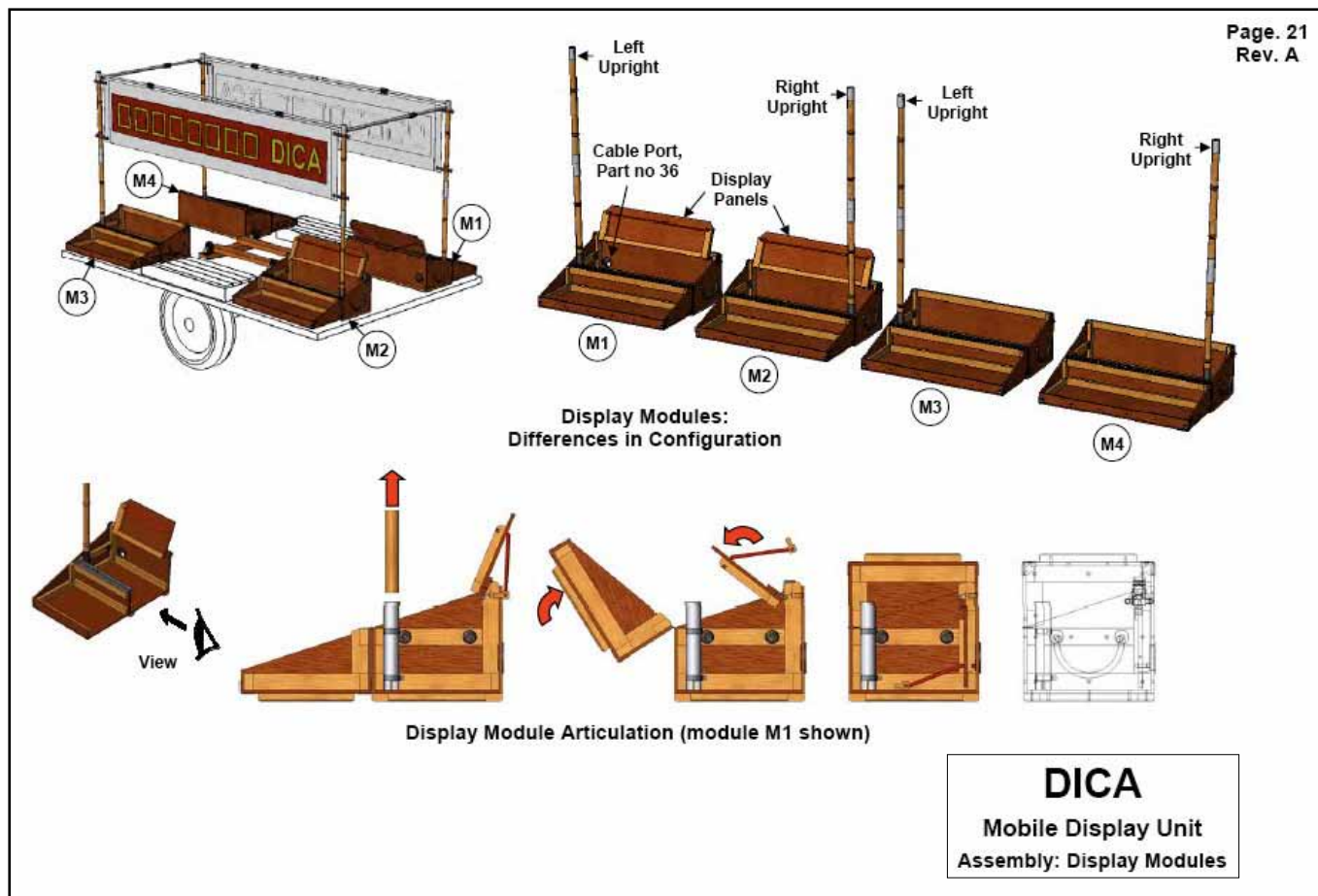Figure 13.6 (right): DICA first outing. Courtesy of the artists.

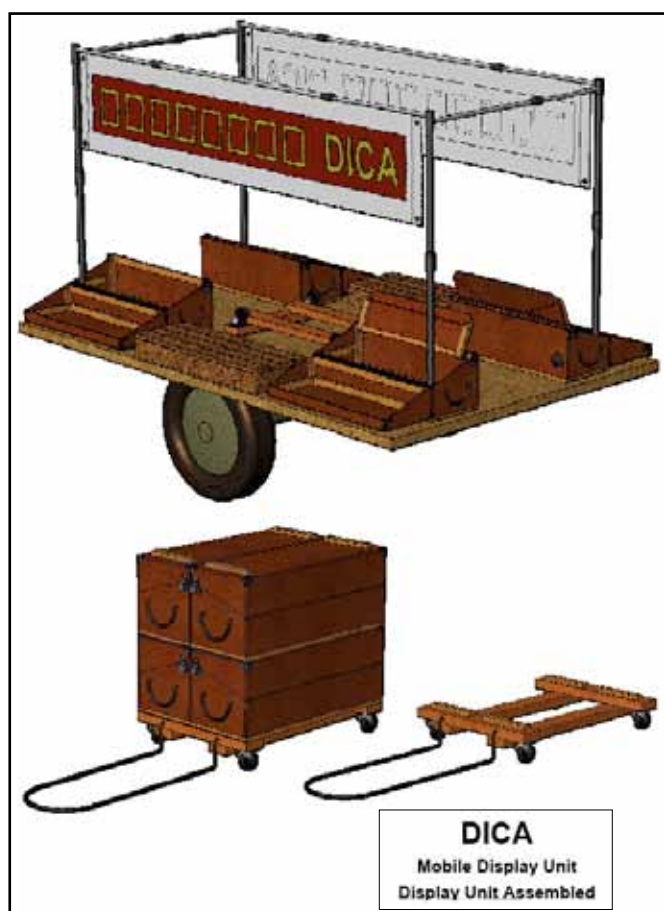Figure 13.7: DICA mobile display unit drawings. Courtesy of the artists.

Figure 13.8: DICA mobile display unit drawings. Courtesy of the artists.

While I returned to Canada after DICA's first outing in the summer of 2009, the project was kept active under the care of Michael. DICA was invited to participate in several notable exhibitions during this period, including the *798 Biennial* in Beijing and *Dong Xi Things* in Austria. Participation in official venues means DICA could indeed maneuver in and out of the art-world.

DICA 2010

As stated in the manifesto, DICA proceeds on 'blind faith'. It is an accumulative, work-in-progress. Since I learned that the presence of DICA could always draw a crowd that could benefit the local economy, I thought DICA could also help Mr Wang to sell things. Prior to my return to Beijing, I worked with Dahlan Gamblin back in Canada to design a set of four portable display units that can be easily mounted onto the donkey cart. This way, Mr Wang could also use two of the units to sell his wares while DICA would present small art objects. I envisioned a mutually beneficial mixing of local and art-world economies. For the 2010 iteration of DICA, Michael and I decided to display a selection of artists' bookwork. The project became a mobile library.

Given the rough and ready nature of the project, as well as the constant stream of harassment DICA had to face, we intended the units to assume a blunt

Figure 13.9: Mobile unit close up. Courtesy of the artists.

Figure 13.10: Mobile unit assembled on trolley. Courtesy of the artists.

Figure 13.11: DICA outing. Courtesy of the artists.

and militant appearance. Dahlan modeled them after WWII ammunition containers and I think they lend a combative spirit to DICA (Figures 13.7–13.8). Despite their rather austere appearance, the mechanism of the units is very refined and sophisticated. The four individual units and a transporting trolley are configured to fit onto the donkey wagon. The units can also be stacked on the trolley and transported easily as an independent structure.

The units were designed to be multifunctional, to be used as storage, display and support for the banner canopy (which was never built). All the equipment and content of DICA such as the monitors, speakers, batteries and artworks can be conveniently packed, stored away and transported in the units (Figures 13.9–13.10).

An Unexpected Guest

Outings were always a lot of fun. The sensation of moving through Beijing traffic on the donkey wagon was incredibly thrilling. A regular outing routinely alternated between wandering and stationing. Along the way DICA invariably created street parties, attracting people from all walks of life (Figure 13.11)

At our first 2010 outing, I noticed one local visitor being very curious, even scrupulous in examining all the art publications on display (Figure 13.12). He arrived alone but was very friendly to everyone, chatting up the scene. After the event, DICA hosted a dinner party on the sidewalk that was attended by a substantial crowd

Figure 13.12: DICA outing featuring a selection of artist's bookworks. Courtesy of the artists.

Figure 13.13: Yam Lau with a visitor from the 'Department of Culture'. Courtesy of the artists.

from the art community. This individual came along and happened to sit next to me. I struck up a conversation with him and asked what he did for a living. He told me he was a policeman. I laughed at his response. I was probably too drunk to take him seriously. But then he showed me his badge under the table. This very discrete act was enough to sober me up instantly.

Once his identity was revealed, he appeared at other DICA outings to monitor us. Although DICA meandered, he always knew where to find us. Apparently he is known to a number of art-world folks as a special policeman from the 'Department of Culture'. We saw each other a couple more times since that evening. In the image below we almost look like we are friends (Figure 13.13).

Future Projects

At this time of writing, I am not sure what the next incarnation of DICA will be. There are things about the geopolitics in Beijing that fascinate me. On the way to village where the donkey peddler Mr Wang lived, I saw a stretch of landscape that could not be classified as urban or rural. Features from both environments seemed to have been littered randomly without a sense of cohesion. Life seemed to have been evacuated as most buildings were abandoned. This long stretch of space looked like a series of disconnected ruins. Since this is the usual route of the donkey, I would like to investigate this environment further. Readers may visit www.donkeyinstitute.net for updates.

ELECTRONIC TEXTILES FOR ARCHITECTURE
Sarah Bonnemaison

This account of a project for a 'warming hut' at the 2011 Canada Games in Halifax reveals how making use of the experimental framework provided by the pavilion type can allow architects to test the possibilities of a more responsive or interactive kind of environment.

Keywords: pavilion, architecture, electronic textiles, biofeedback, experiment, interactivity.

Sarah Bonnemaison was born and raised in Paris, but now works in Nova Scotia, where she takes inspiration from the sense of history in the Canadian province, its unique indigenous traditions, and its vital craft traditions and their adaptions in the face of changing technologies. She regards craft not as a traditional or hidebound practice but an opportunity to create new tools or explore better methods of construction. She teaches architecture at Dalhousie University in Halifax and reflects on the meaning of architecture through lectures, writing and the curating of exhibitions.

ELECTRONIC TEXTILES FOR ARCHITECTURE

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Abstract

This account of a project for a 'warming hut' at the 2011 Canada Games in Halifax reveals how making use of the experimental framework provided by the pavilion type can allow architects to test the possibilities of a more responsive or interactive kind of environment.

Introduction

Some years ago, I joined forces with the weaver Robin Muller to design and develop electronic textiles for architecture. With funding from the Atlantic Innovation Fund, we formed the Architextiles Lab, called the @Lab for short. Our goal as principal investigators of a multidisciplinary team was to design and create architectural prototypes that integrate electronic textiles. Most research in the field of electronic textiles is for wearable items, like shape-changing and heat-reactive clothing or wearable 'soft' computers. The military is a big client for this technology, using, for example, communication technology worn next to the body of the soldier. Our designs for electronic textiles focus on the built environment rather than the body.

They range in scale from a curtain to a pavilion. They also all explore various combinations of manual and digital craft, from slow tech to high tech. This short essay is an opportunity to present one project, showing the design process and completed prototypes, and also to reflect on our design-research process.

In general, the @Lab's prototypes integrate moving parts. They are as simple as a curtain sliding on a rod, and as complex as a collapsible pavilion that must telescope, pivot and fold to shrink to a small fraction of its volume. We learned about collapsible structures from camping tents, folding furniture and retractable objects. Textiles of course, have been valued for millenia for their lightness and portability. To add electronics to these deployable structures, we had to isolate fabric from structure, 'skin' from 'bones', in order to avoid damaging wires as the structure unfolded.

