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Introduction: Architecture Filmmaking: Framing the Discourse and Conditions of Production in Architectural Practice and Education

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ARCHITECTURE FILMMAKING

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INTRODUCTION

Architecture Filmmaking: Framing the Discourse and Conditions of Production in Architectural Practice and Education

Igea Troiani and Hugh Campbell

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Introduction

The persona of the architect as a creative professional is complex, being conditioned by historic constructions of the architect in the conflicting roles of 'artist' and 'professional'. The opportunities for an architect to explore the limits of artistic practice in professional life are heavily circumscribed but there still remain realms, mostly within interdisciplinary practice, in which to facilitate exchange. This book focuses on the in-between space between architecture and film to locate some important pockets of existing practice and suggests lines of future trajectories for architecture filmmaking.

This opening essay aims to describe the current state of the field in which architecture and film operate together in order to question the creative labour enacted by architects. The essay is intended to encompass three key aspects – first, how the terms and techniques through which the relationship between architecture and film have been framed in academic and professional theory and discourse; second, the conditions of production that govern filmic content's current role in the processes of architectural design and construction in professional practice; and third to locate new modes of practices emerging in the architectural academy. What will appear in the three overlapping section fields – theory, practice and pedagogy – is a picture of a relatively well-developed but narrowly defined existing space of architectural practice.

The essays in this compilation are directed at theoreticians of architecture, architectural practitioners and architectural students and educators who are interested in working with film. The book is original because it includes a number of testimonials and accounts that can support architects, architectural educators and students who want to push their filmmaking practice in various directions. The compilation of new ideas, modes of practice and reflections on architecture filmmaking offer an enriching addendum to an already vast body of literature in the field because of the novelty of cases studies discussed. The case studies – short films, artistic projects, films, advertisements, scripts made by women and men filmmakers from/working on or in the United States, Great Britain, Europe, Asia, Africa and Australia – are not readily available or familiar to most readers and their study brings a valuable number of professional and pedagogical insights to the fields of architecture and film. The purpose of the book is to give acumen to the essence of film production in relation to making architecture, in



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particular why architects should analyse films, employ filmmaking techniques of production to make films in order to make new spaces of invention of architecture and to revise what constitutes architectural labour today. The book asks: can architects use film to help make better architecture or help to understand differently the architecture they make? How can film production inform architectural production in order to improve architecture?

From the case studies and reflections presented in this edited collection, the essay concludes with some brief speculations as to how new spaces of invention might open up within the territory described. This can happen by exploiting the gaps within the expanded and extended networks of production that are now increasingly the norm in professional architectural filmmaking practice; it can happen through the re-enchantment of the medium of film and the medium of architectural representation, by means of a closer engagement with the mechanics of film; and finally it can happen by capitalizing on academic research and pedagogy, which are detached from the neo-liberal economic imperatives that drive professional architectural practice, as vehicles for new modes of exploratory and creative architecture filmmaking. It is argued that experimentation in architecture filmmaking that occurs in architecture schools has the capacity to inform architectural practice beyond the academy to enrich the work life of architects. The book encourages architects of all classes, not just starchitects, to explore new possibilities for the exchange between architecture and filmmaking as an artistic *and* professional labour.

Architectural Film Theory

At the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, around 110 years after cinema began and roughly 50 years after architecture became professionalized through regulating bodies or institutes,¹ film and architecture began to meet. These meetings have taken many different forms, encompassing the theoretical, the visual, the spatial, the temporal and the physical. The terms of these meetings, their meaning and significance, are the subject of an ever-growing amount of research, scholarship and theorizing, so that to enter into a discussion about the relationship of architecture and filmmaking now is to join a conversation in which the lines of debate, the frames of reference and the canonical examples of possible practice have already been agreed.

Architecture and film are often understood through a series of theoretical assumptions premised on a similar space of working practice, i.e. that 'the architect and the filmmaker have much in common' (Lamster 2000: 1). According to Lamster (2000: 1), they are both 'orchestrators of complex productions'. Famous architects and directors both act as an *auteur* that lead the execution of their artistic spatial, temporal and physical vision by controlling a team of illustrators, designers and craftspeople with specialist drawing and building expertise. Furthermore Lamster argues that the architect and filmmaker share artistic tenacity, both adopt a collaborative mode of practice, need to compromise and are always at the service of clients or film studios with financial and/or creative input, demands or restrictions. But beyond the contention that practising architects and filmmakers share a broadly similar type of complex design team labour led by a dominant visionary designer, a steady stream of publications on the subject by architectural theoreticians have teased out other areas of reciprocity and opposition that inform architectural scenography.



