Disfigured Ground: architectures of Dada and Surrealism

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I hereby certify that the work embodied in this thesis is the result of original research and has not been submitted for a higher degree at any other university or institution.

(Signed) _____

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Contents

Abstract

In his 1974 work, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, Peter Bürger developed a sociological argument that the practices of the historical avant-garde had emerged as a systematic challenge to the hegemonic institutionalisation of bourgeois aesthetic taste. For Bürger, art had, since the Renaissance, gradually freed itself from societal pressures or responsibilities culminating in the emergence, in the nineteenth century, of a bourgeois institution of art that was characterised by the autonomy of the art object and its economic worth. In Bürger's theory, the historical avant-garde (and Dada and surrealism specifically) challenged this condition by negating the "work of art" (and its value) and reconnecting the production of art with the praxis of life, effectively dismantling the autonomous status of the art object. The critical legacy of the historical avant-garde was the formation of the readymade, collage, montage and chance as strategies that challenged the aesthetic categories of bourgeois taste and the institutional status of the work of art. For Bürger, the acceptance of these works within the institution of art in the 1960s (through their adoption as neo-avant-garde strategies) had meant that they no longer functioned as a critique but as an endorsement of these institutional conditions.

Framed by a recent critical reappraisal of Dada and surrealism in American art theory, this dissertation argues that architecture was an important strategy of the historical avant-garde and especially in the context of Bürger's theoretical categories. Architecture, in this context, is indelibly tied to the praxis of life and was a contextual backdrop to the experiential aspirations of both Dada and surrealism. The dissertation argues that architecture functioned as an *objet trouvé* (found object) that, like the readymade, was employed in the armoury of the historical avant-garde in order to negate the aesthetic and autonomous claims of the institutionalised work of art. It is argued that this experiential repositioning of architecture as an avant-garde (rather than strictly modernist) preoccupation in the 1920s had an influence on the architecture of the 1970s, 80s and 90s, where ideas of Dada and surrealism migrated into contemporary architectural practice not only expanding the disciplinary boundaries but the nature of the architectural object in general. Focussing on the creative processes of Bernard Tschumi, Coop Himmelb(l)au and Diller + Scofidio, the dissertation argues that Peter Bürger's positioning of a dialogue between the historic avant-garde and the neo-avant-garde is instructive for supporting a deeper understanding of the expansion of architectural concerns in this period. The dissertation concludes with a summation of the avant-garde project, its limitations and its ongoing relevance to architectural production.

Introduction: architectures of Dada and Surrealism

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> Whether they want to or not, historians or interpreters hold a position in the social disputes of their time. The perspective from which they view their subject is determined by the position they occupy among the social forces of the epoch.
>
> —Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (1974)[1]

When Peter Bürger wrote his short but influential *Theory of the Avant-Garde* in 1974 he was writing in a cultural climate of immense change. Frustrated with the failures of the May 1968 riots in Paris[2] and committed to extending the Marxist dialectic of the Frankfurt School, Bürger's treatise is written partly out of disgust with the rampant commoditisation of the art market and partly out of a personal need to document the unprecedented historical transformations that were occurring in front of him. Bürger drew heavily from the aesthetic positions of Georg Lukacs, Theodor Adorno and Walter Benjamin that had presciently linked the practices of art with those of capitalist production thereby demonstrating the revolutionary potential and limitations of the autonomous art object. However, Bürger's thesis goes beyond the philosophy of art and its critical reception in order to sketch a historical framework for the avant-garde and an ideological critique of its tactics. At the centre of this critique are the practices of Dada and surrealism[3] that, for Bürger, were virtually unprecedented in the historical evolution of the avant-garde.[4]

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[1] Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde,* trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 6. In the same passage Bürger quotes Wilhelm Dilthey: "[the individual] who investigates history is the same that makes history" (p. 6).

[2] Bürger concedes this in his "Postscript to the Second German Edition" where he historicises the work, maintaining that "it reflects a historical constellation of problems that emerged after the events of May 1968 and the failure of the student movement in the early seventies". In the accompanying note Bürger argues that this "constellation" is "at least Western European in scope" and cites a series of French studies that confirm this instinct. See: Peter Bürger, "Postscript to the Second Edition," in Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 95 (see also note 2, p.121).

[3] While there is no consensus, the literary convention, which is adopted in this dissertation, is to capitalise *Dada* but not *surrealism*, except when referring to the official "Surrealism" movement explicitly connected with

Bürger's subject matter is not new. By 1974, theorising the avant-garde had been a fascination of critics for over four decades and had been somewhat of a preoccupation in American art theory and particularly within the formalist circle of Clement Greenberg and his followers.[5] The point of departure for Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* was its insistence on developing a radicalised historical structure for studies of the avant-garde, positioning the avant-gardes of the 1910s and 1920s as the origin of radical art and all subsequent activity as a derivation of this initial and most pure revolutionary form. Bürger rejected the more heavily trodden path of theorising the avant-garde in dialectical opposition to the popular (or *kitsch*).[6] Instead, Bürger conceptualised the avant-garde as a

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Breton rather than the more generic usage. This corresponds with most contemporary dictionary citations as well as the conventions in journals such as *October*. When Bürger wrote his *Theory of the Avant-Garde* it was still conventional to capitalise "Surrealism" in all contexts, but by the time of his later works in the mid 1990s, he had moved to a capitalisation of *Dada* but not *surrealism* (unless in its official context) or *dadaism*. For consistency, he also tends to replace *Dada* with *dadaism* in some later works. See, for instance: Peter Bürger, "The Decline of the Modern Age," *Telos* 62 (1984-5), pp. 111-124.

[4] Bürger makes clear the centrality of Dada and surrealism to his study in an extended footnote where he demonstrates that "the concept of the historical avant-garde used here applies primarily to Dada and early surrealism." For Bürger, Dada and surrealism are significant as "they do not reject individual artistic techniques and procedures of early art but reject that art in its entirety, thus bringing about a radical break with tradition." See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 109 [note 4].

[5] While this will be covered in more detail in the following chapter, the seminal essay in this regard is: Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," in Clement Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism: Perceptions and Judgements, 1939-1944* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 5-22; Originally published as Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," *Partisan Review* (Fall, 1939), pp. 34-49; later republished in: Clement Greenberg, *Art and Culture: Critical Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), pp. 3-21; T. J. Clark's response, originally published in 1961, is also a seminal moment in the criticism of this field. See: T. J. Clark, "Voice of America," *Arts Yearbook* 4 (1961), pp. 101-108; later published as: T. J. Clark, "Clement Greenberg's Theory of Art," *Critical Inquiry* 9 1 (September, 1982), pp. 139-156; Greenberg loyalist Michael Fried's rebuttal to Clark is best captured in: Michael Fried, "How Modernism Works: A response to T. J. Clark," *Critical Inquiry* 9 (September 1982), pp. 217-234; See also: Stephen C. Foster, "Clement Greenberg: Formalism in the 40s and 50s," *Art Journal* 35 1 (Autumn, 1975), pp. 20-24.

[6] As well as Greenberg, this was also a fascination of both Walter Benjamin and Theodor Adorno, the two most important precedents for Bürger's methodological approach. The influence of this "high and low" dichotomy between the avant-garde and "popular culture" has been a popular subject in cultural studies in the last three decades. For its history, see: Meaghan Morris, "Banality in Cultural Studies," *Discourse* 10 (Spring/Summer, 1988), pp. 3-29; Rosalind Krauss, "Nostalgie de la Boue," *October* 56 (Spring, 1991), pp.111-120.

distinct historical phenomenon, peculiar to the first decades of the twentieth century and in opposition to the bourgeois aesthetic practices that were, in his view, rampant in the historical periods either side of it.

Bürger's argument is relatively straightforward. He argued that a process of institutionalising art had occurred in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries and this had led to the gentrification of art and the isolation of its inherently bourgeois audience.[7] In this sense, he follows the earlier precedents of Adorno and Benjamin, who drew a distinction between "organic" and "nonorganic" artworks: the former being associated with the bourgeois structures intrinsic to the production of art and meaning and the latter with the category of avant-gardiste works characterised by fragmentation and a collapse of the structures of holistic meaning.[8] Bürger maintained that the radical creative approaches of the first decades of the twentieth century were an attempt to both identify and dismantle this institutionalisation of art, attacking the bourgeois gentrification of art process and, ultimately, realigning creativity with the experience of modern life. In short, the historical avant-garde attacked the *autonomy* of the art object and its institutionalisation and conflated the categories of art and life.

Despite the importance of this argument, Bürger's work is more commonly discussed in relationship to his development of a "neo-avant-garde" category—a blanket term intended to cover the practices of the 1960s, predominantly American, experimentations with media and popular culture.[9] Fundamentally this term is intended to position these practices as

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[7] This argument is detailed in the chapter on "The Problem of Autonomy in Bourgeois Society" in: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 35-54.

[8] Benjamin's understanding of the organic and non-organic work of art shifted over the course of his writing. Benjamin's writing on the non-organic work of art in *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* (1924) provides a quite different definition to the one that is central to his essay "Author as Producer" (1934). Bürger's failure to take into account the nuances of this category has been a source of criticism of his work: See, for instance, Benjamin Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde," *Art in America* (November, 1984), p. 21.

[9] While rarely acknowledged, Bürger did not invent the term "neo-avant-garde". It was in use, at least three years prior in: Miklós Szabolcsi, "Avant-Garde, Neo-Avant-Garde, Modernism: Questions and Suggestions," *New Literary History* 3 1 (Autumn, 1971), pp. 49-70. For examples of the use of the category in Bürger's sense, see: Branden Joseph, *Random Order: Robert Rauschenberg and the Neo-Avant-Garde* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2003); Lucia Re, "Language, Gender and Sexuality in the Italian Neo-Avant-

historical and, more specifically, historically tied to the failed project of the original avant-gardes of the 1910s and 1920s. Referencing the work of Andy Warhol, Robert Rauschenberg, Jasper Johns and Daniel Spoerri,[10] Bürger argues that these artists appropriated tactics of the historical avant-garde but in an emaciated form, no longer challenging the autonomy of art but actively reinforcing it in a depoliticised and opportunistic art economy.[11] In this sense, the neo-avant-garde had adopted the techniques of the historical avant-garde but without the requisite critique of the institution of art and the social structures that had created and fuelled it.

Bürger's thesis privileges the tactics of Dada and surrealism over those of equally legitimate avant-garde explorations such as Suprematism, Constructivism, Futurism and even Cubism.[12] While his book is relatively brief, Bürger cites the works of Marcel Duchamp,[13] the collages of early Berlin Dada[14] and the evolution of montage through the

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Garde," *MLN* 119 1 (Jan, 2004), pp. 135-173; Hal Foster, "What's Neo about the Neo-Avant-Garde?" *October* 70 (Autumn, 1994), pp. 5-32.

[10] While Bürger doesn't refer specifically to Johns or Rauschenberg, he makes independent references to their work on a number of occasions, such as his description of the installation of a "stove pipe" in a museum: See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 52. Both Rauschenberg and Johns have subsequently become central to the theorisation of the "neo-avant-garde" and, with Marcel Broodthaers and Joseph Beuys, are the artists most frequently connected with this category. Bürger returns to the work of both Beuys and Warhol in: Peter Bürger, "Aporias of Modern Aesthetics," trans. Ben Morgan, *New Left Review* 1 184 (November-December, 1990), pp. 47-57.

[11] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 58-63; See also his later essay on "Everdayness, Allegory and the Avant-Garde: Some reflections on the work of Joseph Beuys," in: Peter Bürger, *The Decline of Modernism* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), pp. 147-162.

[12] Cubism is cited through an inaccurate reference to Picasso's famous wicker chair painting, which Bürger calls a "woven basket". Critics such as Benjamin Buchloh have demonstrated the clumsiness that accompanies Bürger's writing on cubism. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 73; Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde," p.19. The focus on Dada and surrealism has been noted by other critics, including Cunningham, who argues that the emphasis on "(early) surrealism" in Bürger's theory is arbitrary. See: David Cunningham, "The Futures of surrealism: Hegeliansim, romanticism and the avant-garde," *SubStance* 34 2 107 (2005), p. 63 [note 3].

[13] See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 51-53, p. 56, pp. 78-79.

[14] See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde,* pp. 76-79.

lens of surrealism[15] as the primary evidence in support of his theory. Of the limited illustrated examples in *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, Dada and surrealism (including Duchamp, Magritte and Heartfield) account for half.[16] It is also noteworthy that Bürger's other written works deal with Dada and surrealism at length. Focussing primarily on the literary works of early surrealism, Bürger's prior book (from 1971) is, four decades later, still awaiting translation in English.[17] Subsequent works by Bürger have addressed surrealism and Dada directly and with some authority as well as integrating the writings of key figures such as Georges Bataille and Maurice Blanchot.[18] Since the publication of *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, Bürger has developed a number of his key ideas in greater detail and especially his theory pertaining to surrealist fiction.

From a number of perspectives, the critique Bürger mounts against the neo-avant-garde is a resurgence of the same critiques that were levelled against the historical avant-garde at the time and in the decades after. Consider, for instance, the critiques of Walter Benjamin, which Bürger draws from in his theory. Benjamin's writing in the 1930s saw the strategies of avant-garde art as merely a precursor to revolution, laying the foundations for future radical transformations to build upon.[19] For Benjamin, the failure of the avant-garde is that

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[15] See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 70-73.

[16] The work contains only 8 illustrations, of which 7 belong to the historical avant-garde. The artists whose work is illustrated are: Pablo Picasso (2), Rene Magritte, Marcel Duchamp, John Heartfield (2), Andy Warhol and Daniel Spoerri. For the full list see: See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. vi.

[17] As he notes in the "Preliminary Remarks" to *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, "the present work follows from my [previous] book on surrealism." Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. xlviii; the book he is referring to is: Peter Bürger, *Der französische Surrealismus: Studien zum problem der avant-gardistischen Literatur* (Frankfurt am Main: Athenaum, 1971).

[18] The main text in this instance is: Peter Bürger, *The Thinking of the Master: Bataille between Hegel and Surrealism*, trans. Richard Block (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2002); originally published in German under the title *Das Denken des Herrn: Bataille zwischen Hegel und der Surrealismus* in 1992; see also the 1992 collection of translations of essays that deals intermittently with issues of dada and Surrealism: Bürger, *The Decline of Modernism,* pp. 32-47, pp. 127-136; Peter Bürger, "The Institution of 'Art' as a Category in the Sociology of Literature," *Cultural Critique* 2 (Winter, 1985-1986), pp. 5-33.

[19] The argument is made in: Walter Benjamin, "Author as Producer," in Walter Benjamin, *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Schocken Books, 1978): 220-238; see also: Walter Benjamin, "Surrealism: the last snapshot of the European intelligentsia," in Benjamin, *Reflections*, pp. 177-192.

it was unable to affect production and, as a result of this, was relegated to the realm of aesthetic renewal rather than social or political upheaval.[20] Similarly, for Theodor Adorno, the autonomous nature of art meant that its transformations would always be tempered and, ultimately, ineffective in a political sense. In his 1953 essay "Looking Back at Surrealism", Adorno criticises the artifice of surrealism that merely "simulates" dream experience rather than recreates it.[21] For Adorno, surrealism, despite honourable intentions, fails in its ability to transform the relationship to objects or to disrupt the pressures of commodity fetishism or capitalism. The critique of the neo-avant-garde by Bürger, like the art itself, resembles the ideological biases of the generation prior, albeit redeeming avant-garde practice and restoring its political, rather than aesthetic, function.

This dissertation sets out to apply the historical structure that Bürger identifies in his *Theory of the Avant Garde* to the study of architectural processes. Accepting the inherent flaws in Bürger's work, the dissertation extends this historical structure by foreshadowing this work within the recent context of American art theory, where Bürger's ideas have been both criticised and tacitly adopted to articulate connections between 1960s American art and 1920s European art. Focussing on experiments in automatism, readymades, photography, collage and photomontage, this dissertation argues that architectural space became the literal (and experiential) replacement for visual figuration in a number of creative practices in Dada and surrealism blurring its autonomous status and collapsing the disciplinary boundaries between architecture and art. The contention upheld in this work is that, as the picture plane became a platform through which architectural space was represented, embodied and condensed, there was a resultant influence on future ideas of space and its conceptualisation and this had an ongoing presence in future modes of architectural production. This structured the thinking and methods of the neo-

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[20] Benjamin warns of the dangers of supplying "a productive apparatus without changing it." In the example of photography, Benjamin writes "[w]hat we require of the photographer is the ability to give [their] picture the caption that wrenches it from modish commerce and gives it a revolutionary and useful value." See: Benjamin, "Author as Producer," p. 230.

[21] Theodor Adorno, "Looking Back on Surrealism", trans. Rolf Tiedemann and Shierry Weber Nicholsen, in Theodor Adorno, *Notes to Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), pp. 86-90 [orig. 1956, written 1953]; see also: Rosalind Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1994), pp. 33-35.

avant-garde architectural practices of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s enabling processes from art to infiltrate physical space and its production.

While there are a number of architectural practices from this period that could be included in such an argument, aspects of the formative projects of three contemporary practices will be given extensive analysis: Bernard Tschumi, Coop Himmelb(l)au and Diller + Scofidio. These were chosen due to their conceptual allegiance towards the historical avant-garde and, more importantly, the radical way in which they informed architectural production in the period. Tschumi, as well as contributing an essay to the first major volume on architecture and surrealism,[22] demonstrated a sustained political programme for his architectural theory that thematically drew from a number of historical avant-garde practices. Coop Himmelb(l)au's use of the creative media of the historical avant-garde, and especially collage, frottage and automatism (all tied to an emerging political consciousness) was innovative and influential in repositioning avant-garde concepts in architecture. Merging concepts from art and architecture, Diller + Scofidio's work warrants inclusion for the dependence it places on the spatial strategies of Marcel Duchamp, as well as the reframing of historical avant-garde tactics into the highly-institutionalised creative landscape of New York. While these practices are not definitive, they are illustrative of the creative landscape of the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s and, more importantly, engage the major strategies that are at the centre of Bürger's thesis.[23]

That each of these strategies in architecture draws heavily from Dada and surrealism and, to some extent, creates a new platform through which Dada and surrealism are advanced, is deliberate. The dissertation aims to extend the discussion of Dada and surrealism in

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[22] Bernard Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," in Dalibor Veseley (ed.), *Architectural Design Profile: Surrealism and Architecture* 11 2-3 (1978), pp. 111-116.

[23] All three of these practices have been linked to the category of the neo-avant-garde by theorists in the last ten years. For Tschumi, see: Hilde Heynan and André Loeckx, "Scenes of Ambivalence: Concluding Remarks on Architectural Patterns of Displacement," *Journal of Architectural Education* [JAE] 52 2 (1998), p. 100; K. Michael Hays, *Architecture's Desire: Reading the Late Avant-Garde* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2010), pp. 4-5; For Coop Himmelb(l)au, see: Frank Werner, *Covering + Exposing: The Architecture of Coop Himmelb(l)au* (Bäsel: Birkhäuser, 2000), p. 156; For Diller + Scofidio, see: Hal Foster, "Architecture-Eye", *Artforum* 45 6 (February, 2007), pp. 246-254.

architecture beyond its current stasis and, through Bürger, to reflect upon the influence and impact of these strategies in framing the contemporary architectural landscape. The dissertation also repositions Dada and surrealism in the light of recent research into art theory and, more importantly, demonstrates the integral role that architecture plays in the formation of the creative practices of the historical avant-garde. This is, in no way, a re-historicising of the avant-garde but, instead, a *refocussing* on specific practices in Dada and surrealism that have actively engaged architecture and architectural space in an innovative and under-recognised way. It is not intended as a complete, coherent, nor linear history of the avant-garde or, for that matter, its contributions to architecture.

While the various historical connections linking architecture with Dada and surrealism have been sufficiently (if not exhaustively) covered in the scholarship in the field, there is a discernible hesitation in blurring the disciplinary boundaries of art and architecture. The two major additions into the scholarship of architecture and surrealism—Dalibor Veseley's[24] special issue of *Architectural Design* dedicated to the subject *Surrealism and Architecture* (published at the end of 1978)[25] and Thomas Mical's *Surrealism and Architecture* (published in 2005)[26]— have both stressed the inability of surrealism to assimilate ideas relating to architecture into their work and demonstrated a broader "indifference" to architectural space in the art practices that have characterised the analysis of the period. For Veseley, "the surrealists were not particularly interested in architecture, except occasionally and then only in a very personal and rather indirect way."[27] In the same volume, Frampton had conceded "it may be argued that the surreal in architecture does not exist, or at least does not present itself in the same way as the

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[24] Dalibor Veseley changed the spelling of his name midway through his career from Veseley to Vesely. As the primary work that is dealt with in this dissertation is under the previous spelling, this has been adopted throughout, although the alternative spelling is reflected in the citations (where appropriate) and in the bibliography.

[25] Veseley, *Surrealism and Architecture*, p. 138.

[26] Thomas Mical (ed.), *Surrealism and Architecture* (London: Routledge, 2005). A possible third instalment is the recent publication of: Jane Allison (ed.), *The Surreal House* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), p. 41.

[27] Dalibor Veseley, "Salvador Dali: On Architecture" in Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, p. 138.

manifestations of the movement."[28] Similarly, more than 25 years later, Thomas Mical referred to architecture as a "blind spot" in surrealist theory and argued, "it is only architecture that remains as the unfulfilled promise of surrealist thought."[29] As recently as 2010 (in the context of Jane Allison's curated taxonomy of architectural space in surrealism) Veseley concluded that

> architecture did not become an integral part of surrealist endeavour comparable to painting, sculpture, objects, theatre or film. Architecture has a much closer link with reality and the "principle of reality" was always a bitter encounter for the surrealists. Their admiration for architecture was limited mostly to that which already existed and could be experienced as "discovered" architecture in a similar way to an *objet trouvé*.[30]

It was Anthony Vidler's important scholarship on the uncanny in architecture that first articulated a series of ideas that underpin contemporary architecture and have a natural affiliation with surrealist and Dada concerns, particularly in relationship to the categories of the body, vision, violence and psychology. Drawing selectively from both Dada and surrealism, Vidler's *The Architectural Uncanny* was significant for the emphasis it placed on the conceptualisation of architectural practice, developing a discursive history of modernity that sought to interrogate and diagnose the various tendencies that were endemic in the work of architects as diverse as Daniel Libeskind, Coop Himmelb(l)au, Rem Koolhaas and Bernard Tschumi. While acknowledging the stylistic sympathies in these practices with surrealist concerns and psychoanalysis, the argument developed by Vidler stops short of attributing a direct influence between art practice and architectural production preferring, instead, to focus on the psychological operations that architecture is susceptible to. Similarly, while Vidler's insightful, yet generalist, essay on architecture and

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[28] Kenneth Frampton, "Has the Proletariat No Use for a Glider" in Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, 138.

[29] Thomas Mical, "Introduction", in Mical (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, p. 2.

[30] Dalibor Vesely, "The Surrealist House as a Labyrinth and Metaphor of Creativity," in Jane Allison (ed), *The Surreal House* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), p.41.

surrealism[31] is exhaustive in cataloguing the use of architectural space within the Surrealism movement[32] it is without a detailed theorisation of the way that space functioned in the artistic practices of the early avant-gardes or, for that matter, the influence that it had on subsequent practices in architecture. This aspect remains implied, rather than explicit.

While acknowledging the important contributions to knowledge in this field, and the significance of both Veseley and Vidler's research, this dissertation proposes an alternative model through which the historical project of Dada and surrealism can be mapped. The dissertation is not directly concerned with the relative historiographies of Dada and surrealism or, for that matter, the bigger project of art history. Framed within a Marxist reading of production, this dissertation is a theoretical project that, following Bürger, is primarily concerned with the role of technique and medium in the history of avant-garde practice and, specifically, the way that architecture was engaged within this expanded creative field. In this sense, there is an acceptance that certain "moments" are definitive in the context of the historic avant-garde that, to some extent, are less significant in the grounded focus of a linear art history. This methodological approach privileges the analysis of creative strategies in both art *and* architecture over the comprehensive, but constrained, investigations within the disciplines of art *or* architectural history that have characterised the majority of scholarship in this field.

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Despite the centrality of Bürger's work to art theory, references to his thesis in architecture are rare and typically framed within the work of Manfredo Tafuri, whose own theory of the avant-garde was developed with temporal and ideological synchronicity to Bürger's initial

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[31] Originally delivered as a keynote address to a conference on the subject of "Fantasy Space: Surrealism and Architecture" held at the Whitworth Art Gallery in Manchester (September 2003), the transcript of the paper has been published as: Anthony Vidler, "Fantasy, The Uncanny and Surrealist Theories of Architecture," *Papers of Surrealism* 1 (Winter 2003), pp. 1-12.

[32] "Surrealism" is capitalised to reflect Vidler's emphasis on the official Bretonian movement and its influence.

treatise.[33] Both writing from a Marxist perspective and inherently sceptical of the role of ideology in shaping and indoctrinating creative production, the two projects have a number of mutual affiliations despite radical inconsistencies in both the scope and outcomes of their respective studies. The undeniable influence of Tafuri over recent architectural theory notwithstanding, the outcome has been to oversimplify the dialectical approach of Bürger and, more importantly, to destabilise connections between art and architecture. In a simplistic sense, Bürger is frequently cited as the "art equivalent" of Tafuri's thinking in architecture; a framing which closes down the potential that exists for fruitful avenues of both influence and criticism to extend between the disciplines of art and architecture.[34]

At the instances in architectural theory where investigations of the historical avant-garde have occurred, they have been primarily concerned with connections to "modernist" architects such as Le Corbusier[35], Mies van der Rohe[36] and Richard Neutra[37]. While there is no doubt that these connections exist and have heavily shaped contemporary architectural practices in a number of developed cultures across the world, the influence tends to lie predominantly within the medium of architecture and is internal to the conceptual framework of building. In this sense, this limits the much broader cultural and

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[33] K. Michael Hays is one of few authors to acknowledge the crossovers here. See: Hays, *Architecture's Desire,* p.5.

[34] For an example of this, see: Esra Ackan, "Manfredo Tafuri's theory of the architectural avant-garde," *Journal of Architecture* 7 (Summer 2002), pp. 135-170.

[35] See, for instance: Peggy Deamer, "Structuring Surfaces: The Legacy of the Whites," *Perspecta*, 32 (2001), pp. 90-99.

[36] A primary example, tying Mies to the repetitive commercial geometry of American architecture is: K. Michael Hays, "Abstraction's Appearance (Seagram Building)," Robert Somol, *Autonomy and Ideology: Positioning an Avant-Garde in America* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 1997), pp. 276-292; Hays earlier essay, coinciding with the translation of Bürger's work, unpacks a number of critical elements of *Theory of the Avant-Garde* in the context of Mies's work. See: K. Michael Hays, "Critical Architecture: Between Culture and Form," *Perspecta*, 21 (1984), pp. 14-29.

[37] The work of Sylvia Lavin is of particular relevance: see Sylvia Lavin, "The Avant-Garde is Not at Home: Richard Neutra and the American Psychologising of Modernity," Somol, *Autonomy and Ideology*, pp. 180-197; Sylvia Lavin, *Form Follows Libido: Architecture and Richard Neutra in a Psychoanalytic Culture* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004).

social radicalism of avant-garde praxis and, more importantly, restricts migrations from related disciplines.[38] This is important because a primary (and underexplored) strategy of the avant-garde was the collapse of the fixed medium of the work of art and its splintering into hybrid mediums which were autonomous but also heavily unstable. This dissertation argues that the primary media of art practice in the 1920s (drawing, the readymade, collage, photography and film) were all actively deployed by the Dada and surrealist circles in the collapse of medium altogether and, more importantly, its transition into a broader architectural "space" which became characterised as a new expanded art medium in itself. It was this hybrid spatialisation of art practice that became central to the investigations into architectural representation that shaped the radical culture of 1970s, 1980s and 1990s in architecture.

This dissertation argues that during this period Bernard Tschumi, Coop Himmelb(l)au and Diller + Scofidio were engaged in the implementation of revolutionary creative and representational practices in architecture. These practices emerged in the wake of the 1968 Paris riots and were in the realm of representation rather than architecture itself. It is argued that these practices borrowed heavily from a particular moment of radicality in the historical avant-garde and, most specifically, the development of the distinctive creative practices native to Dada and surrealism. Ultimately though, while these practices were radical in an aesthetic sense, they failed to engender revolution at a social or cultural level. This is partly, as Benjamin and Bürger have illustrated, a result of their inability to effect production or to challenge the systems of production that govern architecture and creativity. In this sense, their effectiveness was bracketed to the same historical frameworks that conditioned the fiery collapse of Dada and the relatively short period of impact that has been associated with surrealism.[39]

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[38] One important and notable exception is the collection of essays published in: Eve Blau and Nancy J. Troy (ed.), *Architecture and Cubism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1997).

[39] In the concluding section of Bürger's thesis he argues that the historical avant-garde transformed the nature of "political engagement in art" and, by transforming art into an "institution" effectively neutralised the political content of the work of art in the subsequent experiments that were undertaken. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 83, p. 90.

Developing this argument in more detail, this dissertation proposes a *disfiguring* of the traditional "ground" of Dada and surrealism, privileging architectural space as an *objet trouvé* (found object) in the conceptual flattening of visual practices that, as identified by Bürger, were instrumental to avant-garde approaches and the decentring of the art object. The dissertation considers architecture in a *plural* sense, concerned primarily with three interconnected architectures that have underpinned the influence of Dada and surrealism on the production and conceptualisation of space. The first "architecture" that this thesis concerns itself with is the critical architecture developed by Bürger in particular, which structures the historical influence of the avant-garde in art and embraces issues of autonomy, Marxism and production. Bürger's reworking of the historical frameworks of Marxism, read in unison with the writing of Adorno and Benjamin and the contemporary Marxism of the Frankfurt School, provides an important (and under-developed) architecture through which the historical structure of architectural practice can be repositioned. While drawing from the important projects of Clement Greenberg, Manfredo Tafuri, Hal Foster and Benjamin Buchloh, the "architecture" of Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* will be the primary structure through which these practices are decoded and the Frankfurt School will be its most immediate backdrop.

The second "architecture" that structures this dissertation is the architecture of the historical avant-garde generally and Dada and surrealism specifically. The innovative practices of Dada and surrealism deliberately redirected avant-garde practice through the strategic integration of architectural space and the borrowed techniques of architectural representation into the visual arts. The importance of architectural space to these practices has been established implicitly in the recent reclamation of Dada and surrealism in American art theory which, centred around the New York journal *October*[40], has provided a methodological framework that complements (if not advances) the primary tenets of Bürger's thesis. Explored through the practices of Marcel Duchamp, Man Ray, Francis Picabia, Man Ray, John Heartfield, Max Ernst and surrealist writing and

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[40] This circle is sometimes referred to as the Octoberist circle, evocative of both the commonality of ideas, approaches and subject matter that unites the editors, as well as the hegemonic influence that they have exerted over contemporary American art theory. The term was first used by Amelie Jones. See: Amelie Jones, "Review of *Art Since 1900*," *Art Bulletin* 88 2 (June 2006), p. 377.

photography, this migration of architecture into art has been theorised, in a preliminary sense, in art but rarely (if at all) from the perspective of architecture.[41] This section demonstrates that there is an "architecture" that accompanies the innovative practices of Dada and surrealism and that the recent critical repositioning of this work has unearthed a specific relevance in these practices to broader architectural audiences and the cultural frameworks that construct them.

The third, and most critical, "architecture" that this dissertation addresses is the architecture of the "neo-avant-garde" which, considered in the formative practices of Tschumi, Coop Himmelb(l)au and Diller + Scofidio, draws heavily from themes and techniques originally developed by Dada and surrealism and central to Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde*. These techniques—including automatism, the readymade, montage, flattening, collage, autonomy, shock and desire—were implicit in the formative creative strategies of these practices and the oppositional architecture that was the result of them. In a number of ways these "architectures" paralleled the contemporaneous passage of neo-avant-garde art, drawing from the radical potential of the 1960s for their inspiration. Through an analysis of the interpenetration of these three architectures, the dissertation will reposition architecture as one of the primary concerns (and strategies) of Dada and surrealism, demonstrating the influence and relevance that the ongoing studies of the avant-garde have on the built environment and its critical interpretation.