One of the most challenging aspects of working at the @Lab was the collaborative process. Like a film crew, we were a multidisciplinary team. But we didn't know what to expect as this was new for all of us. We had to invent a way of working together and continually adapt it throughout our years of collaboration: from the way we communicated with each other, to unexpected collisions when one discipline (or one material) met another. Over time, our weekly meetings became the core of our design process, a space in which we could clarify our intentions and examine our decisions from

Figure 14.1: @Lab (Sarah Bonnemaison and Robin Muller), Winter Warming Hut, Halifax, 2011. Courtesy of Sarah Bonnemaison.

each discipline's point of view. We solved innumerable problems by 'mocking up', or building full-scale, portions of the prototype. This way, we could see where and how structure, fabric and electronics overlap, often in motion. Working in an open lab, we were able to design and build in an iterative process – planning, mocking-up, detailing, and fabricating – with countless feedback loops at each stage, until we got the results we were aiming for. When you walk into @Lab, it feels more like an artist's studio than a laboratory – laser-cut fabric samples flutter from the walls, pinned next to inspirational photographs, records of past projects, and fragments of prototypes. Boxes of printed plastic joints squeeze hand-crafted models off the shelves, bolts of custom-made fabrics are stuffed between crates of electronics and spools of conductive thread.

We have learned that interdisciplinary design research is only as good as the members of the team. In fact, building a team with the right people may be the most critical determinant of success. We now know how to work together and can do so efficiently, effectively and with a great sense of personal and collective accomplishment. As my funding from the Atlantic Innovation Fund drew to a close, I began a new phase of work with the support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and more 'responsive environments' are now in process.

Canada Games / Winter Warming Hut

In the frozen and windy Canadian winter, when people look for social spaces, they are drawn to the small, the warm and the intimate. @Lab's next project was
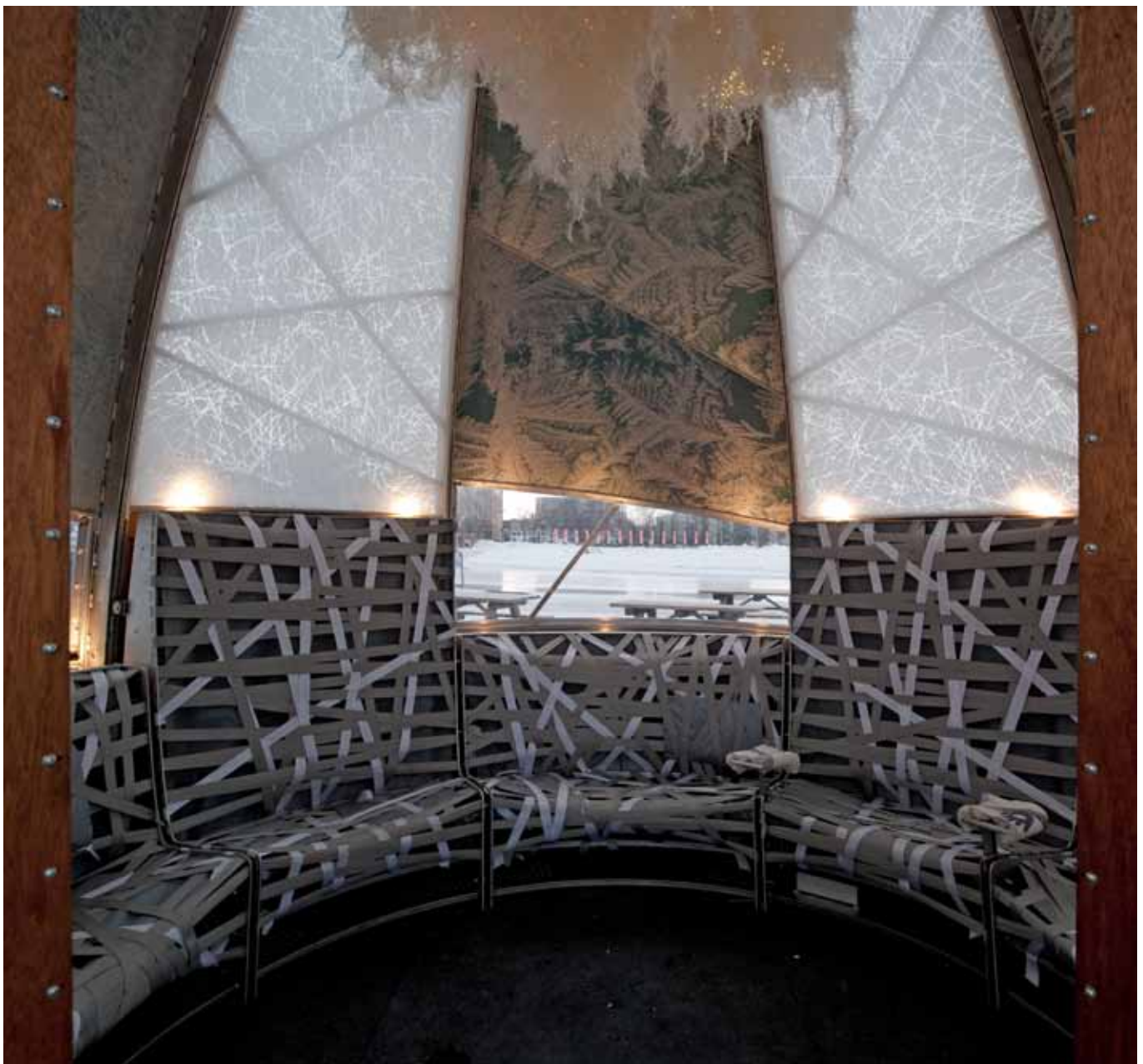

Figure 14.2: @Lab (Sarah Bonnemaison and Robin Muller), Interior view of the Winter Warming Hut, Halifax, 2011. Courtesy of Sarah Bonnemaison.

designed as that kind of space. The brief was a warming hut adjacent to a temporary 400-metre skating oval built on the Commons for the 2011 Canada Games in Halifax. We conceived of this pavilion as a hard shell on the outside – protecting people from wind and snow – and a warm and welcoming place on the inside, made of a seating circle, soft textiles forming a snowflake chandelier, and window through which people could watch the action outside. It would be like a jewel box encasing a social heart. The Commons is a large and windswept site, and any shelter built there must be high to be visible. The conical form of our hut was inspired by the heights of the tepees erected the previous summer, celebrating the 400th anniversary of the baptism of the great Mi'kmaq Grand Chief Membertou.

Textiles

In keeping with the jewel box concept, the hut's interior surfaces were covered with sumptuous hand-crafted textiles. Custom-made Jacquards and burn out laces were unified by our wintery colour palette and decorative motifs such as criss-crossing tracks of skate blades on ice, frost flowers, and cascades of snowflakes. The motifs extended into the circular bench, its seats and the backs crisscrossed with grey and white webbing. The exterior of the hut needed to be wind-and water-proof. Working with our commercial partner Maritime Canvas Converters, we used a perimeter system they were familiar with, to secure panels of lexan, plywood, and a puncture-resistant architectural fabric to the structure. Our colour palette for the exterior was based on the muted colours of a Georges Braque still life – brown, light blue, white, pink and black – both visible and harmonious with the hut's grey and white winter setting.

Architecture

The most important design parameter for the hut's architectural structure was that it had to be durable enough to withstand the elements for three months at a stretch and yet be easily demountable, so city parks staff could erect it, take it down, and store it each year. While Cricket was designed for lightness and portability, the Warming Hut needed to be able to withstand the icy winds that howl across the Halifax Commons in February. This reinforced our decision to make a circular structure, streamlined on all sides to shed the wind. Ten feet in diameter at the ground, it narrows to three feet at the top. The aluminum frame is divided into eight boat-shaped sections, with marine ply sheer panels at their base and Lexan windows on every other section. Some of these windows were placed so

Figure 14.3: @Lab (Sarah Bonnemaison and Robin Muller), Detail of Snowflake Chandelier in the Winter Warming Hut, Halifax, 2011. Courtesy of Sarah Bonnemaison.

people could look out, while others were covered with decorative fabric to admit a filtered light. The sections were connected with bolts and anchored to the ground with tensile anchors installed before the ground froze. Erection took two days. In future versions, the bolt holes will be relocated to allow assembly of the sections from the inside, cutting erection time in half.

Electronics

The responsive features of the hut involved heating and biofeedback. We agreed at the outset to warm people on the bench, rather than trying to heat the air in the shelter. We combed the market for seat warmers – trucks, tractors, cars, medical applications – each with its own electrical requirments and performance features. A timer controlled the pads integrated into the webbed seating and spotlights concealed in the seatbacks lit up the shelter's interior surfaces.

Our research collaborator Alan Macy, an electrical engineer specializing in biomedical electronics, lent us his heartbeat amplifier (HBA) for the centre of our social warming hut. He designed this device which recognises a heartbeat and amplifies the electrical

current associated with it in two dimensions – amplitude and frequency. We used the frequency to create a sound effect of a very low frequency, or haptic, bass. The amplitude changed the color of fiberoptic threads in the chandelier, reflected by hundreds of organza snowflakes cascading from the top of the space. The pulsating chandelier and deep vibrations of the bass made the most intimate workings of a person's body public. People seemed to delight in this, mesmerised and fascinated by the commonality of the heartbeat we all share. People lined up to get inside the hut and have this experience, with friends and strangers looking on.

The research challenge

To experience the heartbeat amplifier, a person places their palms on two surfaces positioned to each side of the seat. Contact between the hand and the copper plate allows the body's own electrical current to flow from one plate to the other. In our Canadian setting, we had to worry about skin sticking to cold metal, so we electrically warmed the pads and made wool covers over each, asking people to remove their gloves. Once
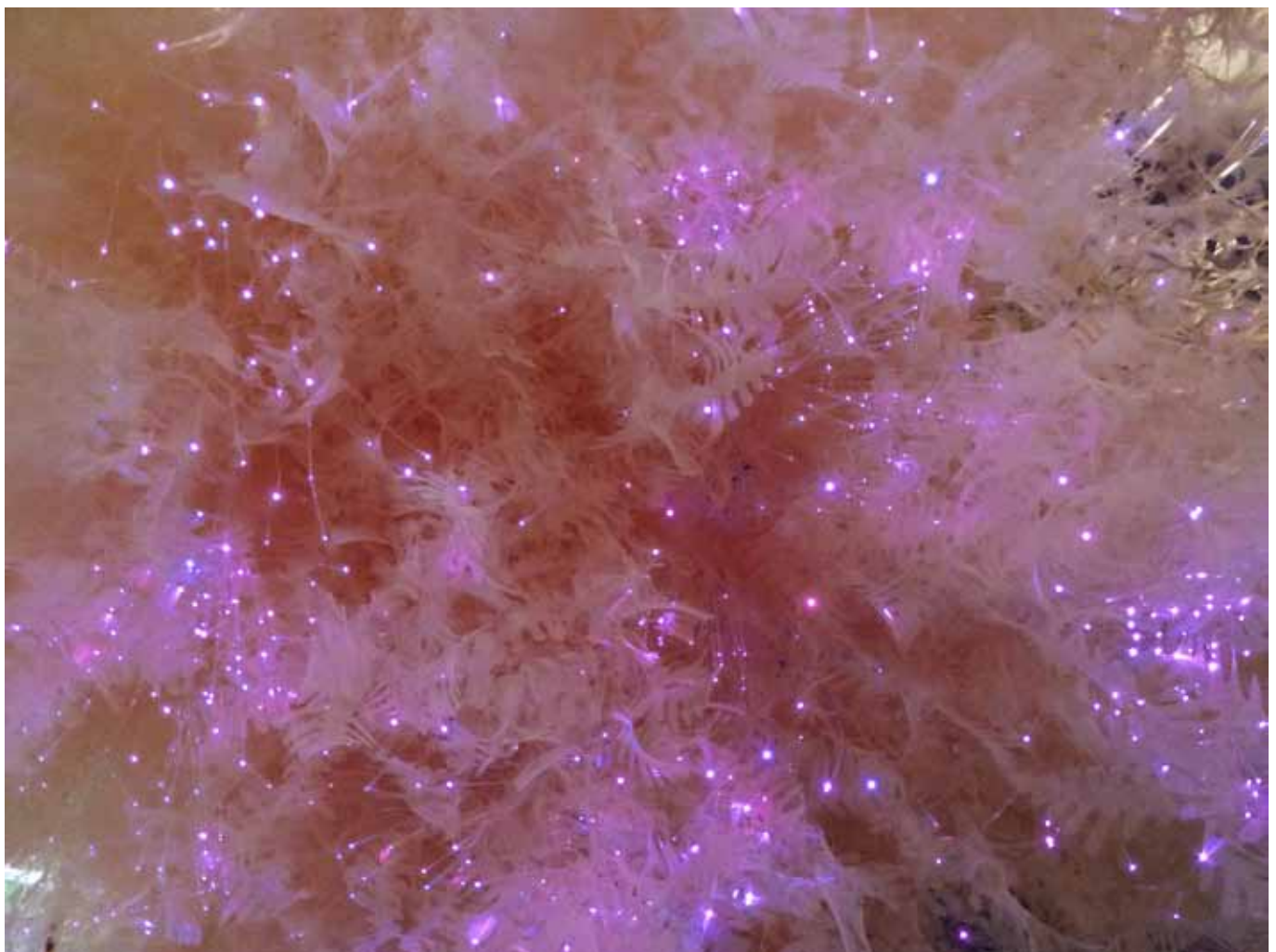

Figure 14.4: @Lab (Sarah Bonnemaison and Robin Muller), Detail of Snowflake Chandelier in the Winter Warming Hut, Halifax, 2011. Courtesy of Sarah Bonnemaison.

the hands are on the plates, the computer takes ten seconds to recognise the unique heartbeat of each person. If they fidgit or tense up, it takes longer – so we tried to make the seat comfortable and relaxing. The visually rich interior – with its unique textiles and wild chandelier – kept people still as they looked around, until the low rumble of the HBA began.