In regards to spatial design of scenography, architects or filmmakers in industry make architectural drawings, designs and/or films respectively to create new visions of real or virtual architecture or worlds. The phenomenological experience of moving through a building or a city or a landscape resembles the episodic experience of viewing a film, in that both produce spaces of narrative, sensorial encounter (Tschumi 1994; Koolhaas in Lubow 2000; Bruno 2002; Psarra 2009; Coates 2012; Cairns 2013; Blundell Jones and Meagher 2015; Truniger 2013; Tobe 2017). Here the design architect is understood as an orchestrator of spatial scenography using architectural, urban or landscape design drawings or filmic moving drawings respectively as the medium through which to represent space and time. Some director filmmakers (Jacobs 2007; Martin 2014) or set designers (Neumann 1995; Wilson in Lamster 2000: 101-16; Albrecht in Lamster 2000: 117-29) have been described as architects who create fragments of architectural and urban propositions as film sets. There is literature emerging on the design of film studios for architectural scholarship (Jacobson 2016) and how film can interact with architectural facades and installations (Koch et al. 2004; Rodgers and Smyth 2009; Lavin 2011; Elwes 2015).

Theoretical studies of techniques for architecture filmmaking explore parallels between the two disciplines through modes of textual and visual design representation and production, whether hand or digital writing, or drawing. Kester Rattenbury (2002) notes, in *This Is Not Architecture: Media Constructions*, that different media display different characteristics, cultures, limitations and biases, suggesting that the interdisciplinary culture of architecture-film representations is complex. Some architects have absorbed the drawing mode of production of a film into their design and presentation process. Others, including a contributor to this book, have researched the exchange between *The Construction of Drawings and Movies* (Forget 2013) for spatial analysis. The architect's preliminary sketch design phase, although using other types of drawings too, has parallels to that of the storyboard artist, who is sometimes the film's director – as is the case of Martin Scorsese's storyboards for *Taxi Driver* (1976) (Twisted Sifter 2012) – but who is usually a professional illustrator or graphic designer commissioned in the pre-production phase. There has been a move by some architects to use storyboarding (Ingels 2009; Lai 2012; Van Der Hoorn 2012; Arana and Klaus 2013; Stadler 2013; Sousanis 2015) to publicize their work. Like the director who uses the scriptwriter's words to begin to realize cinematic space as scenes, architects have sought to use scriptwriting to visualize images of architectural space generated in the mind from prose before making it a reality (Meades 2012).

The essays collated in the 'Architecture Filmmaking Technique' section of this collection reflect the close linkages to technique and to practice. These essays remain alert to the broader theoretical frameworks within which practice unfolds while recognizing that it is precisely through such practices that theory advances.

For instance, Sarah Breen Lovett's essay analyses how the artist Dan Graham and the architects Dillier and Scofidio play with the codes and expectations of film to defamiliarize domestic settings, allowing them to be seen anew. Through these filmic projects, the complex politics of gender and domestic identity are played out in such a way as to become palpable and comprehensible – theory made manifest. Likewise, Alexandra Stara argues, and convincingly demonstrates, that it is only through technique – through the deliberate

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and studied manipulation of the medium – that meaning can emerge. Film opens the latent properties of places and locations to view, as evidenced in the work of Rut Blees Luxemburg. In much the same vein, Fred Truniger examines how a specific technique – in this case the pan – can actually produce new knowledge, by virtue of the mode of view that it opens up. In films such as Johan Lurf's *Reconnaissance*, panning can be seen to deliberately manipulate the perception of time and space to powerful effect. For Douglas Smith, a technological advance such as the advent of widescreen in the 1950s can prompt a range of new methods that in turn give rise to new possibilities for storytelling and for communicating ideas about space and location. Using the distinction between pro-filmic and diegetic space – between the setting and the story – he explores how the two can be set in dialogue with each other, as in Melville's *Le Samourai*. Again, theory and technique develop in tandem and can be seen to reciprocate and reinforce each other. In our essay, we (Troiani and Campbell) discuss the ways in which the extended tracking shot can be used to establish the extent and nature of a particular spatial realm – whether an urban scene, as in the Mexican border town of *Touch of Evil*. Finally in this section, Christine McCarthy considers how the relationship between the space of the screen and the space of the viewer is currently being configured. Using the key example of a Samsung advertisement for new curved screen technology, McCarthy explores how, since the Lumière Brothers set a train in motion towards a roomful of viewers, filmic space always threatened to trespass on lived space while remaining, categorically, separate. In each instance, film technology and its attendant techniques and methods are understood as the means by which specific meanings and effects are achieved. The implication might be that, in using the medium and in establishing its theoretical underpinnings, the question of what is filmed might ultimately be of less consequence than the question of how it is filmed.