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[41] Clear exceptions exist in the paradigmatic work of, for instance, Siegfried Giedion, which demonstrated an affiliation between modernist conceptions of architectural space and the development of Cubist painting. The seminal account is in "Part 5" of: Siegfried Giedion, *Space, Time and Architecture* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1962), pp. 429-476 [orig. 1941]. In 1936 Meyer Schapiro had argued that architectural historians generally "overlook the degree to which the designs of the architect are affected by pictorialism, by the modes of seeing and drawing developed in modern and especially abstract painting." Meyer Schapiro, "The New Viennese School," *Art Bulletin* 18 (June, 1936), p. 266. More recently, Mark Linder has demonstrated an interchange between 1960s Minimalism and the architectural form-making of Frank Gehry and John Hejduk among others. See: Mark Linder, *Nothing Less than Literal: Architecture after Minimalism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004). Neither account considers the practices of Dada or surrealism in any depth.

The decade preceding the initial publication of Bürger's work was one of tumultuous social upheaval and is significant in the context of the present dissertation, which seeks to contextualise Bürger's writing within a broader historical frame.[42] Following his death in 1969, Theodor Adorno's posthumously published *Aesthetic Theory* was released in German in 1970 although its transition into English was delayed due to the complexity of the translation and the widely contested form of the book.[43] Following from his post-war essays, Adorno's work provided an enduring Marxist critique of the culture industry and a nihilistic appraisal of culture's failed opposition towards it. The publication of Adorno's epic work fuelled an influx of research in the German language that further legitimised art as a valid forum for the investigations of the Frankfurt School. In this sense, Bürger's critique of the neo-avant-garde was timely, echoing a number of the major critiques of contemporary art (many of which had come from the artists themselves)[44] and the scathing social critiques of the Frankfurt School. Bürger, in the opening pages of *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, made it very clear that he was writing from a particular historical perspective and with a strong awareness of the cultural pressures and transformations that were tearing at

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[42] For more on this cultural transformation see: Michael Chapman and Michael J. Ostwald, "Unstable ground: Scientific frictions in the analytical techniques of Learning from Las Vegas," *Architectural Science Review* 52 (2009), pp. 245-253; an earlier form of this paper was published in: Michael Chapman and Michael Ostwald, "Deconstructing Las Vegas: Scientific Frictions in Venturi, Scott Brown and Izenour," in Veronica Soebarto and Terence Williamson (eds.), *Challenges for Architectural Science in Changing Climates: 40th Annual Conference of the Architectural Science Association ANZAScA* (Adelaide: The University of Adelaide and The Architectural Science Association, 2006), pp. 318-325.

[43] The first, and highly controversial translation by Christian Lenhardt appeared in English in 1984 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984); a more reliable translation by Robert Hullot-Kentor, appeared in 1997. See; Theodor Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory,* trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: The Minnesota University Press, 1997).

[44] See, in this sense: Dan Graham, "Presentation to an Open Hearing of the Art Workers' Coalition," in Alexander Alberro and Blake Stimson (eds.), *Conceptual Art: A Critical Anthology* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2000), pp. 92-94; Joseph Beuys, "I am Searching for Field Character," in Christos M. Joachimides and Norman Rosenthal (eds.), *Art into Society/Society into Art,* trans. Caroline Tisdall (London: Institute of Contemporary Arts, 1974), p. 48; Lucy Lippard, "Postface," in Lucy Lippard, *Six Years: The Dematerialisation of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997) orig. 1973; see also the responses published as: Carl Andre, Jo Baer, Walter Darby Bannard, Rosemarie Castoro, Donald Judd, Robert Smithson and Lawrence Weiner, "The Artist and Politics: a Symposium," *Artforum* (September, 1970), pp. 35-39.

the seams of European culture.[45] As well as the rise of space travel, rock and roll, the peace movement, the sexual revolution, the widespread use of psychedelic drugs,[46] the explosion of an anti-establishment collective youth culture, the political turbulence of the May 1968 student riots in Paris and the anti-Vietnam war protests in the US, the period is marked by important and systemic shifts in the intellectual culture of both Europe and America.[47] The decade witnessed the mainstream evolution of multi-disciplinary critical practices, the dynamic re-emergence of Marxism, the intellectual reappraisal of psychoanalysis, the emergence of structuralism through the rediscovery of the work of Ferdinand de Saussure (first translated into English in 1955) and its popularisation through Roland Barthes and Claude Lévi-Strauss. Amongst the vast array of ground-breaking and revolutionising works from this immediate period are Jacques Derrida's *Of Grammatology*[48], Jacques Lacan's *Ecrits*[49], and Louis Althusser's *For Marx*[50] which all

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[45] Bürger also illustrates that, by 1974, Adorno's work was already *historical*: in Bürger's terms "it's historicalness has become recognisable" (p. 96). For Bürger, the primary shortcoming was the inability of Adorno to perceive the separation between avant-garde practice and its institutionalisation and, as a result, he was unable to approach art as a critical category. See Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 20, p. 96.

[46] Aspects of this fed into music and architecture. For an elaboration see: Michael Ostwald and Michael Chapman, "Architecture, Music and the Crowd in the Pink Floyd's The Wall", in Colin Ripley (ed.), *Architecture-Music-Acoustics* (Toronto: Ryerson University, Ryerson Embodied Architecture Lab), p. 49 [Paper Available CDROM].

[47] For a more detailed document of these forces see: John C. McWilliams, *The 1960s Cultural Revolution* (Westport, Conn: Greenwood Press, 2000); Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties: Years of Hope, Days of Rage* (Michigan: The University of Michigan, 1987); George G. Iggers, *Historiography in the Twentieth Century: From Scientific Objectivity to the Postmodern Challenge* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1997). The failure to take into account the political and social context of "1968" in the historical account of modern art by Hal Foster, Rosalind Krauss, Benjamin Buchloh and Yve-Alain Bois has been a point of contention in some critiques of their work. See: Hal Foster, Rosalind Krauss, Yve-Alain Bois and Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, *Art Since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2004); Geoffrey Batchen, "Review of *Art Since 1900*," *Art Bulletin* 88 2 (June 2006), pp. 375-376; Amelie Jones, "Review of *Art Since 1900*," *Art Bulletin* 88 2 (June 2006), pp. 376-379.

[48] Jacques Derrida, *Of Grammatology*, trans. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University, 1974); Originally published in French under the title *De la Grammatologie* in 1967.

[49] Jacques Lacan, *Écrits: The First Complete Edition in English*, transl. by Bruce Fink (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2006); Originally published in French under the title *Écrits* in 1967. Selections were first available in English in 1977.

provided radical and provocative models for reinterpreting and engaging with historical ideas; in Derrida through the "deconstruction" of language, in Althusser through the development of a radicalised, Marx-inspired, economics and in Lacan through a semiotic reappraisal of Freudian psychoanalysis. Another key literary work from this period was Guy Debord's influential manifesto *The Society of the Spectacle*[51] which argued that the modern period was characterised by a glut of visual information whereby representation had replaced reality as the primary mode through which life is experienced. This visualisation of culture also required the emergence of new visual means through which to record and document it creating a further division between the act of experiencing spectacle (in itself representation) and then representing it.[52] Without doubt, this culture of revisionist history and criticism left residual traces in Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde*.

The 1960s and 1970s also witnessed dramatic transformations in the art world.[53] The prominence of American Pop Art was offset by a radicalised counter-current, openly questioning the autonomous status of art and its complicity with the forces of social-conservatism. With the emergence of Conceptual Art (linked to what the critic Lucy Lippard termed the *dematerialisation of the art object*[54]) artistic practice moved away from the art-object to focus on the motivating idea behind it and dismantling, in the short term, the traditional functions of painting and sculpture. This resulted in a critical reappraisal of Dada and surrealism and, most importantly, the retrospective return to Marcel Duchamp's

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[50] Louis Althusser, *For Marx*, trans. Ben Brewster (London: Penguin, 1969); Originally published in French under the title *Pour Marx* in 1965; Equally influential is: Louis Althusser and Étienne Balibar, *Reading Capital*, trans. Ben Brewster (London Verso, 1997) orig. 1968.

[51] Guy Debord, *The Society of the Spectacle,* trans. David Nicholson-Smith (New York: Zone Books, 1994); Originally published in French under the title *La Société du Spectacle* in 1967; original English translation by Fredy Perlman and Jon Supak in 1970.

[52] The conflation of art and life was a primary preoccupation in Debord's treatise, and predates Bürger's theory by seven years. For a more detailed discussion of Debord's thinking on the relationship between art and society, see: Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p. 417, p. 428, pp. 430-434.

[53] For Pamela Lee, "1969 marks a virtual divide of sorts, generational, institutional, and art-critical in temper and kind." See: Pamela Lee, "Review of *Art Since 1900*," *Art Bulletin* LXXXVIII 2 (June 2006), p. 379.

[54] See: Lippard, *Six Years* [orig. 1973].

work, achieving for him a period of intense notoriety in the shifting cultural sands of New York at the time. A friend of the key proponents of both Pop Art[55] and Conceptual Art, Tony Godfrey calculates that Duchamp was interviewed over fifty times in the decade before his death in 1967.[56] The resurgence of interest in Duchamp was linked to a widely perceived antagonism towards the institutionalisation of art, its increasing value as an economic commodity and its uneasy relationship with the sanitised space of the gallery. Both popular music[57] and Conceptual Art were vulnerable to the same posthumous criticisms, as record sales soared and key conceptual artists like Bruce Nauman became, perhaps unwittingly, highly saleable commodities.[58]

The early 1970s witnessed a discernible fragmentation of American art criticism and the two recognisable and public defenders of Clement Greenberg's "modernism"—Rosalind Krauss and Michael Fried—had both taken alternate paths: Fried to pursue a career in art history rather than criticism[59]; Krauss to abandon the ideas of Greenberg altogether in

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[55] While Duchamp knew Jasper Johns and Robert Rauschenberg he was often critical of Pop Art, and frequently distinguished his own works from the machinations of pop, in particular in regard to Warhol. For Duchamp, art has a responsibility to provoke. For more on this relationship, see: Andreas Huyssen, "The Cultural Politics of Pop: Reception and Critique of US Pop Art in the Federal Republic of Germany," *New German Critique* **4** (Winter, 1975), p. 84-85; this essay is also published in: Andreas Huyssen, *After The Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 141-159.

[56] See: Tony Godfrey, *Conceptual Art* (London: Phaidon, 1998), p. 75.

[57] For a discussion of the ineffective radicalism of punk music (and its relationship to deconstructivism) see: Michael Chapman, "Strategies Against Architecture: Spatial tensions in Einstürzende Neubauten," in Colin Ripley, Marco Polo and Arthur Wrigglesworth (eds.), *Architecture/Music/Acoustics* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), pp. 83-97; An earlier version was published in: Michael Chapman and Michael J. Ostwald, "Strategies Against Architecture: Traces of Deconstruction in the Spatial Interrogations of Einstürzende Neubauten," in Colin Ripley (ed)., *Architecture-Music-Acoustics* (Toronto: Ryerson University, Ryerson Embodied Architecture Lab, 2006): p. 48 [Paper Available CDROM].

[58] This was based on an international "top 100" list published annually in the magazine *Capital* which takes into account the number of exhibitions and writing devoted to an artist in a given year. Nauman was top of the list in 1992. See: Godfrey, *Conceptual Art*, p.391.

[59] Fried contributed critical essays between 1962 and 1977, although with one exception ("Anthony Caro's Table Sculptures") his critical activity had finished by 1972. His critical essays are collected in Michael Fried, *Art and Objecthood: Essays and Reviews* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998). He went on to write a series of academic/art historical accounts of Romanticism and pre-modernism. While they are of peripheral

order to dismantle the premise of formalism through a detailed reading of French poststructuralism and a radical rethinking of the project of modernism.[60] The careers of Jules Olitski, Kenneth Noland and even Frank Stella—the second wave of American formalism featured famously in the *Three American Painters* exhibition[61]—had begun to wane and the anti-institutional forays of both Minimalism and Conceptual Art were dramatically restructuring the New York art market and the intellectual apparatus that supported it.[62] At the same time, the site-specific works that came to characterise the art of the 1970s had deliberately encroached on the disciplinary boundaries of architecture,

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interest to the argument presented in this dissertation, they do document the abandonment of criticism (and contemporary art/modernism) that restructured the culture of criticism and academia in America in this period. See; Michael Fried, *Absorption and Theatricality: Painting and Beholder in the Age of Diderot* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1988); Michael Fried, *Courbet's Modernism* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992); Michael Fried, *Manet's Modernism, or, The Face of Painting in the 1860s* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996); Michael Fried, *Menzel's Realism: Art and Embodiment in Nineteenth Century Berlin* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002).

[60] While mostly originally published in *Artforum* and *October* (the journal founded by Krauss with Annette Michelson in opposition to *Artforum*) in the 70s, the early essays are collected in: Rosalind Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1986). For a detailed account of Krauss's intellectual transformation, see: David Carrier, *Rosalind Krauss and American Philosophical Art Criticism: From Formalism to Beyond Postmodernism* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2002); see also: Daniel A. Siedell, "Rosalind Krauss, David Carrier and Philosophical Art Criticism," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 38 2 (Summer, 2004), pp. 95-105; Robert Storr, drawing from Krauss's own tendency to psychoanalysis, has argued facetiously that "Krauss was Greenberg's acolyte before she became his apostate and then overt Oedipal rival." See: Robert Storr, "All in the Family," *Frieze Magazine* 95 (November-December, 2005) [up].

[61] The introduction to the 1965 catalogue was written by Michael Fried himself and was a significant moment in art criticism: Fried, Michael. *Three American Painters: Kenneth Noland, Jules Olitski, Frank Stella*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Fogg Art Museum, 1965. It was republished in: Michael Fried, "Three American Painters: Kenneth Noland, Jules Olitski, Frank Stella (1965)" in Fried, *Art and Objecthood*, pp. 213-268. See also the description of this moment remembered in; Rosalind Krauss, "A View of Modernism," *Artforum* (September 1972), p. 48.

[62] For more on the tumultuous culture of American Art in this period see: Lippard, *Six Years* [orig. 1973]; Alexander Alberro, *Conceptual Art and the politics of publicity* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2003).

causing critics, including Krauss, to investigate the "expanded field" in which art operates.[63]

Postmodern architecture, which emerged in America after the publication of Venturi's *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (1963) and the cumulative critiques of post-war modernism in classic texts such as Jane Jacobs's *Life and Death of Great American Cities* (1961), was also implicated through its ready reception within a commercial marketplace. Despite the fact that Venturi, Scott Brown and Izenour's 1972 work *Learning from Las Vegas* had originally carried the subtitle "The Great Proletarian Cultural Locomotive,"[64] architecture in this period gravitated towards "populism" rather than socialism and was concerned more with the *visual* preferences of the proletarian, rather than their *social* emancipation.[65] Contrary to the Marxist revisionism occurring in related disciplines, in architecture the period was characterised by a decidedly non-revolutionary structuralist reappraisal of the kitsch landscapes of corporate America.[66] This primarily American phenomenon meekly interpreted the theoretical motives of critical theory in the 1960s into a literalist and historicist consumer pastiche that was readily applied to the

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[63] See: Rosalind Krauss, "Sculpture in the Expanded Field," *October* 8 (Spring, 1979): 30-44; the essay is reproduced in: Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 276-290.

[64] See: Denise Scott Brown, "Preface to the First Edition," In Robert Venturi, Denise Scott Brown and Steven Izenour, *Learning From Las Vegas: The Forgotten Symbolism of Architectural Form* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1977), p. xi. Jarringly, the opening page carries the subheading "Commercial Values and Commercial Methods" (p.3). For an alternate reading, see: Michael Ostwald and Michael Chapman, "The Erotics of Fieldwork in Learning from Las Vegas," *Architecture and Field/Work* (London: Routledge, 2011), pp.22-34; Chapman and Ostwald, "Unstable ground," pp. 245-253.

[65] Frederic Jameson extends this argument in his *Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* where he draws Jencks and Venturi into a broader Marxist dialectic, with its antithesis in the "bleakest" and "implacably negative" (p. 60) critique of Tafuri. For Jameson, the appeal to populism in Post-Modern architecture is a reaction to the elitist but differentiating and innovative practices of High Modernism effectively rendering it indiscernible from the cultural industry of advanced capitalism. See: Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), pp. 60-63; see also: Hal Foster, "(Post) Modern Polemics," *Perspecta* 21 (1984), p. 148.

[66] For a more detailed investigation of this phenomenon see: Michael Chapman, Michael Ostwald and Chris Tucker, "Semiotics Interpretation and Political Resistance in Architecture," In Zbigniew Bromberek (ed), *Contexts of Architecture: Proceedings of the 38th Annual Conference of the Architectural Science Association ANZAScA and the International Building Performance Simulation Association* (Launceston: Australia and New Zealand Architectural Science Association, 2004), pp. 384-390.

surfaces of American capitalism throughout the 1980s. The Jencksian inspired "Post-Modernism"[67], even more than Conceptual Art, was heavily criticized for its easy appropriation (despite its humanist allegiances) by market capitalism, as it became the signature style for corporate towers across the southern states of America.[68]

Echoing the broader cultural and intellectual shifts that were taking place (and not acknowledged in the restrictive narrowing of Jencks's Post-Modernism), the emergence of architectural theory, as a multi-disciplinary critical practice, is often located historically within this approximate period,[69] anchored by the coincidence of two quite unrelated trajectories: Baird's influential rereading of Saussure and architecture (1969)[70] and Tafuri's polemical rereading of Marxism and the avant-garde in the same year.[71] Tafuri's radical Marxism was an assault on the mainstream ineffectiveness of contemporary architecture and led to a sustained period of theoretical activity that tore at the heart of the commercial foundations of architecture and the passive role of the historian in accommodating it.[72]

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[67] For a discussion of the distinction between postmodernism and Jencks's branded Post-Modernism see: Scott Colman, "Post-Modernism and the Foreclosure of the Architectural Imaginary," in Michael Chapman and Michael Ostwald (ed.), *Imagining: Proceedings of the 27th International SAHANZ Conference* (Newcastle: Society of Architectural Historians Australian and New Zealand, SAHANZ, 2010), p. 95.

[68] One such critique, in defence of modernism, is: Jürgen Habermas, "Modernity versus Postmodernity", trans. Seyla Ben-Habib, *New German Critique* 22 (Winter, 1981), pp. 3-14; Bürger, whose work is cited in the article, wrote a direct response to this article in the same issue. See: Peter Bürger, "The Significance of the Avant-Garde for Contemporary Aesthetics: A Reply to Jürgen Habermas", trans. Andreas Huyssen and Jack Zipes, *New German Critique* 22 (Winter, 1981), pp. 19-22.

[69] This approximate date provides the starting point in K. Michael Hays anthology; 1965 marks the origin in Kate Nesbitt's collection: See: K. Michael Hays (ed), *Architecture Theory Since 1968* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, The MIT Press, 1998); Kate Nesbitt (ed), *Theorizing a New Agenda for Architecture: An Anthology of Architectural Theory, 1965-1995* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1996).

[70] George Baird, "La Dimension Amoureuse in Architecture," in Charles Jencks and George Baird, (ed), *Meaning in Architecture* (New York: George Braziller, 1969), pp. 36-55. First published in 1967.

[71] Manfredo Tafuri, "Towards a Critique of Architectural Ideology," trans. Stephen Sartarelli in Hays, (ed), *Architectural Theory Since 1968*, pp. 6-35. This essay was later enlarged and incorporated as the first chapter in: Manfredo Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia: Design and Capitalist Development* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1976), pp. 1-40.

[72] For a more detailed investigation of Tafuri's influence, see: Diane Y. Ghirardo, "Manfredo Tafuri and Architectural Theory in the U.S., 1970-2000," *Perspecta* 33 (2002), pp. 38-47.

The re-emergence of Marxism at this time was significant, not just in the context of Bürger's work, but also in society at large providing a model for reworking historical frameworks that transformed the critical function of social history.[73] This method was exploited to great effect by second-wave feminist writers[74] and was central to the emergence of social consciousness and rebellion in a number of related fields. These practices also marked a historical movement away from the broader functionalist themes of modernity, reclaiming critical practice as fertile ground for intellectual experimentation and creativity. The animosity between a number of European intellectuals and the prevalent conservatism embodied in institutions in Europe saw them adopt an increasingly politicised role not only in their writing and teaching but also in broader culture in general. Prominent intellectuals like Derrida, Henri Lefebvre, Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze all began to dismantle the traditionally sacrosanct boundaries of conventional philosophy and move into broader areas of cultural analysis like art, literature and film at the same time promoting, as part of their intellectual systems, radical political agendas and programmes for social action.

It was within this era, characterised by the flowering of Marxist ideology, that Peter Bürger wrote his *Theory of the Avant-Garde* presenting a methodological approach that positioned certain techniques associated with avant-garde creative practice in a broader economic and cultural frame. That the work had to wait ten years before its translation into English is equally significant. By the time the English speaking fraternity of art historians and art theorists arrived at the ideas of Peter Bürger the entire art landscape had shifted from the anchored, site specific works which characterised the 1970s to the media-driven art processes of the 1980s. Burger's theory arrived, in English, to coincide with a rampant commercial art market in New York specifically and America generally that, buoyed by the absence of a fringe-benefits tax, saw money poured into avant-garde art from all sections

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[73] The resurgence of Marx in the intellectual culture of the 1960s is analysed in the opening pages of: Hal Foster, "What's Neo About the Neo-Avant-Garde," *October* 70 *The Duchamp Effect* (Autumn 1994), pp. 5-7.

[74] See, for instance: Sheila Rowbotham, *Women's Consciousness, Man's World* (Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1973); Sheila Rowbotham, *Hidden from History: 300 years of women's oppression and the fight against it* (Hammondsworth: Penguin, 1975); Sheila Rowbotham, *Beyond the Fragments: Feminism and the making of Socialism* (London: Merlin, 1980).

of the financial and investment world. The most celebrated and enduring critique (amongst many) of Bürger's argument was by Benjamin Buchloh, interleaved between rampant gallery advertisements in the glossy pulp pages of *Art in America*.[75] This overtly capitalistic forum was an ironic context for Buchloh's rebuttal and potentially confirmation that, to return to Bürger's quote, the "perspective from which [historians and interpreters] view their subject is determined by the position they occupy among the social forces of the epoch."[76]

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As Bürger's theory is central to this dissertation, a consideration of Buchloh's influential rebuttal of it is equally critical for framing and introducing the work. Similarly, the reception of Bürger's theory in the United States (and especially under the auspices of the journal *October*) is an important element in the formation of this dissertation's central propositions and requires detailed examination. While a large amount of German-language criticism has been devoted to Bürger's writing[77], it is only in tandem with the rejuvenation of scholarship into the historical avant-garde in American art theory in the decades since, that the shortcomings inherent in Bürger's theory can be overcome.

Buchloh argues that Bürger's foundation in the fields of literary theory and comparative literature does not qualify him with sufficient tools to study the avant-garde in all of its

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[75] The seminal essay is Buchloh's review of the first the English translation, published ten years after the original. See: Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde", pp. 19-21; Buchloh's argument is significantly extended in the anthology of his essays published in 2003, which also demonstrates his tacit acceptance of the category, if not the details of Bürger's theory, to which he remains vehemently opposed. See: Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, *Neo-Avantgarde and Culture Industry: Essays on European and American Art from 1955 to 1975* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2003), p. xxiv.

[76] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 6.

[77] The most significant response to Bürger's work appeared shortly after its initial publication, in the form of a collection of essays that, unlike the English language criticism, took issue with a number of the philosophical assumptions under which Bürger's theory operated. See: W. M. Lfdke (ed), *Theorie der Avant-garde. "Antworten auf Peter Biirgers Bestimmung von Kunst und biirgerlicher Gesellschaft* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1976); Bürger's response, originally published in as a postscript to the second (unaltered) German edition of 1979, is translated as a postscript to the English translation. See: Peter Bürger, "Postscript to the Second German Edition," in Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 95-99.

multivalent tendencies, concluding that "[Bürger's] knowledge of the history and theory of the avant-garde in the visual arts at times seems limited if not naive."[78] Buchloh is clear that the limitations pertaining to Bürger's essay are less to do with the shifting historical context in the period since its translation and more as a result of "the fact that any theorisation of avant-garde practices from 1915 to '25 […] must force the vast differences and contradictions of that practice into the unifying framework of theoretical categories, and is therefore doomed to failure."[79] However Buchloh's reading of this absolutism in regard to Bürger's reductive practices also acknowledges that, on a number of occasions, Bürger expresses his own scepticism towards the possibility of a totalising theory of the avant-garde and is more concerned with certain paradigmatic shifts that correspond (either directly or indirectly) to alterations in social conditions.[80]

Before illustrating his numerous criticisms of Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, Buchloh concedes that

> Bürger's central idea that the "historical" avant-gardes of the early 20th century must be differentiated from both their modernist predecessors in the 19th century and their "neo-avant-garde" followers after 1945 is sound and will serve as an obligatory model for anyone working in the history of modernism.[81]

Evidence of this is the widespread usage that Buchloh makes of this historical structure in his own research, albeit, from a very different disciplinary perspective. Buchloh sees Bürger's theory as demonstrative of the themes that were circling below the surface of education in Germany in the 1960s and that resulted in a generation of anti-institutional critiques that came to dominate the study of humanities in this period. Bürger's position—as a student of literary and art history in Germany in the 1960s—coincided with a national redemption of a number of "moments" in German history that had been previously omitted in the politicisation of the curriculum of education and especially in regard to the

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[78] Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde," p. 19.

[79] Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde," p.19.

[80] For the most succinct articulation of Bürger's trepidation on this front, see the final paragraph of: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 94.

[81] Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde", p. 19.

humanities.[82] Buchloh speculates that Bürger's approach is a result of this fascination with the "gaps" in the historical structuring of German education, where students arrived indirectly at the key moments of opposition by retracing an alternative pathway of modernism. Primary amongst this was the discovery, in Buchloh's words, of

> the "other" history of the [twentieth] century avant-garde (especially Berlin Dada, French Surrealism and Soviet Constructivism and Productivism) as well as theories of artistic production that had been developed outside of the academic apparatus (such as Walter Benjamin's *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*)—theories which turned out to be more important for the development of a new literary criticism than most of the disciplines own paper tigers.[83]

For Buchloh, the discovery of these suppressed practices was also manifested as a dissatisfaction with the conventional tools of art and literary history; tools which had been handed down from the nineteenth century, virtually without alteration.[84]

Despite acknowledging the cultural context within which the work was produced, Buchloh rejects Bürger's theory as being overdetermined by a number of fixed assumptions and he demonstrates the inherent simplification that Bürger's limited examples give rise to. Part of this critique arises from the brevity of Bürger's thesis that, as Buchloh demonstrates, is ambitiously small to cover such a vast subject and does so with an exceedingly limited number of creative examples.[85] Buchloh has also argued that a genuine neo-avant-garde trajectory in art was not evident until the late 1960s and early 1970s, almost a decade after the practices that Bürger draws attention to.[86] The lack of consideration that Bürger pays to the art of his time is evidence, for Buchloh, of a general lack of interest in the

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[82] Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde", p. 19.

[83] Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde", p. 19.

[84] Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde", p. 19.

[85] Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde", p. 21. Bürger makes reference to just eight illustrated works.

[86] Buchloh makes this argument in: Buchloh, *Neo-Avantgarde and the Culture Industry*, p. xxiv. Buchloh cites the work of Michael Asher, Daniel Buren, Marcel Broodthaers, Hans Haacke, Dan Graham and Lawrence Weiner as the primary agents of a radicalised neo-avant-garde practice. This timeframe has been adopted elsewhere. See, for instance: David Hopkins, "Introduction," in David Hopkins and Anna Katharina Schaffner (eds.), *Neo-Avant-Garde* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 2005), p.6.

subject, or at least in the rigorous study of it. Bürger also illustrates the lack of sensitivity that Bürger applies to his theoretical subjects, especially in regard to Walter Benjamin, where Bürger uncritically marries his writings from almost a decade apart, despite the radically different social and political emphasis that transformed Benjamin's writing over this period.[87]

While Buchloh took issue with a number of aspects of Bürger's argument, his primary criticisms were twofold. First of all, Bürger had constructed a theory of the avant-garde that positioned all radical activity in historical relationship to the original avant-garde. For Buchloh, this was a devaluation of contemporary practice and represented an inability to recognise the creative potential of the present. Secondly, Bürger's theory presumed that the intention and motivation of all artistic activity was political and thereby failed to acknowledge the possibility of engaging other fields that the art-object may impact upon. In this sense, Buchloh saw Bürger's theory as part of a broader Frankfurt School pessimism that was inherently and robustly critical of the present and ideologically opposed to its capitalist allegiances. For Buchloh, there was certainly no prerequisite that art needed to be political and, in a number of cases, art was deliberately opposed to politics (*anti*-political). Buchloh establishes a less linear model of historical evolution whereby the positivistic values of the historical avant-garde are no longer the "origin" of art and its nihilistic collapse in the neo-avant-garde is no longer its endpoint.

One important example that Buchloh raises, in a paper from the same period, is the paradigmatic case of Yves Klein.[88] Klein's 1950s monochromes—such as *Monochrome Blue IKB48*—are representative of the spatialisation of painting and the visual objectivity with which minimalism had restructured the relationship between the art object and its institutional context. However, when read against the monochrome canvasses of

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[87] Buchloh is referring primarily to the contradictory writings that Benjamin produced on the organic and non-organic work of art which, despite their differing contexts, appear side-by-side in Benjamin's theory. See: Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde", p. 21.

[88] A detailed critique of Bürger's work is advanced in this article. See: Benjamin Buchloh, "The Primary Colors for the Second Time: a paradigm repetition of the neo-avant-garde", *October* 37 (Summer, 1986), pp. 41-52.

Rodchenko[89] thirty-five years earlier there is a problematic (and seemingly uncritical) repetition of formal content which, from a number of perspectives, demonstrated a lack of originality or integrity both in content and in theory. Such formal repetitions became heavily associated with a perceived critical dialogue between the neo and historical avant-gardes and, from a distance, embodied the argument mounted by Bürger (although they were not amongst the examples he used). Such was the severity of this "repetitive" culture of art that it led to a number of critics dismissing the works of the neo-avant-garde entirely and polemically linking these practices to the impending collapse of the entire art industry. Despite this, for Buchloh, the connections between Rodchencko and Klein were purely coincidental and far from conclusive. On the contrary, as he demonstrated, Klein had genuinely never heard of Rodchenko, and didn't have access to his work until the late 1950s, which was well after the formative exhibitions of his style had been held.[90] The audience for these works was not educated art-historians but a savvy and visually discerning public who saw in these canvasses the traces of the fashion and graphic ethos that dominated American and European culture in the 1960s. In this sense, the objectives (and audiences) of both Rodchenko (historical) and Klein (neo) were completely contradictory and any formal similarity was largely accidental as well as aesthetically irrelevant.[91]

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[89] Rodchenko first exhibited *Pure Red Color*, *Pure Yellow Color* and *Pure Blue Colour* in 1921 at the *All-Russian Union of Poets in Moscow*. For a more detailed discussion see: Philip Armstrong, "Rodchenko's monochromes and the perfection of painting," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 46 (Autumn, 2004), pp. 173-184.

[90] Buchloh, "The Primary Colors for the Second Time," p. 45.