At the @Lab, we were fortunate to have the time and space to take on a creative project at this scale and be financially supported to sustain our research over four years. Looking back, the @Lab stands as an experiment in research and creation that proposes a way to work in today's design culture which, more than ever, draws from both art and science.

THE PLAYFUL PAVILION: LEARNING FROM RISKY EXPERIMENTATION IN REAL TIME

Harriet Harriss

This short reflection on a student-designed pavilion for the London Festival of Architecture underscores the importance of pavilions in providing experimental and pedagogical spaces, where risk-taking is less encumbered by the minutiae of pragmatic considerations.

Keywords: pavilion, play, ping-pong, experimentation, pedagogy, student, festival, risk taking, ambiguity management, professional behaviours.

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http://openartsjournal.org/issue-2/issue-2-galleries/article-15

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This short reflection on a student-designed pavilion for the London Festival of Architecture underscores the importance of pavilions in providing experimental and pedagogical spaces, where risk-taking is less encumbered by the minutiae of pragmatic considerations.

In summer 2012, I launched an international, 'live-project' collaboration, enabling students to design and build a Ping-Pong Pavilion (Figures 15.1–15.3) as part of the London Summer Olympics.[1] During the process of developing the brief and realising the project, it became apparent that pavilions are far from benignly beautiful constructions or frivolous follies, and are instead among the most risk enabling and innovation engendering architectural typologies possible.

Many architects harbour dreams of designing pavilions, almost as much as they do chairs. The design evidence suggest that both can act as the creative equivalent of a panic room during moments of artistic frustration. A swiftly doodled chair or pavilion sketch; diminutive enough to squeeze onto the 'back-of-a-fag-packet', can offer satisfying results within the time it takes to finish a cigarette.

Like the architect-designed chair, the pavilion typology can prove remarkably diverse, transcending context, culture and materiality. Their fair weather inclinations evoke sun dappled summer freedoms and an urge to move outside of the boundaries of our wintery mental and physical enclosures to embrace emergent optimisms. Whereas a chair succeeds by its ability to be sat upon regardless of how uncomfortable or transient this encounter might be, pavilions are 'free' to withstand any consensus on the nature of their functional remit.

Quite reasonably, the general consensus on risk taking in architecture concedes that one should always experiment in ways that avoid seriously injuring anyone. Yet pavilions have inherently 'risky' characteristics,

including exposure, porosity, temporality, material crudeness and environmental fragility – attributes that seemingly characterize the most addictive form of creative release. It is therefore the pavilion's freedom from these 'real' building constraints that appears to encourage greater levels of experimentation and risk taking during both the conceptualization and making phases: a freedom that subsequently makes them an optimum learning vehicle for architecture students (Gaver, Boucher, Pennington, and Walker, 2004, pp.53–56).

Similarly, for design tutors keen to encourage experimentation, asking students to both design and build a pavilion can liberate students from the usual expectations regarding both methods and outputs. Resisting the established *modus operandi* in schools of architecture is not easy. The tendency is to assume that authentic 'experimentation' can only be achieved by asking students to respond to recondite briefs delivered within the practice nursery of the design studio: an approach that often achieves mixed results and can throw even the most creatively fearless students into the arms of architectural cliché, rather than innovation.

Alternatively, students who are engaged in designing and building a pavilion at the scale of 1:1, are comparatively 'free' to create a dialectic between a liberated typology and a liberated process of design development and realization, and transcend the educational equivalent of repeatedly firing an empty catapult. As collectively enchanting and even self-seductive as the archetypal photo-montaged CAD renderings dominating the 'design crit' might be, the ability to design a good image and a good building are not one in the same thing.

The playful Ping-Pong Pavilion project was therefore intended to offer students from Oxford Brookes University and Montana State University, 'freedom' from pervading methods and outputs characterizing the design studio. The brief asked students to respond creatively to the anticipated Olympic fervour, by designing a playful and interactive pavilion whose tour of duty included our end of year show, the RIBA's 'Love Architecture' Festival and the London Festival of Architecture at the canning town 'Industri[us]' site.

The pavilion brief stipulated that students responded to the LFA's 'Playful City' theme, and develop pavilion proposals that playfully engaged the public in exploring spaces for sport (Johannson and Linde, 2005, n.p.). Implicit within the brief was the requirement to take the concept of a 'game' of ping-pong, appropriate its rules and apply them to the 'game' of architecture (Saggio, 2007, p.399; Schrage, 1999, xiii). Subsequently,

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1   Further images of the Ping-Pong Pavilion are on the website for the London Festival of Architecture http://www.lfa2012.org/events/view/the-playful-ping-pong-pavilion-101, and a blog for the Ping-Pong Pavilion http://playfulpavilion2012.blogspot.com/.

Figure 15.1: Harriet Harriss (with students from Oxford Brookes University and Montana State University), Ping Pong Pavilion, London Festival of Architecture, 2012. Courtesy of Harriet Harriss.

Figure 15.2 (above): Harriet Harriss (with students from Oxford Brookes University and Montana State University), Detail of the Ping Pong Pavilion, London Festival of Architecture, 2012. Courtesy of Harriet Harriss.

Figure 15.3 (right): Harriet Harriss (with students from Oxford Brookes University and Montana State University), Ping Pong Pavilion, London Festival of Architecture, 2012. Courtesy of Harriet Harriss.

the winning pavilion design deconstructed the game of ping-pong, embedding the rules, players' maneuvers and even descriptive terminologies into and onto the pavilion structure. The end result was a pavilion that could accommodate up to twelve players in one game and even assume an active role during the game itself.

With all 'design and build' focused 'live-projects', there are inherent health and safety constraints to reconcile before institutional as well as practical concerns are assuaged. The pavilion endeavour involved a 'risk triptych' that combined the inherent risks in experimentation, the risk to and from students' brandishing electric drills rather than android mobiles and the physical risk to the public during interactions with the end product. At times however live projects pursuits can easily evoke the tyranny of litigation, and can constrain schools that would otherwise seek to engender greater opportunities for students' creative risk taking and experimentation.

The problem is the architects in practice are increasingly exposed to higher levels of risk and liability. This places increased obligation upon schools to delivering practice-ready architecture graduates, and to ensure they are equipped with relevant skills needed to work with and manage their exposure to risk effectively. To isolate students from the freedom to experiment with risk only further undermines a school's ability to offer professional training and education.

The Ping Pong Pavilion students were required to breach the threshold of the speculative risk space of design studio and instead take real risks. If the design studio is as Dana Cuff puts it, 'intended as far as possible to provide a risk free environment for students to learn and experiment,' then the implication is that learning and creative experimentation can only occur if 'risk' is removed (Cuff, 1991, p.106). Yet this notion is at odds with the purpose of education to prepare students for professional practice, and even the very term 'design studio' – which denotes its claim to be modelled upon the architect's 'practice studio' – is called into question.

Within the commercial world, creative experimentation and risk taking are considered core competencies for innovation. It is widely accepted that although taking risks has only two possible outcomes – success or failure – it is failure that will get us to reach better solutions more quickly. As captured in the popular business maxim credited to Bill Moggridge (2012) of Global product innovation company IDEO, the route to innovation involves a, 'fail early, fail often; succeed sooner,' approach. In other words, failing (but not collapsing) pavilions offer a 'sooner' route to successful innovation than other building typologies.

When the Ping Pong Pavilion roof leaked, the students had to experiment to find a solution. Trying to play ping-pong on uneven timber boards identified a risky trip hazard. Cutting into scaffold poles to create a ball return exposed the untreated metal to oxidization. When the team seemed unable to agree on a course of action, everything stopped. The build was physically as well as mentally challenging. Problems needed to be resolved under real time pressure. Even the solutions sometimes failed. Yet slowly, the pavilion emerged chrysalis-like from deep within the tussle of abandoned intentions, failed experiments and missing drill bits. In places, the Ping-Pong Pavilion captured the architecture of elegance, humour, thoughtfulness, invention and intelligence, even if the price of interaction could be counted in splinters.

Although the build proved physically arduous at times, the purpose of arming students with tools on a pavilion build is not to develop their physical muscles, but their commercial ones: the kind of muscles that will enable them to risk success and profit from failure, to prosper in adversity and make architecture an innovative rather than reactive profession.

The two-week pavilion live-project did not set out to teach highly educated architecture students to build less than adequate sheds. Its real purpose was to allow them sufficient freedom to encounter the kind of risky experiences that will characterize their lives as professionals, and perhaps most importantly, to develop the kind of creative and experimental instincts that may yet lead the profession forward in ways we have yet to imagine.

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DECONSTRUCTING THE CHILDREN'S ART PAVILION

Chris Tucker

This paper discusses the design, construction and eventual deconstruction of the Children's Art Pavilion at the Newcastle Region Art Gallery in Australia. As a space for children to experiment with art, the Pavilion metaphorically engaged the verandah as a space that has historically (albeit minimally) mediated the zone where inside and outside meet. Its process of deconstruction referenced the work of Gordon Matta-Clark, and was testament to how the architectural design process continues through this phase, albeit uninhibited by the need to create a functioning object. In the time leading up to its deconstruction, the Pavilion became perfectly functionless, while its form and architectural content remained critically intact. Cutting into its surface, as a continuation of the design process, framed the void. Security was replaced with instability, not just physically but emotionally. At this point, the ground became cliff, or broke against the surf, and indeterminacy destroyed the purpose of even the most elementary architectural space. The new construction immediately suggested the possibilities of another architecture. As an intriguing social and architectural experiment, undergone by a building that could have quietly been loaded into a bin within a few hours, this project illuminated the social responsibility invested within architecture.

Keywords: pavilion, children, verandah, demolition, deconstruction, residual, architecture.

Chris Tucker is the convenor of the Master of Architecture programme in the School of Architecture and Built Environment at the University of Newcastle in Australia, and director of the architectural practice herd. Chris has been awarded regional, state and international prizes for architecture, and his buildings and designs have been widely exhibited and published. A number of his projects and essays are collected in a book entitled *Residue: Architecture as a Condition of Loss* published in 2007 (with Michael Ostwald and Michael Chapman). His designs and models have been exhibited at the Venice Biennale Australian Pavilion in 2008, the State Library of NSW, the Melbourne Museum, and various galleries in Newcastle and Sydney. He is currently completing a PhD titled *Mapping residual space within urban streets: A case for adapting existing buildings within Newcastle for housing.*

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Background

The Children's Art Pavilion was constructed in 1996 as a temporary structure on the site of the Newcastle Region Art Gallery in Australia. Its lifespan was to be only three years; however it remained in use as a children's art space until 2010. In 2006, an architectural competition was held for the design of a new Newcastle Region Art Gallery, the brief suggesting that the Pavilion and the Art Gallery would both be demolished to make way for the new building. The competition was well supported by architects throughout Australia, but the cost of constructing the winning entry was going to be considerably more than the available funds. In 2010, a revised design was undertaken by the NSW Government Architect, adapting and extending the existing Gallery, removing only the Pavilion. The cost for this work had been estimated at £15million, with the Federal Government, NSW State Government and Newcastle City Council (NCC) slated to commit £5million each. However,

the NSW State Government rejected applications for this funding, leaving NCC no other option but to pick up the remaining £5million. With local government elections in September 2012, the issue of whether to fund the final £5million was politicized, with recreation and culture going head to head for electorate support. The decision to go ahead with the demolition of the Pavilion, while debate continued about the future of the Gallery addition, was significant gesture given this current political situation. The demolition of the Pavilion was also used in the media by NCC to leverage the NSW Government to commit to the remaining £5million now that work on the new Art Gallery had begun (Smee, 2012b). It is the demolition, or rather the unmaking or this Pavilion, that is the subject of this paper.[1]