Architecture Filmmaking Practice

The current limits of the overlapping territory between architecture and film in the motion picture (and television) industry are in the terrain of mostly positive professional publicity of architects as a 'creative class' (Florida 2002). Hollywood has been fascinated (off and on) by the architect on screen and has depicted in feature films, for the entertainment industry, fictional or real (mostly heroic male) architects getting buildings built (or not) (Levinson in Lamster 2000; Nobel in Lamster 2000). A small number of Hollywood films portray the difficulty architects have in juggling work and everyday life with other care commitments and were made in the 1980s to early 2000s about working architect mothers or fathers.

Beyond the professional publicity generated in Hollywood, which architects do not commission, some (mostly elite) architectural firms employ documentary makers to reflect upon, promote and publicize them, their architectural practice brand or their architecture through documentary storytelling. 'In globalised practice', Graham Owen (2016: 62) argues that architects have the market advantage of using, 'the phenomena of celebrity – capitalized upon by architectural media and the profession alike – [to] assign identity to the work as commodity of cultural capital, as branded talent'. Documentaries commissioned by architects about them or their architecture consolidate their reputational capital. The documentaries can be in the form of a sociological study of famous buildings understood as post-occupancy evaluation, e.g. Ila Bêka and Louise Lemoine's 'Living Architecture'

series; a historical record of the making or not of a building, i.e. about a famous building's procurement; and biopics made by outsiders or insiders (e.g. the children of famous architects) who were personally acquainted with the famous architect. Many of these types of documentary sustain the myth of the heroic genius and solidify the public perception of the architect as an artist. As Nancy Levinson (in Lamster 2000: 27) has written, 'Central to the mystique of architecture – in life and in the movies – is the idea of the architect as a person of marked creativity, creativity so strong it can seem a primal or religious force'. The films and documentaries made in the film industry about architects contrast to the overlapping territory between architecture and film in the architecture industry today.

The 'tools, techniques and technologies' (Linder 2005: 13) architects use for transdisciplinary practice have changed how theory, design labour and representation are enacted in the industry of architecture. The use of new computational and digital technologies has realigned architectural drawing from the production of hand-drawn or painted sketches and construction documents to 3D computer models, and hyper realist animations, films and virtual reality (VR) models of buildings in context. Use of new digital technologies has allowed architects to respond to the demands of neo-liberalism to not only be potentially more productive but also to create new forms of architectural capital to market and sell designs through the production of entertaining videos, most of which try to simulate for the client a vision of the design as realistically as possible.

Before the wholesale usurping of architectural representation by computer-generated drawings and models to enhance production in a competitive, neo-liberal age, architectural design representation was a more open and experimental terrain. But working in a globally competitive neo-liberal climate has altered an architect's ability to produce work that is not deemed financially remunerative. Neo-liberalism – understood here as a political project of creating new means of capital accumulation (Harvey 2005) through innovation, competition, marketization and specialization – has co-opted modes of representation, such as the digital arts, into the realm of advertising in order to win greater market share. A neo-liberal model of architectural production has impacted on the development of architectural drawing and representation as an artistic endeavour and so any study of architecture filmmaking needs to be understood within architecture's conditions of production associated with neo-liberal control and compliance (Spencer 2016). The drive for constant growth in competitive neo-liberal markets by big architecture films results in a growing divide in architectural labour that can prise the artist further from the professional and different classes of workers inside and outside the architect's office.