[91] Buchloh fails to heed this lesson in his own scholarship at times. In his study of Gerhard Richter's "October 18, 1977" series of paintings, for instance, Buchloh refers to their original display in the Musuem Haus Esters (by Mies van der Rohe in Krefeld) an art space created in 1955 from the alteration of a private residence. For Buchloh, it is not this transformation of the domestic to the institutional that is of interest but, instead, "an appropriate historical accident" related to Mies's involvement in the design of the revolutionary memorial to Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht. While there is a temporal affiliation between the design of the monument and the commission to design the Esters House in the following year, the connection is tenuous at best and, despite the use of "proletarian" clinker bricks, the revolutionary content of the memorial does not carry through to the design of the bourgeois house. It is not carried into the paintings exhibited in the space, anymore than Rodchenko's politics is to the canvasses of Klein. See: Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, "A Note on

Buchloh argued that, given the formal sameness between Klein and Rodchenko, it was the role of the critic to establish an external context through which these works could be evaluated, rather than resorting to simplistic comparisons of stylistic similarities. Going beyond the comparison of works with selected historical precedents, Buchloh argues for a more methodical positioning of the work within the specific context in which they are produced and received. As Buchloh concludes,

> [t]he primary function of the neo-avant-garde was not to re-examine this historical body of aesthetic knowledge, but to provide models of cultural identity and legitimation for the reconstructed (or newly constituted) liberal bourgeois audience of the postwar period. This audience sought a reconstruction of the avant-garde that would fulfil its own needs, and the demystification of aesthetic practice was certainly not among those needs. Neither was the integration of art into social practice, but rather the opposite: the association of art with spectacle. It is in the spectacle that the neo-avant-garde finds its place as the provider of a mythical semblance of radicality, and it is in the spectacle that it can imbue the repetition of its obsolete modernist strategies with the appearance of credibility.[92]

While accepting Buchloh's position in this regard, the critique that Bürger mounts against the ineffective nature of these practices in their advanced capitalist context is still instructive and especially when the formal properties of the work of art are widened to include an extended economic frame. There is no doubt that Büchloh's own position, as a critic of contemporary (neo), rather than (historical) avant-garde art was provoked by the historical construct of Bürger and this is, in part, the motivation of his sustained critique. However there is also an emphasis on the ideological critique of Adorno that runs through Buchloh's writing,[93] and his frustration with Bürger's theory is not its ideological standpoint but its failure to go further.

Gerhard Richter's 'October 18, 1977,'" *October* 48 (Spring, 1989), pp. 88-93; see: Franz Schulze, *Mies: A Critical Biography* (Chicago: The Univeristy of Chicago Press, 1995), pp. 125-128.

[92] Buchloh, "The Primary Colors for the Second Time," p. 51.

[93] Thierry de Duve, for instance, refers to Buchloh as a "post-Adornian" theorist. See: Thierry de Duve, *Kant after Duchamp* (Cambridge, Massachussetts: The MIT Press, 1996), p. 22 [note. 10].

Buchloh's position towards the critical writing of art history echoes Tafuri's in architecture, citing his commitment "to make the writing of history itself, its historicity, contribute to the larger project of social and political change"[94]. In the wake of the frustrations of the failure of the avant-garde, it is primarily Bürger's inability to provide an alternative role, even for the critic or historian,[95] in the ideological debates of the twentieth century that Buchloh directly confronts. As well as illustrating an expanded role for the contemporary avant-garde in this context, a number of the methodological flaws that Buchloh recognises in Bürger's historical account are addressed in much greater detail in Buchloh's own erudite scholarship, although the ideological dilemmas remain largely unresolved.

Buchloh's most strident critique of Bürger's work is reserved for the latter's conclusion: ultimately, that the failure of the avant-garde (despite the honesty of its intentions) meant that subsequent generations of art were doomed to failure, through the endless repetition of the same techniques and their indoctrination *within*, as opposed to *against*, the institution of art. As Buchloh demonstrates, the failure of one aspect of avant-garde activity is not the endpoint of creativity and certainly does not equate to the triumph of the ideological opposition to that activity.[96] Clearly Buchloh takes issue with the overwhelming pessimism that is characteristic of Bürger's concluding remarks, where the opportunities first articulated by the avant-garde had not only failed but had also been appropriated by the institutions and social structures against which they were directed. Buchloh, in contrast, arrives at a vastly different conclusion, arguing that

> [t]he assault on the false isolation of art and on the ideology of its autonomy by the "original" avant-garde cannot be abandoned simply because it was aborted. It seems

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[94] Benjamin Buchloh, "The Social History of Art: Models and Concepts," in Hal Foster, Rosalind Krauss, Yve-Alain Bois and Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, *Art Since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism, Postmodernism* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2004), p. 22.

[95] Buchloh's fears that, in Bürger's theory, critics and historians become merely "caretakers inside the ideological apparatus of art and its institutions" and are no longer capable of the kind of Marxist critique that Bürger's theory originally aspires to. See: Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde", p. 21.

[96] Buchloh's example, in this instance, makes this point clearly, demonstrating its absurdity through the consequential hypothesis: "since most struggles for self-determination in Latin American countries are aborted, colonialist and imperialist policies are historically just as valid as the politics of liberation". Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde", p. 21.

> more viable to define avant-garde practice as a continually renewed struggle over the definition of cultural meaning, the discovery and representation of new audiences, and the development of new strategies to counteract and develop resistance against the tendency of ideological apparatuses of the culture industry to occupy and to control all practices and all spaces of representation.[97]

It is within this understanding of an expanded avant-garde practice that continues into the second half of the twentieth century (as opposed to two distinct avant-gardes) that Buchloh's writing is most firmly aligned. The preference to see the avant-garde as a singular, multi-facetted strategy, as opposed to a simplistic repetition of historical ideas, has enabled far greater currency for Bürger's work and shifted the emphasis onto his theorisation of the historical avant-garde, which establishes certain characteristics of avant-garde practice that are still instructive and particularly in relationship to the sublation of art and life.

Both Bürger and Buchloh, in their own ways, have been integrated in the English language reception of *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, tacitly accepting the thrust of Bürger's argument with the necessary clarifications, readjustments, and contextualisations that were illustrated by Buchloh.[98] In fact, Bürger's treatise has been the focus of much fascination for the group of art theorists gathered around the journal *October* and who, anxious to reignite research into the historical avant-garde have, typically, used Bürger's theory critically to facilitate their own interest in re-framing this connection with contemporary art. Within the peculiar context of New York art criticism generally, Bürger's ideas have become a seminal starting point from which to project a rejuvenated role for the avant-garde in contemporary culture. Hal Foster is one of the most important examples, structuring a large part of his research on the contemporary relevance of the historical

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[97] Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde", p. 21.

[98] Of course, there has also been a growing trajectory of criticism that, rather than qualifying Bürger's theorisation of the neo-avant-garde, has actively embraced it. This is most evident in the circle around the publication *Avant-Garde Critical Studies* (to which Bürger is an advisor) and which has recently devoted both conferences and books to the subject of the neo-avant-garde, as a direct extension of Bürger's writing on the subject. See; Dietrich Scheunemann, *Avant-Garde/Neo-Avant-Garde* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 2005); David Hopkins and Anna Katharina Schaffner, *Neo-Avant-Garde* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 2005).

avant-garde and the shifts in its critical reception. In his book *The Return of the Real*[99] he develops a more moderate stance towards the binary positions of Buchloh and Bürger and, in a critical sense, advances the position of both. While acknowledging, in the endnotes, his debt to Buchloh,[100] Foster's work uses Bürger's thesis as the point of departure for reinvigorating the practices of the neo-avant-garde and their broader relationship to the history of art and architecture.[101] To understand the relationship of these practices to broader ideas in art history Foster stresses the importance of perspective, both of the artist and, across a distance of several decades, the critic. Of importance to Foster is "the relation between *turns* in critical models and re*turns* of historical practices"[102]; he asks, "how does a reconnection with a past support a disconnection from a present practice and/or a development of a new one?"[103].

After Identifying the contextual flaws in Bürger's selective and linear historical reading of the avant-garde, Foster presents an alternate model for understanding the neo avant-garde, which is not the nihilistic end of art, but instead the emergence of new forms of critical practice which are responding to different and ephemeral conditions in broader culture. The neo-avant-garde of the 1960s, for Foster at least, didn't replicate the historical avant-garde but reappropriated it to develop new practices of critical activity. As a result, the neo-avant-garde represents a continuation of these practices in a new critical context that, by targeting cultural values outside of the domain or art, is "enact[ing] its project for the first time"[104].

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[99] Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996).

[100] Foster, *The Return of the Real*, p. 230 [note 1]. Foster concedes that "this chapter is written in dialogue with [Buchloh's] criticism."

[101] For a more detailed exploration of this argument see: Michael Chapman and Michael Ostwald, "Automated architecture: Violence and nihilism as strategies of 'making' in the tactics of Coop Himmelb(l)au," *ARQ: Architectural Research Quarterly* 10 (2007), pp. 241-248.

[102] Foster, *The Return of the Real,* p. 20.

[103] Foster, *The Return of the Real,* p. 20.

[104] Foster, *The Return of the Real,* p. 20.

The other critical aspect of Foster's argument is that the historical avant-garde was far less organised, strategic, or even legible than Bürger assumes and, for Foster, the activity that occurred in the historic avant-garde was a project that was fundamentally disrupted and inherently incomplete. Drawing from the Freudian concept of *deferral*, Foster argues that it was with an understanding of this latent avant-garde project that the neo-avant-garde developed a revitalised critical practice, reinvigorating the historical avant-garde project and redirecting its tactics against a new target. While the psychoanalytical aspect of this argument is underdeveloped in a number of ways,[105] the emphasis on time that is enabled in this reading provides an important extension to the historical construct of Bürger and its application to historical thought.[106]

To summarise Foster's position, the formative ideas of the historical avant-garde were "realised" in the critical revisions of later neo-avant-garde practice. It is with an awareness of Foster's broader critical revision of Bürger's thinking and the questions he frames around *turning* and *returning*, that this dissertation revisits Bürger's work in an expanded critical context, in order to measure its relevance to architectural theory and the study of Dada and surrealism. In this sense, the dissertation argues that the practices of the 1970s avant-garde in architecture were the continuation of a latent avant-garde project in art, where the integration of architectural space became an essential and multivalent tactic against the institution and was aligned to the broader creative and political concerns of the 1920s. The neo-avant-garde exploited these creative strategies in the development of a radicalised approach to architecture that, while original, was the redirection of these historical tactics towards a new audience and within an expanded creative context.[107]

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[105] This is also the conclusion of other critics. See, for instance: Hopkins, "Introduction," p.7.

[106] Pamela Lee uses Foster's reinvention of this historical paradigm to position kinetic art as "critical intervention" as opposed to "tired rehearsal", in line with Foster's re-reading of Bürger's thesis. See, Pamela Lee, *Chronophobia: On Time in the Art of the 1960s* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004), p. 329 [note 26].

[107] This conclusion is made in a more elaborate form in: Chapman, "Automated architecture," pp. 241-248.

Taking, as a point of departure, the evolution of techniques in art that are central to Peter Bürger's theory, this dissertation is loosely structured around media, and the techniques common to both Dada, surrealism and the neo-avant-garde in architecture. A number of key dates are useful, if not obligatory, in defining the scope of the present study. In June 1912, having seen a performance of *Impressions of Africa* by Raymond Roussel at the Theatre Antoine with Apollinaire and Francis Picabia,[108] Marcel Duchamp began working on his *Bride Stripped Bare By Her Bachelors, Even* and produced the first study for the work in July of that year. This marks the historical origin of the shifts in avant-garde practices that are central to this dissertation and unfolded over the ensuing decades. The closing date is the publication of Breton's *Surrealism and Painting* in 1928 that, to some extent was the first sanctioned acknowledgement of the relationship between painting and the surrealist movement and heavily restructured art-practice away from experimentation and towards production. The scope of this dissertation is set by specific techniques, all of which are central in the theory of Peter Bürger. While exploring the strategies of the readymade, collage, montage, photography and drawing, the dissertation will not be concerned with other media, including painting which, despite its centrality to the history of surrealism, does little to advance the primary concerns of Bürger's theory or, for that matter, the formative practices of surrealism. This is not to suggest that alternative or later developments in these strategies are not worthy of consideration, but that the primary strategies and techniques with which this dissertation is concerned had all been developed to such an extent by the late 1920s that they had ceased to be experimental and had become productive. With a few notable exceptions,[109] there was little evolution of these techniques in relationship to architecture, beyond this historical frame.

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[108] There are some contradictions in Duchamp's various writings and comments about this. It is known that he saw the play, which ran until July of that year, with Picabia and most likely Apollinaire. Despite this, as Tomkins points out, Duchamp had maintained in three separate interviews, including with Cabane, that he hadn't meant Apollinaire until October of the same year (after the play had finished); See: Calvin Tomkins, *Duchamp: A Biography* (New York: Henry Holt, 1996), p. 90-91.

[109] Of significance in this area are the curatorial adventures of both Duchamp and Kiesler, which established a new field of surrealist explorations with space. See: T. J. Demos, "Duchamp's Labyrinth: First Papers on Surrealism, 1942." *October* **97** (2001), pp. 91-119; while technical evolutions in surrealist photography continued to occur well into the 1930s, the primary innovations took place in the mid 1920s. For the later

Each of the chapters in this dissertation are intended as critical "windows" which, like the project of Dada and surrealism in general, collapse the distinctions between inside and out and allow multidirectional flows between subject and theory, architecture and art. They are not intended to straightjacket the architects of the neo-avant-garde within a narrow field of art theory, nor force the practices of Dada and surrealism into an overdetermined architectural context. Attempting to redirect the avant-garde in architecture away from the historical forces of modernism and the theoretical magnetism of linguistics, the dissertation is intended, above all, as an alternative (rather than absolute) historical structure. These windows attempt to look in both directions, not only broadening the theoretical context of the neo-avant-garde but also reshaping the space of Dada and surrealism within a more divergent and contemporary architectural context.

This thesis is divided into three sections that correspond to its primary structure, examining the critical, historical and neo-avant-garde architectures of Dada and surrealism. The first section introduces the work of Bürger and its relationship to other theories of the avant-garde as well as the formidable critiques of his work within American art theory. The first chapter, on "Timeframes," looks at the correlation between Dada and surrealism and history, and especially the way that this intersects with architecture and the writing of Bürger. Developing the theoretical, historical and methodological framework for the dissertation, the following chapter in this section demonstrates the relationship between Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* and concurrent theories in art and architecture, with a specific focus on the avant-garde theories of Clement Greenberg and Manfredo Tafuri. This chapter also looks at the application of the neo-avant-garde category in art theory after the publication of Bürger's work and with a specific emphasis on the work of the *October* circle. The chapter that follows, dedicated to "The Avant-Gardiste Work" looks at the category of the work of art in the writing of Benjamin and Bürger and particularly the avant-garde's negation of this category, which has an ongoing relevance to architecture. The chapter demonstrates the role of the *objet trouvé* in framing Dada and surrealist attitudes to architecture, premised on its discovery, rather than its

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explorations of surrealism, see: Alyce Mahon, *Surrealism and the Politics of Eros: 1938-1968* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2005).

production. The second section of this dissertation looks at “architectures of the historical avant-garde” focussing on the processes of Dada and surrealism and the extent to which they engage and problematise architectural space. The four chapters that comprise this section of the work are dedicated to the formulation of an architecture of the historical avant-garde, represented independently through the creative practices of the found object, drawing, collage, montage and photography. Shifting the emphasis away from the modernist fascination with the architectural object, each chapter in this section looks at the *discovery* of architecture through the experimentations that took place in artistic process. The final section—“architectures of the neo-avant-garde”—focuses on specific processes within the architectural practices of Bernard Tschumi, Coop Himmelb(l)au and Diller + Scofidio, demonstrating their respective relationship to the historical avant-garde and the broader themes of Bürger’s thesis. Drawing from Bürger’s writing on montage, the first chapter in the section looks at a number of practices in the work of Tschumi, focussing in particular on his *Advertisements for Architecture* and *Manhattan Transcripts*, which both rework themes of surrealist narrative and, particularly its theorisation by Bürger through montage and allegory. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the recurring themes of constraint and sadism in Tschumi’s work, and the extent to which they demonstrate an affiliation with avant-garde practice as well as a fetishisation of the architectural object. The following chapter considers the important and pivotal role of violence and automatism in Coop Himmelb(l)au’s psychogram and the ancestry that this owes to the varied experiments with automatism that both Dada and surrealism were heavily engaged it. Establishing the important role of cutting and stabbing techniques in Coop Himmelb(l)au’s work, the chapter looks at the psychological frameworks through which these can be positioned and their relationship to a theory of “shock” that is developed in the work of Bürger. The chapter finds traces of automatism and violence expressed in a more primitive form in a number of projects where the structure of the pyschogram is dismantled, and a more direct, and emotional connection with the architectural object is facilitated. The final chapter in this section examines the formative practices of Diller + Scofidio, who have appropriated Duchamp’s work in a direct way as well as engaging the broader theory of Peter Bürger. The chapter considers the important role that these practices have played in blurring the relationship between art and

architecture as well as engaging cultural and political shifts in globalisation, the institution and the movement of capital.

The dissertation concludes with a discussion about the effectiveness of avant-garde practice and the ongoing relevance of Bürger's work. The dissertation argues that the theory of Bürger enables a deeper critique of the forces of capitalism than is possible in the context of a de-historicised analysis of art practice. The dissertation also proposes that, like the neo-avant-garde in general, the radical nature of these projects is consumed by the success of their authors and their subsequent immersion in the forces of capitalism, which, rather than intervening with the forces of production, tend more dramatically to reinforce them and exaggerate them. The commercial nature of each of these practices subjects them to the same criticism that faced the revolutionary aims of both the historical and neo-avant-gardes.

While there has been a recent interest in establishing the kind of connections with the avant-garde in architecture that are proposed here there have also been a number of significant protestations towards drawing further connections between contemporary practices and the historical avant-garde.[110] The use of Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde*

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[110] Greg Lynn's has argued that the theoretical obsession with the historical avant-garde has limited the opportunities for creative practices in architecture and that an avant-garde practice, drawing from an historical avant-garde, is in its nature contradictory (the avant-garde for Lynn implies a departure from the past). Writing in regard to the *Origins of the Avant-Garde* symposium at the MoMA in February 1996, Greg Lynn questions "whether it is possible to launch another experimental architecture through the re-evaluation of the historical avant-garde." Lynn's critique argues that the assembled scholars each harboured disproportionate allegiances with the avant-garde, and his antagonism is tied to a distrust of high-modernism and its resurrection in the 1990s through the work of Herzog and de Meuron, Jean Nouvel, Rafael Moneo and others (all of whom were represented in the accompanying exhibition). While neglecting the subtleties that differentiate avant-garde practice from modernism, Lynn argues that the resurgence of these programmes threatened creative innovation in architecture and led, through the historicist practices of Koolhaas and Eisenman, (chained to Harbison in the former and Terragni in the later) to a direction in architecture which not only limits creativity in practice, but the relevance of theory to the world. Beatriz Colomina has pointed out a number of problematic generalisations and errors in Lynn's review, and Lauren Kogod has shown how Lynn is using the forum of theory to defend a preconceived programme in design (related to folding, complexity and algorithms) and, in the process, is sustaining the same model of "operative history" that he himself criticises. Kogod also dismisses the assumption that history is a linear *forward* and *backward* (progress/regress) relationship and that, simple orthogonal buildings (such as those of the "neo-moderns") are not, as implied by Lynn, inherently

in the present context is in no way intended to reduce the discussion of these practices to a limited theoretical and historical categorisation. The dissertation sets out to uncover new frameworks to interpret these practices, rather than disprove the existing ones. In no way does this imply that an ancestry with the historical avant-garde is either necessary or desirable for the production of architecture. Rather than conceptualising the avant-garde as a historically-bounded phenomenon, it is in the spirit of Bürger to position it as a collection of strategies assembled against concrete historical conditions and with dedicated institutional targets. In this sense, the practices discussed in this dissertation are not historically reworking themes of the original avant-garde but actively engaged in the implementation of equivalent strategies into variable historical and institutional contexts. In this sense, it is more applicable to understand these practices as the varied appropriation of a singular avant-garde strategy, than the repetition of the former, by the latter.

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conservative. See: Greg Lynn, "In the Wake of the Avant-Garde," *Assemblage* 29 (April 1996), p. 116; Lauren Kogod, "Re-assemblage," *Assemblage* 30 (August 1996), p. 112; Beatriz Colomina, "At Home with His Parents," *Assemblage* 30 (August 1996), pp. 108-112; the catalogue of the exhibition that coincided with Lynn's review is: Terence Riley, *Light Construction* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1995).

Part One: Critical Architectures

The primary methodology that structures this thesis interweaves two competing (but related) strands of knowledge in the theory of visual art and applies them to the study of architecture. Peter Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* sets up a historical and rigorously sociological explanation for avant-garde practice, distinguishing it from the more general concerns of modernism and establishing, at the centre of this, a formative role for Dada and surrealism. Recent explorations in American art theory have also established Dada and surrealism as the pre-eminent mode of avant-garde activity, rejuvenating the study of the historical avant-garde and dismantling a number of preconceptions about its practices. While Bürger's work is grafted upon the dialectical method of the Frankfurt school, the subsequent explorations in art theory have a dependence on an expanded model of critical theory that seeks a broader contextualisation of the art object within economic, political and psycho-sexual fields of knowledge. Both engage the avant-garde as a historical paradigm within which Dada and surrealism represent a productive, but transgressive, trajectory.

In the decades since the publication of Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* there has been a resurgence of interest in the connections between architecture and Dada and surrealism. Starting with the publication, in 1978, of Dalibor Veseley's *Surrealism and Architecture* and culminating with the 2010 exhibition at the Barbican on *The Surreal House*, this broad-ranging scholarship has focussed on historical crossovers between the discipline of architecture and the creative practice of Dada and surrealism. However a detailed examination of the role of architecture in framing the practices of the avant-garde, as well as how this intersects with the radical and political aspirations of Dada and surrealism has yet to be undertaken.

There is no doubt that architectural space has figured centrally (and perhaps disproportionately) in the rejuvenation of Dada and surrealism in recent art theory. A focus on the specific spatial properties of avant-garde practice, as well as the socio-political critique that is implied within this, has been a characteristic of the explorations in this field. While Peter Bürger's writing has featured prominently in the historical redemption of these practices, in architecture it is rarely (if at all) cited and usually then only as a footnote.

Drawing heavily from the theory of Bürger, this section frames the methodology for the thesis, focussing on the formulation of a theory of avant-garde practice that, while specific to art, can be applicable to architectural practice. By positioning architecture within a field of avant-garde activities and concerns and as a formative practice of Dada and surrealism, a model of conceptualising space emerges that is both ”transgressive” and distinct from the mainstream spatial explorations of modernism. This methodological approach positions architectural space as an equivalent aperture in the visual arts to photography, drawing, collage and sculpture and part of a broader network of strategies that are avant-garde in nature and radical in intent. By positioning architecture within this broader context of art theory, and within the confines of the institutional critique launched by Bürger, the specific creative intentions of Dada and surrealism are privileged over the purely architectural outcomes. The intertwining of these two threads provides a critical architecture that structures this dissertation and its conclusions.

Theories of the Avant-Garde

> But all those attempts to level art and life, fiction and praxis, appearance and reality to one plane; the attempts to remove the distinction between artefact and object of use, between conscious staging and spontaneous excitement; the attempts to declare everything to be art and everyone to be artist, to retract all criteria and to equate aesthetic judgement with the expression of subjective experiences—all these undertakings have proved themselves to be sort of nonsense experiments. These experiments have served to bring back to life, and to illuminate all the more glaringly, exactly those structures of art which they were meant to dissolve. They gave a new legitimacy, as an end in itself, to appearance as the medium of fiction, to the transcendence of the art work over society, to the concentrated and planned character of artistic production as well as to the special cognitive status of judgements of taste. […] The surrealists waged the most extreme warfare, but two mistakes in particular destroyed their revolt. First, when the containers of an autonomously developed culture sphere are shattered, the contents get dispersed. Nothing remains from a desublimated meaning or a destructured form; an emancipatory effect does not follow. Their second mistake has more important consequences […]. A rationalised everyday life […] could hardly be saved from cultural impoverishment through breaking open a single cultural sphere—art—and so providing access to just one of the specialised knowledge complexes. The surrealist revolt would have replaced only one abstraction.
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> —Jürgen Habermas, "Modernity versus Postmodernity" (1981)[1]

By drawing from the dialectical method implicit in the early criticism of Karl Marx, Peter Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* argues that the avant-garde is a collection of accumulated strategies that are assembled in protest against an entrenched model of cultural production. These strategies, while articulated in multivalent forms and practices, are directed against a common enemy and, whether in film, architecture, sculpture or painting, seek the same effects and response. In this sense, Dada and surrealism witnessed the virtual collapse of distinct media altogether, as the tactics of one medium

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[1] Jürgen Habermas, "Modernity and Postmodernity," trans. Seyla Ben-Habib, *New German Critique* 22 (Winter, 1981), p. 11.

inherently disrupted the practice of another. A number of creative works from this period are literally beyond categorisation in the conventional structures of art history.[2] Given the emphasis that Bürger places on this collapse in his theory, this dissertation argues for a place for architecture in this accumulation of strategies and that these hybrid media were equally engaged in the invention and dissemination of architectural space.

Given this, the significance of Bürger's thesis is twofold: firstly, it extends the already developed social theories of Adorno, Lukacs and Marcuse into a broader theory of art history and, specifically, into a historical theory of artistic production that is applicable to architecture; and secondly, it inspired, and virtually re-structured, a generation of American criticism that, while hesitant of Bürger's formulation of the "neo-avant-garde", actively promoted the term and category as a conditional framework from which to discuss both the achievements of the historical avant-garde (through the influence they had on more recent art practices) and contemporary American art, which could be positioned critically (with or without the use of Bürger's theory) in relationship to this newly theorised historical avant-garde. Within this emerging field of art criticism, architecture is increasingly implicated as a medium through which avant-garde practices were inadvertently explored. Bürger's work played a pivotal role in the critical interest in the avant-garde and its dissemination in American scholarship. It was also tangentially linked to the important critical insights that have restructured the interpretation of the historical avant-garde in the last three decades.[3]

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[2] Bürger writes that "in the historical avant-garde movements, forms of activities were deployed that cannot be adequately subsumed under the category 'work'". Bürger cites, as evidence, the "manifestations" of Dada. See: Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), p. 56.

[3] Most significant in this context is the re-positioning of surrealism to privilege the theory and work of the disenfranchised surrealists that had collected around Georges Bataille. The vast majority of recent scholarship into surrealism has centred on Bataille's role in the movement (at the expense of the movements self-proclaimed leader André Breton), and despite Bataille's own protestations against being called a surrealist and his reservations towards the idea of a "movement". For seminal examples of the proselytising of Bataille's work in surrealism see: Rosalind Krauss and Jane Livingston, *L'amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985); Briony Fer, "Surrealism, Myth and Psychoanalysis," in Briony Fer, David Batchelor, and Paul Wood, *Realism, Rationalism, Surrealism: Art between the Wars* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), pp. 170-249; Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1995); Alyce

While a large amount of critical attention has been devoted to the "neo-avant-garde" the vast majority of Bürger's short work is concerned with the machinations of the historical avant-garde and, more particularly, its evolution in opposition to bourgeois aestheticism.[4] Like many theorists of the Frankfurt school, Bürger's theory is concerned with a much broader historical project that accepts modernism as paradigmatic and enabling but is pessimistic about the "cultural machinery" that produces it and undermines its social efficacy. Bürger's argument is that the 1920s allowed the institution of art to be recognised for the first time, establishing the vantage point (through avant-garde practice) from which it could also be critiqued.[5] The historical avant-garde revolutionised art practice but was unable to institute any substantial transformation of the political or economic structure of capitalism. For Bürger, the more contemporary avant-garde practices are limited by the formulation of this institution of art, which means they no longer operate in connection with society but within the dislocated and autonomous structure of this institution, embodying, in the process, a corrupt art economy.

While the primary hypothesis and method of Bürger was, in its nature, innovative, it replicated a number of important concerns in architecture at the time and particularly in relationship to autonomy and the historical role of modernism. The architectural historian Manfredo Tafuri had established his own theory of avant-garde practice that, like Bürger's, was laden with the pessimism and frustration that accompanied the derailed Marxist resurgence of the 1960s. That these two discourses dovetail so closely (both temporally and ideologically) enables a comparative and expanded model of avant-garde practice to

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Mahon, *Surrealism and the Politics of Eros: 1938-1968* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2005); Dawn Ades and Simon Baker, *Undercover Surrealism: Georges Bataille and Documents* (London: Hayward Gallery, 2006).

[4] Schulte-Sasse argues that the historical structure provided by Bürger is "less vulnerable to criticism" than his writing on the "avant-gardiste" work of art and, as a result, should be taken as the primary legacy of his theory. See: Jochen Schulte-Sasse, "Theory of Modernism versus Theory of the Avant-Garde," in Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. xl.

[5] This was a process that ultimately failed. Bürger argues that the "abolition of autonomous art […] has not occurred and presumably cannot occur in bourgeois society unless it be a false sublation of autonomous art" (p. 54). Further on, he states that "it is a historical fact that the avant-garde movements did not put an end to the production of works of art" (p. 57). He ultimately arrives at the conclusion that the "sublation of art that the avant-gardistes intended, its return to the praxis of life, did not in fact occur" diagnosing the "failure of the historical avant-garde movements." Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 58-59.

be theorised in relationship to the disciplinary boundaries of architectural production. While Tafuri and Bürger have existed in isolated "compartments"[6] in the various theories of postmodernism, the significance and synchronicity of their ideas warrants further scholarly attention.

This chapter makes an argument for the relevance of Bürger's theory to the study of architecture and establishes the methodological approach to historicising avant-garde practice, detailing its relationship to the broader historical-philosophical project of modernism and the discursive trajectory that will ultimately be explored in this thesis. As an affront to formalism, Bürger's theory enables an expanded understanding of the work-of-art which, as well as intersecting with recent trajectories in art theory, allows architecture to be categorised as an extended concern of the historical avant-garde, influencing its practices in significant ways. Beginning with an investigation of architecture and the avant-garde, the chapter will contextualise Bürger's work in relationship to Tafuri and establish an alternative model through which architecture and the avant-garde can be theorised, with particular concern for Bürger's theoretical method. The chapter then turns to the polemical position of Clement Greenberg in art, demonstrating how Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* presents an affront to the hegemony of modernism in art theory and (by recognising the avant-garde sublation of art and life) provides an antithesis to the *tabula rasa* autonomy of the modernist project. The chapter demonstrates how Bürger's theory positions itself against the earlier writings of Adorno, Lukacs, and Marcuse, going beyond the interrogation of individual works in order to historicise the forces of reception and effect that are central to Bürger's methodological approach. Demonstrating the numerous and repeated criticisms of Bürger's thesis and its centrality to American art theory, the chapter concludes by positioning the theory in the broader context of the "Octoberist" critics who have (drawing from Bürger) established the centrality of "medium" to the artistic practices of the avant-garde. This provides a path for revisiting the artistic processes of the historical avant-garde as a motivating and unrecognised influence in the collapse (and critique) of autonomy in architecture.

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[6] See, for example: Esra Ackan, "Manfredo Tafuri's theory of the architectural avant-garde," *Journal of Architecture* 7 (Summer 2002), pp. 135-170.

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While Bürger's writing on the avant-garde has had a formative influence on art theory in the last three decades, the attempts to assimilate it with architecture have been sporadic and often tangential. There has been opposition generally, to assimilating the artistic avant-gardes with architecture given the contradictory claims to autonomy that are a characteristic of this debate.[7] In 1980, Giorgio Grassi, for instance, had argued that "avant-garde architecture is of minor importance [… and] is always marginal to any decisive change."[8] For Grassi, the philosophical idea of an avant-garde could never be reconciled with the functional necessity of architecture and, as a result, "the avant-garde position in architecture contradicts the very definition of architecture."[9] Coincidently, in George Baird's *The Space of Appearance*, he argues that Grassi's position (tied to an understanding of collective "continuity") belongs in a similar category to Bürger's work, predisposed, as it is, to the distinction between "avant-garde" and "modernist practices.[10] While Grassi sees the avant-garde as inherently elitist and aristocratic (antithetical to the concerns of architecture and urbanism), his position neglects the role of *experience* in Dada and surrealism where both architecture and the city function in a discursive (and

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[7] In opposition to the relevance of Bürger's theory to architecture, Ackan asks:

> Can we talk about an autonomous architecture in any period in the first place? Would the attack on institutionalisation of art hold true for architectural avant-gardes who unavoidably situated themselves in a profession that is necessarily tied to institutionalisation of pedagogic and production processes?

See: Ackan, "Manfredo Tafuri's theory of the architectural avant-garde," p. 137.

[8] Giorgio Grassi, "Avant-Garde and Continuity," trans. Stephen Sartarelli, *Oppositions* 21 (Spring, 1981), p.24 [24-32].

[9] Grassi, "Avant-Garde and Continuity," p. 24.