Making the Children's Art Pavilion

The existing gallery was Australia's first purpose-built regional gallery and was officially opened by Queen Elizabeth II in 1977. Designed in the Brutalist style, its concrete structural frame, articulated with a split double column, provided a visual separation between structure and the wall elements that it supported. The site for the Pavilion was triangular in shape and something of a left-over space from the original gallery design, but facing a popular street to one side of the Gallery, and with a mature eucalyptus in its centre. In 1995, the then director of the Newcastle Region Art Gallery, David Bradshaw, contacted three recent architectural graduates to see if they would be interested in designing an adjunct space for no more than £60,000, where children could experiment with making art. While contemporary project procurement and management processes have limited the engagement of architectural graduates for these types of small, low-cost public buildings, a significant legacy of the Pavilion was that it afforded this opportunity. The design of the Pavilion was well publicized and a series of models were exhibited within the Gallery. The matter of whether it could remain within a small budget, however, would always have the potential to impose design changes. When the construction tender was only £3,000 over budget, the designers removed the surveyors' fee from the tender and completed this themselves for no cost. The construction drawings described each element of the building's frame with a discrete length, cutting profile and bolt locations, allowing the complex organic shape to be assembled

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1 As one of the original architects of the Children's Art Pavilion, I became interested in the wider political questions around the removal or unmaking of buildings at the point when this project was slated for demolition.
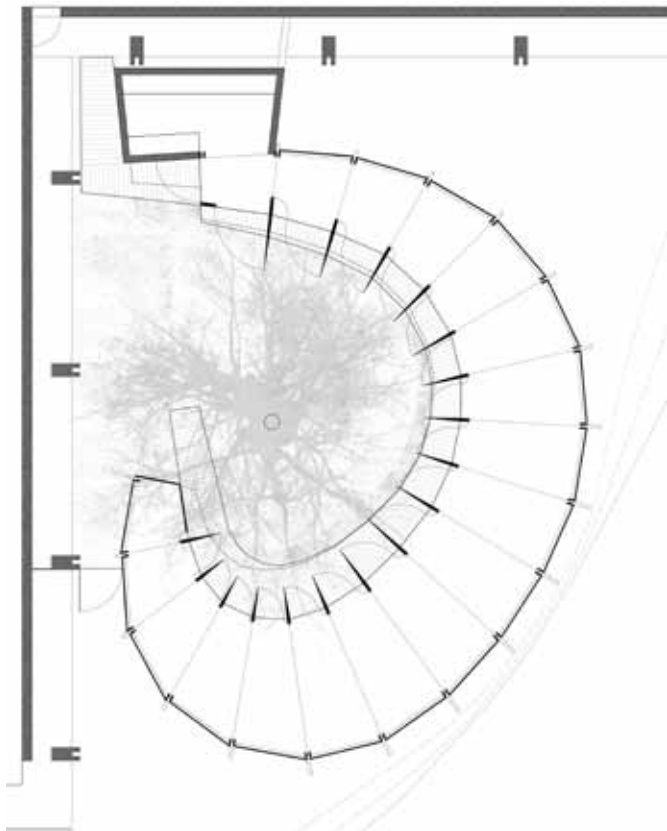
Figure 16.1: Chris Tucker, *Art Pavilion plan*, 2013. Courtesy of the architect.

on site. Purlins connected each of the portal frames and the structure was lined externally with a single skin of cypress pine tongue and groove floorboards. The wall facing the courtyard was made from fourteen swiveling and tapered doors lined with galvanised sheet, allowing the children's workspace to be completely opened up to the court-like a verandah, as shown in Figure 16.1. The doors became easels, with magnets holding paper in place, or even surfaces for temporary *in situ* artworks, shown in Figures 3 and 4.

When Bob Carr, then Premier of NSW, officially opened the Pavilion in 1996, he recognised it as a cultural milestone within a city that was undergoing change, with for instance the closure of its steel making facilities (Scanlon, 1996). There followed a number of newspaper editorials describing the Pavilion's engagement with the community (Towndrow, 1997), and particularly with children as part of the Scribbly Gum Art Club (Ryan, 1996). It received design awards including the 1996 Charles Davis Award, the Hunter Civic Design Award and the 1996 Master Builders Association Award for innovative timber use. (This was quite an achievement, for as none of the graduates were registered architects, the Pavilion could not be considered for any architectural awards sponsored by the Australian Institute of Architects).
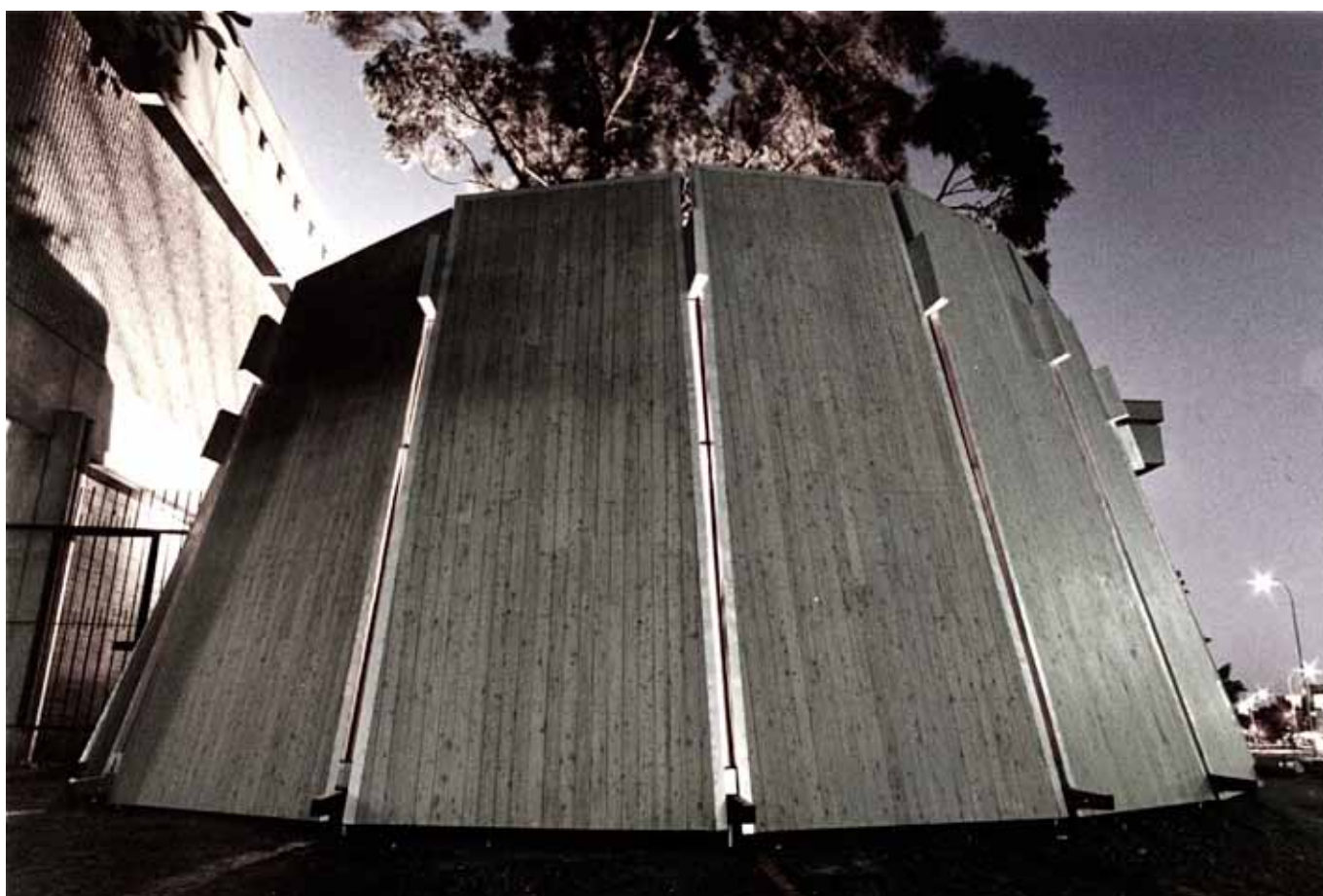

Figure 16.2: Herd (Architectural Practice), *Art Pavilion*, Newcastle Region Art Gallery, Australia, 1996. Credit Tim Lincoln. Courtesy of the architect.

The Pavilion was published in the *Australian Architectural Review* (Margalit, 1997) and described elsewhere as a thrilling, surreal and unique place (Maitland and Stafford, 1997). That it was built at all, however, was an achievement in itself, and a significant cultural statement. Due to its ambitious form, the designers were always going to struggle to meet the budget, and its timber construction being a fire hazard to the

adjacent Gallery only passed because it was considered temporary, Figure 16.2 shows its relationship with the existing gallery. To reduce the risk of vandalism and graffiti, the landscape around the Pavilion was to be planted with thistles, stingers and other offensive weeds, warding off anyone getting too close. In the end, more servile plants were prosaically positioned around the exterior, yet the Pavilion still remained surprisingly graffiti-free for six years, and never suffered any vandalism that affected the performance of this space. It was only when the exterior landscape and cladding began to take on a neglected appearance that the graffiti began to appear. For the remaining ten years, tagging and occasional commentary would appear on the timber walls, perhaps acknowledging that this urban space was right for reclaiming by the city (Banet-Weiser, 2011). The response to the appearance of graffiti was to paint over the markings, which had an unfortunate effect on an oiled timber building, making the surface look even more inviting of abuse.

Verandah as metaphor

The Pavilion's plan (Figure 16.1) shows a verandah space whose inclined walls wrapped the existing eucalyptus, enclosing a courtyard adjacent to the Gallery. In Australia the verandah has historically mediated the conditions of outside and inside, and here it became a metaphor for minimal construction and the activities of children within. The critique of the verandah within Australian architecture has a long

Figure 16.3: Herd (Architectural Practice), *Internal view 1*, Newcastle Region Art Gallery, Australia, 1996. Credit Tim Lincoln. Courtesy of the architect.

Figure 16.4: Herd (Architectural Practice), *Internal view 2*, Newcastle Region Art Gallery, Australia, 1996. Credit Tim Lincoln. Courtesy of the architect.

history, beginning with the notable architect John Sulman, who in 1883 criticized it as being too often a stylised element flimsily attached to an otherwise solid building. He wrote that it looked more like the scaffold used in its construction, only to be disappointingly metamorphosed into a seemingly more permanent motif (Phillips, 1997). His critique took aim at the use of the verandah on many dwellings and commercial buildings of the time, as a form of decoration that lacked any real spatial or environmental role. He argued instead for the verandah to become an integral part of the internal spaces they were attached to, and to be of sufficient width to allow a multitude of household functions, effectively becoming an outdoor room.

Phillip Drew surveyed this evolution of the verandah and its use, not as a single space wrapping the edge of a dwelling, but as a demarcated zone of differentiated territories (Drew, 1992). The street-facing verandah became the ceremonial space of the house, the sides becoming the domain of individuals with adjacent bedrooms; the back becoming a service zone where the mechanics of the household could be undertaken in relative privacy. The exposed edge of the verandah was often mediated with fixed or moving screens that filtered the harsh sunlight, shielded against a strong wind, or visually made private the space from passers-by or neighbours.

Inside the verandah, furniture signified a territorial zone of the house, yet highlighted a 'nomadic condition' due to the fact that it might only be occasionally occupied (Drew, 1992, p.80). The verandah supports an overflow of internal functions where old chairs and tables might gather, only returning inside as required by guests and special occasions. A body-length lounge chair or chaise-longue becomes a place to watch passers-by or sleep outdoors on hot nights. Treasured but broken furniture finds a space to simply weather away, being just a single step from leaving the house entirely. The verandah is a temporal space critically measured by sunlight, air, household size, social relations and the street. The production of children's art is often associated with the verandah because its proximity to the inside and relaxed formality can safely accommodate the often messy business of painting and crafts. Experimentation is tolerated here because it is a border zone lacking the functional rigor that defines and limits what is possible on either the inside or the outside. For Crouch (Crouch, 2003) it is this quality of being half-open that best describes the formality of such a liminal space. Remembering the phrase of French philosopher Gaston Bachelard (Bachelard, 1969, p.222), 'man is a half-open being ... so frequently inverted, and so charged with hesitation,' what the

verandah makes vivid is that the inside and outside are not simple opposites.