Where previously an architect was multi-skilled as a singular artisan, their labour is now divided between architectural partners, employees and/or consultants. The multiple tasks traditionally seen as within the scope of a sole practitioner (who designs, draws, represents, sells, oversees site works and manages their office) are often now split and delegated according to practice expertise (Saint 1983) and the cost for production of that portion of architectural labour. While the genius architect remains an active player in elite architectural firms, many no longer manage their own practice. They choose instead to partner with or employ others (including office managers) to sell their designs and their brand and manage their staff. For business efficacy and efficiency, architectural labour on

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the drawing shop floor has been divided in order to maximize economic, social and cultural capital return.

In *The Architect as Worker: Immaterial Labor, the Creative Class, and the Politics of Design*, Peggy Deamer (2015: xxxiii) contends that in conventional offices, architects are blind 'to the fact that they perform labor and examines two of the underlying suppositions contributing to this ignorance: that creative work, like architectural design, isn't labor; and that work in general is laborious and uncreative'. This revolves around the issues of 'architecture's essential creative nature (that may be its escape from commodification or commodification's particular partner)' and 'architecture's essential social recognition' (Deamer 2015: xxxv). The architect's labour and commerce nowadays is inseparable from 'immaterial production' that 'promote continual innovation in the forms and conditions of communication (and thus in work and consumption)' (Lazzarato 1996: 137). Sociologist, Maurizio Lazzarato (1996: 137) argues that 'all the characteristics of the post-industrial economy (both in industry and society as a whole) are highly present within the classic forms of "immaterial" production: audiovisual production, advertising, fashion, the production of software, photography'. This 'call[s] into question "classic definitions of work and workforce" because they bring together intellectual work with manual labor for entrepreneurship'. 'This commodity [in this instance, architecture and its representations] does not produce the physical capacity of labor power; instead, it transforms the person who uses it. Immaterial labor produces first and foremost a "social relationship" (a relationship of innovation, production, and consumption). Only if it succeeds in this production does its activity have an economic value. This activity makes immediately apparent something that material production had "hidden," namely, that labor produces not only commodities, but first and foremost it produces the capital relation' (Lazzarato 1996: 137).

To write that architecture has a 'tricky' relationship with capitalism because it is dependent on it and 'subject to exploitation' because of it (Mangold 2014: 23) is an understatement. 'Buildings cost money to build and therefore construction - and within it, architecture - necessarily works for and within the monetary system' (Deamer 2014: 1). In order to run and maintain a professional practice, architects need to engage more and more with the pressures that arise from the close link between time and money and efficient and effective modes of production. In the architectural industry, time to design, to speculate, to experiment, to explore creative practice that is not revenue generating has virtually disappeared, relegated as a luxury within what is otherwise a frugal and rationalized system of production that relies on constant workflows of computer-generated drawings and 24/7 digital communication transfer.

Different types of computer-generated architectural drawings (moving or static) are produced to sell designs to clients, win competitions and document buildings for the purpose of construction and costing. In architectural practice, design labour has been commoditized into image-making for design branding and has led to the division of the labour that produces working drawings for the construction procurement phase - that remains mostly as in-house labour - as opposed to visualizations and animations at the pre-design stage which are often outsourced. The labour of visualization is seen as a 'new market' in which to compete (Davies 2014). Some visualization companies, many founded by trained architects,

design the architecture through the images (still or moving) they produce. Joan Ockman (2015: xxiii) contends that, 'Today the issue of architectural sourcing and outsourcing is more than a banal matter to be regulated to the business of construction management'.

Outsourcing the labour of architectural representation and rendering in the industry has co-opted a new interdisciplinary space between architecture and film production in which the architect's craft, authority and autonomy as a designer can sometimes be compromised. Often, rather than hire full-time staff, cheaper outsourced labour is exploited to undertake less meaningful laborious visualization and animation of the architect's design (Grozdanic 2015; Bernhard 2017). Conversely visualization companies can take creative ownership of the design, going beyond the architect's concept so that the 'use of film as part of the [architect's] design process' (Clear 2005: 105) is undermined by the 'use of film' to win commissions.

For Manuel Shvartzberg (2015: 181), 'the popular notion of "creativity" is particularly interesting because it has become a generalized imperative of neo-liberal societies: creativity (and its proxies, "innovation" and "disruption") [...] [is] seen today as an essential component of any "competitive" worker'. It is because of the ability of 'creativity [to] ma[k]e new worlds out of nothing' and to 'measure [...] that productivity as a kind of surplus value relative to other inputs' (Biernacki 2015: 40) that economists such as Richard Florida (2002) have defined the value of the 'creative class' in which avant-garde architectural animators and visualizers sit comfortably.