[10] See: George Baird, *The Space of Appearance* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1995), p. 352-353 [note. 13], pp. 383-384 [note. 67]. For Baird, these positions, as opposed to the popular/elitist (high culture/low, mass culture) dialectic offered by Huyssen, constitute an arm of enquiry through which the avant-garde can be repositioned. See: Andreas Huyssen, "The Hidden Dialectic: Avantgarde-Technology-Mass Culture," in Kathleen Woodward, ed., *The Myths of Information: Technology and Postindustrial Culture* (Madison, Wisconsin: Coda Press, 1980), pp. 151-164; republished in Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 3-15.

anachronistic) way to disrupt modernist hegemonies.[11] Bürger is aware of this characteristic of avant-garde perception, attaching significant weighting to it in his synopsis of the avant-gardiste work of art. In Bürger's approach, architecture can be readily assimilated with the avant-garde as an extension of the negation of the bourgeois work of art (appropriated to experiential ends), whereas in Grassi's argument, it remains diametrically (and dialectically) opposed. While there is a natural confluence between the approaches of Grassi and Bürger, it is only through a focus on the expanded categories of artistic production (identified by Bürger), that architecture can be reintegrated in the history of modernism not as the technological reification of functionalism but as the experiential (life) embodiment of the sublation of art and life.

Tracing the opportunities for architecture in Bürger's theory has, to date, only been undertaken in a preliminary way. The collusion, for instance, between Benjamin's writing on mechanical reproduction and Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* was the subject of a selective series of essays published in a volume edited by Joan Ockman and Beatriz Colomina in 1988.[12] Each of these tentatively applied the theories of Bürger and Benjamin to the interpretive criticism of architecture, focussing on the themes of production and autonomy. An indicative example is Colomina's essay, which footnote's Bürger's writing on Duchamp's fountain by positioning it as an unrepeatable avant-garde shock tactic, as opposed to the alternative theories of hygiene, cleanliness and mass-production that

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[11] As Ignacio Sola-Morales illustrates, Grassi's theory of architecture remains bound to a "morphological-typological" structure that is linguistic in nature and tends to position an ancestry between modernism and the enlightenment, of which the avant-garde is a self-indulgent offshoot. See: Ignacio Sola-Morales, "Critical Discipline: Review of *L'Architettura come mestiere,*" trans. Silvia Kolbowski, *Oppositions* 23 (Winter 1981); republished in: Michael K. Hays (ed), *Oppositions Reader* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1998), pp. 660-671.

[12] See: Beatriz Colomina and Joan Ockman (ed), *Architectureproduction* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1988); Mary McLeod and Joan Ockman's response to Colomina's essay, argues against the "postmodernization of modernism" through the retrospective application of contemporary theoretical frameworks to historical material, potentially risked "distortion, […] de-emphasising original intentionality […] and distortion." See: Mary McLeod and Beatriz Colomina, "Some Comments on Reproduction with Reference to Colomina and Hays," in Colomina and Ockman (ed), *Architectureproduction*, pp. 223-231.

underpin the urinal in Le Corbusier and Adolf Loos.[13] In Robert Somol's 1997 edited volume *Autonomy and Ideology: Positioning an Avant-Garde in America* only two of the contributions deal with the work of Bürger at any length[14]. More recently, Bürger plays a tangential role in framing the arguments presented in recent essays by Tahl Kaminer,[15] Simon Sadler[16], Esra Ackan[17] and Jon Goodbun and David Cunningham.[18] Despite this, a rigorous and systematic application of Bürger's theory to the practice of architecture is still yet to be attempted.

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[13] See: Beatriz Colomina, "L'Esprit Nouveau: Architecture and Publicité," in Colomina and Ockman (ed), *Architectureproduction,* pp. 56-99. This connection was made nearly a decade earlier in: Kenneth Frampton, "Has the Proletariat No Use for a Glider?" Dalibor Veseley (ed), *Architectural Design Profile: Surrealism and Architecture* 11 2-3 (1978), p. 97. See also Ockman's investigation of the "neo-avant-garde" through the politics of *Oppositions*: Joan Ockman, "Resurrecting the Avant-Garde: The History and Program of Oppositions," in Colomina and Ockman (ed), *Architectureproduction*, pp. 180-192.

[14] Joan Ockman refers to Bürger's "pessimism" in her discussion of Alexander Dorner's work drawing on the sublation of art and life to articulate concepts in curatorship. Alternatively Mark Linder argues for Frederick Kiesler as a manifestation of neo-avant-garde themes in architecture, and particularly those of display in surrealism. Linder maintains that Kiesler's work is "not exemplary but emblematic" of the neo-avant-garde tactics of minimalism and cites the connection with Duchamp and the emphasis on display as evidence of this connection. These relationships are treated in more depth in subsequent chapters of this dissertation and primarily in the chapter on "Diller + Scofidio". See: Joan Ockman, "The Road Not Taken: Alexander Dorner's Way Beyond Art," in Somol, *Autonomy and Ideology*, pp. 80-121; See: Mark Linder, "Wild Kingdom: Frederick Kiesler's Display of the Avant-Garde" in Somol, *Autonomy and Ideology*, p.130. As well as Ockman and Linder, Eisenman also cites Bürger's theory, but only in passing. See: Peter Eisenman, "Autonomy and the Avant-Garde: The Necessity of an Avant-Garde in America," in Somol, *Autonomy and Ideology*, p. 75.

[15] Bürger is quoted in passing in: Tahl Kaminer, "Autonomy and Commerce: The integration of architectural autonomy," *Architecture Research Quarterly* [ARQ] 11 1 (2007), p. 66 [note 15, p. 70]; see also: Lukasz Stanek and Tahl Kaminer, "Transdisciplinarity: The Singularities and Multiplicities," *Footprint* (Autumn 2007), pp. 1-5. The authors argue that "the status of ideology Bürger associated with artistic autonomy is easily applicable to architecture as well." (p. 3-4).

[16] Sadler makes use of the neo-avant-garde category, footnoting Bürger's work in support. See: Simon Sadler, "An Avant-Garde Academy: Teaching Radicalism in European and North American Architecture," in Andrew Ballantyne, (ed), *Architectures: Modernism and After* (London: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), p. 44, p. 54 [note. 15].

[17] Ackan, "Manfredo Tafuri's theory of the architectural avant-garde," pp. 135-170.

[18] Bürger is cited in passing, in Jon Goodbun and David Cunningham, "On Surrealism and Architecture: with some Stylistic Apologies to André Breton," Samantha Hardingham (ed), *Architectural Design Profile: The 70s is Here and Now* 75 2 (March/April, 2005), pp. 66-69; See also: David Cunningham, "The Futures of Surrealism: Hegelianism, Romanticism and the Avant-Garde," *SubStance* 34 2 (2005), pp. 47-65.

One of the more detailed and productive investigations of Bürger's work in relationship to architecture is Hilde Heynen's essay "What Belong's to Architecture?"[19], which seeks to preserve the distinction between modernism and the avant-garde that operates in Bürger's theory.[20] Heynen demonstrates a moment in the 1920s when an adversarial mode of thinking operated in the work of Siegfried Giedion and Walter Benjamin and that, rather than conforming to the aspirations of modernism, this moment was better categorised under the tactics of the avant-garde. Echoing the work of Detlef Mertins[21], Heynen demonstrates the affiliation between Benjamin and Giedion arguing that this relationship presented a tandem affront against the commercialisation of architecture and, through the use of montage and other techniques of the avant-garde, borrowed themes and concepts that were central to it. While acknowledging this small revolutionary current in the 1920s, Heynen sees its dissipation after World War II, concluding unambiguously that in the post-war period "[o]ne can discern no lining up any more between modern architecture and the avant-garde in the arts. After the Second World War it became very obvious: modern architecture was no longer avant-garde."[22]

The work of Heynen has significantly advanced the scholarship in this field by untangling the avant-garde project from the history of modernism, as well as articulating the contradictions between the values of the modern movement in architecture and the theorisation of "modernity" by the Frankfurt School.[23] The focus however, has remained on aspects of the historical avant-garde and the early history of modernism, mostly through

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[19] Hilde Heynen, "What Belongs to Architecture? Avant-Garde ideas in the Modern Movement," *Journal of Architecture*, 4 (Summer, 1999), p. 143. See also: Hilde Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity: A Critique* (London: The MIT Press, 1999).

[20] Heynen, like Ockman and Linder, also acknowledges the clarification of this aspect of Bürger's work in the writing of Andreas Huyssen; See Heynan, "What Belongs to Architecture?" p. 130 [note 6, p. 144]; See also: Ockman, "The Road Not Taken," p. 100; Linder, "Wild Kingdom," [note 11, p. 337].

[21] See: Detlef Mertins, "The Enticing and Threatening Face of Prehistory: Walter Benjamin and the Utopia of Glass," *Assemblage* 29 (April, 1996), pp. 7-23.

[22] Heynen, "What Belongs to Architecture?" p. 143.

[23] The seminal volume is: Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity*.

the lens of Benjamin and Giedion[24] but also through an architecturally specific rereading of the aesthetic theory of Adorno.[25] A more holistic account of the way that the radicalisation of art cross-fertilised with the historical development of architecture is outside of the boundaries that Heynen sets up in her research, which remains primarily contained within the discipline of architectural theory. Despite this restriction, the theoretical framework that Heynen sets up is instructive in the broader cultural sphere of art theory and its influence and can be applied at a broader and more ambitious scale.

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One obvious impediment to the application of Bürger's theory to architecture is the enormous influence of Manfredo Tafuri on architectural criticism and the obvious parallels that connect the two discourses. The majority of theories of the avant-garde are restricted to the realm of art theory or art philosophy and, while encroaching upon architecture, exist definitively outside of its specific domain. This is not to suggest that a robust investigation of the avant-garde from within architecture is lacking, or, for that matter, that the two discourses don't overlap. The writing of Tafuri in particular has been prescient in centring debates around the avant-garde and is still the most pervasive theory of the avant-garde in architecture. His influence has had a discernible and lasting impact in the scholarship in this field frequently at the expense of his historical concerns.[26]

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[24] In this context, the work of Detlef Mertins has also significantly advanced the contemporary understanding of these two figures. See, as an example, Detlef Mertins, "The Enticing and Threatening Face of Prehistory," pp. 7-23; Detlef Mertins, "System and Freedom: Siegfried Giedeon, Emil Kaufmann and the Constitution of Architectural Modernity," in Somol, *Autonomy and Ideology*, pp. 212-231.

[25] The most important essay in this field is: Hilde Heynen, "Architecture between Modernity and Dwelling: Reflections on Adorno's "Aesthetic Theory," *Assemblage* 17 (April, 1992), pp. 78-91.

[26] Andrew Leach has demonstrated that the focus on Tafuri's polemics has often neglected his fundamentally historical concerns. Leach argues that history and the present are competing dialectical interests throughout Tafuri's life, rather than chronological or sequential concerns, and he concludes that "Tafuri's purpose remains the recovery of architectural history as a critical discipline." Andrew Leach, "Tafuri and the Age of Historical Representation," *Architectural Theory Review* 10 1 (2005), p. 9. See also: Andrew Leach and John Macarthur, "Tafuri as Theorist," *ARQ* 10 3/4 (2006), pp. 235-240.

First published in English in 1976, Tafuri's seminal criticism of the avant-garde is delivered in *Architecture and Utopia: Design and Capitalist Development*.[27] The timing of Tafuri's work is significant, coinciding roughly with Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* as well as the broader cultural resurgence of Marxism that preoccupied multi-disciplinary explorations in a number of literary fields. Viewing architecture through the lens of ideological criticism,[28] Tafuri laments the ineffective nature of ideology against the rationalising forces of architectural production, presenting a fatalistic scenario for contemporary architecture that is characterised by the same negativity with which Bürger approaches the study of contemporary art. For Tafuri, as the practice of architecture "deliberately flees confrontation"[29] either through cooperation with rationalism or utopian escapism, architectural criticism assumes an elevated role in evaluating and opposing the effects of ideology, as well as articulating the inherent contradictions in the categories through which society is represented.

Tafuri's argument reaches its crescendo in the closing passage of this work, which, tinged with anger and heartfelt despair, reads as a eulogy for architecture as it accepts the futility of its own position.[30] Having established the inevitable surrender of contemporary architecture to ideology, Tafuri argues that the discipline of architecture has "marked its own fate by making itself, within an autonomous political strategy, the bearer of ideals of rationalisation by which the working class is affected only in the second instance."[31] For

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[27] Manfredo Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia: Design and Capitalist Development*, trans. Barbara Luigia La Penta (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1976). This work was originally developed from an essay published in the Marxist journal *Contrapiano* in 1969. Tafuri discusses its evolution from the text in the preface (pp. vii-ix). Tafuri's critique of the avant-garde is considerably expanded (and in many ways revised) in: Manfredo Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, trans. Giorgio Verrecchia (London: Granada, 1980); Manfredo Tafuri, *The Sphere and the Labyrinth: Avant-Gardes and Architecture from Piranesi to the 1970s*, trans. Pellegrino d'Acierno and Robert Connolly (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1990).

[28] For a more extended account of the methodological approach adopted by Tafuri see: Susan Carty Piedmont, "Operative Criticism," *JAE* 40 1 (Autumn, 1986), pp. 8-13; Mary McLeod, "On Criticism," *Places* 4 1 (1987), pp. 4-6.

[29] Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia*, p. 170.

[30] These paragraphs are central to the reading of Tafuri in: Diane Y. Ghirardo, "Manfredo Tafuri and Architectural Theory in the U.S., 1970-2000," *Perspecta* 33 (2002), pp. 38-47.

[31] Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia*, p. 181.

Tafuri, architectural practice was so heavily immersed in the forces of production that there were no avenues through which it would be able to effect or disrupt the means of production. It was, in its nature, an outcome of production rather than the means to oppose it. The nihilism of Tafuri is articulated in his tortured description of this hopeless fate:

> [t]he historical inevitability of this phenomenon can be recognised. But having been so, it is no longer possible to hide the ultimate reality which renders uselessly painful the choices of architects desperately attached to disciplinary ideologies. "Uselessly painful" because it is useless to struggle for escape when completely enclosed and confined without an exit. Indeed, the crisis of modern architecture is not the result of "tiredness" or "dissipation." It is a crisis of the ideological function of architecture.[32]

For Tafuri, the implication is clear: faced with no other avenues of practice and operating within a discipline slavishly and inevitably tied to the forces of production, architecture can no longer seek comfort in "purely architectural alternatives"[33] and needs to dismantle the ideological structures that are internal to it. Criticism has an important role to play on this front. As with Bürger, Tafuri's method echoes the early work of Marx, which sets out to dismantle the illusions pertaining to ideology and bring its operations "into the light". The closing paragraph echoes Marx's critique of religion, where dialectical criticism lays bare the inherent contradictions of ideology. Attempting to reconcile political praxis with architecture, Tafuri writes

> [t]he systematic criticism of the ideologies accompanying the history of capitalist development is therefore but one chapter of such political action. Today, indeed, the principal task of ideological criticism is to do away with impotent and ineffectual myths, which so often serve as illusions that permit the survival of anachronistic "hopes in design".[34]

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[32] Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia*, p. 181. Tafuri's pessimism extends to "the fall" of modern art where he writes: "No 'salvation' is any longer to be found within it: neither wandering restlessly in labyrinths of images so multivalent they end in muteness, not enclosed in the stubborn silence of geometry content with its own perfection." (p. 181).

[33] Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia*, p. 181.

[34] Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia,* p. 181.

Tafuri's critique of the inherent futility of architectural practice is continued in later works, and with a specific emphasis on the avant-garde.[35] The twin operations of Tafuri's polemic are embodied in the rationalist pursuit of the object (the sphere) and the labyrinthine obsession of the avant-garde to undermine it. Both are, for Tafuri, ineffective practices for resisting the hegemony of capitalist production and an extension of the flawed logic of radicality that underpins the paper architecture of the 1970s.[36] Despite his scepticism towards these practices, it is important to illustrate that Dada, in particular, provided an important conduit in Tafuri's dialectic, embodying, in a number of passages, the "chaotic" avant-garde trajectory which opposed (but synthesised with) the rationalising and homogenising forces of modernism. For Tafuri, Dada represented the most destructive and "anarchic" of the avant-garde movements but its tactics were ultimately assimilated by capitalism: firstly as "a means of control for planning" and, more damagingly, as a precursor to its advances. In his dialectical theory, Tafuri argued that

> Dada's ferocious decomposition of the linguistic material and its opposition to prefiguration [had resulted in] the sublimation of automatism and commercialisation of values [that] now spread through all levels of existence in the advance of capitalism […]. Dada, by means of the absurd, demonstrated—without naming it—the necessity of a plan.[37]

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[35] Leach warns against placing too much emphasis on the historical contextualisation of Tafuri's work and the inherent romanticisation of the 1960s protest movement, arguing that in the subsequent decade Tafuri developed a model of resistance through criticism that transcended the popular reception of his work and is "no less important for the imbalance in its up-take that we can now observe." See: Andrew Leach, *Manfredo Tafuri: Choosing History* (Ghent: A & S Books, 2007).

[36] For an alternative exploration of the political and ethical basis for Soviet paper architecture, (as well as its relationship to theories of avant-gardism and aesthetics) see: Michael Ostwald and Michael Chapman, "The Politics of Labour: Dissent and Dissensus in the Architecture of Brodsky and Utkin," in Michael Chapman and Michael Ostwald (ed), *Imagining: Proceedings of the 27th International SAHANZ Conference* (Newcastle: Society of Architectural Historians Australian and New Zealand, SAHANZ, 2010), pp. 318-322; Michael Ostwald and Michael Chapman, "Utopian Voyages in the Postpolitical Era: Analysing the Visions of the Russian Paper Architects" *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Working Paper Series: Identity and the Politics of Utopia* 229 (Berkeley, 2010) [up].

[37] Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia,* p. 93. Tafuri returned to this position in his chapter on "Architecture and the Avant-Garde" in the first volume of the co-authored *Modern Architecture*. Here, Tafuri argued

Tafuri's criticism resembles that of Walter Benjamin, who saw the primary objective of avant-garde practice as a transformation in the conditions of production rather than merely an alteration of its aesthetic or spatial conditions through experimentation.[38]

Tafuri's criticism of the avant-garde was directed primarily towards the Italian avant-garde of the 1960s and particularly the idealism of Archizoom and Superstudio.[39] While Tafuri employs a similar construct to Bürger, where strategies are charted across "historical" and "neo" generations,[40] it is clear that Tafuri is cynical about the redeployment of avant-garde tactics in his time and, more specifically, under the guise of a political radicality. Having established the historical futility of the avant-garde project and its inability to disrupt the mechanisms of capitalism, Tafuri disparages the watering down of these practices and their eclectic and stylistic redeployment in the contemporary avant-garde. Not only is this selective reclamation of the historical avant-garde opportunistic, it is also a desperate attempt to redeem the radical practices of art for architecture, without a recognition of the ideological impediments that resist this. Tafuri writes

> [i]t is no wonder then, that the most strongly felt condition, today, belongs to those who realise that, in order to salvage specific values for architecture, the only course is to make use of "battle fragments", that is, to redeploy what has been discarded on the

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> [t]he purpose of Dada goes to the roots of Nietzschean thought. If the wind of global merchandising has made all value anachronistic and any thought of form ridiculous, then by losing oneself in the unformed one might be able to save one's soul. The city, subjected to the reign of merchandising is anarchy: in it all familiarity is a lie, and the only thing that counts is maddest chance.

—Tafuri, "Architecture and the Avant-Garde From Cubism to the Bauhaus" in Manfredo Tarfuri and Francesco Dal Co, *Modern Architecture/1*, trans. Robert Erich Wolf (New York: Rizzoli, 1986), p. 108 [1976].

[38] In his essay "L'Architecture dans le Boudoir" he draws particular attention to Benjamin's "Author as Producer," which, despite erroneously categorising Dada montage as "revolutionary" is, for Tafuri, still "profoundly valid today." See the chapter "L'Architecture dans le Boudoir" in: Tafuri, *The Sphere and the Labyrinth,* p. 288. See also: Walter Benjamin, "Author as Producer," in Walter Benjamin, *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Schocken Books, 1978), p. 228.

[39] Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, pp. 156-158.

[40] Tafuri had used the term "neo-avant-garde" (Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia*, p. 148, p. 161) as well as the more pejorative "disenchanted avant-garde" in his essay "L'Architecture dans le Boudoir", exactly contemporaneous with Bürger's work. See: Manfredo Tafuri, "L' Architecture dans le Boudoir: The Language of Criticism and the Criticism of Language," trans. Victor Caliandro, *Oppositions* 3 (May, 1974), pp. 37-62.

> battlefield that has witnessed the defeat of the avant-garde. Thus the new "knights of purity" advance onto the scene of the present debate brandishing as banners the fragments of a utopia that they themselves cannot confront head on.[41]

As Tafuri correctly observes, the objects and fragments of the visual practice of the avant-garde were only a by-product of their experience and its reification through art. This aspect of avant-garde process was not preserved in the contemporary avant-garde. Tafuri rejected the objects of creative practice as the ineffective production of *representation* in the face of the overwhelming experience of modern life. As Tafuri concluded in his co-authored work on *Modern Architecture*, "it was the city, from whose reality the avant-garde drew its very existence, which was the real proving ground for all its proposals."[42]

As well as this shared emphasis on experience, there are a number of overlapping themes in the writing of Tafuri and Bürger. Both draw from a Marxist historical-dialectical method,[43] positioning architecture (or the work of art) against the forces of economic production (and ideology) that produce it. Equally, both Tafuri and Bürger see contemporary avant-garde practice as fundamentally and naively flawed; in the former, restricted to the production of pictures and in the latter immersed within the institution of art that it seeks to dismantle. The important differentiation between the two writers is that Bürger endows the historical avant-garde with positivistic values where for Tafuri, all avant-garde activity is fundamentally flawed, tied to a fascination with chaos and, using Picasso and Piranesi as the spectacular precedents, a doomed model of critical activity. Of equal importance, where Bürger preserves the distinction between avant-garde practice and modernism, Tafuri conflates the two. As David Cunningham has observed, in the theory of Tafuri

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[41] Tafuri, *The Sphere and the Labyrinth*, p. 267; also published in Tafuri. "*L'Architecture dans le Boudoir*", pp. 37-62.

[42] Tafuri and Dal Co*, Modern Architecture/1*, p. 110; Goodbun develops this aspect in his search for an alternative "genealogy" of architectural history that, draws from the understanding of the metropolis as a second nature that "can deal with both 'the revolt of objects' […] and 'the revolt of the images' that dominates contemporary experience." See: Jon Goodbun, "Brand New Tafuri: some timely notes on the imaging of spatial demands," *The Journal of Architecture* 6 (Summer, 2001), p. 161.

[43] Despite his emphasis on the historical aspects of his work, Leach categorises Tafuri as "fundamentally and orthodoxically Marxist." See: Leach, *Manfredo Tafuri*, p. 140.

> [a]ll possibility of an avant-garde was completely sublated within the modernist "ideology of the plan" and any attempt to re-activate it is at best a kind of futile nostalgia which fails to understand "historically the road travelled".[44]

Where Tafuri prefers to view these experiments as bound to the ultimately failed avant-garde project of the last two centuries, Bürger sees a dynamic and radical *effect* in the processes of the historical avant-garde that is only miscarried in its subsequent appropriation by the neo-avant-garde. As a result, Bürger's treatise is not a theory of art, but a theory of avant-garde practice which, ultimately, is transferrable to the production of architecture. It is important to acknowledge the insight in Tafuri's writing that avant-garde practice has an inherent detachment from the real world of experience or action and, as a result, is limited and marginalised in its effects. Characteristic of Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* is the sublation of art and life which, rather than displacing art into the realm of the "hypothetical" firmly entrenches the avant-garde within real world experience and institutional critique. While central to this thesis, the extent to which Bürger romanticises (and oversimplifies) avant-garde practice in this way is a point of contention,[45] and Tafuri's scepticism towards the representational nature and intangible outcomes of these practices is well-founded. It is also apparent that the artistic practices which lie at the heart of Bürger's theory (collage, montage, the readymade) are far more susceptible to Tafuri's critique of *representation* over experience than the architectural projects against which it was initially directed.[46]

There have been a few intermittent attempts to connect the writing of Tafuri and Bürger. The most prolonged is an essay by Esra Ackan which sets out to weave the theories of Bürger and Poggioli with a detailed unpacking of Tafuri's theory of the architectural avant-garde, undertaken through the categories of the "death of history", the "confrontation with

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[44] David Cunningham, "Architecture, Utopia and the futures of the Avant-Garde," *The Journal of Architecture* **6** (Summer 2001), p. 171.

[45] Amongst the critics of this aspect of Bürger's thesis, see: Peter Osborne, "Non-Places and the Spaces of Art," *Journal of Architecture* **6** 2 (2001), pp. 183–94; see also: David Cunningham, "A Time for Dissonance and Noise," *Angelaki: Journal of the Theoretical Humanities* **8** 1 (April, 2003), pp. 61-74.

[46] This dimension of Bürger's argument will be examined in more detail in subsequent chapters.

the metropolitan condition" and the "death of architecture as an auratic object"[47]. Ackan is sceptical that the theory of Bürger is transferrable to architecture, centred, as it is, in the production of art and its associated institutionalisation. Seeking a theory specific to architecture, Ackan turns to Tafuri, while retaining the historical structure of Bürger and the distinction (observed by Heynen) between modernism and the specific disruptive processes of the avant-garde.[48] Ackan is primarily interested in the operations of the historical avant-garde in architecture, rather than the contemporary application of these theories and, as a result, the critical formulation by Bürger of a "neo-avant-garde" category is extraneous to its application in this context.

An alternative marrying of Tafuri and Bürger's writing occurs in the 2010 work by K. Michael Hays, entitled *Architecture's Desire: Reading the Late Avant-Garde*.[49] Hays specifically rejects Bürger's "neo" terminology in his title in favour of "late", perhaps as a result of what he sees as the former's "derogatory" and "inescapable" connotations.[50] Despite this, Hays argues that Bürger's category of the neo-avant-garde can be productively applied to architecture and *specifically* the work of Eisenman, Hejduk and Tschumi.[51] For Hays, there is a reworking of the primary operations of Le Corbusier, de Stijl and Constructivism respectively in each of these architects work and the model of the "neo-avant-garde" provides a framework for its interpretation. However, Hays goes beyond this to argue that the categories of Bürger had been developed earlier and independently in the writing of both Tafuri and Colin Rowe.[52] Rowe had identified

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[47] Ackan, "Manfredo Tafuri's theory of the architectural avant-garde," pp. 135-170.

[48] See: Hilde Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity*, p.28; Hilde Heynan, "What Belongs to Architecture?" p. 143.

[49] K. Michael Hays, *Architecture's Desire: Reading the Late Avant-Garde* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2010).

[50] Hays, *Architecture's Desire*, p. 4.

[51] Hays, *Architecture's Desire*, p. 4; Hilde Heynen and Andre Loeckx also connect Eisenman and Tschumi with the "neo-avant-garde" in: Hilde Heynen and Andre Loeckx, "Scenes of Ambivalence: Concluding Remarks of Architectural Patterns of Displacement," *Journal of Architectural Education* [JAE] 52 2 (November, 1998), p. 100 [see also: note 1, p. 107].

[52] Hays is referring to Rowe's introduction to the *Five Architects* catalogue. See: Colin Rowe, "Introduction," *Five Architects* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), pp. 7-8; For a deeper investigation of the avant-

"ideological roots" that connected the historical avant-garde with Marxism, as well as the common "philosophical ambition to interfuse form and word—variously articulated as expression and content, system and concept, practice and theory, building and politics, or (in Bürger's terms) art and life."[53] In the same volume, Arthur Drexler had famously concluded that "architecture is the least likely instrument with which to accomplish the revolution."[54]

This dissertation is not concerned with marrying Tafuri and Bürger, or even highlighting the similarities that underpin their respective writings. In contrast, the dissertation lies primarily outside of the disciplinary criticisms of Tafuri. As already illustrated, the argument presented here is that, rather than constructing a theory of the avant-garde that is internal to the disciplinary boundaries of architecture (what Tafuri refers to as the *institution* of architecture), it is productive to explore the role of architecture in dismantling the institution of *art* and, vice-versa. By charting the disciplinary crossovers in this field, the aim is not to project a theory of the architectural avant-garde but, alternatively, to reposition the categories through which a theory of the avant-garde is constructed. This is not a historical project. The practices chosen for scrutiny in the dissertation are, for the most part, disconnected geographically and historically and independent of the broad historical structures that have characterised this period of architectural production. Equally, unlike Tafuri, this dissertation is not centrally concerned with the *practice* of architecture[55] but rather the processes through which it is conceived (or discovered), the tactics through which it engages with the world and the representational techniques that are used to

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garde politics of the *Five Architects* exhibition, see: Nadia Watson, "The Whites vs the Grays: re-examining the 1970s avant-garde," *Fabrications* **15** 1 (July, 2005), pp. 55-69.

[53] Hays, *Architecture's Desire*, p. 5.

[54] Arthur Drexler, "Preface," *Five Architects* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), p. 1. For a more extended discussion of these correalations, see: Felicity Scott, "Architecture or Techno-Utopia," Grey Room 3 (Spring, 2001), pp. 112-126.

[55] Leach has demonstrated the dialectical nature of Tafuri's thinking in regard to the practice of architecture and the role of the historian. For Tafuri, the historian, unlike the architect, can operate outside of the discipline of architecture, and, as a result: "Tafuri's historian is not simply something other than an architect; rather, this historian is programmatically antagonistic towards 'the architect'." See: Andrew Leach, "Tafuri, Criticality and the Limits of Architecture," *Journal of Architecture* **10** 3 (2005), p. 235 [235-244].

articulate it. While not central to the concerns of this dissertation, these practices open on to the broader field of postmodernism and have a cultural resonance well beyond the disciplinary restrictions of either art or architecture.

While not denying the importance of Tafuri in framing discussions of the avant-garde in architecture, this dissertation applies the work of Bürger to architecture for deliberate reasons and in order to facilitate the development of new knowledge. Acknowledging Tafuri's argument that the oppositional potential for architecture needs to be developed outside of the "purely architectural" domains that have constructed it,[56] this dissertation will not traverse the internalised critiques of Tafuri but attempt to broaden the disciplinary scope of architecture and chart its influence and effectiveness in a broader cultural domain.

The motivations for this are twofold; firstly, there is a specific historical structure to Bürger's theorising of the avant-garde in art that identifies the historical phenomenon of avant-garde practice in a distinctive way and is distinguished from Tafuri's historical and ideological study of architecture. Secondly, in Bürger's writing, there is a positivistic role assigned to the historical avant-garde generally (and Dada and surrealism specifically)[57] that is not preserved in Tafuri's more pessimistic critique. This enables a reinvestigation of Dada and surrealism as well as the influence that architecture had on these practices. Equally, the fallout from Bürger's treatise in recent art theory has provided an array of critical mechanisms for revisiting the avant-garde and a number of these are centred on the discussion of architecture. Where the scholarship of connections between architecture and Dada and surrealism has tended to focus frigidly on the specific historical crossovers, this expanded field of post-structuralist art theory enables new critical tangents to be explored in a cross-disciplinary context that reposition architecture as only one of a number of critical practices that were central to the oppositional tactics of the avant-garde.

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[56] Tafuri argues that: "[i]t is useless to propose purely architectural alternatives. The search for an alternative within the structures that condition the very character of architectural design is indeed an obvious contradiction in terms." See: Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia,* p. 181.

[57] This is most apparent in Bürger's romanticisation of the readymade as both the start and end of the avant-gardiste work of art. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 51-53.

In this sense, the dissertation is more concerned with using Bürger's theory to dismantle the theoretical structures embedded in the formalism of Clement Greenberg, than reworking the ideological criticism of Tafuri in architecture. Greenberg's enormous stewardship of American art theory in the decades after the Second World War and the skewed emphasis on a depoliticised formalism served to enlarge the disciplinary boundaries between art and architecture, at a time when these practices were pursuing a project of greater alignment. Greenberg's entrenched segregation of the categories of artistic production are an extension of bourgeois aesthetic practices and have limited the productive avenues through which art and architecture that have otherwise been contained. Rather than trying to preserve the autonomy of architecture from the related visual arts, the strategies that are to be investigated in this dissertation are anxious to collapse them, borrowing heavily from the visual arts as well as deliberately blurring the traditional modes through which architecture is practiced. It is in this area, that the writings centred around the journal *October* and its editors have been instrumental in expanding upon Bürger's theory of avant-garde practice and extending its relevance to a broader discourse of Dada and surrealism.