A form of urban short story, the verandah has become deeply embedded within Australian culture. For the most (sub)urbanised people in the world, the verandah frames the 'ambivalence that Australians sense at being the reality of the city and the myth of the bush' (Beck, Cooper (eds), 2002, p.9). Not being defended by solid walls, the verandah and its furnishings implied that damage or theft was a reasonable possibility. There is a sense of ease within the space, where passers-by might get a glimpse of the living arrangements within. As families grew and the spaces of domestic work, study and entertainment became more common, the openness of the verandah often evolved into a more permanent enclosure. The lightness of the building, once provided by the verandah's open edge, was then bloated by the accretion of other functions.

Returning now to the Pavilion, it will be evident how the verandah has been used to structure the children's work space. The house that would usually support the verandah is sliced away, so that this side of the structure becomes another edge, one that now faces the street. From the street, it appears like a segmented wall, while from within, vertical slit-like apertures between the double columns provide a partial glimpse outward. This allowed the verandah's traditional public-facing edge to capture space in the form of a courtyard. Fully rotating swiveling doors wrapped the verandah posts, allowing the verandah space to be fully opened or completely closed as required. The doors were not lockable, and thus signalled this as an ambiguous and liminal space. The Pavilion was accessible from within the Gallery, while street-facing walls offered enclosure and security against random entry. The straight edge of the traditional verandah was abandoned, with the designers taking their cue from the eucalyptus in the centre, and delimiting an organic curve instead. This curve was not drawn with a compass, but generated by the requirements of respecting the drip line of the eucalyptus, utilizing space cost-effectively, and creating a pragmatic shelter for the activities that were to happen on the inside.

In section, the double columns that span the floor bearer and roof rafter were positioned at 2400-milimetre spacings. Nearest the entry from the gallery, these columns were vertical; however, they slowly become more inclined as the verandah space thickens toward the middle, and then become more upright as the width of the space is once again compressed (approximately to the size of a human body). Depending on their degree of incline, the walls facing the street changed in height. Only the doors

facing the courtyard remained vertical and of a regular size. The complex geometry of the Pavilion changed the way that normalised surfaces such as floor, wall and roof might behave in visual terms. The Pavilion was designed like this with a view to constructing a space that would be engaging for children, but only upon completion were its complex spatial and perceptual effects fully defined and appreciated. Visitors reported various sensations, some commenting that the floor appeared to rise as they moved through the space; that the experience became more intense as they quickened their pace, and that the walls appeared to close inward; that the scale of objects within the space seemed indeterminate; and that the light bulbs suspended from each portal frame actually appeared to defy gravity and hang away from the wall. Interestingly, children seemed to be far less affected by these perceptual effects, perhaps because adults are more habituated to rectilinear space.

Becoming residual

Cultural and social activities include both physical and cultural elements that ultimately create residual space, and occasionally result in ruins. According to the architect Louis I. Kahn, such spaces become free from the tyranny of function (quoted in Thompson, 2002). As new social spaces are created, or evolve, the existing conditions change and as a direct consequence something is lost. The deconstruction of the Pavilion in 2010 was a reminder of this, as were the words of the seventy-year old contractor who explained how he had demolished the houses that once stood here – in this very place – fifty years earlier. What other human places have been lost here, it might be asked? The Pavilion was designed and constructed as a temporary building with a three-year life-span. At the beginning of the design process, therefore, the timing of its end was already defined. While everyone is familiar with the fact that appliances and instruments of other kinds have quantifiable life expectancy, architectural design is usually intended to be more lasting, and thus it is continually challenged by the thought of its nonexistence.

With cypress pine flooring, Oregon timber columns and purlins, and plywood roofing, the Pavilion boasted a lightness of structure and skin appropriate to its temporality (as well as its budget). Even so, the Pavilion was not removed after three years as planned, but remained for another thirteen. The children's programmes run by the Gallery were only funded for three years, but proved such a success with parents and children alike, that they continued to run for twelve more before being moved inside the Gallery.

Admittedly, the Pavilion's architecture was looking tired at this time, with leaks limiting its use a public space. No longer serving its original function as a verandah-*cum*-workshop, it became a repository for chairs and tables used in Gallery seminars and openings, and an ungainly sight at best. The door between the Gallery and Pavilion was now locked to visitors, and the doors that pivoted open and shut so as to define a liminal space 'half-open' to the community were now closed for good. The Pavilion had become an actor left on stage too long, whose performance had long come to an end; the best way forward was now only a tactful departure.

The loss of a building, the destruction of something that appears more permanent, is both a horror and fascination to behold (Bevan, 2007, p.7); conversely, though, the forced usage of a building against its age or will has the character of a Phajaan (a violent ritual performed by a shaman to crush the instinctive wild nature of an elephant and render it obedient). To be sure, buildings are not alive and do not suffer, but they are bound up with emotions, ideas and meanings whose loss can cause pain to animate beings. As Hannah Arendt (1969, p.96) so lucidly puts it: 'The reality and reliability of the human world rests primarily on the fact that we are surrounded by things more permanent than the activity by which they were produced.' The threat of demolition creates emotions of loss for those whose lives and memories found a home in such things. Emotions of nostalgia and sentimentality are usually reserved for those from the broader community and civic coalitions (Zukin, 1995) who symbolise the loss more generally as a social condition. In this sense, demolition becomes emblematic of a more pervasive societal malaise where change brings an uncertainty about what the future might hold. For the Pavilion, the sense of loss associated with its demolition was perhaps diminished by its own Phajaan a few years beforPlans to relocate the Pavilion to other sites were considered since 2008. However, while it appeared to be built of potentially removable panels, it was actually a series of portal frames strapped together with purlins and lined with floorboards and plywood. Any relocation would have involved the linings being removed and the frame being disassembled into parts, before being rebuilt in a new location. Simply put, the relocation cost was twice that of constructing a new Pavilion, and given the degradation of the Pavilion's materials presented a far better solution. The community groups proposing its relocation made a clear distinction between the Pavilion and a mere replica, and were prepared to overlook its current functional limitations so as to preserve the original project. The preservation of its

social and working condition, which its relocation seemed to justify, needed to be tempered by a design process that had invested in young aspirational talent to create it in the first place. The Pavilion showed how a small sum of money invested within a community project, developed by the creative capital of the recent graduates, could result in an outstanding success. Compared with the prospect of relocation and the costs involved in that, the prospect of providing this opportunity to others appeared to be far more difficult to resurrect or replicate.

Conservation and preservation

Maros Krivy (2011) has discussed the paradoxical lack of interest conservationists have in the historicity of the built structures they struggle to conserve or reinstate. The social and situational forces that establish the ground for architecture appear to become detached from the built form itself, often reducing the complex architectural ideas to an emblematic façade. This process of detachment as Frederic Jameson (Jameson, 1991, p.424) points out, is similar to the urban mapping processes outlined by the urban theorist Kevin Lynch (Lynch, 1960), where the legibility

of buildings is removed from the situational conditions that informed their creation. Through conservation, architecture is forced to signify a particular form of temporality that 're-creates the building as a reified object, frozen in a moment prior to its obsolescence' (Krivý, 2011, p.52).

It could be argued that preservation differs from this, because it retains the traces of time as use and alteration; it also tolerates the inevitability of obsolescence as functions continue to adapt and change. Urbanist Jacqueline Groth (Groth and Corijn, 2005) extends this by suggesting that even residual structures that retain no function are part of a collective historical memory that provides a mental base for their preservation. Studies conducted by building scientist Laure Itard (Itard and Klunder, 2007) also advance the idea that preservation is more environmentally efficient than demolition or rebuilding, a significant part of this being the reduction in construction waste. The longer that a building remains functional, the more the value of the initial investment continues to increase, indicating that preservation needs to accommodate change and adaptation as an integral part of a sustainable process (Thomsen et al,

Figure 16.5: Chris Tucker, *Before deconstruction 1*, 2012. Courtesy of the architect.

Figure 16.6: Chris Tucker, *Before deconstruction 2*, 2012. Courtesy of the architect.

Figure 16.7: Chris Tucker, *Light*, 2012.
Courtesy of the architect.

Figure 16.8: Chris Tucker, *Light and door,* 2012.
Courtesy of the architect.

2011). Preservation however is continually threatened by obsolescence, as the capital-intensive characteristics of property always investigate the possibility of demolition.

The relocation of the Pavilion to a new site is indicative of conservation as opposed to preservation. The same building, on a new site and with a new use, reinforces the disjunction between context and object inherent in conservation. The persistence of architectural form discussed by Aldo Rossi (Rossi, 1982), where the urban environment and the building are linked by their production is a process that requires some level of adaptation to become successful, and as Abraham Akkerman suggests, a significant challenge for contemporary urban design could instead be to 'preserve change and to enshrine the passage of urban time' (Akkerman, 2009).
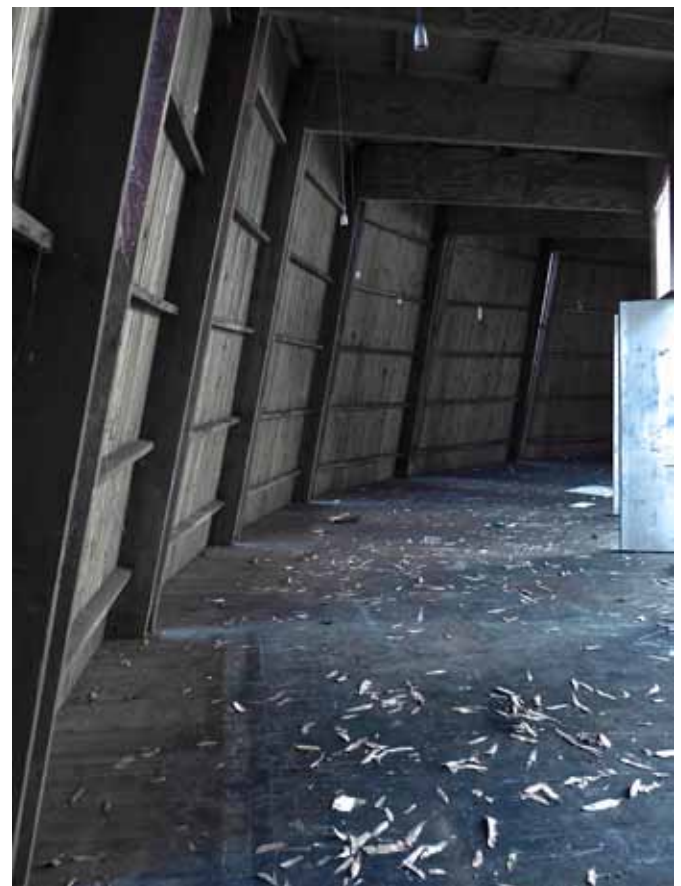

Figure 16.9: Chris Tucker, *Wall*, 2012.
Courtesy of the architect.

Should the architect be the voice of a reactionary conservation, or look for the absolute recreation of their work in another place? Theorist Bechir Kenzari infers this by reflecting that architects view 'destruction as an antonym of performance' (Kenzari, 2004, p.30). Architecture suggests a permanence that architects perhaps feel is a stable vessel for holding ideas. While buildings have always been demolished, few have perhaps been strategically unmade by their own builder. It is counterintuitive that the architect should be the one to orchestrate this, but the creation of buildings also in a way implicates this as a responsibility. It is impossible to know how the role of a building will change in the future, but in the case of the Pavilion, the architect needed to be aware of and active in this process, which was one in which the residual construction afforded a medium for continued experimentation.

Having discarded the idea of relocating the Pavilion, based on the cost of that, the council moved to demolish the Pavilion using the standard method in which nothing is preserved. This is quick and treats nearly all of the construction material as a waste product. In response, a petition was drafted that

Figure 16.10: Chris Tucker, *One of these days*, 2012. Courtesy of the architect.

requested a gradual process of deconstruction instead,[2] which would remain engaged with the community that had formed around the Pavilion over the last sixteen years. The argument was made that its removal was a compelling part of its design (Jones, 2011). Community and political support for this option followed, and this longer and more highly skilled process was costed at only 10% higher than the less respectful and creative process of simple demolition; the use of smaller machines and the possibility of recycling much of the material counteracted the increased labour costs. The deconstruction was to take a week, and one day prior to this, I staged a well-attended art event, in which I projected onto the Pavilion's wall an architecturally mapped twenty-minute film, *One of These Days*.[3] This highlighted the performative dimension and essential temporality of architectural design already implicit in the Pavilion.

Destruction, demolition and deconstruction

The processes by which a building is removed fall into one of three categories: destruction, demolition and deconstruction. Beyond the unaltered use of a building lies preservation and its possible conservation as outlined earlier. Destruction is the most violent of the removal processes, being associated with war. This might be an unintended effect of war, but quite often the intent is to erase the collective memory associated with its existence, or fulfill a symbolic act against an object of high cultural or social value (Thomsen et al, 2011).