Nowadays the architectural 'creative class' commodifies design labour through product innovation and marketing. Design as 'immaterial labour gets categorized, spatialized, and monetized' (Deamer 2015: xxxiii) - the extent of which depends on the degree of 'innovation' performed by the designer within the market. According to Richard Biernacki (2015: 40) 'Economics instrumentalizes creativity as a factor of production'. 'Creativity in the master framework of economics nowadays equals skill at manipulating data, words, or visual components for "creative problem solving" (Reich 1991: 235)' (Biernacki 2015: 40).

The specialist visualization companies that have emerged since the 1970s, such as Luxigon (<http://www.luxigon.com/>), Squint/Opera (<http://www.squintopera.com/>) and DBOX (<http://www.dbox.com/>), to name but a few, are now the mainstream avenues through which filmmaking or video-making has been absorbed by high-profile architects for architectural advertising and promotion. While Luxigon and Squint/Opera differ in many ways, both produce similar artefacts for the commodification of architectural and urban designs by elite, large architectural practices feeding their growth and takeover of global markets. The videos of these kinds of companies are lavishly created using the computer-craft skills of the mostly younger, male technicians and renderers (many of them trained in the film industry) who produce them through lengthy hours of labour-intensive production, solely in front of the computer screen in what can sometimes resemble digital sweatshops. This career trajectory is a lifestyle nurtured in some of the 'best' architecture schools who use the architectural studio as the site for specialization of visualization labour in architectural production. It is important to understand the existing terrain of architecture filmmaking in architectural education because it will lead onto other opportunities for architecture filmmaking beyond those already established.

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The instances of filmmaking practice discussed in the essays in this volume can be seen as representing a critical response to the mainstream tendencies outlined above. The easy availability and affordability of high-quality cameras and editing software has made film a far more accessible medium for architects. And while, as has been argued, the mainstream of filmic production in architecture is oriented towards the needs of the market, it is increasingly feasible for the medium to be used in more critical, reflective or exploratory ways. The medium can allow practitioners to think differently, to open up new design approaches, processes and methods or to allow space and place to be depicted and hence understood differently, or to allow the ways in which architecture is inhabited and used to be analysed and reconsidered.

The first sequence of three essays in Part Two, Section I, 'Reimagining Domestic Space', deals with interior space. Its focus is on intimate scale and individual experience. It explores how film can activate such spaces – can allow the physical surroundings and traces to exemplify and embody the behaviours and experiences they contain. In these readings and in the examples discussed, buildings are not objects but fields of active movement and change. For Lilian Chee, the essay film allows precisely the kind of individual, subjective viewpoint that can reveal the larger political and social issues at play in housing policy in Singapore. Focusing on simple domestic rituals, the film allows this subject matter to be unlocked in a new way. Equally, the film of Pierre Chareau's *Maison de Verre* discussed by Mary Vaughan Johnson provides what she terms 'a reading from within' the house, so that it becomes an agent, or a being, in its own right. The nature and language of cinema, and specifically the edit, allow the emphasis to be placed in this way. Eleanor Suess' practice uses film as 'moving drawing'. In the example discussed, this allows the passage of light through the rooms of a building to be laid bare and made evident, so that again, spaces become animated. Calmly, quietly, intimately, film brings architecture to life.

A second trio of essays in Part Two, Section II, 'Reimagining the Urban Realm', explores how film can reveal the material, social and political character of a location or situation. Film is proposed as a medium that can capture and convey complex truths about the lived urban experience of a particular place and time. Thus, film might act as a prompt to new proposals and creative endeavour. In Jan Frohburg's analysis of Christina Gangos' film about Limerick, *Hammer to Bell*, the pace and focus of the piece open up new readings of this challenging urban context. For Ektoras Arkomanis, the area of Eleonas is given even greater agency – being called upon to offer up or prompt a script from the filmmaker. And in Ronnie Close's discussion of his Cairo film, the sociopolitical comes centre stage. In all cases, tentative parallels might be drawn between the structuring and shaping force of film and the role that architecture might perform in this context.