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In an essay from 2003, David Cunningham, concerned with establishing an extended history of the avant-garde beginning much earlier in the work of Blanchot, argues that any re-probing of the avant-garde and its influence should not be undertaken with respect to the limited concerns of Bürger and Greenberg but in a more holistic, historicised sense. For Cunningham,

> reconsidering the relation of surrealism to modernism or the avant-garde should not involve simply another minor rewriting of typological categorisations derived (usually with considerable simplification) from the likes of Clement Greenberg or Peter Bürger, but should invite us to reconsider the nature of the very concepts of modernism and the avant-garde themselves.[58]

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[58] Cunningham, "Blanchot, Surrealism and the Time of Fragment," p. 2. In an essay from the same period, Cunningham revised this passage to argue that a return to the issues of surrealism and modernism "should not involve simply another re-jigging of curatorial categorizations derived (usually with considerable

While it is important to recognise the limited definitions imposed on the avant-garde by both Bürger and Greenberg and the historical nature of their theories, the work of both of these authors is critical to the relationship of architecture to the avant-garde as it enables an interrogation of the categories of autonomy and production which have hitherto been restricted, for the most part, to art theory. It is primarily through the dialectical opposition between the *work* (in Greenberg's case) and its *negation* (in Bürger) that a role for architecture can be established in the historical avant-garde and as a critical component of Dada and surrealist activity.

Written in 1938, Clement Greenberg's "Avant-Garde and Kitsch"[59] is one of the formative texts in the study of the avant-garde and occupies a critical starting point in its theorisation. While often considered the foundational text of American formalism, the text is highly politicised and presented an argument that was a direct response to the intellectual conditions of the emerging New York art scene, harbouring a deep-seated parochialism that had, as its goal, the dethroning of European art and the political structures that had underpinned it. However, the broader context of Greenberg's thinking was what Serge Guilbaut has referred to as the "de-Marxification of the New York intelligentsia,"[60] which saw a dramatic shift away from the left and towards the values of neo-conservatism. At the heart of this drift was the writing of Meyer Shapiro who, in the

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simplification) from the likes of Clement Greenberg or Peter Bürger." See: Cunningham, "The Futures of Surrealism," p. 49.

[59] Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," Clement Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism: Perceptions and Judgements, 1939-1944*, John O'Brian, ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 3-22; originally published as: Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," *Partisan Review* (Fall, 1939); Later republished in: Clement Greenberg, *Art and Culture: Critical Essays* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961): 3-21.

[60] Serge Guilbaut, "The New Adventures of the Avant-Garde in America: Greenberg, Pollock, or from Trotskyism to the New Liberalism of the 'Vital Center'," trans. Thomas Repensek, *October* 15 (Winter, 1980), pp. 61-78; for a more detailed study of the political context of Greenberg's work see: Serge Guilbaut, *How New York Stole the Idea of Modern Art: Abstract Expressionism, Freedom and the Cold War* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1983); Terry A. Cooney, *The Rise of the New York Intellectuals: Partisan Review and its Circle* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986); Alan Wald, *The New York Intellectuals: The Rise and Fall of the Anti-Stalinist Left from the 1930s to the 1980s* (Chapel Hill: University of Carolina Press, 1987).

1937 essay "Nature of Abstract Art,"[61] argued for a moderate positioning of abstract art that was no longer the by-product of an elitist individualism (as the communists had claimed) but was tied to the conditions of economic production and social infrastructure. As a result, Schapiro saw the individual artist as hopelessly immersed in the broader current of society, helpless and lethargic in the face of its mounting pressures and certainly not in the possession of the agency for revolutionary cultural transformation. Trotsky echoed this fatalistic position in his 1938 text "Art and Politics" published in *Partisan Review*.[62] Trotsky had become friends with Schapiro who had, in turn, introduced him to the circle of surrealism and the writing of André Breton. Just prior to the publication of "Art and Politics", Breton had travelled to Mexico where he met Trotsky who was, at the time, staying with the second-wave surrealist painters Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera. Breton and Trotsky had collaborated on a text entitled "Towards a Free Revolutionary Art"[63], published initially in the *Partisan Review*. Arguing that the work of art was the solitary vessel through which creative thought should be explored, Breton and Trotsky maintained that the radical work of art, by inspiring those who had contact with it, had the potential to restructure the economic and cultural foundations of a society provided that artists preserved their autonomy (from society) and had a social conscience which was liberated from the machinery of capitalism.[64] The argument for a revolutionary art echoed the calls in "Art and

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[61] Meyer Schapiro, "Nature of Abstract Art," *Marxist Quarterly* (January/February 1937), pp. 77-98; the text was a departure from the ideas presented a year earlier in the essay "Social Bases of Art" which argued for the artist as a literal extension of the proletariat. See: Meyer Schapiro, "Social Bases of Art," *First American Artist's Congress* (New York: AAC, 1936), pp. 31-37.

[62] Leon Trotsky, "Art and Politics," *Partisan Review* (August/September: 1938), p. 310.

[63] Diego Rivera and André Breton, "Manifesto: Towards a Revolutionary Art," *Partisan Review* (Fall, 1938): pp. 49-53; For "strategic reasons", Trotsky left his name off the text and replaced it with Rivera's, with whom he was living in Mexico at the time. The text was published in the same year in a pamphlet in French. Their meeting is covered in: Gerard Durozoi, *The History of the Surrealist Movement* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. 349-351.

[64] For more on the relationship between Breton and Trotsky, and its influence on the Surrealist position on politics, see: Pierre Taminiaux, "Breton and Trotsky: The Revolutionary Memory of Surrealism," *Yale French Studies* 109 (2006), pp. 52-66; Robin Adéle Greeley, "For an Independent Revolutionary Art: Breton, Trotsky and Cárdenas's Mexico," in Raymond Spiteri and Donald LaCoss, *Surrealism, Politics and Culture* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2003), pp. 204-225.

Politics"[65], as well as Breton's earlier manifestos on politics[66] which, as well as criticising the prevailing aristocratic conditions of American capitalism, had positioned autonomy and the freedom of creative exploration as a political, rather than solely aesthetic, necessity.[67]

Greenberg took the writing of Breton and Trotsky (as well as Schapiro) as a point of departure, framing an alternative perspective which, rather than connecting art with the proletariat, understood the role of the artist as the prevention of popular annihilation. Where Trotsky and Breton had argued that the independent artist was the solitary defence against the prevailing spectre of capitalism, Greenberg argued that the *avant-garde* was culture's defence against the popular and, most specifically, the *kitsch*. For Greenberg, the avant-garde project was drawn not from the needs of the *proletariat* but from the desires of the *bourgeoisie*.[68] As Greenberg writes,

> [a] part of Western bourgeoisie society has produced something unheard of heretofore—avant-garde culture. A superior consciousness of history—more precisely, the appearance of a new kind of criticism of society, an historical criticism—made this possible… it was no accident therefore that the birth of the avant-garde coincided chronologically—and geographically too—with the first bold development of scientific revolutionary thought in Europe.[69]

In direct and deliberate contradiction to the theory of Trotsky, Greenberg positioned the avant-garde as the salvation of a fragmenting culture, which could only be restored through the medium specific advances of high art. Guilbaut has shown that the publication

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[65] Trotsky, "Art and Politics," p. 310.

[66] The most extensive is "The Political Position of Surrealism" from 1935, although the Manifesto entitled "On the Time When the Surrealists Were Right" is also an expression of the Surrealists political ideology. See, Andre Breton, "The Political Position of Surrealism, " in André Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism,* trans. Richard Seaver and Helen Lane (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1972), pp. 207-211; Andre Breton, "On the Time When the Surrealists were Right," in Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, pp. 243-253.

[67] Bürger's theory was instrumental in challenging these earlier assumptions about avant-garde praxis, demonstrating that it was through the collapse of the autonomous nature of art that the avant-garde took possession of political agency. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 53-54.

[68] Greenberg wrote that "the avant-garde remained attached to bourgeois society precisely because it needed its money". See: Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch", p. 5.

[69] Greenberg, "Avant Garde and Kitsch," p. 5.

of "Avant-Garde and Kitsch" coincided with both the Soviet invasion of Finland and their signing of a non-aggression pact with the Germans which both had a dramatic effect on the perception of Communism in America.[70] There was also a paradigmatic shift in the intellectual culture of New York with the splintering of the (Stalinist) *American Artist's Conference* and the subsequent migration of a number of its members (including Schapiro) to the more moderate *Federation of American Painters and Sculptors*. Within all of these manoeuvrings was the need to create a synthesis between a new language of abstract art and a viable form of social praxis led by a rejuvenated theory of modern art. Greenberg's essay fulfilled this criteria exactly, preserving the artistic autonomy of art while at the same time establishing an idealised role for the artist in rebuilding society, rather than revolutionising it. This depoliticisation of art became one of the defining characteristics of formalism and was central to the growth of the decontextualising aesthetics that characterised Abstract Expressionism.[71]

There is little doubt that Greenberg was originally sympathetic to both surrealism and Trotskyism and it was because of the worthy nature of these adversaries, that he developed his theory of the avant-garde in militant opposition to both. After the publication of "Avant Garde and Kitsch" Greenberg was a perpetual critic of the "literary" art of surrealism, even arguing that artists such as Pollock, Baziotes and Motherwell had "freed" automatism from the constraints of surrealism and fully emancipated its visual qualities.[72] Reacting against its figurative and symbolic roots, Greenberg's essay "Surrealist Painting" divided the movement famously into "good" and "bad" surrealists, based on their predilection for automatism or eclecticism respectively. Miro, Arp and Masson were the

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[70] Guilbaut, "The New Adventures of the Avant-Garde in America", p. 67.

[71] See: Stephen C. Foster, "Clement Greenberg: Formalism in the 40s and 50s," *Art Journal*, 35, 1 (Autumn, 1975), pp. 20-24.

[72] Greenberg makes this argument in: Clement Greenberg, "After Abstract Expressionism," Clement Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism: Modernism with a Vengeance, 1957-1969*, ed. John O'Brian (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 121-134; for a counter argument see: Max Kozloff, "A Letter to the Editor," *Art International* 7 (June 1963), pp. 89-92.

epitome of "good" surrealists, while Max Ernst[73], Salvador Dali,[74] Yves Tanguy and Rene Magritte were indicative of the qualities of "bad" surrealism that Greenberg dismissed as figurative reproduction.[75]

It would be difficult to find two more antithetical theorists of avant-garde practice than Clement Greenberg and Peter Bürger. While Greenberg had corresponded with Adorno on friendly terms,[76] his position could not be more opposed to the Marxist leanings of the Frankfurt school or the emphasis on negation that structured it. Where Greenberg positioned avant-garde practice as an inherently aristocratic pursuit, enabled through the robust autonomy of the institution of art, Bürger saw the avant-garde project as the collapse of the institution of art and the alignment of art with the praxis of (proletariat) life. Greenberg proselytised the singularity of media; praising painting for its inherent flatness, sculpture for its inherent 3-dimensionality; architecture, for its necessary spatiality. For Greenberg, artists should be developing representational strategies that are internal to the medium of painting, rather than extraneous to it. Bürger, on the other hand, saw a primary characteristic of the avant-garde as the collapse of medium, and its dispersal into fragments that are imperfectly reassembled by the viewer and the society that houses them. This required interpretive modes that were beyond the medium of art and engaged the *praxis* of life, with the aim of ultimately transforming society and the behaviour of its

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[73] Greenberg wrote disparagingly of Ernst's "diabetic, prematurely worm-eaten pictures". See: Clement Greenberg, "Review of Exhibitions of Mondrian, Kandinsky and Pollock; of the Annual exhibition of the American Abstract Artists; and of the Exhibition European Artists in America," in Clement Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism: Arrogant Purpose, 1945-1949* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 15.

[74] In another essay, Greenberg had argued that the figurative paintings of Dali were "not fundamentally advanced painting" (p.260). See: Clement Greenberg, "Where is the Avant-Garde?" in Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism: 1957-1969*, pp. 259-265.

[75] The "good" and "bad"" categorisation, while a familiar theme in Greenberg's writing, comes in this instance from: Caroline A. Jones, *Eyesight Alone: Clement Greenberg's Modernism and the Bureaucratization of the Senses* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2005), p. 68.

[76] Adorno had met and become friends with Greenberg during his time in exile, despite the obvious political differences. Adorno had praised Greenberg's interpretation of Walter Benjamin. This is stated in a letter to Maurice English quoted in: Francis Franscina, "Looking Forward, Looking Back: 1985-1999," Francis Franscina (ed), *Pollock and After: The Critical Debate* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 4.

inhabitants. Where Greenberg heavily criticised surrealism and virtually dismissed Dada as agents of avant-garde strategies, Bürger saw Dada and surrealism as the primary authentic form of the avant-garde and its enduring legacy.[77]

Bürger made the emphasis on Dada and surrealism, and the reasons for it, clear in his definition of the historical avant-garde. Bürger was unambiguous that "[t]he concept of the historical avant-garde movements used here applies primarily to Dadaism and early surrealism."[78] Where Greenberg had argued for a return to medium, Bürger considers that, by marginalising the historical medium and its categorisations altogether, Dada and surrealism had initiated a larger critique of the institution of art itself.[79] Bürger argues that the tactics of Dada and surrealism imply a redefinition of the nature of art, as well as questioning the work of art as the primary outcome of this process. Well beyond an argument about technique, Burger had argued that the avant-garde was inherently involved in a transformation of the praxis of life and, as a result, the tactics of Dada and surrealism (devoid of aesthetic content) were indicative of the primary operations of the avant-garde, which sought a politicisation of artistic production and a transformation of the social roles that had been assigned to it.

Greenberg took a fundamentally different view of Dada and surrealism, aligning it with the populist machinations of *kitsch* and arguing that "works of art are self-sufficient and not required inevitably to be either mirrors of reality or decoration."[80] In a later essay entitled

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[77] Evidence of the centrality of Dada and surrealism to Bürger's thinking can be found in the extended footnote where he clarifies what he means by the term "historical avant-garde". See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p.109 [note. 4].

[78] See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p.109 [note. 4]. Bürger also includes the Russian avant-garde after the October revolution, but provides very little analysis of it through out the work.

[79] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p.109 [note. 4]. While outside of his primary concerns Bürger implies at the end of this passage that Italian Futurism and German Expressionism are engaged in a similar cycle, although his emphasis is on Dada and surrealism as the most radical agents of this.

[80] Clement Greenberg, "Review of Joint Exhibition of Joseph Cornell and Laurence Vail," in Clement Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism: Perceptions and Judgements, 1939-1944* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), p. 131.

"Avant-Garde Attitudes: New Art in the Sixties"[81] Greenberg had argued against the reification of art that had been initiated by Duchamp, by dividing avant-garde practice into two distinct categories: "the popular avant-garde" which he rebuked and "the unpopular" avant-garde which he gravitated towards. For Greenberg, the unpopular avant-garde "was the real and original one"[82] and the tactics of Dada in particular were a counter-attack, motivated by "a retreat from 'difficult' to 'easy' art".[83]

While marginal to the discourse of architecture as such,[84] the entrenched categorisation of Greenberg's aesthetics is of significance as it serves to articulate a dialectical counterpoint to the theory of Bürger. Fundamentally, the categories of Greenberg's theory of the avant-garde are essentially a continuation of the bourgeois aesthetics that Bürger's theory attempts to dismantle. As Robert Somol observes, there is an inherent ambiguity in the categories of Greenberg's theory which positions the "high-modern" as an avant-garde practice while a number of the important mechanisms of the historical avant-garde (including surrealism) are pejoratively given the label of "kitsch".[85] Bürger's theory, on the contrary, is aligned with the politicisation of the art object in the 1920s and the development of expanded categories through which art is produced and, as importantly, *received*. In Bürger's writing modernism and the avant-garde are distinct trajectories concerned with autonomy (in the former) and a reconnection with life (in the latter).[86]

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[81] Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde Attitudes: New Art in the Sixties," in Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism: 1957-1969*, pp. 292-303.

[82] Greenberg, "Avant-Garde Attitudes," p. 301.

[83] Greenberg, "Avant-Garde Attitudes," p. 301.

[84] The most concentrated effort to connect Greenberg's writing with a theory of architecture is in: Mark Linder, *Nothing Less than Literal: Architecture after Minimalism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004), pp. 59-100.

[85] For Somol, this is a generational, rather than polemical slippage. See: Robert Somol, "Statement of Editorial Withdrawal," in Robert Somol (ed), *Autonomy and Ideology: Positioning an Avant-Garde in America* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 1997), p. 21.

[86] The observation was first made in: Matei Calinescu, *Faces of Modernity: Avant-Garde, Decadence, Kitsch* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), p. 140.

The emphasis that Greenberg placed on the bourgeois origins of avant-garde art (marked as a continuation of the nineteenth century experimentations of Impressionism), as well as the preoccupation with a narrowly focussed obsession with painting (as the primary form through which avant-garde tactics were expressed) were two significant points that Bürger's theory of the avant-garde sought to oppose in the historicisation of art practice. For Bürger, these formalist cues were the polemical triggers that structured his dialectical hypothesis: the *avant-garde* was a historical phenomenon, defined by its opposition to the bourgeois institutionalisation of art and the autonomy of artistic production; the avant-gardiste work of art, as a negation of artistic production, was defined by its opposition to the established aesthetic categories of institutional aesthetics and, as a result, required the formulation of new ones (focussed on reception). In tandem, these twin strategies required the formation of the concept of the "avant-garde" as a response to the paradigmatic shifting of categories that they initiated. They also enable the integration of architecture in a broader theory of the avant-garde, conceived as a received *objet trouvé*, rather than an autonomously produced "work." The hypothesis is that, through a reworking of Bürger's theory of the avant-garde, architecture can be understood as an extension of the practices of the historical avant-garde and a polemical device in the negations of Dada and surrealism.

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Peter Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* was differentiated from previous theories of modern art by interpreting the avant-garde as a historical phenomenon, as opposed to an aesthetic one. For Bürger, the avant-garde had emerged as a direct response to historical (and sociological) circumstances and, in the same way, its activities were conditioned and structured by them. As has been argued, one key aspect of this was that the avant-garde was distinct from modernism and occupied an independent trajectory in the twentieth century that, while related to the social transformations that had accompanied modernity, was equally distinct and disassociated from them.[87] This is despite the fact that both

[87] Of interest here is Taisto H. Mäkelä's argument, drawn from the second of Nietzsche's *Untimely Meditations* on the use and abuse of history. Mäkelä maintains that modernism is a self-propagating genealogy that appropriates history in order to serve its own ends as well as to overcome its past. See: Taisto H. Mäkelä,

Adorno[88] and Habermas[89] use the words modernism and avant-garde interchangeably and, as already demonstrated, Greenberg saw high modernism as a particular genre of the avant-garde.

More recently it has been necessary to separate the historical evolution of modernism from the particular concerns of the avant-garde. Bürger's work was instrumental on this front, in that it established a historical and sociological context for the avant-gardiste work of art that, by definition, negated the categories of bourgeois aestheticism and the autonomy of art that was its by-product. On this point, the work of Andreas Huyssen is equally instructive, furthering Bürger's theory by arguing that autonomy is a characteristic of modernism, while the sublation of art and life belongs solely to the project of the avant-garde.[90] This reading implies a continuity between modernism and nineteenth century bourgeois aestheticism, ruptured by the adversarial nature of avant-garde experimentation.

The failure to recognise this historical paradigm had been a major limitation of critical theories of the avant-garde up until this point. Modelled upon the philosophy of history

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"Modernity and the Historical Perspectivism of Nietzsche and Loos," *JAE* 44, 3 (May, 1991), pp. 138-139. For a detailed exploration of the distinction between modernism and the avant-garde, see: Schulte-Sasse, "Theory of Modernism versus Theory of the Avant-Garde," pp. vii-xlvii.

[88] Bürger's primary criticism of Adorno is his inability to conceive art radically, basing his analysis on an interrogation of the category of the "new". Adorno is only able to view strategies as evolutions of previous technical innovations (departures of style and method). For Bürger, the historical avant-garde cannot be viewed within this model, as their concerns were not technical reworkings of previous forms of artistic production, but an entire revolution in the social conventions of art. This means that Adorno's approach lacks specificity and applicability in differentiating the avant-garde from modernism. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 59-63.

[89] Bürger's critique of Habermas's approach, to which he also acknowledges his debt, is most strongly articulated in: Peter Bürger, "The Institution of 'Art' as a Category in the Sociology of Literature," *Cultural Critique* 2 (Winter, 1985-1986), pp. 5-33.

[90] See: Andreas Huyssen, "The Search for Tradition: Avant-Garde and Postmodernism in the 1970s," *New German Critique* 22 (Winter 1981), pp. 23-40; also published in: Huyssen, *After the Great Divide*, pp. 160-178. See also: David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (London: Blackwell, 1990), p. 12.

promoted by Jose Ortega y De Gasset,[91] the theory of the avant-garde presented by Renato Poggioli,[92] for instance, posits four primary characteristics to avant-garde practice—activism, antagonism, nihilism and agonism—but neglects the historical specificity of the avant-garde altogether. His theory is thus unable to distinguish between broad historical trends that define the eighteenth, nineteenth and twentieth centuries or reconcile them with the specific dilemmas raised by the emerging historical avant-garde in the 1920s.[93] In this sense, Poggioli constructs a theory of modernism, rather than a specific theory of the avant-garde.[94] Jochen Schulte-Sasse dismisses these contributions, arguing that a theory of the avant-garde has, as its function, the requirement "[t]o characterise, with theoretical accuracy the historical uniqueness of the avant-garde of the 1920s (futurism, Dadaism, surrealism, the left avant-garde in Russia and Germany)."[95]

Predominantly concerned with this "theoretical accuracy," Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* is a considerable departure from previous contributions in the field.[96] Drawing its methodological approach from the explorations of Marx and the associated reclamation

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[91] Ortega's philosophy of history is developed in the essays contained in: José Ortega y Gasset, *History as a System and Other Essays Toward a Philosophy of History* (New York: W.W Norton and Co., 1962); see also: José Ortega y Gasset, *The Dehumanisation of Art and Other Essays on Art, Culture and Literature* (New York: Princeton University Press, 1968).

[92] Renato Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press, 1968). The theory is the starting point of an investigation of the work of Benjamin and Gideon in: Hilde Heynan, "What Belongs to Architecture?" p. 28.

[93] Buchloh refers to Poggioli's work as "hopelessly atheoretical and historically insufficient." See: Benjamin Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde," *Art in America* (November, 1984), p. 19. This argument is made in greater detail in: Schulte-Sasse, "Theory of Modernism versus Theory of the Avant-Garde," p. xliv.

[94] In a number of respects, Greenberg's writings on the avant-garde belong to the same genre. Other generalist theories of the avant-garde include; John Weightman, *The Concept of the Avant-Garde: Explorations in Modernism* (La Salle, Illinois: Library Press, 1973); Irving Howe, *The Decline of the New* (New York: Harcourt Brace and World, 1970). Neither of these texts provide a sustained or historical account of the avant-garde, or any scholarly analysis or definition of the techniques pertaining to it. They both use modernism and the avant-garde as interchangeable concepts.

[95] Schulte-Sasse, "Theory of Modernism versus Theory of the Avant-Garde," p. x.

[96] Countering the numerous overly-historical accounts of the avant-garde, Thierry de Duve sees Bürger's thesis as "pure theory", where the argument is constructed prior to the gathering of historical facts. See: Thierry de Duve, *Kant after Duchamp* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press), p. 23.

projects of the Frankfurt school, Bürger's theory is situated outside of the discipline of art history and resides in the multidisciplinary terrain of critical theory.[97] In the opening passages of *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, Bürger situates his writing within the broader context of a "critical science" claiming, as its point of departure from traditional science, an awareness of the "social significance of its activity"[98]. Rather than replacing traditional science through the invention of new categories, Bürger sees the task of critical science as an interrogation of the existing categories and the development of the frameworks of knowledge that are permitted within these.[99] Methodologically, Bürger borrows from the seminal work of Hans Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*[100] and particularly his definition of the concepts *prejudice* and *application*. In Gadamer's hermeneutics, understanding is achieved by the *application* of the studied work to the contemporary context of the viewer, enabling the inherent *prejudices* of the viewer to impact upon the reception of the work. For Gadamer this amounts to a "placing of oneself within a process of tradition,"[101] a perspective that, while criticised by Jürgen Habermas,[102] is used by Bürger to contextualise the role of the social historian in relationship to the subject of their study.[103] It is particularly poignant in the context of the neo-avant-garde, which inflects the traditions of history through the application of contextual prejudices.

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[97] For a taxonomy of the forms of criticism and their relationship to architecture, see: Mary McLeod, "On Criticism," pp. 4-6.

[98] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p.3. Note that Tafuri also considered his critical activity "scientific". See; Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, p. 149; see also: Anthony Vidler, *Histories of the Immediate Present: Inventing Architectural Modernism* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2008), p. 177.

[99] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 3.

[100] Hans Georg Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, trans. Garrett Barden and John Cumming (London: Sheed and Ward, 1975).

[101] Gadamer, *Truth and Method*, p. 258. On this point, Huyssen argues that all avant-gardes are involved in fighting tradition and resisting its dogma. See Huyssen, "The Search for Tradition," p. 164.

[102] As Bürger illustrates, Habermas is critical of the over-emphasis on prejudice in Gadamer's position. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 6.

[103] Adorno implies that, while a "prejudice" exists in the perspective from which we consume media, this is a two-way process. For Adorno, "when a medium desired and consumed by the masses transmits an ideology […], this ideology is presumably adapting to the needs of the consumers as much as, conversely, it is progressively shaping them." See: Theodor W. Adorno, "The Curious Realist: On Siegfried Kracauer," trans. Shierry Weber, Nicholson, *New German Critique* 54 (Autumn 1991), p. 167 [orig. 1964].

Bürger is guarded in his writing about history and method in his theory of the avant-garde; wary of the critiques of objectivism common in the 1970s, as well as the inherently postmodern project to emancipate history from the constraints of strictly linear and evolutionary narratives.[104] Drawing from Gadamer, Bürger stresses the danger of completely historicising aesthetic theory, to the point where it is wholly contained within the period of study (the *zeitgeist*) and does not allow for subsequent developments of knowledge to impact on the chosen era. This leads to what Bürger terms a "false objectivism,"[105] whereby the author is indifferent towards the specific perspective from which they write. The other extreme, against which Bürger also warns, is the formation of a palimpsest approach, drawn from the fragmentary accumulation of selected aspects of previous theories up until the present that, while avoiding some of the dangers of objectivity, is prone to becoming the construction of a "prehistory of the present" but in a selective and decontextualised manner.[106] For Bürger, the historicisation of a contemporary aesthetic theory needs to pay special attention to the categories upon which this analysis rests and their specific historical relationship to both the present and the historical subject. In this way a critical theory serves to illuminate the structures upon which knowledge is based and develops a relationship between the historical categories of knowledge and the critical perspective of the author.

While aesthetics was amongst his numerous concerns, Marx left behind a limited framework from which a theory of art could be established.[107] As Zuidervaart illustrates, "it is problematic to speak of the Marxian model [as…] Marx and Engels never propounded a

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[104] Bürger explored the broader issue of history in the context of postmodernism in the essays compiled as: Peter Bürger, *The Decline of Modernism* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992); on this subject, see also: Andreas Huyssen, "Mapping the Postmodern," *New German Critique* (Autumn, 1984), pp. 5-52.

[105] Bürger expands on his understanding of this in: Bürger, "The Institution of 'Art' as a Category in the Sociology of Literature," p. 54.

[106] Bürger is reproducing here the methodological system of Marx, as well as a number of its key terms. The passage draws heavily from Marx's writing on history in: Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, trans. Martin Nicolaus (London: Penguin, 1973), pp. 105-107.

[107] On this see: Martin Jay, "'The Aesthetic Ideology' as Ideology; or, What Does It Mean to Aestheticize Politics?" *Cultural Critique* (1992), pp. 41-61.

comprehensive philosophy of art and their scattered comments on art may imply more than one such model."[108] Most attempts to structure a philosophy of art based on the writings of Marx assume a distinction between base and superstructure and, for the most part, this has been the structure that has dominated the integration of Marx's work in architecture, although this has been complicated by the diversity of avenues through which this has been pursued.[109] For Bürger, the distinction between the base and superstructure is of less significance than the methodological critique of ideology that, in art, is conditioned by the forces of production and reception. In this respect, Bürger seeks to apply the methodological approach of Marx to a sociology of art and its economical structure, drawing from history in order to advance an understanding of the present.

Bürger argues that previous Marxist attempts to theorise art within the context of bourgeois society—most notably those of Adorno, Lukacs and Benjamin—have failed to attribute sufficient weight to the *function* that art plays within this society and, as a result, neglect its sociological contribution.[110] The preconception that art has no functional importance is, in Bürger's analysis, only countered in the work of Herbert Marcuse who sees the function of art as an affirmation of the values intrinsic to the society in which it is produced. As a result, Bürger concludes that the theoretical incursions of both Benjamin and Adorno,[111] remain at the level of a theory of modernism and are inadequate positions from which to develop a broader theory of avant-garde practice.

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[108] Lambert Zuidervaart, "The Social Significance of Autonomous Art: Adorno and Bürger," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* **48** 1 (Winter, 1990), p. 62.

[109] A taxonomy of the approaches to theorising Marx and architecture is available in: David Cunningham and Jon Goodbun, "Marx, Architecture and Modernity," *Journal of Architecture* **11** 2 (2006), pp.169-185. The authors argue that the work of Tafuri is underappreciated in this field and that it is through a reworking of both Benjamin and Lyotard that Marx has found a theoretical home in architecture.

[110] Buchloh sees this aspect of Bürger's argument as problematic, falsely assigning to the critic a scientific platform from which to extract scientific knowledge. For Buchloh, neither Benjamin or Adorno sought to elevate aesthetics to such an ideologically-centred position. See Buchloh, "Theorising the Avant-Garde," p.21.

[111] Bürger also argues that Adorno's emphasis on the "new" as a category prevents his approach from coming to terms with the practices of the neo-avant-garde and, as a result, is applicable only to the historical avant-garde. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 63.

The contextual prejudices that condition Bürger's theory are clear. Bürger establishes his debt to Marx and, most importantly, the relationship between ideology and production, accepting ideology as *produced* by social structures, rather than a direct outcome of them. Bürger's discussion of Marx takes, as its example, the critique on religion that Marx undertakes in his *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* where he scrutinises Hegel's definition of truth as "the agreement of an object with our perception."[112] For Marx, criticism has a role in exposing the inherent contradictions in a social system, as well as the illusions that disguise its appearance. In this sense the relationship between an object and its perception is conditioned by ideology and it is the role of criticism to reveal this relationship. In the case of religion, the mechanisms of ideology operate to erect an illusion of religion through objects at the same time as they construct a psychological consolation that, at a social level, prevents the forces of social change gaining any momentum. Bürger's writing, as with the criticism of Lukacs and Adorno, draws heavily from this dialectical model of criticism which attempts to separate ideology from the "masks" that are a direct manifestation of its operations.[113] Writing about this model of criticism, Bürger explains that

> [c]riticism is not regarded as a judgement that harshly sets one's own views against the untruth of ideology but rather as the *production* of cognitions. Criticism attempts to separate the truth of ideology from its untruth […]. Although the element of truth is present in ideology, criticism is needed to expose it. [sic.] When the critique of religion destroys the illusion of God's real existence and the hereafter it simultaneously permits one to perceive religion's element of truth, namely its character as protest.[114]

Of equal importance to Bürger is the conflation of Marx's critique of religion with a broader critique of society. Bürger is hesitant in the application of a Marxian dialectical model to

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[112] Karl Marx, *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970). Bürger is most concerned with the introduction where Marx develops a dialectical argument that religion contains both illusion and truth.

[113] Lukacs developed a sustained position towards modernism in his early writing. It is articulated most strongly in the chapter on "The Ideology of Modernism" in: Georg Lukacs, *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*, trans. John and Necke Mander (London: Merlin Press, 1963), pp. 17-46.