Demolition is the most commonly used process to regenerate the urban environment, and is often occasioned by the loss of value or function, and the wish to release the potential of a particular site. It is the elimination of all constructed parts leaving only a clear site ready for development. Partial demolition of a building can take place as a process of preservation, and in some cases where changes to the built fabric are regular, the waste generated has been shown actually to exceed that associated with a well-timed demolition and new construction (Thomsen et al, 2011). Mechanical demolition is generally incompatible with either the conservation or recycling of building materials, however this is dependent on the nature and condition of the building (Leigh and Patterson, 2006).

As the cost of new resources and waste disposal continues to rise, deconstruction is being recognised as an urban resource, similar to the urban mining

2   The petition received 133 signatures and can be viewed at: http://www.gopetition.com/petitions/newcastle-region-gallery-art-pavilion-demolished-as-art.html
3   https://distrify.com/films/4385-oneof-these-days

Figure 16.11: Chris Tucker, *Doors,* 2012. Courtesy of the architect.

processes that were common in most cultures before the modern movement changed the nature of resource management within the community. In effect, construction and deconstruction are part of the same industrial cycle, and over time this loop may close even tighter. Where demolition is an undifferentiated process of compressing the mass of a building into trucks, depositing it as landfill, deconstruction is a controlled process that requires careful planning, or more fundamentally, an element of design. The conservation of natural resources is a direct outcome of this process, but its benefits require skills not typically found within demolition teams (Leigh and Patterson, 2006).

Deconstruction is a value-adding exercise that requires a willingness to recycle. Temporary buildings such as the Pavilion highlight this need to consider the life of materials beyond an initial construction. Buildings destined for demolition need to be investigated as opportunities for deconstruction, a process that should involve the skills existing within the construction industry. A potential end user or designer could be required to assess what materials might be used elsewhere; the builder to assess the logistics of removal, and more broadly how the elements of a deconstructed building might once again become general building materials.

The deconstruction of the Pavilion began on 7 August 2012. Studying both prefabricated parts and general building materials within the Pavilion, and establishing a possible reuse, was easier than thought. Much of the cypress pine boarding went to a small furniture maker who specialised in recycled timber, the patina of the boards being of particular value; other boards in good condition became floorboards

elsewhere. Some sections of walls went to varied individuals as complete constructions that have become other types of objects, particularly as tables and garden furniture. Twelve complete portal frames went to an individual for reconstruction, four others were cut out as fully lined assemblies and used in various locations, again often in gardens. The galvanised sheet and cappings were recycled as were many other smaller elements such as galvanised pipe, bolts and framing members.

As parts of the Pavilion were redistributed for various reuses, the cost efficiency of the deconstruction process became more obvious. The lightness of the construction, used as a method to reduce costs, provided a more efficient deconstruction process as well. Very few elements were hidden by linings, reducing both the unknowns within the construction, and the labour of disassembly. A rational use of materials is such that it always asks what the minimal materials required are for an intended function, and expresses a yearning for architectural lightness captured succinctly in Buckminster Fuller's question: how much does your building weigh?[4] It was the geometrically complex way that those materials were joined that lent the space its qualities, and it followed in deconstruction that those connections and joints were highly valued as reusable items. The craftsmanship applied to the individually cut and profiled parts and joints, which had been left exposed, told a story of its making, and of processes of material transformation over time.

4   This is a question that Buckminster Fuller would ask when marketing his lightweight Dymaxion House in the 1920s.

Weathering

The Pavilion is conceptually derived from the traditional Australian verandah, minus the house that functionally and visually supports it. Generally speaking, the verandah is that supplement to the house which, mediating the inside and the outside, is exposed to the weather. The walls facing the children's workspace maintained much of their natural timber finish over its sixteen years of use. However, the same boards facing the street were exposed to the urban environment, with no roof overhang, and inclined to face more sky than a usual wall. Thus, its exposed surface was always going to be weathered in varied ways. Rain, light and wind on natural timber has the effect of opening up the grain over time. Cracks and fissures provide spaces for residue, lichen and other plant life to rest, and in turn either protect or continue to break down the physical surface. The environment thereby writes itself into that surface. The sixteen faces of the Pavilion, each differently angled, absorbed the sun, shade, wind and street, and weathered in their own ways; boards facing north east continued to look almost new, while the south facing boards became thick with lichen and other plant life.

These weathered surfaces, in their various conditions of decay, reveal a history of the Pavilion in response to its environment. While surfaces are fascinating in themselves (Mostafavi, Leatherbarrow, 1993, p.65), forming the very conditions of space (Bixby, 2009), it is the inscription of the environment there that layers meanings within the city, generating a space of articulation (Gandelsonas, 1998). As long as the surfaces are not repaired or maintained, they record their interaction within the environment in a literal way. This is often the condition of the urban residual, left as a remnant from some vanishing process. architecture continues to interact with the environment that it now persists passively within.

The weathering and possible deterioration of the building within the environment is often considered a failure of the architectural intention. Where surfaces are considered to be pure and faultless, as in many modern and contemporary buildings, the process of weathering is required to be suppressed as it creates a different impression from the one originally intended.[5]. Weathering on these surfaces requires repair, often undertaken by cleaning and painting the surfaces so they once again appear like new. Apart from the negative effect this has on resource usage, it also removes the recorded layers of interaction the building

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5   An example of this process is the evolution of Le Corbusier's social housing project in Pessac.

Figure 16.12: Chris Tucker, *Urban reading 1*, 2012. Courtesy of the architect.

Figure 16.13: Chris Tucker, *Urban reading 2*, 2012. Courtesy of the architect.

has had with the environment, and in doing so negates this history.

The surfaces of urban space are marked by their interaction with the public. Those buildings that have a public frontage are often regularly cleaned and updated to appear once again fresh and new. However, in the parts of the urban network that are less valued for their physical appearance, the residue of public interaction and weathering is afforded time to become layered and textual. The surface records its interaction with urban space, and in doing so tells its own history. As Kenzari states, 'matter is ready to receive and to keep alive the pervasive and slicing trace of a human being kept aside and condemned to silence' (Kenzari, 2004, p.21). Cutting into a building's surface is a radical intervention into the social fabric of urban space; it 'brings one history to a standstill but releases another in a moment of shock' (Muir, 2011, p.185).

Releasing the void

Just prior to it being removed, so as to free up the piece of land it has occupied for many years, the Pavilion has become perfectly functionless. If form follows function then what is left must become a pure object, or what is often referred to in the discipline as pure architecture. The marks of use, weathering, and present disuse are the most obvious changes that it has undergone, but it is essentially the same building. It is now without a useful function, but its form obviously remains, as a memory of what it looked like when it was first built. As an architectural and urban object, the opportunity to undertake the architectural transformation from building to open space, to describe how it leaves this space, is rare within the practice of architecture; or rather, it is an opportunity that has often been overlooked. Elements of the Pavilion can be surgically removed, structural breaches can be entertained, all the while experimenting with the sensation of constructed space. This process retains the object as architecture, and as long as constructed material remains to frame the void, it can continue.

The work of Gordon Matta-Clark offers insights into these processes, and the sculptural use that might be made of buildings that are due to be demolished. One of his works, *Conical Intersect* (1975), carried out at Plateau Beaubourg adjacent the Pompidou Centre that was then under construction, is of particular interest regarding the construction of the void. Conical Intersect, by carving into an established functional form – that of a terrace house – reduces the architectural capacity of its construction, to an assemblage of materials. The creation of the void exposes the architectural processes that remain hidden while the

building retains only a memory of its function, releasing the useful object as an abstract space. Krivy (2010, p.839) suggests that the creation of the void is not a 'negation of architecture but exposure of its negativity.'[6] It exposes the architectural object stripped of its function, or as Matta-Clark put it, it 'embrace[s] the impossibility of inhabiting that moment' (Matta-Clark quoted in Lee, 2000, p.55). Jonathan Hill (1998, p.80) reflects that '[a]rchitecture is the gap between building and using, just as literature is the gap between writing and reading.'

The deconstruction of the Pavilion clearly acknowledges *Conical Intersect* as inspiration and instruction on how the architectural process need not be limited to the intention of creating a functional object. *Conical Intersect* involves far more ambitious cuts into a more substantial building than was required for the Pavilion, but the series of cuts that I proposed for the Pavilion involved the apparent (if not real) risk of collapse. The danger inherent in a building with a series of cuts unearths the sublime within ordinary buildings and ordinary spaces. It makes buildings appear unstable, not just physically, but emotionally or psychologically. It is the point where the ground becomes cliff or where the ground breaks against the surf. There is an indeterminacy that destroys the security that defines even the most elementary architectural space. Being within a building with purposeful cuts can be a rather confrontational experience, and the spaces created immediately suggest the possibilities of another architecture. Richard Brook has discussed this process of allowing an object's appearance to suggest new uses as a way of establishing contingency and emergence (Brook and Dunn, 2011, p.25). The sequence of cuts to be made into the Pavilion was documented in a movie file that reflected the deconstruction process undertaken by the demolisher. The sense of theatre created by systematically cutting into a building as if an architectural model one-hundredth its actual size also brought an unusual sense of scale to both the street and the Pavilion.

To supplant habitat with intrigue and the uncanny requires calculation, control and strategy. The edges of the cut need to be calculated and clean, sliced as if with a scalpel. The geometry of the cuts, and the timing of their arrival, need to be considered in terms of a sequence, which might only end when the void is fully released as open space. A building doing this

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6   According to Krivý (2010), negativity is 'before' and 'after' architecture, and includes the 'invisible' materiality of urban space and buildings that is usually ignored; negativity finds its purest expression today in obsolete industrial architecture.

Figure 16.14: Chris Tucker, *Hole*, 2012. Courtesy of the architect.

Figure 16.15: Chris Tucker, *Open*, 2012. Courtesy of the architect.

through deterioration within the environment alone is a different process; it is the conscious act of design that established the architectural content of the Pavilion's deconstruction. A horizontal datum within a natural landscape creates a clear threshold between what is constructed through thought, and what is a consequence of natural selection. Thought, or in this case design, is the mental process that maintains the object as architecture while releasing the void.

Decadence

Making sophisticated cuts into a building that will soon disappear is a decadence afforded by art, particularly as the work itself is temporal. Passers-by and otherwise interested people appreciated the deconstruction process; some enjoyed the novelty, others as a possible act of urban vigilantism, something that might have no approval to proceed; others simply enjoyed the positive experience of a process of unmaking that was as creative as it was destructive. There does appear though something radical and uncontrolled in a process that allows the public to re-use the fabricated parts of a building directly from a street. A press release from the 'Save our Figs' lobby group expressed horror at the prospect of cuts being made

Figure 16.16: Chris Tucker, *Gone*, 2012. Courtesy of the architect.

into its surface, and the public being invited to take pieces home. The intention was framed differently, stating that the Pavilion 'is about to be chopped up – or, in Council's words, 'deconstructed under Mr. Tucker's supervision', and people are being encouraged to – wait for it – take pieces as souvenirs!' (Raschke, 2012). How to treat waste is a significant responsibility for local governments, yet the systems in place are overly concerned with locating it in bins. Beyond the waste it creates, the problem with the bin is psychological; placing waste within a bin somehow releases the producer from the responsibility of having created it in the first place (Hawkin et al, 1999, p.49). The Pavilion was almost entirely recycled; as stated earlier, very little was actually placed in a bin. In the moments before the deconstruction process began, the original intention for creating the Pavilion had been removed; it had become perfectly functionless. Critically, its form and original architectural content still remained, and by cutting into its surface as a continuation of the design process, to firstly frame the void then to remove it entirely, effectively closed the architectural loop that was the Pavilion. The process responded to the residual nature of the Pavilion, and through an urban performance, reinforced a social, cultural and architectural condition that still resided within its construction. Kristiaan

Borret (1999, p.242) has described these types of urban performances as libertarian, marginal, deviant and even disrespectful of the traditional codes of the city. As Groth acknowledges, it is also these types of spaces that defy urban meaning; they can establish temporary activities that challenge planning processes, questioning their relevance (Groth, Corijn, 2005).

Matta-Clark's innovation lay in sculpting the by-products of urbanity (Lee, 2000, p.73). In doing so, he made residual buildings function as transient monuments of a kind, just moments before they disappeared. He was the 'marauder of the blank wall' (Kenzari, 2004, p.18), opening walls up to the light and revealing what lay hidden beneath the surface. His cuts, like the voids he created, have long disappeared; instead, they are reconstructed and reclaimed as photographs and photomontage. The deconstruction of the Pavilion was an intriguing social and architectural experiment born upon a building that could have quietly been loaded into a bin within a few hours. Instead, a responsibility implicit within the construction of the building itself was answered. The pavilion, as an architectural type, presented the opportunity for experimenting with how one might take such responsibility.