The final three essays in Part Two, Section III, 'Reimagining Auteurship', focus on questions of approach, style and territory. Dik Jarman's piece, including parallel perspective or voice, relates his attempts to reconcile his professional path in architecture with his filmmaking, exploring the scope for acting meaningfully and with maximum impact in either medium. Jarman points to the incorporation of Deconstruction into the discipline's thinking as a moment when new methods and modes began to gain endorsement. Troiani is also testing the limits of the discipline, arguing the need for 'undisciplinary research practice' as a means

of incorporating the female perspective and female stories. She uses two films from her own practice as discursive exemplars. Finally, Philip J. Clarke explores the role of the stylist in fashion photography/cinematography, arguing that it is precisely their mobility, their lack of fixedness and their capacity to act as bricoleur (a concept used elsewhere in this volume) that gives their input its potency and flavour. Taken as a whole, this part argues the need for methods and modes of operation that allow the telling of new cinematic stories in new ways.

Architecture Filmmaking Pedagogy

The visualization industry in architecture has created a defined and limited set of possibilities for the meeting of architecture and film in architectural education. The two sites in which architecture students can locate the interdisciplinary space of architecture and film are in theory courses and the architectural design studio taught by architectural educators who are architecture film enthusiasts or themselves filmmakers. The overlap between architecture film practice possibilities occurs mostly in studio project work and in the publications those academics generate about their own practice or the practice of their students.

In the United Kingdom, some institutions recognized for having research clusters or design studios that only research or employ filmmaking or moving image in architectural research and education are in the Schools of Architecture at the University of Cambridge (led by François Penz and Maureen Thomas), University of Liverpool (led by Richard Koeck), Architectural Association (formerly led by Pascal Schöning) and University College London (Bartlett) (initiated by Nic Clear - now at Greenwich University). Some students of these architecture-film educator enthusiasts have gone on to teach and research the overlaps in architecture and film in other schools of architecture, and there have been international exchanges with circles of architect film enthusiasts from the United States and elsewhere to create groups in other universities with histories of employing film in architectural education.

According to Dougal Shaw (2015) some universities are training architecture students to use 'animation skills to build film careers'. Neo-liberal careerism (Brown 2015), promoted in many architecture schools, incentivizes architecture students to exploit market opportunities for labour during their education by developing, to a high level, their skills in visualization or film production, graphic design, illustration or fine art and installation or set design so that they can work in architecture (if those skills are required by particular practices) or in those other industries. While many students enter architecture to become architects, learning highly developed visualization skills such as filmmaking can offer them opportunities to potentially generate more capital through the business of architectural visualization (Jones 2000) rather than conventional architectural practice. These disciplinary slippages in professional expertise are promoted in architecture programmes as producing more resilient and employable graduates who are multi-skilled business entrepreneurs able to better operate in the global economy (Thomas 2017).

The chapters in the final part of the collection have a shared focus on education. How can the practice of filmmaking most meaningfully and usefully be incorporated within studio



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programmes? Within schools of architecture it is increasingly common to see the use of filmmaking or integration of film studies in the architectural design studio – often without the educators having any deep understanding of the ways in which to do so (this is by no means a bad thing). In design studios, some teachers of architecture encourage their students to explore how architecture and film might be used methodologically to change the process of design or to incorporate particular design requirements that are not able to be represented through conventional architectural drawings such as movement or temporality. Using animation to create animated architecture is becoming more commonplace. Student ‘digital narratives’ are capable of making and editing films easily and can therefore produce short films, videos and animations quickly. Enquires into motion-based presentation can change the kinds of ‘drawings’ and subsequent designs architects produce.