[114] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 8. Italics in original. Original passage contains an open bracket with no closed bracket.

individual works (such as in the examples of Adorno and Lukacs[115]) arguing that they fail to take into account the *function* of the objects they interrogate, allowing the autonomy of art to be conserved through the neglect of its ideological impact (or reception) at a social level.[116] Adorno, as Bürger demonstrates, is determined to exclude the production of art from its miscellaneous effects and, in the process, "forgoes the possibility of mediating work and effect with each other"[117]. In response to this, Bürger cites Marcuse's dialectical model of critique[118] which, as a point of departure, outlines the contradictions inherent in the function of art in bourgeois society, demonstrating, for Bürger that "art thus stabilises the very social conditions against which it protests."[119] Unlike Adorno and Lukacs (who remain largely concerned with the criticism of individual works), Marcuse asks deeper questions regarding the status of these works and their complicity with the forces of ideology.[120] The more global approach to the investigation of art that Bürger distils from Marx (and finds inspiration for in Marcuse) has implications for the study of architecture, shifting dialectical discussions beyond the narrow context of the "work" and outwards

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[115] The primary work in this genre is: George Lukacs, *History and Class Consciousness: Studies in Marxist Dialectics*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1971).

[116] Adorno reveals this in a letter in response to Walter Benjamin, where he outlines his thoughts on autonomy and the dangers associated with its degradation in art. Adorno argues that "it would border on anarchism to revoke the reification of a great work of art in the spirit of its immediate use-values." (p.122) See, Theodor Adorno, "Letter to Benjamin, (London, 18 March 1936)," trans. Harry Zohn in Theodor Adorno, Walter Benjamin, Ernst Bloch, Berthold Brecht, and Georg Lukacs, *Aesthetics and Politics* (London: Verso, 2007) pp. 120-126 [orig. 1978]. See also: Terry Eagleton, "Aesthetics and Politics," *New Left Review 1* 107 (January/February 1978), pp. 21-22.

[117] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 11. See also: Zuidervaart, "The Social Significance of Autonomous Art," pp. 61-77.

[118] The primary text is: Herbert Marcuse, "The Affirmative Character of Culture," in Herbert Marcuse, *Negations: Essays in Critical Theory* (London: Penguin, 1968), pp. 88-134; Marcuse's dialectical method is developed at greater length in: Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man* (London: Sphere, 1968).

[119] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 11.

[120] This aspect is of Marcuse's work is expanded in: Herbert Marcuse, "Remarks on a Redefinition of Culture," *Daedalus* 94 (Winter 1965), pp. 190-207; see also: Herbert Marcuse, *The Aesthetic Dimension: Toward a Critique of Marxist Aesthetics* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1978).

towards the systems of *reception* and effect, and the ways in which society constructs and preserves these.[121]

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Bürger's resituated theory of avant-garde practice begins with the historicisation of the institution of art, oriented around the phenomena of "aestheticism" which, for Bürger, resembles methodologically the category of "labour" in Marx's critique of capitalism. For Bürger, the avant-garde is a historical phenomenon that repositions the history of art by revealing certain categories in art practice that had hitherto not been known or explored. As a result, the role of the avant-garde can't be contained in the linear progression from the earlier practices of art and determines its own social and historical position outside of these conventions. Confirming this, Burger argues that "certain general categories of the work of art were first made recognisable in their generality by the avant-garde"[122] and, as a result, a shift in the historical categories occurs at that time. Bürger warns against the "evolutionist view" that has the potential to "eradicate what is contradictory in historical processes and replace it with the idea that development is linear progress"[123]. The phenomenon of the avant-garde makes visible the historical categories that enable an unmasking of bourgeois aesthetics, constituting the effective origin of these new ideological tools.

Echoing the method of Marx, the category of "aestheticism" is central to Bürger's rehistoricising of a theory of art production. Bürger contends that "[i]n bourgeois society, it is only with aestheticism that the full unfolding of the phenomenon of art became a fact, and it is to aestheticism that the historical avant-garde movements respond"[124]. As an example, Bürger uses the category of medium, or "artistic means", to illustrate the central tenets of the avant-garde project. The emphasis on aestheticism heavily structured the

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[121] For the implication of Marx for architecture, see: Cunningham and Goodbun, "Marx, Architecture and Modernity," pp. 169-185.

[122] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 18.

[123] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 17.

[124] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 17.

use and choice of artistic means, which were revealed to the artist through the over-determined categories of style. As Bürger illustrates, prior to the avant-garde, art was criticised within the framework of its medium, so that a comedy was assessed and evaluated against the entrenched categories and expectations of comedy.[125] This was the ideological system through which bourgeois aesthetics emerged and flourished. In a number of contexts, Greenberg's theory of the avant-garde is an exact continuation of this model of criticism.

In contrast, Bürger sees the avant-garde project as the rolling together of all of these independent historical "means" into a singular strategy so that the oppositions between them are assimilated. Collapsing the distinctions of style as well as the technical constraints of medium, the avant-gardiste work embodies no inherent genre or means but is tacitly an amalgamation of all of them simultaneously. As Bürger writes,

> [i]t is in the historical avant-garde movements that the totality of artistic means becomes available as means. Up to this period in the development of art, the use of artistic means had been limited by the period style, an already existing canon of permissible procedures, an infringement of which was acceptable only within certain bounds. But during the dominance of a style, the category of 'artistic means' as a general one, cannot be seen for what it is because, *realiter*, it occurs only as a particular one.[126]

For Bürger, the category of artistic means was indiscernible up until the historical avant-garde, as it was so bound to the conditions of style that structured art that it was never exposed to a dialectical or oppositional critique of alternatives as the pervasive schema of bourgeois criticism ensured that none was available. With the evolution of the historical avant-garde, the aesthetic function of art was annihilated, resulting in the dissolution of the structures of style and the emergence of new categories through which "artistic means" had to be evaluated. For Bürger it is

> a distinguishing feature of the historical avant-garde movements that they did not develop a style. There is no such thing as a Dadaist or surrealist style. What did

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[125] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 17.

[126] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 18. Italics in original.

> happen was that these movements liquidated the possibility of a period style when they raised to a principle the availability of the artistic means of past periods. Not until there is universal availability does the category of artistic means become a general one.[127]

It is this aspect of Bürger's work that is of profound significance for architecture as, rather than marginalising architecture from the historical avant-garde (the conventional perspective), it enables a correlation between the two where architecture—like any other "artistic means"—can be appropriated towards avant-gardiste ends. It no longer needs to be contained at the margins of art practice but resides, as will be illustrated, as a central concern of the historical avant-garde and sits along side photography, film, drawing and collage as a tactic through which the "stylistic" categories of aesthetics are dismantled.

Bürger's writing on means has some commonalities with Adorno's critique of functionalism,[128] where he argued that, in architecture, the absence of style was effectively a style itself. Adorno, who differentiates between purposeful and non-purposive arts, argues that the lack of aesthetic content (ie. pure functionalism) is a myth, as the expression of functionality is in itself a style.[129] For Adorno, architecture is heavily engaged in the cycles of aesthetics and especially in regard to the need for aesthetic renewal operating not as an alternative to the visual arts but in unison with them. One of the primary characteristics of architecture in the writing of, firstly, Benjamin and then Adorno is its inherent pragmatism which provides a dialectical counterpoint to aesthetics. For Bürger, the discovery of the readymade was an attempt to combat aesthetics through pragmatism, effectively dismantling the status of the work of art, at least as it pertains to the institution of art.[130] The merging of functionality and art in the readymade was only the first of these strategies which, in Bürger's thesis, saw the integration of experiential reality with artistic production. Architecture's inherent functionality made it a radical, and easily

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[127] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 17.

[128] Originally an address to the *German Werkbund* in 1965, Adorno's most concentrated meditation on architecture is translated as: Theodor Adorno, "Functionalism Today," trans. Jane Newman and John Smith, *Oppositions* **17** (Summer 1979), pp. 30-41.

[129] Adorno, "Functionalism Today," p. 32.

[130] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 56-57.

appropriated, weapon in the armoury of the avant-garde, capable of nurturing life and experience but at the same time recontextualising the aesthetic qualities of the work of art and negating the categories attached to these. As will be argued, architecture became an avenue for the expansion of historical avant-garde activities in this period, decentring aesthetic production and the emphasis on the art object in its role as the traditional and symbolic home of the praxis of life.

For Bürger, the sublation of art and life that is central to his thesis is equally an extension of the model of dialectical criticism that was undertaken by Marx, exposing the ideological category of aestheticism and, its alternative: life. Drawing from the precedent of Marx, and following this model of dialectical criticism,[131] the "objects" of architecture can be applied to the "categories" of the avant-garde in the same way that collage, montage or photography can.[132] The object retains the categories implicit to architecture but is recontextualised within the fragmented ideology of avant-garde protest and, as a result, the internal contradictions can be harmonised with the external pressures that bear upon it.[133]

In this sense, however, architecture is no longer just a "means" available to the avant-garde but a weapon against the categories of bourgeois aestheticism and the autonomy of art in general.[134] Replicating the structure of Marx's critique of religion, Bürger is clear

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[131] Of the numerous developments of Marxism in dialectical criticism, see: Terry Eagleton, *Criticism & Ideology: A Study in Marxist Literary Theory* (London: Verso, 1975).

[132] This point is also recognised in: Lukasz Stanek and Tahl Kaminer, "Transdisciplinarity: The Singularities and Multiplicities," *Footprint* (Autumn 2007), pp. 3-4.

[133] Incidentally, the status of the architectural "object" was a defining characteristic of Mark Wigley's writing on both deconstruction and deconstructivist architecture. See, for instance, the passage on the "status of the object" in: Mark Wigley, *The Architecture of Deconstruction: Derrida's Haunt* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1995), pp. 30-31, pp.143-145; See also Wigley's critique of the London exhibition entitled *Deconstructivism*, where he argues that deconstruction should "exploit the unique condition of the architectural object." (p.133). See: Mark Wigley, "Deconstructivist Architecture," in Andreas Papadakis, Catherine Cooke and Andrew Benjamin (eds.), *Deconstruction: Omnibus Volume* (London: Academy Editions, 1989), pp.132-134.

[134] As Huyssen has illustrated, modernism is also a formidable tradition that the historical avant-garde seeks to displace. The development of autonomy in modernism, parallels that of bourgeois institutionalisation, and the

that the categorisation of art as an "institution" is twofold; embodying both "the productive and distributive apparatus" of art, as well as the social and political conventions that govern its reception. One critical aspect of the argument put forward in this dissertation is that architecture, rather than being autonomous to the history of art, is deeply implicated within it and, as a result, can be understood as an "artistic means" engaged in the avant-garde dismantling of the institution of art. This is beyond the scope of the present arguments that seek to position an "institution of architecture" that architectural practice may well have an antagonistic relationship with (and an avant-garde opposition towards).[135] On the contrary, this dissertation is concerned with the extent to which architecture operates productively within the armoury of the historical avant-garde, as a medium that is used against the institution of *art*, rather than architecture itself. This characterises the various "architectures" that structure the dissertation: firstly, as a "medium" through which avant-garde practice found traction in the historical avant-garde, and secondly, as a conduit through which the techniques of art were deployed in architectural practice.

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While the major points of Bürger's theory are central to the structure and method of this dissertation, it is primarily through the critical revision and theoretical application of Bürger's ideas in American art-theory that the connections with architectural theory become most apparent. Of these, it is the circle of critics linked to the journal *October* that have been the most aggressive and forthright in interrogating Bürger's work as well as expanding upon its theoretical preconceptions in order to frame a post-Greenbergian methodology for the study of both art and its history. This has specific implications for the study of architecture.

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sublation of art and life is antithetical to both structural systems. See: Huyssen, *After the Great Divide*, pp. 160-178. p. 163-165.

[135] See, for instance: Ackan, "Manfredo Tafuri's theory of the architectural avant-garde," p. 137. Tafuri had argued that the plan had become an "institution" in its own right, and, to a large extent, a political one. See: Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia,* p. 61, p. 174.

While it is important not to conflate the writings linked to the circle of *October* too much, constituting the parallax views of a number of independent (and highly individualistic) writers and thinkers, it is clear that there is an editorial perspective that runs through its various publications and a commonality in subject matter that unites the various editors (as well as a number of its authors).[136] Both Buchloh and Foster were post-graduate students of Krauss, Bois has been a long-time collaborator and emerging authors in the Octoberist field, such as George Baker and T.J Demos, have developed careers that follow heavily the concerns of the more senior Octoberist mentors.[137] The 2004 publication of *Art Since 1900*, under the co-authorship of Hal Foster, Rosalind Krauss, Yve Alain Bois and Benjamin Buchloh[138] is the best evidence yet of the harmonising critical views of these authors and the collaborative force of their larger project to critically redeem the historical avant-garde and establish its presence in the activities of contemporary art. Presenting their own view of modernism by effectively weaving the methodologies of psychoanalysis, social art history, structuralism (linguistics) and post-structuralism (all central to the journal *October*), it was in response to the publication of this volume that Amelie Jones coined the term "Octoberism",[139] arguing that the collaborative efforts of these authors had assumed the force of a hegemony: effectively providing a platform from which a selective reading of

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[136] For a history of these authors influence in art theory, see: David Carrier, *Rosalind Krauss and American Philosophical Art Criticism: From Formalism to Beyond Postmodernism* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Publishers, 2002); see also: Daniel A. Siedell, "Rosalind Krauss, David Carrier and Philosophical Art Criticism," *Journal of Aesthetic Education* 38 2 (Summer, 2004), pp. 95-105.

[137] Baker's doctorate was supervised by both Krauss and Buchloh, and he was made an editor of the journal in 2006, after the publication of a number of chapters as journals in the years proceeding; T.J Demos's thesis on Duchamp was also supervised by both Krauss and Buchloh and a large section was published in *October*. For details of the influence, see: George Baker, *Artwork Caught by the Tail: Francis Picabia and Dada in Paris* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2007), p. xiii, p. xvi; T. J Demos, *The Exiles of Marcel Duchamp* (Cambridge, Massachussetts: The MIT Press, 2007), p. ix.

[138] Hal Foster, Rosalind Krauss, Yve-Alain Bois and Benjamin H.D. Buchloh, *Art Since 1900: Modernism, Antimodernism and Postmodernism* (New York: Thames and Hudson, 2004), p. 179.

[139] Jones writes: "For lack of a better term, this hegemony marked in such definitive—one might even say final—form by the publication of this book might be called Octoberism." Amelie Jones, "Review of *Art Since 1900*," *Art Bulletin* 88 2 (June 2006), p. 377.

art history (and modernism) was being projected.[140] Having effectively dismantled the hegemonic modernism of Greenberg, the Octoberist critics have been central to the establishment of an equally intellectualised, and highly-conditional, reading of modernism which *excludes* with the same rigour and biases that Greenberg was famous for.[141] Krauss had acknowledged this in passing in the 1990s, when she wrote "[m]y modernism is, of course, another name for a discursive field that, like any such field, is structured."[142] Despite occasional acknowledgements, the hegemony of *October* is involved not only in the production of ideology, but its selective redistribution, allowing a history of modernism to emerge that reflects the concerns of an intelligent, but powerful elite, who only occasionally acknowledge their agency in regard to this model of criticism.[143]

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[140] Amongst the reviews that took issue with the historical myopia of the work see: Robert Storr, "All in the Family," *Frieze Magazine* 95 (November-December, 2005) [up]; Robert Storr, "Review of *Art Since 1900*," *Art Bulletin* 88 2 (June 2006), pp. 382-385; Geoffrey Batchen, "Review of *Art Since 1900*," *Art Bulletin* 88 2 (June 2006), pp. 375-376; Nancy J. Troy, "Review of *Art Since 1900*," *Art Bulletin* 88 2 (June 2006), pp. 373-375; Pamela Lee, "Review of *Art Since 1900*," *Art Bulletin* 88 2 (June 2006), pp. 379-381.

[141] Jones, and others, have taken issue with the exclusivity of the "Octoberist" hegemony which is fundamentally aligned to the patterns of European and American art markets and, despite its leftist leanings, tends to exclude the work of artists (or critics) operating outside of these institutional and geographic constraints. The hermetic nature of *Art Since 1900* which effectively fails to acknowledge either the Algerian or Vietnam wars, has been a point of contention for a number of historians and particularly those engaged with the social history of art. Beyond just an intellectual paradigm, Jones argues that Octoberism is indeed an "ideological state apparatus", citing the work of Althusser in her defence See: Jones, "Review of *Art Since 1900*," p. 377.

[142] Rosalind Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1994), p.12.

[143] A primary characteristic of this new "hegemony" is its self-referential nature. As the influential art theorist Robert Storr has written, in regard to the bibliography of *Art Since 1900*,

> even a cursory inspection of writers deemed worthy of attention shows that an overwhelming preponderance are either the principal authors themselves, former contributors to *October* magazine, the group's party organ, intellectual mentors who have been "rebranded" by the October group, or former students of one or another of the principal authors, and so essentially the respectful progeny of the *Doktormutter* and *Doktorvaters* who head the family enterprise. That the same coterie's writings and exhibitions are repeatedly cited in the body of the book, to the virtual obliteration of divergent much less dissenting views, simply reinforces this pattern.

See: Robert Storr, "All in the Family," [up]

One of the frustrations for historians of the alternative histories of art and modernism is the focus that the Octoberist critics have placed on the historical avant-garde and, in particular, the work of Peter Bürger. Jones, for instance, laments the methodological approach of these critics who frequently base their "value judgements" in art on "an early-twentieth-century conception of avant-gardism, reinforced and refined […] by Peter Burger's arguments in his 1974 *Theory of the Avant-Garde*."[144] However, even beyond the thematic fascination with the historical avant-garde is a methodological affiliation with Bürger's approach, which privileges the work of art and its production over social diversity, equality or human experience. Critical of the neglect of contextual issues relating to colonialism, gender and conflict, Jones argues that

> these authors haven't let go of an essentially modernist belief in the connection between the work ("structurally" interpreted) and the artist as an originary force of meaning and value, and because they fail to interrogate their own participation in the posing of value judgments and in the positioning of origins and authors […their work], while brilliant and innovative in its analyses and structural organization, baldly reveals the conservatism of Octoberism as a hegemonic discourse.[145]

The opposition to the "hegemony" of the Octoberist critics is also not restricted to American art theory but runs through the work of a number of European authors as well. While it is clear that the writing of Krauss and Foster has gained a degree of traction in a number of theoretical projects in the United Kingdom,[146] it is equally common to see their work marginalised, ignored or openly contested. David Hopkins, for instance, describes his "discomfort with aspects of […] the 'Octoberist' model of twentieth-century art," given their "intense partisanship" and the "partiality of their reading of the post-Dada/surrealist

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[144] Jones, "Review of *Art Since 1900*," p. 378.

[145] Jones, "Review of *Art Since 1900*," p. 378. Jones refers to the authors frequent "hectoring tone" which adopts "a highly authoritative manner, stating opinions as fact" and, by excluding any subjectivity, privileging "the particular objects and narratives they choose to highlight and those they choose to down play or marginalize" (p. 378).

[146] Foremost amongst these are the writings of Briony Fer and, to a lesser extent, Christopher Green. See Briony Fer, "Fault-Lines: Surrealism and the Death Drive," *Oxford Art Journal* 18 1 (1995), pp. 158-60; Briony Fer, "Surrealism, Myth and Psychoanalysis," pp. 170-249; Christopher Green, *Picasso: Architecture and Vertigo* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 26-27.

tradition."[147] As a result of this he prefers to "play down" the importance of an avant-garde/neo-avant-garde relationship[148] in order to focus on general themes that are intertwined between generations of artistic production.[149] His analysis of masculinity in twentieth century art, while focussing heavily on the processes of Dada, attempts to resurrect a discussion of intersubjectivity through the "amplification, in the late twentieth century, of an earlier fragmentary language or 'secret discourse.'"[150] Hopkins history of masculinity in Dada, which undertakes an "intimate", rather than "ideological" framework for the avant-garde, is of more use in art (than architecture), as human relationships between artists and across generations inevitably affected the course of aesthetics more than the built environment. In architecture however, it is precisely the ideological framework of avant-garde activity that is of significance given that the categories of artistic production intersect more with architectural practice than the lives of artists typically do. However Hopkins, who draws heavily from Bataille in his analysis of both Duchamp and Ernst's work,[151] is not the only historian of Dada and surrealism who has shared similar material but arrived at conflicting conclusions to the Octoberist critics, and Krauss and Foster in particular.[152]

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[147] David Hopkins, *Dada's Boys: Masculinity after Duchamp* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), p. 8.

[148] Elsewhere Hopkins is more comfortable promoting the work of Bürger and the idea of a "neo-avant-garde". See, for instance: David Hopkins, "Introduction," in Hopkins, *Neo-Avant-Garde*, p.1-18; David Hopkins, "Art and Life…and Death: Marcel Duchamp, Robert Morris and Neo-Avant-Garde Irony," in Hopkins, *Neo-Avant-Garde*, p.19-36.

[149] Hopkins, *Dada's Boys*, p. 9.

[150] Hopkins, *Dada's Boys*, p. 9.

[151] Hopkins reading of Ernst's work in the chapter "Blind Swimmers" resonates strongly with the critiques of Ernst that can be found ten years earlier in both Foster (1995) and Krauss (1994). Both position Ernst's work within a sexualised culture of psychoanalysis, and use Bataille to draw out the more disturbing characteristics that have been overlooked in the "Bretonian" model of analysis. See: Hopkins, *Dada's Boys*, p. 65-84; Foster, *Compulsive Beauty*, pp. 157-191; Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*, pp. 33-93.

[152] Matthew Biro's recent publication deals only intermittently with the work of the Octoberist critics, despite the centrality of Foster's *Prosthetic Gods* to his argument, and the emphasis on Bürger that structures it. Foster is cited only in relationship to his writing on the neo-avant-garde and not in relationship to his repositioning of the body as a site of Dada creativity. See: Matthew Biro, *The Dada Cyborg: Visions of the New Human in the Weimar Berlin* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), p. 288 [note. 119].

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While acknowledging that the writing of the Octoberist critics is essentially hegemonic in nature and, not unlike the Frankfurt School, prone to a self-referential internalisation of its discourse, there is no doubt that it has advanced the study of avant-gardism (as opposed to modernism) to a considerable degree and has provided a rich field of knowledge to which architectural theorists have, to date, been only marginally concerned.[153] The important role that architecture and space play in the rejuvenation of avant-garde practices by the Octoberist critics is still of considerable value in unravelling the histories of the avant-garde in architecture.

As already illustrated, one element of Octoberism that is singled out is the collective emphasis that is placed on the theory of Peter Bürger, as well as the historical structure that is implied by it.[154] Bürger's methodological approach has a particular resonance with the concerns of the Octoberist critics and his writing on criticism "as the *production* of cognitions" [155] aptly describes their multi-facetted attempts to re-evaluate the history of the avant-garde but from a narrowly ideological perspective. While engaged in the broader critical project to resurrect psychoanalysis, recontextualise the influence of Duchamp and demystify the writing of Bataille in art theory, it is primarily through a re-emphasis on the characteristics of historical avant-garde practice that *October* has most shaped the critical study of art. In particular, this has seen a focus on what is sometimes termed the transgressive avant-gardes[156] or, more explicitly, Dada and surrealism. Within this critical field, as will be demonstrated, an emphasis on architectural space has become apparent if, to date, only tacitly.

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[153] The exception here is in the theorising of Peter Eisenman's work, where Krauss's writing on grids has proved particularly instructive. See: Rosalind Krauss, "Death of a Hermeneutic Phantom: Materialisation of the Sign in the Work of Peter Eisenman," in Peter Eisenman, *House of Cards* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 166-184; Rosalind Krauss, "Grids," *October* 9 (Summer, 1979), pp. 50-64.

[154] On this, see: Jones, "Review of *Art Since 1900*," pp. 378.

[155] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 8.

[156] As early as 1985, Foster had used the term to refer exclusively to Dada and surrealism. See: Hal Foster, *Recodings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics* (New York: The New Press, 1985), p. 129; Baker also uses the term frequently, as well as testing its validity. See: Baker, *The Artwork Caught by the Tail,* p. 88.

A number of key themes link the writings of the Octoberist critics and are useful in developing an expanded theory of the avant-garde. Firstly, there is a critical attitude adopted towards the historical avant-garde and, in particular, Dada and surrealism which positions these practices as originary and transformative in the context of twentieth century art. In this respect, the writings of Hal Foster and Rosalind Krauss have had a particular influence in restructuring critical views of Dada and surrealism, as well as unravelling a discursive anti-formalist (and post-Greenbergian) reading of avant-garde practice.[157] Secondly, there is an attitude adopted in these texts that rejects the definitive categorisations of medium that Greenberg had argued for and attempts to chart the dissolution of the categories of the work of art as a primary strategy of the avant-garde.[158] Thirdly, and most importantly, the Octoberist critics, and Hal Foster and Benjamin Buchloh in particular, have revisited the writings of Bürger, arguing that, instead of a historical avant-garde and its "neo" imitation, there is only one avant-garde project that is characterised by a continuation of discursive practices, critically reapplied in response to changing conditions in the production and reception of art.

While Bürger seeks to understand Dada and surrealism as a failed process of emancipation that is miscarried into the practices of the neo-avant-garde, the Octoberist

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[157] The influential works, in this respect, are Krauss's simultaneous readings of photography and Bataille in surrealism, her interrogation of the "optical unconscious" and her various meditations on "medium" including, of course, her unravelling of originality in the avant-garde. For Foster, the critical works are his reworking of surrealism through an application of late Freudian psychoanalysis, his diagnosis of a "masculinity in crisis" in the works of the historical avant-garde and his theorisation of the reception of Duchamp in regard to the neo-avant-garde. See: Rosalind Krauss, "Photography in the Service of Surrealism," in Krauss and Livingston (ed), *L'amour Fou*, pp. 15-56; Rosalind Krauss, "Corpus Delicti," in Krauss and Livingston, *L'amour Fou*, pp. 57-114; Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*, pp. 33-88; Rosalind Krauss, "The Photographic Conditions of Surrealism," in Rosalind Kraus, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1986), pp. 87-118; Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty*, pp. 157-192; Hal Foster, "Obscene, Abject, Traumatic," *October* 78 (Autumn, 1996), pp. 106-124; Hal Foster, "Amour Fou," *October* 56 (Spring, 1991), pp. 64-97; Hal Foster, *Prosthetic Gods* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004), pp. 109-150. It is important to note that Dawn Ades has made an equivalent contribution to the scholarship in this field, over a similar time frame, but with a different scholarly emphasis.

[158] One of the most critical texts in this regard is: Rosalind Krauss, *Voyage on the North Sea: Art in the Age of the Post-Medium Condition* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1999); see also the collection of essays published as: Rosalind Krauss, *Perpetual Inventory* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2010).

critics seek a rejuvenation of their value primarily through a reading of the dissolution of medium (and the primacy given to architectural space)[159]. Greenberg's depoliticisation of art practice and emphasis on the art product (usually a painting) not only served to marginalise the importance of the historical avant-gardes but the contributions of any creative practice that didn't conform to experimentations with the surface of painting. Krauss (to whom Greenberg was an early mentor) had split away from the journal *Artforum*, primarily as a result of editorial conflicts that emerged in the mid 70s[160] and particularly with regard to the enclosing legacy of Greenberg (distilled through Michael Fried's writing). Krauss's essays from the late 1970s and early 1980s demonstrate the extent to which she sought to methodically expose the limited role that formalism could play in the interpretation and criticism of contemporary art, instead turning to linguistics and post-structuralism as the only viable means through which to position the divergent and multi-disciplinary practices of the 1970s and 80s.[161]

Two characteristics of Krauss's writing are of considerable significance for this study: her writing on the nature of *medium* as a central tactic of the avant-garde (including in its relationship to architecture)[162] and her critical repositioning of the objectives of surrealism,

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[159] While central to the work of Krauss, Foster and Baker, architectural space is a major theme in the studies of Duchamp undertaken by Demos and Joselit. See: T.J. Demos, *The Exiles of Marcel Duchamp*; David Joselit, *Infinite Regress: Marcel Duchamp, 1910-1941* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998).

[160] Jones argues that Krauss's departure was not due to the Greenbergian conflicts within the editorial circle, but the conflict caused by a full-page advertisement taken out by Lynda Benglis, where she appeared in a highly-sexualised pose and used the forum of advertising to question issues of sexuality (pornography) and subjectivity. Krauss expressed outrage following the publication of the image, further evidence, for Jones of the conservative and artificially objective stance of October. See: Jones, "Review of Art Since 1900," pp. 378-9; Amy Newman, *Challenging Art: Artforum 1962-1972* (New York: Soho Press, 2000), p. 414; Foster's review is also insightful. See: Hal Foster, "Art Agonistes: Review of Challenging Art," *New Left Review* 8 (March/April, 2001), pp. 140-149.

[161] Of critical importance here is: Rosalind Krauss, "Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America, Part 1," *October* 3 (Spring, 1997), pp. 68-81; Rosalind Krauss, "Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America, Part 2," *October* 4 (Autumn, 1977), pp. 58-67; Rosalind Krauss, "Poststructuralism and the Paraliterary," *October* 13 (Summer, 1980), pp. 36-40.

[162] The critical espousal of this theory is in: Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*, pp. 1-27; see also: Rosalind Krauss, "Reinventing the Medium," *Critical Enquiry* 25 2 (Winter, 1999), pp. 289-305; Krauss, *Voyage on the North Sea,* pp. 5-7.

primarily in regard to the importance of Bataille and the emphasis on the photographic works. Writing in her 1994 tome on *The Optical Unconscious*, Krauss (following Jameson) had argued that there was a trajectory in the history of modernism that had been imperfectly integrated with the history of art. For Krauss, the history of modernism could be summarised as a conflation of the figure-and-ground dyad,[163] which, in the oversimplification and selectivity of Greenberg, led to the fetishisation of flatness as the primary category through which the interpretation of art operated. Wary of the inherent oversimplifications that this reduction necessitates, Krauss's expansion of this dyad eventually incorporated the key themes of psychoanalysis, demonstrating a depth—both visual and psychological—to the formative strategies of the avant-garde and with particular emphasis on the work of Marcel Duchamp and Max Ernst. While an extension of her previous writing on Dada and surrealism, Krauss's formulation of the *optical unconscious* betrays an impulse to broaden the aesthetic analysis of avant-garde works and examine their intentions within a wider framework. It is also the invitation to investigate art in an expanded *spatial* context, whereby architecture is heavily connected to both the interpretation and exaggeration of visual effects. It is in constructing this method that Krauss distinguishes her approach from the broader melange of modernism and is clearly able to develop concrete characteristics that pertain to a particular strand of avant-garde activity and specifically as it was exploited in the techniques of Dada and surrealism.[164]

Krauss repackages Bürger's critique of the historical avant-garde as essentially a critique about visual practices, recognising a crisis that had emerged in the institution of art through the proliferation of visuality (although Bürger clearly prefers the term aestheticism).[165] Summarising Bürger's position, Krauss argues that

> If Dada, surrealism and the Russian avant-garde were truly radical […] this must be understood against the historical conditions that made that radicalism possible,

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[163] Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*, p. 13-14.

[164] One characteristic that Krauss is particularly conscious of is the confluence between the evolution of perspective as a visual strategy, and architecture which not only frames objects, but creates a context in which the object is interpreted. See: Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*, p. 111, pp. 119-120.

[165] On this, see also: Rosalind Krauss, "Antivision," *October* 36 (Spring 1986), pp. 147-154.

> conditions Bürger locates in the very autonomy modernism had so painfully won for aesthetic production. For if this autonomy liberated art, it did so, ironically , only into the jail of its own institutional incarceration, freeing art from the very field of social praxis that could supply it with seriousness or purpose. The independence that the institution of art now supported and maintained—an independence from the social field of the patron, the moral one of the receiver, the objective one of the referent—was the independence of a closed and self-immured system: it was the very picture of alienation, the very rootlessness of the commodity condition.[166]

Bürger's argument regarding the commodification of art practice corresponds neatly, for Krauss, with the historical emergence of a trajectory in aesthetic production away from the concerns of vision and also transgressing the fixed conventions of aesthetic medium. For Krauss, the issues pertaining to autonomy and the social status of art were not exclusive to the visual arts but applied equally to the concerns of literature and poetry, a fact to which Bürger was acutely aware. However, in Krauss's genealogy of avant-garde practice there is an emphasis on spatiality and, explicitly, on the dialectical relationship between vision and space.

While acknowledging that she has "no particular competence in architectural criticism[167], Krauss had formulated a role for architecture in the visual arts as early as 1979, in her essay on "Sculpture in the Expanded Field"[168]. Questioning the way that the category of sculpture had, in the 1970s, become "almost infinitely malleable" Krauss points to examples of contemporary art such as *Perimeters/Pavillions/Decoys* by the American "sculptor" Mary Miss. For Krauss, not only does work of this nature challenge the categories of aesthetic discourse but the conditions of its interpretation and historicisation.