Figure 16.17: Chris Tucker, *Chunk*, 2012.
Courtesy of the architect.

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AFTER WORD, THOUGHT, LIFE: A STROLL IN PARISIAN PARKS

Michaela Giebelhausen

*This afterword takes the reader on a lyrical psychogeographic drift (*dérive*) through Paris' green spaces, from the Buttes-Chaumont of Aragon's* Paris Peasant *back through the* jardin anglais *of the Parc Monceau and the grounds of colonial expositions to the bright red follies of the late twentieth-century Parc de la Villette. The pavilions met with here are like relics, living out their afterlives, triggering memories and imagination, reminding the reader of the changeability of function and meaning that makes it so difficult to pin down such structures.*

Keywords: pavilion, Paris, Parc Monceau, Parc des Buttes-Chaumont, Parc de la Villette, folly, monument, picturesque, psychogeography.

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Michaela Giebelhausen

Abstract

This afterword takes the reader on a lyrical psychogeographic drift (dérive) through Paris' green spaces, from the Buttes-Chaumont of Aragon's Paris Peasant back through the jardin anglais of the Parc Monceau and the grounds of colonial expositions to the bright red follies of the late twentieth-century Parc de la Villette. The pavilions met with here are like relics, living out their afterlives, triggering memories and imagination, reminding the reader of the changeability of function and meaning that makes it so difficult to pin down such structures.

Standing at the foot of Montmartre, in the rue Notre-Dame-de-Lorette, Louis Aragon, André Breton and Marcel Noll debated where to go and spend the rest of their evening. You can just see them emphatically pointing in different directions: to Montmartre, Montparnasse, and to the Buttes-Chaumont. Readers of Aragon's *Paris Peasant* (1926) know that the lure of the east and of nature prevailed. The three friends climbed into a cab and instructed the driver to take them to the Buttes-Chaumont.

On tumbling out of the taxi, Aragon, Breton and Noll find the gates of the Buttes-Chaumont still open. Their *impromptu* visit captures a sense of excitement, which left the friends 'feeling like conquerors and quite drunk with open-mindedness' (Aragon [1926] 1994, p.137). In the surrealist imagination the park 'stirred a mirage', configuring 'a field of experiment where it was unthinkable that we should not receive countless surprises' while its structures trigger a conversation on obsessive irrationalities (p.133). The three friends strike a myriad of matches to read the detailed inscriptions on the monument, outlining the infrastructure of the 19th arrondissement: information ranging from the practical to the scientific, including the number of kindergartens and railway stops as well as altitudes above Seine and sea. They also ruminate on the so-called suicide bridge from which even unsuspecting strollers were rumoured to plunge headlong into the lake below. One moment, the friends dwell on the irrational power of this bridge which had lured passers-by to their sudden deaths like the vertiginous pull of some mythical Loreley. The next, they're deciphering

the lengthy inscriptions. Aragon's stark contrast of the total oblivion of death with the meticulous reclaiming of history's minutiae turns the Buttes-Chaumont into one of those parks that 'opened their hearts to forgetfulness as well as to memory' (p.147). The night-time excursion engendered reverie in which time and place shimmered between past and present, vision and promise.

A stroll in the park is always a historical excursion. The surrealists valued the surprising and playful, and for them a promenade in the park became an imaginary voyage of discovery. So let us begin our own stroll in the affluent Haussmannised west of the city. At the metro stop Monceau you climb up into the sunshine blinking to find yourself at the splendid iron gold-tipped gates of the park. Here you encounter the remnants of an eighteenth-century fantasy landscape. It was dreamt up by the Duc d'Orleans and his collaborator, the writer and painter, Louis Carrogis Carmontelle in the 1770s. English landscape gardens such as Stowe in Buckinghamshire served as a major source of inspiration. The pavilion is at home here. This is one of its classic habitats, one it shares with follies and all sorts of small scale commemorative structures. Time has substantially altered the park's original design, overlaying it with things new and old. As you pass through the gates you're greeted by Claude-Nicolas Ledoux's rotonda built as one of the many toll booths encircling the city and making it murmur with revolt in the 1780s. Ledoux's radical classicism has since been softened by a dome. The structure's stylistic lineage runs right back to Bramante's Tempietto and the Temple of Vesta at Tivoli. But such echoes of antiquity and the Renaissance are trumped by a down-to-earth sense of utility. [figure 17.1]

Two discrete signs indicate *toilettes hommes*, with an arrow pointing to the right, while *toilettes dames* points in the opposite direction. Modern mass culture has asserted its presence in the Elysian Fields you've entered. You got here just ahead of the noon crowds of office workers on their hurried lunchbreak. Soon they'll be sprawling on the lawns, scoffing takeaway noodles and sandwiches. As free patches of green become as rare as seats in your local brasserie, the toilets in Ledoux's rotonda, a sacrilege at first, are beginning to make sense. Modernity meets antiquity. A miniature pyramid erected in 1778 evokes ancient Egypt as much as imperial Rome [figure 17.2]. The ruined colonnade at the end of the oval basin is also part of the park's original design and reminiscent of the Villa Hadriana at Tivoli [figure 17.3]. Close by is a solitary arch of the Hôtel de Ville, re-erected here after it burnt down in the civil war of 1871 [figure 17.4]. Paris in ruins was

Figure 17.1 Claude Nicolas Ledoux, Rotonde (1787), part of the Farmers-General wall, Parc Monceau. Photograph: Uwe Bennert.

Figure 17.2 Classical Colonnade (1778), Parc Monceau. Photograph: Michaela Giebelhausen.
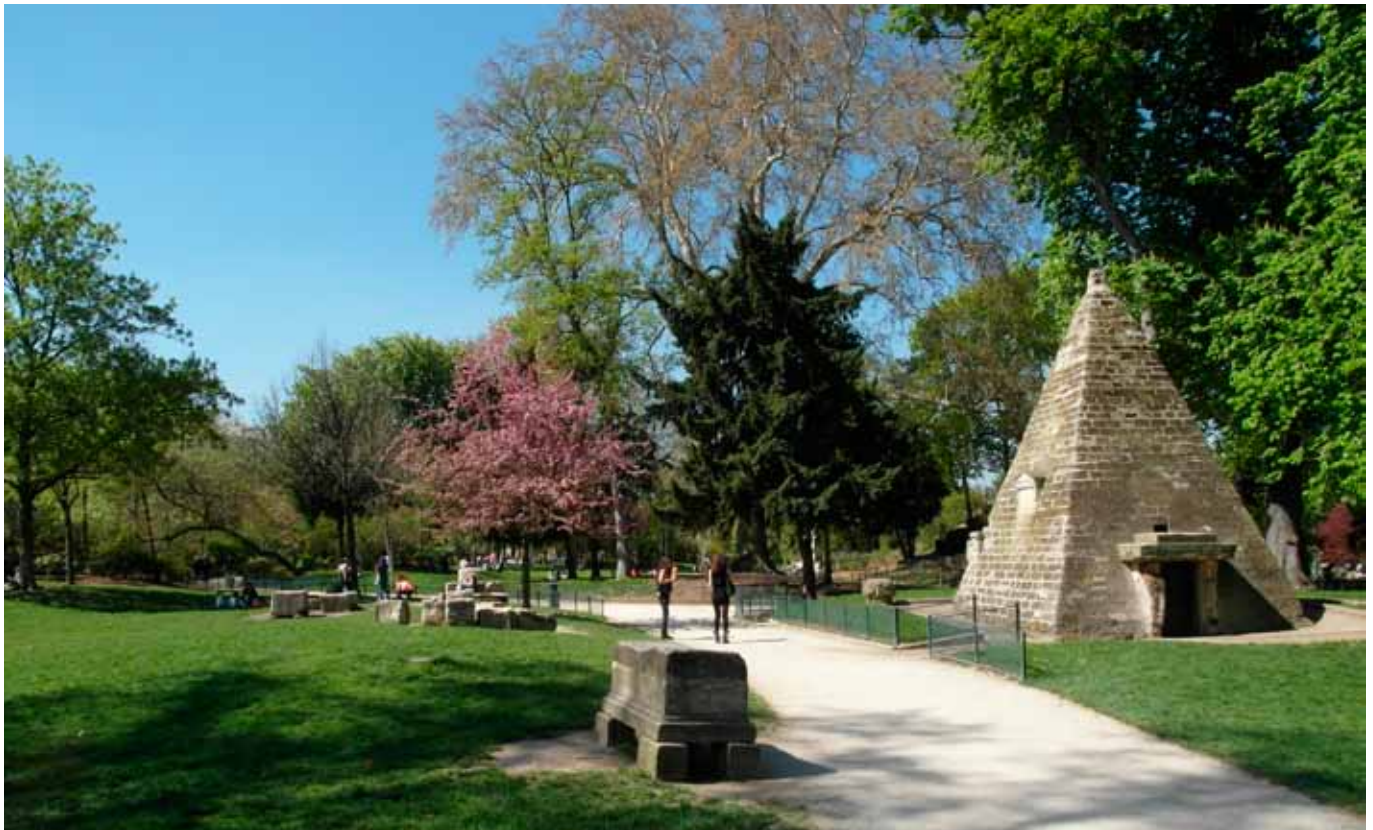
Figure 17.3 Egyptian Pyramid (1778), Parc Monceau. Photograph: Michaela Giebelhausen.

frequently compared to antique Rome or Pompeii. The park's structures invoke a kind of time travel, or feigned voyage. They make manifest the symbolic aspiration of Paris as a new Rome as well as the tragedy of such a claim.

The pavilion's power to conjure imagined worlds blends with artificial fragments as well as real ruins, enabling a sense of history that is fluid, meandering and full of associations. These structures are in effect wormholes in time; they fill the present with resonances of the past. Only when the Parc Monceau teems with Parisians on their lunch break are such temporal oscillations inappropriate. Forgetfulness and memory are less dramatically contrasted in the Parc Monceau at mid-day. But here too memories are symbolic, aspirational and historical, and mostly embodied in the park's structures.

In the surrealist imagination pavilion and monument meet their alter ego: the folly, a structure which Bernard Tschumi explored in the Parc de la Villette. Jacques Derrida reminded us that Tschumi's folly isn't a singular madness, but 'folies' designed to challenge the meaning of architecture (Tschumi, 1986, p.7). These madnesses take a single form and the challenge to architecture is staged through the pavilion, a structure which has been denied the status of architecture. The red cubes are, in fact, pavilions. In eighteenth-century parks, the pavilion has been shelter and *Fata Morgana* of different times and places. Often it has been a royal

plaything, most famously perhaps in Marie-Antoinette's fantasy village tucked away in the far reaches of the formal gardens at Versailles. Tschumi also introduces an element of play in the Parc de la Villette. His notion of the 'case vide', the empty field on the game board to which pieces might migrate in clever moves, simultaneously highlights the grid and the game – certainty and chance (Tschumi, 1986, p.3). When the figure of M challenges X to a mathematical game in Alain Resnais' *L'Année dernier à Marienbad*, the game of chance becomes one of irrational certainty. M claims to never lose. Indeed, M never does. Less certain though is his victory in the game of love played out in the modern-day memories of the *fêtes gallantes* lingering in the park.

If the pavilion and the monument inevitably conjure the folly, so the red cubes of Tschumi's 'folies' offer a mathematical certainty that is diametrically opposed to Aragon's frenzied excitement of the true gambler whose body is the roulette wheel and who is betting on red (Aragon, 1994, p.7). Instead, Tschumi offers us a cerebral game of cube and variation: the denial of function and thwarting of meaning. Whilst the pavilion is a built allusion, (illusion, a time- or a dream machine) Tschumi's 'folies' expose the madness of such thinking. Derrida's insistence on the *'maintenant'* of these structures frees them from the oscillations of time and place; frees them also from the possibility of nostalgia and overt signification. They are structures in a game

Figure 17.4 Fragment of the Hôtel de Ville, destroyed in the civil war of 1871. Photograph: Michaela Giebelhausen.

Figure 17.5 Bernard Tschumi, 'folie', Parc de la Villette (1982-87). Photograph: Uwe Bennert.