In ‘Architecture Filmmaking Pedagogy’, new and original ways of using film in design studio teaching and beyond are revealed. Each of the essays in this section draws examples from taught programmes or from experimental projects. The projects described are either student work or research work undertaken within the academy. Notwithstanding this pedagogical focus, the theoretical positioning and framing of the work produced is often important. In his essay, Marc Boumeester, for instance, mobilizes ideas from George Simondon, Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari to argue for the importance of what is left outside the frame as much as what is within it, an approach illustrated through three of his research films. Randall Teal also draws upon Deleuze, in this case his concept of ‘any-space-whatever’, as a way of considering the manner in which specific yet ordinary and incomplete settings are utilized by filmmakers such as Yasujiro Ozu. Thomas Forget wants to reframe the established reciprocity between the disciplines as a more fluid dialogue between multiple types of constructed space and various types of time-based media that both depict and occupy it, establishing the key term ‘spatial projection’ for this methodology. For Rikke Munck Petersen and Mads Farsø, questions of empathy and atmosphere are to the fore as they discuss film projects that seek to produce the space of bodily presence. The idea of bricolage and the figure of the bricoleur are central to Igea Troiani and Tonia Carless’ approach, allowing new modes of filmic collage to emerge from their postgraduate design studio research. Finally, Penz and Thomas reflect on almost thirty years of engagement with film and digital media at the University of Cambridge. Their chapter argues for experimental teaching as a means to develop and test new theories and new approaches to the film/architecture relationship. Design studios and theory seminars serve as laboratory and testing ground, benefiting from and feeding into longer term research activity, while simultaneously expanding the capacities and the thinking of architecture students. The final essay in this book is purposely by a postgraduate student who has since graduated, Edward Gillibrand, whose design practice intersects architectural design, filmmaking and art practice.

Conclusion

This book acts both as a survey of current thinking and a prompt to future possibilities. It asks whether it is possible, within the well-established tracks of accredited architectural education and practice and the architecture/film discourse and the embedded structures of neo-liberal production – all represented in these essays – to make room for ‘true creativity



and innovation? Are there ways in which architecture can draw upon the language and technologies of film, not just to visualize complete projects or to record discovered places – as many of the examples discussed in this collection do – but also to play an active role at every stage of the design process, from initial inception to final refinements, as a consummate architectural-arts practice? One approach may be simply to return to the given qualities of the medium, to play and experiment with its basic blocks through interdisciplinary, arts practice-based practice (Rodgers and Smyth eds. 2009) that operates beyond ‘immaterial labor’ (Lazarato 1996: 137). Two examples from the visual arts illustrate the potential – Christian Marclay’s (2010) *The Clock* and Tacita Dean’s *FILM* (2011-12).

The conceit of Marclay’s already-classic 2010 work *The Clock* is that, over the entirety of its 24-hour duration, time on the screen corresponds exactly with the time of the viewer. When a character in one of the hundreds of meticulously collated clips of which the work is composed looks at their watch, we viewers may do the same and find ourselves in perfect synch.

The device is disarmingly simple but also endlessly compelling. Films such as *Rope* (Hitchcock 1948), *Run Lola Run* (Tykwer 1998) and, latterly, the TV series *24* (Surnow and Cochran 2001-2010), had previously explored the dramatic possibilities of allowing screen time to unfold at the same pace as real time, but Marclay’s work is both more ambitious and more innocent than those virtuosic exercises. By rifling through random scenes² – some appearing for no more than a second, some recurring, none overstaying their welcome – the relationship established with the viewer becomes entirely different. We are not hooked into the forward momentum of a narrative (already a familiar device of cinema and architectural design), we are simply dwelling in time and space, registering character, setting, familiar moviestar faces, recognizing long-forgotten mediocre potboilers. The equilibrium of the usual exchange between screen and viewer is upset, brought into a new balance. On the one hand, we feel we are dropping in on real worlds in which real time is unfolding. On the other, the whole artifice of film becomes freshly evident to us: as we switch in one sequence from Denzel Washington in a railway control-station to Tobey Maguire losing his job at a pizzeria on to the next clip, we register repeatedly the completeness with which each of those imagined worlds has been conjured – including, to varying degrees, its *mise-en-scène*, its characters, its storyline – while understanding the ultimate flimsiness of their relationship to the real.

And beyond the particular interest generated through the time-alignment we also feel, over and over, the basic pleasure of entering into these constructed screen worlds. No matter how corny – whether familiar or new – each excerpt exerts an immediate grip. This grip is so ubiquitous that it feels like it cannot be a product of the action, or dialogue, or production design or camerawork or any of the individual aspects of filmmaking. It seems rather to be inherent to the medium itself, or maybe more precisely, to the nature of the encounter with this medium. Even as it engages the imagination, however, we understand the film as a meticulous construct.