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[166] Rosalind Krauss, "The Master's Bedroom," *Representations* 28 (Autumn, 1989), pp. 55.

[167] Krauss, "Death of a Hermeneutic Phantom," in Eisenman, *House of Cards*, p. 166.

[168] Rosalind Krauss, "Sculpture in the Expanded Field," *October* 8 (Spring, 1979), pp. 30-44; also published in: Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 276-290.

The tendency to align works of this nature with "sculpture" is a profoundly historical one, conforming to a need to disarm the "ideology of the new"[169] and position it within an evolutionary trajectory of development. As Krauss writes,

> [t]he new is made familiar since it is seen as having gradually evolved from the forms of the past. Historicism works on the new and different to diminish newness and mitigate difference. […] And we are comforted by this perception of sameness, this strategy for reducing anything foreign in either time or space to what we already know and are.[170]

Krauss points to the urge, in the 1960s to develop a line of influence between Minimalism and Russian Constructivism that, regardless of the clear differences in content, was based on formalist similarities that were, at best, tenuous. For Krauss, however, it is the category of "sculpture" that underwent the most dramatic transformations in the 1970s. By employing a "universal category to authenticate a group of particulars"[171] the category of sculpture has expanded exponentially in the experimentations of the 1970s and, by virtue of the diverse range of objects and activities that were now included under it, it had "been forced to cover such a heterogeneity that it is, itself, in danger of collapsing"[172]. Presenting an Adornian position, Krauss argues that the category of sculpture was defined as a negation of other categories: effectively encompassing work that could not be included under the categorical definitions of either landscape or architecture. The culmination of a historical project intended to negate the positivistic values of the monument and manifest in the work of Robert Morris, Robert Smithson, Richard Serra, Sol Le Witt and Bruce Nauman, by the late 1960s the categorisation of sculpture was based entirely on a negative condition. As Krauss argues,

> [s]culpture had entered the full condition of its inverse logic and had become pure negativity: the combination of exclusions. Sculpture, it could be said, had ceased

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[169] In this regard, Bürger's work is prescient, opposing the emphasis on the category of the new that structured Adorno's work. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 59-63.

[170] Krauss, "Sculpture in the Expanded Field," p. 30.

[171] Krauss, "Sculpture in the Expanded Field," p. 33.

[172] Krauss, "Sculpture in the Expanded Field," p. 33.

> being a positivity and was now that category that resulted from the addition of the not-landscape to the not-architecture.[173]

Employing a similar Kleinian diagram to that used to structure the oppositions of figure-ground,[174] Krauss argues that the categories of both "landscape" and "architecture" create an expanded field which reposition the categories of modernist sculpture and, in the process, those of landscape and architecture. What is significant in Krauss's theorisation is that the "work" functions as a negation of its own category: an argument that Bürger contends began with the evolution of the "avant-gardiste work" which was, in itself, a negation of the categories of the work of art. Within this expanded field created through the blurring of aesthetic categories, architecture assumes a dialectical role: implicated both by what it is, and what it is not.

Motivated by this emphasis on spatiality, one of the primary themes in Krauss's work has been making the practices of the historical avant-garde available for a theory of postmodernism. This has been undertaken with respect to the work of Frederic Jameson, to whom Krauss makes continual reference.[175] Krauss argues that, where modernism and the avant-garde existed in a kind of unison, with the emergence of postmodernism as a critical paradigm there is a need to revisit the avant-garde from an expanded perspective. Krauss argues that

> postmodernism establishes a schism between itself and the conceptual domain of the avant-garde, looking back at it from across a gulf that in turn establishes a historical

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[173] Krauss, "Sculpture in the Expanded Field," p. 36.

[174] See the analysis presented in: Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*, pp. 13-23. For more on Krauss's use of the Kleinian diagram, and particularly in relationship to the "figure" and "ground" poles, see: Michael Chapman, "Fore and Against: Science, aesthetics and visual complexities of figure-ground in urban analysis," in James Coulson, Dirk Schwede and Richard Tucker (ed), *Towards Solutions for a Liveable Future: Progress, Practice, Performance, People, 41st Annual ANZAScA Conference, 14-16 November* (Deakin: ANZASCA, 2007), pp. 62-69.

[175] The term "optical unconscious" is drawn from Jameson's theorisation of a "political unconscious". See: Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*, p. 27.

divide. The historical period that the avant-garde shared with modernism is over. This seems an obvious fact.[176]

Two figures in particular—Georges Bataille and Marcel Duchamp—become critical to this reconciliation, enabling a discursive history of modernism to be reconstructed. The practices of Duchamp, as in Bürger's theory, are central to what pertains to an avant-garde in art and the ongoing influence of Duchamp is a paradigm of postmodernism which sees a continuation of these processes outside of the entrenched lens of modernism. Krauss's writing also draws heavily from the writing of Bataille, which is often placed as an alternative to the work of Breton,[177] at least as an agent in the interpretation of surrealism. Bataille's fascination with dismantling the inherent structures of academic knowledge, as well as challenging the moral boundaries that it erected, for Krauss coincides very strongly with the decentring of art practice in the period since 1968 where art has deliberately challenged the expectations of a narrowly academic art audience.

A similar argument is presented in Hal Foster's *Compulsive Beauty* which (originally written as a PhD under the supervision of Krauss)[178] sets out to position an alternative starting point for evaluating surrealist activity, drawn from Bataille rather than Breton, and focussing on Freud's darker, later works, rather than the more classical expositions of psychoanalytical theory. In short, Foster stresses the centrality of death rather than the romanticisation of love, as the primary explanation for a number of surrealist practices and fetishes. For Foster, this tends to shift the discussion of surrealism towards some of the historically marginalised practices such as, for instance, the perversions of Hans Bellmer. The critical aspect of Foster's work is the emphasis that it places on architecture, which,

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[176] Rosalind Krauss, "The Originality of the Avant-Garde," in Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde*, p. 170.

[177] While the animosity between these two leading intellectuals is already well-documented, Krauss, who is often depicted as a disciple of Bataille, also demonstrates the closeness of their ideas on most things and the inherent similarity of their outlook. See: Rosalind Krauss, "Nightwalkers," *Art Journal* 41 1 (Spring, 1981), p. 36

[178] There is an overlapping, in both content and method in this period of Krauss and Foster's writing. Both choosing to focus on related movements, as well as singling out similar works and artists for critique. Published in the following year to *The Optical Unconscious* in the "Preface" to *Compulsive Beauty*, Foster writes: "although we take different directions, I make my way in parallax with hers." Foster, *Compulsive Beauty*, p. xvi.

through Benjamin's concept of the outmoded, assumes a critical role in avant-garde practice not through production but through its rediscovery as a fragment of the values of the nineteenth century. In this sense, architecture provides a direct opposition to the "category of the new" by its reappropriation as a historical, and antiquated archaeological practice.[179]

Approaching the study of Dada practice from a similar perspective, the work of George Baker goes some way to extending the primary thesis of Krauss, by undertaking an analysis of Picabia's works from the perspective of a collapse of media. In Baker's book *The Artwork Caught by The Tail* he sets out to establish that the Dada approach to all of its activities was driven primarily by the need to *negate* the categories of artistic production: a drawing, for instance, became a category that was characterised by the negation of the act of drawing.[180] It is this aspect of Dadaism that is most significant, and his study of Dada is transformed into a study of distinct practices—drawing, painting, film, performance—demonstrating, in each instance, the internal collapse of the medium that results. In each of these categories, Baker privileges the role of architecture, which heavily foreshadows the Dada experimentations with medium and the attempt to redefine them.

There is a clear correlation between Baker's theorising of Dada practice and Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, where both see the collapse of the categories of *medium* as central to the formation of an avant-garde praxis. While Baker's analysis is considerably more elaborate in both depth and scope, it is a revitalisation of the study of the historical avant-garde on essentially Bürger's terms. Seeing avant-garde practice as a negation of art production enables the avant-garde to be recognised as a specific trajectory within modernism and distinct from the primary historical patterns that have shaped it. By

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[179] While Foster has been primarily concerned with the machinations of surrealism, he has also directed attention towards the nihilistic practices of Dada, most notably in his analysis of Ernst's early work, or the performances of Hugo Ball. See, for instance: Foster, *Prosthetic Gods*, pp. 151-191; Hal Foster, "Dada Mime," *October* 105 (Summer, 2003), pp. 166-176.

[180] George Baker, *Artwork Caught by the Tail*, pp. 87-89. For Baker, "there is no such thing as a single Dada strategy", arguing instead that the avant-garde was "dedicated to the production of multiplicities." (p. 159), See: George Baker, "Entr'acte," *October* 105 (Summer, 2003), pp. 159-165.

focussing on media and technique (as opposed to the historical interpretation of works[181]), this method enables an understanding of the mechanisms and motivation for avant-garde production, rather than its purely aesthetic content.

That the Octoberist critics have engaged, in the period since the translation of Bürger's work, in a critical reappraisal of avant-garde activity is of fundamental significance for a theory of the avant-garde and central to the concerns of this dissertation. By repositioning the study of Dada and surrealism along lines that coalesce closely with the primary concerns of Bürger's thesis, and focussing on the inherent categories of medium, these critical theories have enabled a context for architecture in the discussion of both art practice and the avant-garde. While there is no doubt that the concerns of the Octoberist critics have, like Bürger, served to narrow, rather than enlarge the canon of modernism, the ideological approach that is common to both provides an emerging genealogy of avant-garde production where architecture is not inherently excluded and, on the contrary, deeply implicated.

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While a number of contemporary writers prefer to understand the avant-garde as a practice—an epistemological condition, manifesting as a way of living and operating that is inherently opposed to the normative conventions of society[182]—it is primarily through a theorisation of the "works" of the avant-garde that this condition has been understood. While there is an affiliation between the work of Tafuri and Bürger (and a shared Marxist ancestry) it is primarily through the recent critical excursions of the Octoberist critics that a role for architecture can be projected in relationship to Dada and surrealism. Extending Bürger's understanding of the dissolution of aesthetic medium in the historical avant-

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[181] Baker's work is organised around the discussion of medium, with chapters on drawing, painting, photography, abstraction and cinema. For Baker's explanation, see: Baker, *Artwork Caught by the Tail*, pp. 87-89.

[182] See, for instance: Andrew Benjamin, *Art Mimesis and the Avant-Garde: Aspects of a Philosophy of Distance* (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 99-106; Andreas Huyssen, "The Hidden Dialectic," pp. 151-164; Stanford Kwinter, "The Fallacy of Misplaced Concreteness and the "Avant-Garde" in America," in Somol (ed), *Autonomy and Ideology*, p. 262-263; Jürgen Habermas, "Modernity versus Postmodernity," trans. Seyla Ben-Habib, *New German Critique*, 22 (Winter, 1981): 3-14;

garde, the more recent explorations on this front have unearthed a submerged spatiality that, outside of the disciplinary concerns of architecture at the time, impacted upon the avant-gardiste *negations* being carried out through the medium of drawing, collage, montage, photography and the readymade. As each of these activities was independently "spatialised", architecture was not only "found" but openly exploited as a medium most directly related to the praxis of life and fundamentally opposed to the institutional aestheticism that was characteristic of bourgeois art.

It is productive to explore the role of architecture in this dissolution of the categories of artistic production in the avant-garde in order to understand more concretely the influence of this on architectural production in subsequent timeframes. Central to this is Peter Bürger's theorisation of the avant-gardiste work of art which, as the negation of the work of art, is both the start and endpoint of avant-garde activity. Its exploitation, through the readymades of Duchamp, enabled the emergence of the avant-garde as a historical rupture that not only opposed the institutionalisation of art in bourgeois aestheticism but made recognisable its operations through their systematic negation. However when the neo-avant-garde presented "works" a generation later that were accepted (rather than rejected) by the institutions of art, it was commensurate, for Bürger, with the failure of the avant-gardiste project, which, rather than sublating art and life, had served only to widen this gap by concretising the autonomy of art and embracing its institutionalisation. This dissertation argues, in an extension of the arguments of Buchloh and Foster, that this moment was not the culmination of that avant-garde (through its institutionalisation) but the beginning of the migration of these practices into adjacent disciplines outside of the institution of art. Of these surrounding disciplines, architecture, was amongst the most important.

The Avant-Gardiste Work

> The use of the concept "work of art" when applied to products of the avant-garde is not without its problems. […] But does that mean that one must conclude that aesthetics today has to dispense with the concept "work"? […] First we must ask ourselves what is it that has entered a crisis: the category "work" or a specific historical form of that category?
>
> —Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*[1]

One of the central aspects of Peter Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde*—and the most essential in regards to its application to architecture—is the transformation that took place in regard to the "work of art". Bürger develops the argument that, as an extension of the progression from a feudal society to a bourgeois capitalist one, the work of art was transformed from an artefact that had collective meaning to a society to an artefact that, produced by individuals for individuals, was merely a reflection of the values of that society.[2] It is against this state-of-affairs that the avant-garde reacts. The avant-gardiste work, of which Duchamp's readymade is the pre-eminent form, enacts a comprehensive negation of the work of art, inverting the aesthetic and institutionalised values of the bourgeois society that it represents.[3] By challenging the individuality of the work of art and removing aesthetics from its production, Bürger argues that the avant-gardiste work of art "radically questions the very idea of art in bourgeois society according to which the individual is considered the creator of the work of art."[4] To summarise: it is through an historicisation of the "work of art" and the formulation of the category of the "avant-

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[1] Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 55.

[2] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 48.

[3] The seminal art object, in this genre, is Marcel Duchamp's *Fountain* which is Bürger's examplar of an avant-gardiste work of art, recognisable as an artwork only through its signature and institutional context: in a gallery as part of an exhibition. The functional (experiential) role of the urinal is negated along with the aesthetic (artistic) expectation of the gallery sublating, for Bürger, the production of art with the praxis of life. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 56.

[4] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 52.

gardiste work of art" (as its negation) at a specific moment in time, that Bürger provides a method for understanding the significance of avant-garde activity and its future influence.[5]

While Bürger places a large emphasis on "life" and "experience" in his theory, it is essentially through a diagnosis of selective works of the avant-garde and the techniques through which they are produced, that he understands the historical conditions of avant-garde production.[6] Bürger argues that the detachment of art from the practical concerns of a society is a fundamentally historical process, rather than a sociological necessity[7] and the avant-garde played a role in exposing the development of this autonomy as well as combating it. Walter Benjamin first problematised the category of "work" in his influential essay "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"[8] where he argued that the industrialisation of printing and representational processes had resulted in a crisis in the work of art, as its originality (or *aura*) was no longer a pre-requisite condition.[9] If for Benjamin, the work of art was reconceptualised in both time and space in the 1920s as it was subjected to accelerated production and the collapse of its authenticity, for Bürger, the work of art was linked in this period to a transformation in the collective production of

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[5] The critical chapter, in this regard, is "The Avant Gardiste Work of Art" where Bürger dismantles Adorno's concept of the new in relationship to the work of art, and establishes the avant-gardist work of art as the negation of autonomy and the sublation of art and life. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 55-82.

[6] Bürger is critical of the limitations of a focus entirely on "works" (such as in Lukacs or Adorno's investigation of the "ideological object") but approaches the study of works through a broader social and historical context that, while dependent on the physical work as a manifestation of the social forces that he is charting, is essentially sociological in nature. Buchloh reads this sociological approach as a lack of interest in the material history of art, as much as a sociological bias that conceals it. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 8-9; Benjamin Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde," *Art in America* (November, 1984), pp. 19- 21.

[7] For Bürger the process is not ony historical but "socially conditioned". Bürger's conceptualisation of autonomy goes beyond this individualism, arguing that autonomy can only be understood as a socially transformation, and in contrast to the individual subjectivity embedded in "art for arts sake" (l'art pour l'art). Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 46.

[8] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the age of Mechanical Reproduction," in Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), pp. 217-252.

[9] For a more detailed exploration of this aspect of Benjamin's work, see: Susan Buck-Morss, "Aesthetics and Anaesthetics: Walter Benjamin's Artwork Essay Reconsidered," *October* 62 (Fall 1992), pp. 3-41.

art, initiating the collapse of autonomy that, as a symbol of bourgeois aestheticism, was radically attacked through a negation of the category of the work itself.[10]

This dissertation presents a variation of Bürger's argument that places architecture and architectural space as a central concern of the historical avant-garde.[11] This argument is based on three critical observations. Firstly, the readymades of Duchamp were inherently architectural, in that they responded to architectural and spatial contexts more directly and frequently than they attacked institutional ones. Secondly, in the practices of the historical avant-garde, architecture was conceptualised as thoroughly practical, historical and experiential and, as representative of these qualities, assumed a dialectical relationship to the art object, effectively embodying the "praxis of life" and providing the context for its sublation with art (a primary strand of Bürger's thesis). Thirdly, architecture functions as a counterpoint to modernity in avant-garde practice, inherently opposed to autonomy but equally embodying the repressed spaces of nineteenth century bourgeois society and framing a "spatial unconscious" which inhabits the collages, drawings, photographs and readymades of Dada and surrealism.

This chapter will consider Bürger's categorisation of an "avant-gardiste work of art" within this expanded architectural context, tracing the historical evolution of autonomy in Bürger's theory and with particular concern for the practices of Dada and surrealism. The chapter will demonstrate the extent to which the category of autonomy coalesces with the work of art in bourgeois society, framing a particular formulation of historical events that gives rise to the avant-gardiste work of art. By expanding the category of the work of art, Bürger enables a contemporary theory of medium to be constructed that has been irrevocably significant in contemporary art theory and of ongoing importance for the production and interpretation of architecture.

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[10] Acknowledging this problem in relationship to the "work" of music, for instance, Adorno had written that "[t]he only works that really count are those that are no longer works at all." Theodor Adorno, *The Philosophy of Modern Music*, trans. Anne G. Mitchell and Wesley V. Blomster (New York: Continuum, 1973), p. 30. This passage is quoted in Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 55.

[11] This is not to suggest that "architecture" is a category that Bürger overlooked, but rather that it is implicated in all of the categories of the avant-gardiste work that Bürger draws attention to: chance, collage, montage, the readymade. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 51-54.

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Given the centrality of the work-of-art to Bürger's thesis, it is worth tracing the historical argument that Bürger presents in relationship to the work of art and its connection with autonomy and the institutionalisation of the art process.[12] Bürger's historical system, consistent with his methodological approach, detects three distinct phases of artistic production and analyses them from the perspective of three, equally distinct, interpretive categories. The three phases that concern Bürger are "sacral art" (essentially the art of the High Middle Ages), courtly art (defined as the art at the court of Louis XIV) and bourgeois art (essentially manifesting itself as a representation of the values of that class, and especially in regards to the nineteenth century evolution of aestheticism).[13] Of course the numerous holes in this genealogy, as well as the general lack of specificity, has been a concern for a number of scholars.[14] At a theoretical level, however, it does serve to illustrate the major social paradigms that underpin both Bürger's theory and method.

The categories to which Bürger subjects these phases are essential, especially in terms of the theoretical system that Bürger is attempting to establish.[15] Already glimpsed in the introductory chapters as the primary categories for a sociology of art[16] and intrinsically

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[12] The groundwork for Bürger's argument about the avant-gardiste work of art is laid in the preceding chapter on "Autonomy of Art in Bourgeois Society." The chapter interrogates the category of autonomy as well as developing a theory towards its historical evolution that is a considerable departure from contemporaneous writings of the Frankfurt School, and especially those of Adorno. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 35-54.

[13] See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 47.

[14] The most systematic critique of Bürger's historical method is Zuidevaart's, who justaposes the theories of Bürger and Adorno, preferring the methodology of Adorno and its predilection towards the category of truth. See: Lambert Zuidervaart, "The Social Significance of Autonomous Art: Adorno and Bürger," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* **48** 1 (Winter, 1990), p. 62; also on this, see: Jochen Schulte Sasse, "Theory of Modernism versus Theory of the Avant-Garde", in Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. vii-xv; Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde", pp. 19- 21.

[15] Bürger's thesis is explained visually in diagrammatic form using a table with the categories juxtaposed against the historical epochs. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 48.

[16] Bürger first introduces these categories in his "Preliminary Reflections" (p. 10-11). Bürger draws these categories from the writing of Benjamin, and particularly in relationship to the status of the work of art. See the

embedded in the Marxist analyses of the Frankfurt School, the categories that Bürger draws attention to are "purpose or function", "production" and "reception". Bürger argues that, while production and reception are intrinsic to the aesthetic theory of Benjamin, Lukacs and Adorno, it is only Herbert Marcuse who has paid sufficient attention to the category of purpose or function. Bürger sets out to map the development of art by demonstrating the transformation that occurs in each of these categories. While stressing that the development of each of these categories was not synchronous,[17] Bürger's social history of art shows how, in each of these areas, there was a gradual shift from the collective to the individual, culminating in the stage of bourgeois aestheticism, where both production and reception are experienced individually and the purpose or function of the work of art is simply a representation (or reiteration) of bourgeois society's view of itself.[18]

Bürger's conclusion is that, in bourgeois art, the work of art is separated from the praxis of life for the first time, functioning *only* as the representation of its own autonomy.[19] Where in sacral art, the work of art functioned as a *cult* object, and in courtly art, as a *representational* object, by the time of bourgeois aestheticism the work of art no longer had a social function at all, other than in articulating the autonomy that had become its primary precondition and purpose. Bürger arrives at the conclusion that

> [t]he European avant-garde movements can be defined as an attack on the status of art in bourgeois society. What is negated is not an earlier form of art (a style) but art as an institution that is unassociated with the life praxis of men. When the avant-gardistes

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section of "Regarding the Discussion of Benjamin's Theory of Art" in: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 27-34.

[17] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 48.

[18] Echoing this in *The Search for Wagner* Adorno argues that autonomy is in fact an illusion, corresponding to a "fetish of the disciplines formed by the division of labour." Theodor Adorno, *In Search of Wagner*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London: Verso, 1981), p. 99.

[19] Bürger's writing on autonomy is framed within two clearly contradictory passages from Adorno, both representative of the over-deterministic role that has been assigned to it as an aesthetic category. The first, from his posthumous *Aesthetic Theory,* states that the autonomy of art "surely remains irrevocable" (quoted p.35). In clear contradiction to this, Bürger cites a passage from Adorno's much earlier *In Search of Wagner* where he argues that "[i]t is impossible to conceive of the autonomy of art without covering up work." See: Adorno, quoted in Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 35. Bürger is quoting from: Theodor Adorno, *Versuch über Wagner* (Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag, 1952), p. 88.

> demand that art become practical once again, they do not mean that the contents of art should be socially significant. The demand is not raised at the level of individual works. Rather it directs itself to the way that art functions in society, a process that does as much to determine the effects that artworks have as does the particular content.[20]

Bürger's conclusion is inseparable from his understanding of the historical emergence of autonomy which, he argues, is a category that belongs solely to bourgeois art and only comes to fruition in the late-eighteenth century, as the culmination of a centuries-long economic and social transformation.[21] In fact, Bürger argues that the evolution of bourgeois art closely corresponds with the emergence and economic predominance of the bourgeois class, from whose perspective a systematic theorisation of aesthetics subsequently became possible. A seminal moment in the emergence of aesthetics (and, as a result, autonomy) was the publication, in 1790, of Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Judgement*[22]. Still one of the most formidable texts on aesthetics, Kant posits that it is *not* the work of art that is inherently important but the response that a viewer has towards it (their judgement) that should frame the study of aesthetics. Bürger sees in Kant's system the "detachment of the aesthetic from all practical life contexts"[23] framing a provisional concept of autonomy, at least as it applies to judgement. Stressing the universality of

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[20] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 49.

[21] In defence of this theory, Bürger cites Helmut Kuhn's writing, who argues that "the modern concept of art […] did not become current until the end of the eighteenth century". Of equal significance, Kuhn argues that, at this time, the various arts (in which he includes architecture, alongside poetry music, theatre, sculpture and painting) were "removed from the context of everyday life and conceived of as something that could be treated as a whole." Kuhn argued that this formulation of the discipline of art was later "contrasted with the life of society. Helmut Kuhn, quoted (and translated) in Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 42; The passage was originally published in German in: Helmut Kuhn, "Aesthetik" in Wolf-Hartmut Friedrich and Walther Killy, *Das Fischer Lexikon: Literature 2/1* (Frankfurt: Taschenbuch, 1964), pp. 52-53; First written in 1939, Kuhn's epic history of aesthetics (co-authored with Katharine Gilbert) was revised in 1959 and makes a more detailed investigation of the emergence of aesthetics in the late-eighteenth century. See: Katharine Gilbert and Helmut Kuhn, *History of Esthetics* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1959).

[22] Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Judgement*, trans. J. C. Meredith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009) [orig. 1790]. For Bürger's discussion of the work, see: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 41-44.

[23] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 42.

aesthetic judgement in Kant's aesthetics[24] Bürger establishes its indifference towards the contextual perspectives of either history or class and its subsequent independence from the categories of both *theory* and *sense*.

However it is upon the work of Schiller[25] (who expanded on the work of Kant to develop a sociological and historical function for aesthetics) that Bürger bases the formative aspects of his understanding of bourgeois art. Where Kant's aesthetics had arrived at the inherently functionless nature of art, Schiller's aesthetics is framed within a theory of historical evolution that sees the division of labour and the subsequent emergence of a class society inextricably linked to the autonomous status of the art object. This historicisation, and partial politicisation, opens up an avenue of exploration for Bürger that is familiar to Marxist methodology and tied to the interplay between history and categories. Bürger draws from this historicisation of the art object and its social function heavily, seeing autonomy as purely a category that pertains to the aesthetics of bourgeois art (rather than the holistic history of art production) and in no way a prerequisite for its production or, for that matter, consumption. Summarising his definition of autonomy, Bürger writes

> [t]he autonomy of art is a category of bourgeois society. It permits the description of art's detachment from the context of practical life as a historical development—that among the members of those classes which, at least at times, are free from the pressures of the need for survival, a sensuousness could evolve that was not part of any means-ends relationships. […] What this category cannot lay hold of is that this detachment of art from practical contexts is a historical process, ie. That it is socially conditioned.[26]

For Bürger, the significance of autonomy for an investigation of avant-garde practice is the recognition that it is a condition that has developed historically, rather than as a requirement for art practice. The failure to recognise the historical nature of autonomy as a

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[24] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 43.

[25] Bürger is primarily concerned with: Friedrich Schiller, *On the Aesthetic Education of Man*, trans. Reginald Snell (New York: Frederick Ungar Publishing, 1965).

[26] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 46.

category (rather than a condition) of art has meant that the separation between the work of art and the praxis of life is interpreted as "the (erroneous) idea that the work of art is totally independent of society."[27] Following Marx's explorations of ideology, Bürger concludes that autonomy is an "ideological category" that "joins an element of truth (the apartness of art from the praxis of life) and an element of untruth (the hypostatization of this fact, which is a result of historical development as the 'essence' of art.)"[28] The key aspect of Bürger's theorisation of autonomy is that it emerges from a transformation in the feudal conditions of production that saw a separation of the intellectual and material qualities of art, primarily through the evolution of a court where artists were supported. As a result, one of the conditions of autonomy is that it evolves in contrast to handicrafts and, in essence, in unison with a revaluation of aesthetics. Bürger's point of departure for revisiting issues of autonomy is that the predominantly German scholarship[29] that he analyses tends to limit the autonomy of art to the formation of an art economy, while neglecting the historical forces that have driven this.[30]

However Bürger's emphasis on the historical evolution of autonomy invites an investigation of architecture, where the relationship between social forces and artistic production is entirely different. In *The Search for Wagner*, Adorno had argued that autonomy was

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[27] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 46.

[28] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 46.

[29] Bürger draws from Berthold Hinz's work on autonomy, which, contemporaneous with Bürger's work, connects Marxism with aesthetic production. Better known as a historian of National Socialist art, Hinz argues in his essay on autonomy that "during the historical phase of the separation of the producer from his means of production, the artist remained as the only one whom the division of labour had passed by, though most assuredly not without leaving a trace […] The reason that {the artist's] product could acquire importance as something special, "autonomous" seems to lie in the continuation of the handicraft mode of production after the division of labour had set in." Hinz, translated in: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 36. For the original citation in German, see: Bertold Hinz, "Zur Dialektik des bürgerlichen Autonomie-Begriffs," in Michael Mülller, *Autonomie der Kunst: Zur Genese und Kritik einer bürgerlichen Kategorie* (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1972), p. 175. See also: Berthold Hinz, *Art of the Third Reich*, trans. Robert and Rita Kimber (Oxford: Blackwell, 1980).

[30] Since the publication of Bürger's work, there has been a large amount of scholarship devoted to the autonomous nature of art and, more specifically, the influence it has exerted over art criticism. See for instance: Alex Potts, "Autonomy in Post-War Art, Quasi-Heroic and Casual," *Oxford Art Journal* 27 1 (2004), pp. 45-59; Casey Haskins, "Kant and the Autonomy of Art," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 47 1 (Winter, 1989), pp. 43-54.

fundamentally an "illusion" which resulted from the fetishisation of the division of labour[31] arbitrarily organising artistic production into separate and isolated categories, through the concentration of expertise. Adorno's observations, echoed in the method of Bürger, are valid. However, despite this artificial partitioning of artistic production, architecture can never be assimilated entirely with the autonomy of art given that it is fundamentally *collective* in both its production and reception and inherently *functional* across all of its historical epochs.[32] However, what the avant-garde exposes is the illusion of autonomy in the visual arts and architectural space (as the *opposite* of the autonomy of the art object) becomes a strategy of the avant-garde in this polemical negation.

The nature of autonomy in art is clearly different to the requirements or history of autonomy in architecture.[33] Where it was an assumption (almost a prerequisite) for the work of art in the nineteenth century, it was always highly contested in the realm of architecture. Modernity, in general, saw architecture aligned more closely with the social aspirations of society to an unprecedented extent, as the central figures were anxious to dispel questions of aesthetics and beauty in favour of functionalism, utility and structure. Despite this, architectural production in the modernist period generally arrived at the "work" from a utopianism that revered the lack of autonomy that architecture embodied and was in flagrant contradiction to the status of the work of art.

Consider, for instance, the historical framework sketched by Kenneth Frampton in regard to architectural history[34] that, like Bürger's, responds to key moments when attitudes

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[31] Adorno, *In Search of Wagner*, p. 99.

[32] Of the three categories that Bürger applies historically, it is only "reception" in which architecture can attain autonomous status. Christopher Wood argues "individual buildings can eventually, by the mysterious workings of reception, achieve something like autonomy." Christopher Wood, "Why Autonomy?" *Perspecta* 33 (2002), p. 49.

[33] See, for example, Jonathon Hill, who argues that: "the early twentieth century attacks on the institutional autonomies of art of architecture are not equivalent to each other because of the differences between the two disciplines." See: Jonathon Hill, *Actions of Architecture: Architects and Creative Users* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 100: Ackan, "Manfredo Tafuri's theory of the architectural avant-garde," p. 137; Jonathon Hill, *Actions of Architecture: Architects and Creative Users* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 100.

[34] First presented as a paper in 1972 (and published in the subsequent year), Frampton's historical construct of architectural production predates Bürger's by two years. It was published in the opening issue of

towards architectural production changed. Drawing from the methodologies of both Benjamin and Marx, Frampton's argument is that "[t]he transformations that overtook the basic means of production between 1750 and 1850 not only radically modified the [built] landscape […] but also wrought fundamental alterations in the basic system of distribution and consumption."[35] For Frampton, it is the separation between architecture and engineering which is critical, linked, as he argues, to the dialectical relationship between "labour" and "work"[36]. Drawing from the writing of Hannah Arendt, Frampton argues that "labour" is essentially an extension of "life itself" while work corresponds to the "unnaturalness of human existence."[37] For Frampton, this separation, which saw the science of engineering splinter from the emerging field of aesthetics, also triggered a fracturing of form and content in architecture where the functional and artistic began to operate in distinctive (and often unrelated) spheres.[38] Frampton argues that this rupture between function and form "was to subtly undermine the object of architecture throughout the nineteenth century and to tentatively resolve itself in the early twentieth as a mode of building to be predicated on the precepts of an economically determined functionalism."[39]

Frampton's dialectical method is similar to the approach of Bürger, which uses the production of art to demonstrate major social and economic transformations that were

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Oppositions and, interestingly, the "crisis" in the work-of-art that Bürger identifies in *Theory of the Avant Garde*, is already present in Frampton's thesis in an architectural context, embodied in the title of the piece. See: Kenneth Frampton, "Industrialisation and the Crises in Architecture," *Oppositions* 1 (September, 1973), pp. 58-81.