Figure 17.6 Claude Nicolas Ledoux, Rotonde de la Villette (1884-88), part of Farmers-General wall, Place Stalingrad. Photograph: Michaela Giebelhausen.

whose rules we don't quite know. And yet, walking among Tschumi's signal-red folies whose 'madness' he insted on in an interview (Tschumi, 1986, p. 26), I cannot help but be reminded of Aragon's ruminations on modernity which conclude with the evocation of 'an essentially modern tragic symbol: … a sort of large wheel which is spinning and which is no longer being steered by a hand' (Aragon, 1994, p.118). The 'folie' which sits along the east side of the grande halle, the former abbattoir, has a giant water wheel, spinning unsteered [figure 17.5]. Might this be another game of signification, one that taunts the notion that there is none to be found in Tschumi's folies?

Distractions are inevitable at the Parc de la Villette. As I contemplate Tschumi's zero degree (or not?) pavilions, another of Ledoux's toll booths makes its presence felt. The magnificent rotonde de la Villette at the end of the canal de l'Ourcq reminds me of the pavilion's potential for the picturesque, the classical and the ideal. But approach the Villette rotonde at your peril! [figure 17.6]. Close up, the metro's elevated tracks swerve just clear of it. A hesitant row of trees dolefully tries to soften the encounter of modern engineering and eighteenth-century radical classicism. Guy Debord found the charm of the rotonda 'singularly enhanced by the curve of the elevated subway line that passes by at close distance' (Debord, 1956). It reminded him of Toukhachevsky's proposal to improve the park of Versailles by erecting a factory in the terrain between

the palace and the water basin. The clash between Ledoux's rotonda and the twentieth-century modernity of the elevated metro line is further orchestrated by the confluence of several busy streets either side of the rotonda.

The raw brutality of the location is perhaps best epitomised in the nearby metro stop's evocation of besieged and war-torn Stalingrad. From the backseat of the taxi that took him and his two friends to the Buttes-Chaumont, Aragon had similarly mused on the discordant collage of this part of Paris. He characteristically delighted in the idiosyncracies of urban naming, remarking that the metro 'reunites ridiculously those two extremes, Nation and Dauphine' (Aragon, 1994, p.135).[1] The violent juxtapositions, which marked the city as war zone and site of revolutions, excited both Aragon and Debord who also commented on the psychogeographical confluences of the canal and various roads and streets. They reminded him of the didactic simplicity of illustrations in children's books, uniting 'a harbor, a mountain, an isthmus, a forest, a river, a dike … a bridge, a ship' (Debord, 1956). In Debord's mind these accessories evoked the paintings of Claude. But the Claude-like ideal was here inflected by the jarring modernity of the city. The elevated metro train still rattles past Ledoux's rotonda which is no longer 'a virtual ruin left in an incredible state of abandonment'

1   Nation and Porte Dauphine are the final destinations of metro line 2.

Figure 17.7 Chinese wooden gate, constructed for the Exposition Coloniale 1907, Jardin d'agronomie tropicale, Bois de Vincennes, Nogent-sur-Marne. Photograph: Michaela Giebelhausen.

Figure 17.8 Monument to the war dead from Cambodia and Laos (1927), Jardin d'agronomie tropicale, Bois de Vincennes, Nogent-sur-Marne. Photograph: Michaela Giebelhausen.

that had fascinated Debord. From the hip hangout, now a restaurant and bar, boom the heavy rhythms of dance music and a changing rainbow of colours illuminates the rotonda at night.

Let's leave these modern-day Elysian Fields with their echoes of antiquity and the past, and go East, further east still than Aragon and his two friends. At the far end of the Bois de Vincennes, a RER train ride from the city centre, lies the Jardin d'agronomie tropicale. It was established in 1899 with the aim to research the possibilities of cultivating tropical plants on French soil. En route from the train station at Nogent-sur-Marne signs give directions to the Pavilion Baltard. The sleepy suburb is home also to a tiny part of the belly of nineteenth-century Paris, one of the iron umbrellas of Les Halles has been re-erected here. But Baltard has to wait.

We have come to visit the remnants of the 1907 Exposition Coloniale and to explore the pavilion's flair for the exotic and other cultures. Some of the pavilions are boarded up, the paint peeling, the structures themselves crumbling and decayed. World's Fairs there have been many as well as Colonial Exhibitions, but few are the vestiges that have survived into our own day. Through the wooden Chinese gate, a faded red, we enter another world [figure 17.7]. The pavilions dotted about the park offer echoes of empire that no longer register on a modern map. Indochine was a French invention, a region jointly named after its neighbours, India and China. Such naming betrays the west's crude understanding of the colonised territories which comprised Laos, Cambodia and parts of Vietnam. French imperial power also operated closer to home on the African continent, in Algeria, Tunisia and the Congo. The 1907 exhibition celebrated every corner of the French empire with pavilions dedicated to each country and region. Today one walks amongst a collection of semi-derelict structures. The pavilions here speak of a concrete French past, not some vague invocation of antiquity. Dreams and realities of empire were enacted here. In 1914 a military hospital was erected in the grounds of the park.[2] As the wounded of the colonial regiments started arriving, the hospital quickly became too small, adding almost 300 beds to the original 49. By the time it closed in 1919, it had taken in some 4813 soldiers, mostly from the colonies. Those who could not be nursed back to health here were buried in the military section of the nearby cemetery of Nogent-sur-Marne. Their contributions to the French war efforts are commemorated in several of the park's monuments. As one stops to read the

2   The information on the park is taken from the notice boards dotted around it.

inscriptions, the extent of the colonies' involvement in the French military action becomes painfully apparent [figure 17.8]. Aragon and his friends would no doubt have lingered longer than I did, deciphering every bit of each monument as they had in the Buttes-Chaumont. The park combines several moments of France's imperial past. Exhibition pavilion and war memorial sit side by side. Both share the fate of not quite being architecture. But they're also far more single-minded and expressive structures for that. Together they accentuate a landscape originally designed to understand and exploit, celebrate and commemorate France's imperial episodes. Indochine is the first of the pavilions to have recently been restored. It will once more serve as a temporary exhibition space.[3]

On their way to the Buttes-Chaumont Aragon and his friends might have passed the location of another reappropriated pavilion. Konstantin Melnikov's Soviet pavilion had originally been created for the Exposition des Arts Décoratifs in 1925. It won a gold medal and was greatly admired by modernist architects such as Josef Hoffmann who had himself designed the show's Austrian pavilion. After the exhibition had closed, the Soviets relocated the wood-and-glass structure to the 19th arrondissement, close to the Buttes-Chaumont (Mileaf, 2010, pp.127-128; Blake, 2002, p.40). Just a few years after the friends' midnight ramble in the park, Melnikov's pavilion was to house an anti-colonialist exhibition which the surrealists had helped set up. *La vérité sur les colonies* ran from September 1931 to February 1932, attracting over 4000 visitors (Morton, 2000, p.103). The exhibition parodied the colonising discourse and its values, aiming to challenge the positive spin of the 1931 International Colonial Exposition. Aragon and Breton were among the Surrealists who signed the manifesto, *Ne visitez pas l'Exposition Coloniale*, which drew attention to the brutal reality of French colonial rule. Not a week passes that there aren't killings in the colonies, the manifesto poignantly proclaimed.[4]

Despite the surrealists' strongly worded exhortation not to visit the International Colonial Exposition, its lure was hard to resist. Official records list some 33 million entries into the vast exhibition grounds at the western end of the Bois de Vincennes (Morton,

1998, p.357). For the best part of 1931, from May to November, the Exposition promised visitors 'le tour du monde en un jour' (Morton, 2000, p.3). The one-day world tour was designed to reinforce and legitimise the West's domination of its colonies. In the accurately modelled and scaled structures, such as the Kmer temples at Angkor Wat or populated Senegalese villages, the exhibition quite literally brought the colonies to Paris. It attempted to create a visual imaginary of 'la plus grande France', a greater France which included its far-flung colonies. The exhibition organisers were keen to distance the displays from those of the fairground, while still offering 'a simulation of colonial life' (Mileaf, 2010, p.133). Much attention was lavished on the 'authenticity' of its architecture and educational displays. The architecture of the pavilions provided the language through which 'the artistic achievements of each indigenous culture, ranked according to European standards' was meant to be read (Morton, 2000, p.180). Thus the pavilions formed part of a collection that carefully mapped and measured the varying degrees of civilisation and evolution throughout the world.

In his *Principles of Human Geography* (1926) Paul Vidal had characterised the differences between an African and a European village as one of accidental temporality versus permanence. A European village's history, he claimed, 'is traceable for thousands of years'. In the case of the African village the 'site may be changed by a mere accident' (Morton, 2000, p.183).[5] For all its rhetoric of Western evolutionary superiority, the International Colonial Exposition was just such an African village. The spectacular structures left few permanent traces. Theirs had been a fugitive gathering, an ideological mirage in the working-class East end of Paris. The exuberant art deco building of the Palais des Colonies (now known as the Palais de la Porte Dorée) offered a more permanent form of collecting the colonies. It exemplified an up-to-the-minute architectural vernacular that framed a sculpted tapestry of colonial motives and was designed to house the Musée des Colonies et de la France extérieure. In a post-colonial age, the questions we ask of history have been rephrased. The stories we want to tell and hear seem more fluid, focusing on movement and cultural hybridity. Since 2007 the Palais de la Porte Dorée has been home to the Cité nationale de l'histoire de l'immigration.

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3   For images and project description of the restoration see: www.lemplusarchitectes.com.

4   'Le dogme de l'intégrité du territoire national invoqué pour donner à ces massacres une justification morale, est basé sur un jeu de mots insuffisant pour faire oublier qu'il n'est pas de semaine où l'on ne tue aux colonies.' The full text of the manifesto *Ne visitez pas l'exposition colonial* is found at: http://faculty.virginia.edu/ajmlevine/880/Readings/nevisitezpas.html.

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5   'The African village whose site may be changed by a mere accident, and the European village whose history is traceable for thousands of years, is as widely different as the city of antiquity and the immense metropolis of today. The distance is that between a rudimentary and an advanced stage of civilisation' (Vidal, 1926, p.163).

Figure 17.9 Pavilion Baltard, originally one of the pavilions of Les Halles (c. 1863), Nogent-sur-Marne.
Photograph: Michaela Giebelhausen.

I have taken you to places which now figure on your mental map of Paris. When arriving in Nogent-sur-Marne we resisted the lure of the dérive and headed straight for the Jardin d'agriculture tropicale. But Baltard must no longer wait. On the way back to the train station I detoured to pay a visit to the Baltard pavilion, the only one to survive the demolition of Les Halles in 1971; remnants of another now reside in Yokohama [figure 17.9]. The giant pavilion serves as an event space not dissimilar to the Parc de la Villette's central grande halle. However, the programme is pitifully sparse (http://pavillonbaltard. fr/). The pavilion is fenced off and uninviting. Nothing here speaks of its former function as a place of trade, exchange, encounter and consumption. It is hard to imagine the formidable fish wives' daily bickering and haggling so vividly recounted in Zolas' *Belly of Paris* (1873). Just outside the tall industrial gate nestles an odd assemblage of Haussmannian street furniture: lamp posts and iron benches, an advertising column and even a rubbish bin [figure 17.10]. These forlorn relics of nineteenth-century Paris are tied together in a nostalgic and inept gesture. The space in which the street furniture purposelessly congregates is called 'Square du Vieux Paris' [figure 17.11]. Nothing could be further from the truth. But that is not what I came here for.

On the monument in the Buttes-Chaumont whose inscriptions Aragon and his two friends deciphered with the reverence of modern-day Champollions, the city remains unmapped. Two blanks still await the plan of the nineteenth arrondissement and of Paris, which were to be raised by subscription. The benefactor's generosity in charting and communicating the facts of the nineteenth arrondissement with such meticulous care has not been matched by his neighbours. In this stroll through Parisian parks searching for pavilions and the traces they have left behind, not least 'on the town's collective unconscious', we have by default been latecomers to the stories they tell (Aragon, 1994, p.136).

Aragon's roulette wheel is not the only game of chance on offer. Turn away from the page and the night, and stick a pin into a map of *Paris et ses environs*, piercing the paper at points west, north-east and east. Our stroll in Parisian parks can be dictated by chance, but wherever we go we are only witnesses to the pavilion's afterlife, be that neglect, decay, half-hearted resuscitation or miraculous resurrection. After words and thoughts there remains the humbling admission, borrowed from Aragon: 'I have said scarcely anything about this garden [for garden read park or pavilion], I have neglected all the essential features' (Aragon, 1994, p.185). But who is to say what is essential about the pavilion and its urban afterlife?

Figure 17.10 Haussmannian street furniture, reassembled in Nogent-sur-Marne. Photograph: Michaela Giebelhausen.

Figure 17.11 Street sign, 'Square du vieux Paris', Nogent-sur-Marne. Photograph: Michaela Giebelhausen.

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