The Clock has as its overt subject the coincidence of screen time and real time, and – by extension – of screen space and real space. It seems to offer an absolute continuum between the two, recalling the stories of audiences running in fear from the train thundering through

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the screen in the earliest film by the Lumière brothers. That train is in the same space as us, they thought – just as viewers of the *The Clock* might be lulled into thinking that High Noon happens only, and always, and everywhere at the stroke of noon. But equally, *The Clock* draws attention to the absolute artifice of screen space and screen time and then, to the joyful ease with which we enter into that artificial realm. It exposes the mundane workings of the medium while reaffirming its potency.

Working in a very different register, Tacita Dean's Tate Turbine Hall installation of 2011–12, *FILM*, achieved a somewhat similar effect. Her screen was a 13-metre high slab onto which was projected an endlessly scrolling – and therefore seemingly static – spool of film, overlaid with a variety of filmed and collaged images – an escalator ascending, gothic windows, framed rectangles of colour flashing in and out, images of rocks and mountains. The screen became a complex composite surface rather than a transparent window onto a projected space beyond. Our attention was drawn back to the medium itself (Dean was mourning the demise of celluloid film), but also the unlikely but endlessly bountiful premise that it offered: that a succession of still images, printed onto film might, through having light passed through them at 24-frames-a-second, reproduce to view the world as we experience it in space and time.

In their different ways, Marclay and Dean manipulate the medium of film to make us freshly aware of its component parts, its techniques and of how it works. Out of this process of 'defamiliarization', new aesthetic, narrative and spatial possibilities start to emerge. The medium feels renewed. Returning to the relationship of architecture and film if we accept that the terms of the discourse and the conditions of production have together worked to reduce its potency, then perhaps hybrid, 'second-hand' works such as *The Clock* and *FILM* can serve to reignite the spark in the relationship. Central to this would be the meaningful integration of film into architectural pedagogy as a means not just of depicting worlds as found or imagining worlds into being, but also as a way of expanding and exploring the languages and structures of the discipline itself and its interdisciplinary spatial and temporal conditions.

To consider what such a pedagogy might look like, it is worth referring back to some of the terms and themes set out in this essay. If the age of digital production has once again turned attention back on labour and craft, then perhaps those very aspects of film-work can begin to be celebrated and become a source for experiment and invention. Both Marclay and Dean certainly throw attention back on the crafting of film – on how frames and scenes can be sliced and cut, on the physical and labour-intensive aspects of the industry. Marclay and Dean also challenge the concept of authorship in ways that might be useful to a new pedagogy of film for architecture. *FILM*'s attention is so obsessively upon the very surface of celluloid itself that the kind of distance necessary for authorship to be established never seems possible. Working this close up means that intentions get rethought and projects reordered. *The Clock* might be thought of as a massive project of meticulous fine-grained assembly, composed entirely from found material. In place of autonomy, expression and the grand sweep of an authored work, it proposes a kind of obsessive combing over of the accumulated archive of film history. The canon is reordered. A new taxonomy emerges in which originality and completeness are supplanted by

correspondences and alignments. It is possible to conceive of countless manifestations of this new taxonomy, in which the grammar of film, its frame by frame capturing of space and time are endlessly reconstituted, always to new ends.

Finally too, it is striking that both works embrace contemporary technologies while celebrating older ones. Dean's paean to celluloid gains monumental presence only by virtue of the latest projection and screening techniques; Marclay's restaging of vintage clips is facilitated by precise digital editing and mixing. Like the other strategies enumerated above, this hybridity introduces a kind of friction into what can sometimes seem an entirely seamless, smooth medium. By virtue of this, we become newly alert to aesthetic properties, to meaning and to content.

For film making to rejuvenate the processes of architectural design and production - in the academy and in practice - it will need to be 'brushed against the grain', to borrow Walter Benjamin's phrase, made raw, in order that it can register more and communicate more. This collection concludes with an essay by Edward Gillibrand describing a project in this vein.³ We hope this book will contribute to the making of many others.

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Notes

- 1 1834 (RIBA) and 1857 (AIA).
- 2 Marclay engaged a team of six assistants to watch films and rip any clip with watches or clocks, building a database of time-specific moments from which he could then begin to weave strands, overlapping and inter-cutting between the clips.
- 3 Gillbrand, who formerly studied fine art and who worked with celluloid film, was an architecture design studio student tutored by Igea Troiani and Andrew Dawson with Hannah Durham.

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