[35] Frampton, "Industrialisation and the Crises in Architecture," p. 58.

[36] This argument was pursued by Frampton several years earlier in: Kenneth Frampton, "Labor, Work and Architecture," in Charles Jencks and George Baird, *Meaning and Architecture* (New York: Braziller, 1969), pp. 151-167.

[37] Frampton, "Industrialisation and the Crises in Architecture," p. 63.

[38] Frampton describes the process whereby

> architecture as theory tended towards the dematerialisation of mass, as in Laugier, or the surreality of pure but useless form, as in Boullée's idealisation of the sphere as the essence of the sublime [while] civil engineering proceeded to work upon nature and to subject , for the first time, its untamed wastes to a measured infrastructure of metalled roads and embanked canals.

—Frampton, "Industrialisation and the Crises in Architecture," p. 63.

[39] Frampton, "Industrialisation and the Crises in Architecture," p. 64.

restructuring capitalist society. In Frampton's argument, architecture went through two significant transformations that—equivalent to the passage from courtly art to bourgeois aestheticism—saw the artistic status of architecture shifting as its economic independence diminished. In the first instance, architecture was separated from the functional and experiential domains through the arbitrary expression of form and, in the second instance, it was conditioned by the controlling forces of an accelerating bourgeois economy which limited the expression of architecture to the narrowing requirements of market forces. Throughout, architecture assumed a role in dialectical opposition to nature, functioning as a collective, but highly politicised, instrument of social reform.

This dialectic, which ran through the historical project of Tafuri in a similar time period,[40] saw a separation between the artistic concerns of building and their rational resolution. The inherently functional and economic status of the architectural object, bounded by forces which inherently shaped its form, meant that formalistic explorations (such as those of Boullée), while embracing the natural, where ultimately doomed to remain speculative utopian experiments, unable to be realised as concrete architectural forms under the social or economic conditions of firstly, the Enlightenment, and ultimately, modernism. For both Frampton and Tafuri, the unification of these trajectories came to be embodied in modernist rationalism although, as will be demonstrated, it was equally a motivation for the historical avant-garde in their redemption of architecture as a lived social artefact.

Just as engineering and architecture were gravitating towards autonomous social fields in the Enlightenment, there was an explosion of capitalism in nineteenth century bourgeois society which saw architecture commercialised to an unprecedented extent and instrumental in the formation of a "building typology dedicated to serve the processes of consumption."[41] At the same time as the autonomy of art had achieved its independence from social forces, authoritatively poised at the nexus of a hungry bourgeois market,

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[40] Of particular interest is Tafuri's writing on rationalism and nature in the Enlightenment, expressed in the chapter "Reason's Adventures: Naturalism and the City in the Century of Enlightenment." See: Manfredo Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia: Design and Capitalist Development*, trans. Barbara Luigia La Penta (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1976), pp. 1-44.

[41] Frampton, "Industrialisation and the Crises in Architecture," p. 66.

architecture was involved in facilitating commerce through the design of markets, exhibition halls and the department store,[42] coinciding, in Frampton's argument, with the simultaneous appearance of wholesale kitsch[43]. In fact, as both Frampton and Tafuri conclude, architecture, rather than approximating the independence of the visual arts in this timeframe, was enslaved by bourgeois capitalism due to its inherently obedient submission to both economic and rationalising forces. This is an inevitable condition of architecture that, as already demonstrated, is necessarily collective in both its production and function. As Christopher Wood concludes,

> [a]rchitecture […] is always answerable and never disengaged from the business of the world; and it would have plenty to lose if it were to disengage itself. Unlike painting, architecture historically never gave up its close connection to authority. Architects still represent society's understanding of itself, still shelter and shape the central symbolic activities of social life, and still mediate between [the individual] and nature in ways that painters or sculptors can only envy. Architecture does not need to simulate vitality through a posture of monadicity. And there is clearly no need for society to compensate architecture with the gift of autonomy. It is amazing that architects would try to claim this ambiguous privilege, unless they were announcing their own withdrawal from the world.[44]

In fact, in Wood's synopsis, architecture, as a discipline, tends to embody a number of the characteristics of the bourgeois institutionalisation of art that the avant-garde set out to dismantle, especially in regard to the representation of social values. Effectively summarising Bürger's historical theory of autonomy,[45] Wood contends that the autonomy

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[42] Frampton, "Industrialisation and the Crises in Architecture," p. 66.

[43] Frampton, "Industrialisation and the Crises in Architecture," p. 68. It is worth noting, at this point, the dialectical relationship originally employed by Greenberg between the avant-garde and kitsch, later theorised in the context of postmodernism by Andreas Huyssen, amongst others. See: Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde and Kitsch," *Partisan Review* (Fall, 1939), pp. 34-49; Andreas Huyssen, "The Hidden Dialectic: Avantgarde-Technology-Mass Culture," Kathleen Woodward (ed), *The Myths of Information: Technology and Postindustrial Culture* (Madison, Wisconsin: Coda Press, 1980), pp. 151-164. The centrality of kitsch as a dialectical polar to avant-garde praxis is also central to the writing of: Matei Calinescu, *Faces of Modernity: Avant-Garde, Decadence, Kitsch* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), p. 140.

[44] Wood, "Why Autonomy?" p. 49.

[45] Wood succinctly (and facetiously) summarises the history of autonomy in a paragraph as follows:

of art was subsequently driven by forces in two distinct directions: firstly, from the outside, as commercial and liberal forces within society (as opposed to political and religious ones) attempted to control art and secondly, from within, as artists themselves sought independence from the controlling schemas of politics and religion, in order for individual expression to be liberated. In both instances, this tended to distance the production of art from the broader concerns of architecture.[46]

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The non-autonomous status of architecture does not, despite claims to the contrary[47], disqualify architecture from engaging with the avant-garde practices that Bürger identifies in the visual arts. For Bürger, the avant-garde set out to challenge the autonomous status of art by reconnecting it with the praxis of life, fundamentally through the exploitation and deconstruction of function. This dissertation argues that it was precisely the *lack* of autonomy in architecture that was central to the avant-gardiste attempts to engage it more vigorously. If the avant-gardiste work is conceptualised as a sublation of art and life, then architecture has a significance not for its resonance with creative values, but for exactly the functional and social necessities that accompany its existence.

> [i]n the west over the last five hundred years, art gradually lost its traditional connections to state and cult, and the idea that the fine arts might be liberal arts, and therefore permitted to run free, emerged as a compensation. At first, the autonomy of art was guaranteed by local potentates who hoped that by protecting art they might harness it to their radical parochial ends. The first haven of the modern artist was thus the princely court of the Renaissance. The princely patron extracted a talented artist from the coils of urban guild restrictions and from the levelling mechanisms of a craft whose interest it was to run art as it was a business. Eventually, by the nineteenth century, European society as a whole came to share the prince's belief that artists were properly exempt from the old customs. From then on, artists were permitted to do whatever they liked, more or less without having to answer for it.

See: Wood, "Why Autonomy?" p. 49.

[46] On this front, Wood has argued that the evolution of autonomy was also the splintering of architectural history from art history; where the autonomy of art was preserved, while the autonomy of architecture was inherently compromised. Wood cites as evidence the nineteenth century histories of art, which habitually included architecture, while those of the twentieth century accounts tended to exclude it. Wood argues that the idea of autonomy in architecture is "not much more than a mystification." See: Wood, "Why Autonomy?" p. 49.

[47] See, for example: Ackan, "Manfredo Tafuri's theory of the architectural avant-garde," p. 137.

Of some interest here is the writing of Peter Eisenman which, drawing heavily from the theory of Tafuri,[48] seeks to position an architecture that is *entirely* autonomous, as the inherent outcome of the avant-garde project, thus fixing the disciplinary boundaries of architecture to the primary concerns of the architectural object, while at the same time alleviating architecture from its contextual and social responsibilities. In this sense, his position aligns more closely to Greenberg's than it does to Bürger's. Eisenman refers to Bürger only in passing, on one occasion and without evidence of a depth of understanding of the theory.[49] Eisenman's primary argument is that: firstly the avant-garde in architecture starts in 1966, and secondly, is split between the dialectical positions of Aldo Rossi and Manfredo Tafuri on one side, and the semiotics of Robert Venturi on the other. In both cases the language of historical architecture provides a platform for the positioning of a revitalised autonomy in architecture.[50] The significance of this is not so much in the two competing strands of avant-gardism but the failure to acknowledge the "historical" avant-garde or the Modern Movement as a contribution to an avant-garde in architecture in America.[51] However Eisenman's position is limited by its failure to consider transformations that were occurring in the visual arts. In fact the language of historical architecture was an obsessive preoccupation of surrealism a generation before it was reclaimed by the "neo-avant-gardes" in architecture and had been a recurring theme across a range of avant-

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[48] For Eisenman's use of Tafuri, see: Peter Eisenman, "Autonomy and the Will to the Critical," *Assemblage* 41 (April, 2000), pp. 90-91; Peter Eisenman, "Autonomy and the Avant-Garde: The Necessity of an Avant-Garde in America," in in Robert Somol (ed), *Autonomy and Ideology: Positioning an Avant-Garde in America* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 1997), pp. 68-79. Eisenman's work and writing shows a consistent and methodical reworking of the themes of Tafuri and, specifically, the way that these relate to issues of autonomy in architecture. Piranesi, the starting point of Tafuri's theorising of the avant-garde, is a figure that Eisenman returns to on a number of occasions in his written work. See, for example: Peter Eisenman, "The Wicked Critic," in Peter Eisenman, *Written Into the Void* (New Haven: Yale, 2007), pp. 152-159; Peter Eisenman, "Written into the Void," in Eisenman, *Written Into the Void*, pp. 80-86; Peter Eisenman, "The Graves of Modernism," in Eisenman, *Inside Out* (New Haven: Yale, 2004), pp. 107-110.

[49] Eisenman, "Autonomy and the Avant-Garde," p. 75.

[50] See: Eisenman, "Autonomy and the Avant-Garde," p. 73.

[51] Tschumi, arrives at a similar conclusion in regards to modernism, but is diametrically opposed to Eisenman's arguments pertaining to the autonomy of architecture. Tschumi is clear in his understanding that "architecture is never autonomous". See: Bernard Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," in Dalibor Veseley (ed), *Architectural Design Profile: Surrealism and Architecture*, 11, 2-3 (1978), p. 111.

garde activities, most obsessively in the collages of Max Ernst which used fragments of the bourgeois interior to displace contemporary expectations of the modern, functionalist interior.

This dissertation will argue that the historical avant-garde had demonstrated a fascination with the historical language of architecture in the 1920s for polemical reasons and that, as well as predating avant-garde concerns in architecture, this creative redemption of the built environment was a symptom of the collective attack on the autonomous status of art. The avant-garde obsession with the outmoded forms of architecture (central to the critical re-reading of surrealism in the 1990s) embraced the forgotten forms of nineteenth century architecture, not only for their "decadence" (in the case of Ernst) but equally as a result of their connections with commerce.[52] As Benjamin illustrated, the role of architecture in the fetishisation of the commodity dovetailed with the surrealist reclamation of the city and, unlike the institutionalised art object, was available to collective reception in the public realm.[53] Giedion's fascination with the forms of nineteenth century architecture not only acknowledged the social transformations but the evolution of technology, which meant that, while indicative of progress, they were superseded at a very rapid rate. It was the inherent "outmoded" dimension, as well as the functional and social values that were attached to it, that made the forgotten architectural spaces of the nineteenth century central to the avant-gardiste negation of the institutionalised work of art. Attracted to the commercialised, readymade objects of consumerism, the avant-garde used architecture as a contextual frame, whereby the forces of art and life literally intersected.

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[52] Breton's writing is littered with encounters in the historical market-spaces of the nineteenth century. Amongst the most famous is the description of the flea-market where architecture, as the backdrop, and objects, as the commodity in: André Breton, *Mad Love*, trans. Mary Ann Caws (Nebraska: The University of Nebraska Press, 1987), pp. 25-30.

[53] Bürger draws attention to the collective nature of surrealist experience where group activities and projects were frequent. This was also an important characteristic of Dada (centred on the Cabaret Voltaire) as well as the tumultuous crossover period. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 113-114 [note. 20].

The autonomy of the work of art, for Bürger, is not a constant in society but the result of a historical process that reaches its culmination in nineteenth century bourgeois art where the effective separation of art from society is most pronounced. The "work of art", in this period is characterised by its autonomous status, where art is valued entirely on aesthetic grounds and is complicit with the economic market for which it is intended. Bürger's argument is that the avant-gardist work of art exposes the category of autonomy, effectively negating the autonomous work of art and the bourgeois audience (and market) that consumes it. By reconnecting art with society and challenging the autonomous status of the work of art, Bürger argues that the avant-garde initiated a dramatic rupture in the historical evolution of autonomy in art, necessitating new categories upon which a sociology of art needs to be based.

Bürger demonstrates how an entire transformation occurred in relationship to the work of art which, rather than conforming to stylistic debates internal to aesthetics, required a rigorous investigation of the sociological foundations of art and the relationship that the art-object maintained with them. Effectively summarising Bürger's position towards autonomy and the work of art, Schulte-Sasse argues that

> [t]he autonomous status and the concept of the work of art operative in the bourgeois institution of art imply separation from social life. This is essential for an art intending to interpret the world at a distance. For such an aesthetic project, a concept of the work of art as being a closed, albeit "complex" unity is appropriate. Avant-garde aesthetic praxis, though, aimed to intervene in social reality. The avant-garde saw that the organic unity of the bourgeois institution of art left art impotent to intervene in social life, and thus developed a different concept of the work of art. Its concept of art sees a chance to reintegrate art into social praxis if artists would create unclosed, individual segments of art that open themselves to supplementary responses.[54]

Shifting aesthetics away from the stylistic concerns of the institution of art and towards an inherently subjective social interpretation, the focus on the fragmentation of meaning in the avant-garde (and the accompanying dissolution of entrenched categories) restated the emphasis on the reception of the artwork, as opposed to its hermetic production. Within

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[54] Jochen Schulte Sasse, "Theory of Modernism versus Theory of the Avant-Garde," p. xxxix.

this, the emergence of the avant-garde techniques of montage, collage and the readymade enabled a blurring of time and space, where the work of art was continually antagonistic to the institutional contexts within which it was presented and the linear orthodoxies that sought to rationalise its production. Dada and surrealism, inherently resistant to both style and aesthetics, were the primary agents of this radicalisation of the artwork and its values.[55] Breton, recognising the dissolution of the historical categories of artistic production in this period, remarked that "anything that can delay the categorisation of beings or ideas—that can, in a word, maintain ambiguity—has my full approval."[56]

In his conceptualisation of the changing nature of the "work of art", Bürger draws from the writing of Walter Benjamin in some detail, and especially in regard to the historical transformation of aesthetic production. It was primarily in the period from the late 1920s to the mid 1930s that Benjamin's writing addressed the critical category of "work" as his position moved gradually closer to a radical Marxism, culminating in his twin essays from 1934: "Author as Producer"[57] and the "Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"[58]. Embodying his argument, Benjamin is critical of film as it consumes the audience, removing the opportunities for contemplation or interpretation and assembling the fragmentary elements of a script in a coherent and entirely *organic* form. To this model of mass-consumption, he juxtaposes the Dadaist work of art that "sacrificed market values which are so characteristic of the film in favour of higher ambitions."[59] The ambition of Dada was to invert economics by outraging the audience and disassembling the conventional systems of representation and communication. In a critical passage, Benjamin discusses the Dadaist tactics as the exemplary form of avant-garde activity:

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[55] Bataille had challenged the emphasis on the work in surrealism, arguing that it compromised experience. In Bataille's analysis, the emphasis on painting and poetry in surrealism "placed the work before being." See: Georges Bataille, "On the Subject of Slumbers" in Georges Bataille, *The Absence of Myth*, trans. Michael Richardson (London: Verso, 1994), p. 49.

[56] André Breton, "The Disdainful Confession" (1923) quoted in George Baker, "Entr'acte," *October* 105 (Summer, 2003), pp. 159.

[57] Walter Benjamin, "Author as Producer," in *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Schocken Books, 1978), pp. 220-238.

[58] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," pp. 217-251.

[59] Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," p. 237.

> [t]he Dadaists attached much less importance to the sales value of their work than to its uselessness for contemplative immersion. The studied degradation of their material was not the least of their means to achieve this uselessness. Their poems are "word salad" containing obscenities and every imaginable waste product of language. The same is true of their paintings, on which they mounted buttons and tickets. What they intended and achieved was a relentless destruction of the aura of their creations, which they branded as reproductions with the very means of production. Before a painting of Arp's or a poem by August Stramm it is impossible to take time for contemplation and evaluation as one would before a canvas of Derain's or a poem by Rilke. In the decline of middle-class society, contemplation became a school for asocial behaviour; it was countered by distraction as a variant of social conduct. Dadaistic activities actually assured a rather vehement distraction by making works of art the centre of scandal. One requirement was foremost: to outrage the public.[60]

Not surprisingly, Benjamin's conceptualisation of the work of art plays an important role in Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde*[61] and especially given the emphasis that Benjamin places on the reception of a work and its inherent "functionlessness". As already shown, the characteristic of the "avant-gardiste work of art" is its negation of the traditional categories of the work of art, deliberately dismantling the *function*, *production* and *reception* of the artwork. This is especially apparent in relationship to individuality, where mechanical reproduction is, as Benjamin demonstrates, not simply a means of reproduction of art but the means to displace the individual artist from the institution of art completely. For Bürger, the pre-eminent form of this model of institutional critique is Marcel Duchamp's *readymades* and, most famously, the *Fountain* which embodied Bürger's critique of the bourgeois art-market as well as Benjamin's prescription of the Dadaist destruction of aura. In both cases, Duchamp embodied the systematic negation that became a characteristic of the historical avant-garde and its interpretation.

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[60] Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," p. 238. Benjamin also returns to the "revolutionary" tactics of Dada in "Author as Producer" where he argues that the collages of Dada were instrumental in transforming the relationship between the artwork and its audience, paving the way for future innovations in film. Tafuri is sceptical of this aspect of Benjamin's argument. Benjamin, "Author as Producer," pp. 228-229; See the chapter "L'Architecture dans le Boudoir" in: Tafuri, *The Sphere and the Labyrinth,* p. 288.

[61] See the section "Regarding the Discussion of Benjamin's Theory of Art" in: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 27-34.

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The category of the work of art is a central theme in Marcel Duchamp's work and central to his influence. As early as 1913 Duchamp had asked "is it possible to make works, without making works of art?"[62] The question is, in a number of ways, at the heart of questions relating to avant-garde practice and the complex and ongoing reception of Duchamp's work. The *Fountain* as the most blatant of Duchamp's assaults on the bourgeois art-market, makes this model of critique explicit.[63] Purchased from "Mott Works" plumbing wholesalers in New York, Duchamp submitted the urinal to the 1917 *Independents* exhibition (with the required fee) and (despite the rules stating that the only pre-requisite for hanging was the fee itself)[64] the hanging committee rejected the work.[65] Duchamp's provocation was followed, several days later, by a note in the second issue of *The Blind Man* attributed to Beatrice Wood but widely considered to have come from Duchamp himself.[66] As well as dismissing the "immoral" nature of the work, Duchamp

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[62] Duchamp, quoted in: Sanouillet and Peterson (eds)., *The Writings of Marcel Duchamp* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1973), p. 74.

[63] The memoirs of Beatrice Wood recall the conversation where Walter Arensberg and a member of the committee discuss the status of the work, with Arensberg arguing that it complies with the rules and his adversary stating his offense at its inclusion. See: Beatrice Wood, *I Shock Myself* (Ojai, California: Dillingham Press, 1985), pp. 29-30; also published in: Francis Naumann (ed), "I Shock Myself: Excerpts from the Autobiography of Beatrice Wood," *Arts Magazine* 51 9 (1977), pp. 135-136.

[64] As Duchamp's response indicates indignantly: "they say that any artist paying six dollars may exhibit." See: Marcel Duchamp, Beatrice Wood and H. P Roché, "The Richard Mutt Case," *The Blind Man* 2 (May 1917) [up]; see also: Lucy Lippard (ed), *Dadas on Art: Tzara, Duchamp, Arp and Others* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1971), p. 143.

[65] The precedent had been set in 1910 for contravening the bourgeois standards of the Independents in the "Boranali" Hoax, where the paintings produced by a donkey with a brush tied to its tail were anonymously exhibited. See: Calvin Tomkins, *Duchamp: A Biography* (New York" Henry Holt and Company, 1996), p. 40. Wary of scandal (as the 1917 text attributed to Duchamp reveals) the *Fountain* was dismissed by the hanging committee "[w]ithout discussion […and] disappeared and never was exhibited". See: Duchamp, "The Richard Mutt Case," p. 143.

[66] For more on *The Blind Man* journal and its influence, see: Dawn Ades, "The Blind Man and New York Dada," in Dawn Ades, *The Dada Reader: A Critical Anthology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), p. 145.

goes on to make clear that the "work" was inherently artistic, subscribing to a new and radical model of artistic production. The note reads

> Mr Mutt's fountain is not immoral. That is absurd, no more than a bathtub is immoral. It is a fixture that you see everyday in plumber's windows. Whether Mr Mutt with his own hands made the fountain or not has no importance. He CHOSE it. He took an ordinary article of life, placed it so that its useful significance disappeared under the new title and point of view—created a new thought for that object.[67]

The emphasis, in Duchamp's explanation, on the "ordinary article of life" and its "useful significance", is central to Bürger's explanation of avant-garde practice, where a negation of aesthetic practice is used to challenge the institution of bourgeois art (itself founded on aestheticism). The significance of *Fountain* to Bürger's theory cannot be overstated. He attaches enormous importance to this act, to the extent where it becomes a primal scene of avant-garde production. Stressing the historical individualism of the creative process and its negation in the readymade, Bürger argues

> [w]hen Duchamp signs mass-produced objects (a urinal, a bottle drier) and sends them to art exhibits, he negates the category of individual production. The signature, whose very purpose it is to mark what is individual in the work, that it owes its existence to this particular artist, is inscribed on an arbitrarily chosen mass product, because all claims to individual creativity are to be mocked. Duchamp's provocation not only unmasks the art market, where the signature means more than the quality of the work; it radically questions the very principle of art in bourgeois society according to which the individual is considered the creator of the work of art. Duchamp's Ready-mades are not works of art but manifestations.[68]

While Bürger's passage focuses on the institutional critique, for Duchamp the significance of the act (as a negation) was to be found in the functionality of the lived world. Duchamp argued, in regard to his *readymades*, that "functionalism was already obliterated by the

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[67] Marcel Duchamp, "The Richard Mutt Case," p. 143.

[68] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 51-52. Bottle Dryer (originally 1914) was never "sent to an exhibition" as Bürger incorrectly asserts, but spent its life suspended from the ceiling of Duchamp's apartment until a replica was created in 1964. See: Arturo Schwarz, "The Philosophy of the Readymades," Jennifer Mundy, *Duchamp, Man Ray, Picabia* (London: Tate, 2002), pp. 125.

fact that I took it out of the earth and onto the planet of aesthetics."[69] Dismissing the original grounds for refusing *Fountain* on the basis that is was "plagiarism, a plain piece of plumbing"[70], Duchamp had argued that it was only in the field of "plumbing and bridges"[71] that America had approached the work of art. This is confirmation of the primary elements of Bürger's argument: the avant-gardiste work of art challenges the autonomy of the work of art by rendering the functional *aesthetic* and, in the process, connected the production of art with the practice of life. The attempt to exhibit *Fountain* gives it a significance in this critique but, as Bürger notes, "[o]nce the signed bottle dryer has been accepted as an object that deserves a place in a museum, the provocation no longer provokes: it turns into its opposite."[72] For Bürger, it was the proliferation of the readymade, as a gallery object in the 1960s that signalled the failure of the historical avant-garde.[73]

The signed bottle dryer that Bürger makes reference to was, in fact, one of Duchamp's first readymades, preceded only by the bicycle wheel. It is in relationship to Duchamp's *Bottle Dryer* (1914) that Thierry de Duve argues that the readymade "is art or else it's nothing"[74] demonstrating that once the object has been identified as a "work" its role is dramatically altered (as is the significance of its existence). For de Duve, the discovery of the readymade was a transformative moment, not only in Duchamp's life,[75] but also in the

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[69] Duchamp interview quoted in: Anne d'Harnancourt (ed), *Marcel Duchamp* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974), p. 276.

[70] Duchamp, "The Richard Mutt Case," p. 143.

[71] Duchamp, "The Richard Mutt Case," p. 143.

[72] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 52.

[73] Bürger argues that, in the 1960s, "the category 'work' is not merely given a new lease on life after the failure of the avant-gardiste attempt to reintroduce art into the praxis of life: it is actually expanded." Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 57.

[74] Thierry de Duve, *Kant After Duchamp* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996), p. 377.

[75] In de Duve's account, a note, scribbled in 1912, is a cathartic turning point for Duchamp, where he wrote "no more painting, get a job." For de Duve, this remark launched Duchamp's trajectory away from the visual and towards the discovery of the readymade. See: Thierry de Duve, *Pictorial Nominalism: On Marcel Duchamp's Passage from Painting to the Readymade* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1991). A contrary argument is presented in Joselit's work, which prefers to see the readymade as an extension of Duchamp's concern with cubism. See: David Joselit, *Infinite Regress: Marcel Duchamp, 1910-1941* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1998), pp. 92-96.

history of art.[76] After the readymade, Duve argues that painting was no longer possible and art had to find alternative means of both expression and legitimation.

For Bürger the readymade is representative of a crisis in the category of the "work of art" and one that contemporaneous theories were unable to successfully account for. Bürger argues that Adorno's focus on the category of the "new" is redundant in the discussion of provocations such as Duchamp's, as the act negates the entire institution of art (as opposed to providing a new form of organising older technologies).[77] Of equal importance is that the negation of the work of art is a particular characteristic of avant-garde activities, and is distinct from the historical trajectory of modernism or, in Adorno's case, the expansion of a consumer society.[78] What is significant in the readymade is that, while applied to a mass-produced item, it is signed individually, rendering Duchamp's critique specific to the institution of art. As Bürger writes

> It is only with reference to the category 'work of art' […] that Duchamp's readymades make sense. When Duchamp puts his signature on mass-produced, randomly chosen objects and sends them to art exhibits, this provocation of art presupposes a concept of what art is: the fact that he signs the readymades contains a clear illusion to the category 'work'. The signature that attests that the work is both individual and unique is here affixed to the mass-produced object. The idea of the nature of art as it has developed since the Renaissance—the individual creation of unique works—is thus provocatively called into question.[79]

Bürger places a large emphasis on the signature; conveniently corresponding to the historical argument he builds in regards to individual production and the emergence of autonomous works of art. However his theorisation of the contextual aspects of the readymade (as well as its "institutionalisation") is comparatively underdeveloped. In his determination to demonstrate that the readymade is an exact negation of the categories of

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[76] Duve's extensive theorisation of the readymade functions, in the author's own terms, as an alternative theory of the avant-garde. The substance of this argument is developed in comprehensive detail in: Thierry de Duve, *Kant After Duchamp*.

[77] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 61.

[78] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 63.

[79] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 56.

the work of art, Bürger neglects a systematic, or historical account of the readymade, particularly in regard to its relationship to the institution of art or the restrictions placed on its production.[80] In this simplification, Bürger undervalues the artist's own intentions[81] which, as well as engaging the signature, were less critically focussed than Bürger assumes. While clearly provocative, the status of Duchamp's provocations as "works" is far from conclusive.

The clear counterpoint to Duchamp's urinal, in architecture at least, is the bidet of Le Corbusier, heralded as a symbol of modernist functionalism.[82] First published in *L'Espirit Nouveau*,[83] in relationship to an article on museums, the image (cropped from a trade journal) has been central to a number of discussions regarding functionality and modernism.[84] In her essay on the bidet, Beatriz Colomina establishes that the object had a particular affiliation with modernism (what Corbusier referred to as "a modern state of mind") but she asks; "to what extent can we consider Le Corbusier's bidet an avant-garde gesture?" For Colomina, the differentiation between the modern and the avant-garde lies in the particular function of the object: transformed, in Duchamp, into a provocation or accepted, in Corbusier, for its functional and aesthetic simplicity. The first instance is a critique of culture, and the second, its affirmation. While both see the object as part of a museum, for Duchamp this was concerned with "creating a new thought for an ordinary

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[80] For a more thorough account of this, see: Molly Nesbit, "Ready Made Originals: The Duchamp Model," *October* 37 (Summer, 1986), pp. 53-64.

[81] The best account of this is: Marcel Duchamp, "Apropos of 'Readymades'," in Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *The Writings of Marcel Duchamp*, p. 141

[82] In a similar juxtaposition, Diane Lewis constrasts the pipe in Rene Margritte's (1929) *The Treachery of Images* [Ceci n'est pas une pipe] with a similar image of a pipe from *The Decorative Art of Today.* See: Diane Lewis, "Present Tense: Reply to Catherine Ingraham," in Diana Agrest, Patricia Conway and Leslie Kanes Weisman, *The Sex of Architecture* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1996), p. 47; for the original image, see: Le Corbusier, *The Decorative Art of Today* (Paris: Foundation Le Corbusier, 1959), p. 27 [1925].

[83] This was republished, a year later, in: Corbusier, *The Decorative Art of Today,* p. 15.

[84] See, for instance, Charles Jencks, "The Architectural Sign," in Broadbent, Bunt and Jencks (ed), *Signs, Symbols and Architecture* (New York: Wiley, 1980), pp. 83-85.

product"[85] while for Corbusier, "the bidet speaks of our culture, as the folklore of a certain place spoke of that place's culture in other times."[86] In Colomina's argument the dialectic of Frampton and Tafuri again becomes evident, whereby architecture—as a rational and inherently functional activity—is juxtaposed with the concerns of the avant-garde, aimed at dismantling the limits imposed on the art object. As a negation of the work of art, the role of the readymade was to disrupt function. However, as a *found object*, the role of the readymade was to recontextualise reality, providing a new lens through which the everyday could be experienced. Understood in Bürger's work as the sublation of art and life, it is this characteristic of avant-garde activity that enables architecture to be reconciled with art, as the discovered embodiment of the social and functional aspects of life, exploited through its representation and reproduction.

However, the radical assault on institutionalisation that Bürger argues for is not generally the case for Duchamp's readymades and certainly not to the extent that is implied in *Theory of the Avant-Garde*. As Molly Nesbit has demonstrated,[87] the selection of the readymades was rarely arbitrary and, despite Duchamp's protestations to the contrary[88], regularly *aesthetic*. Also, rather than being institutionalised, the vast majority of Duchamp's original *readymades* have been lost, existing only in replicas,[89] re-editioned by the artist towards the end of his life but radically torn from the original context in which they were intended. On the contrary, the majority of Duchamp's *readymades* were never intended as assaults on the institution of art and were, in most instances, indifferent to the notion of art

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[85] Beatriz Colomina "L'Esprit Nouveau: Architecture and Publicité" in Beatriz Colomina and Joan Ockman (ed), *Architectureproduction* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1988), pp. 56-99

[86] Colomina "L'Esprit Nouveau: Architecture and Publicité," p.61.

[87] Molly Nesbit, "The Language of Industry," in Thierry de Duve, *The Definitively Unfinished Marcel Duchamp* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1991), pp. 351-384.

[88] Duchamp continually pledged indifference towards the readymades, most famously in regard to the *Bottle Dryer*, to which he professed "pure visual indifference". See Anne d'Harnancourt (ed), *Marcel Duchamp*, p. 275. In his talk to the Museum of Modern Art in 1961, Duchamp had argued that "the choice was based on a reaction of visual indifference with at the same time a total absence of good or bad taste… In fact a complete anaesthesia." The talk is transcribed as: Marcel Duchamp, "Apropos of 'Readymades'," p. 141.

[89] The only readymades that exist in their original form are *Comb* (1916); *Fresh Window* (1920) and *La Bagarre d'Austerlitz* (1921). The remainder are signed replicas, many of which have been re-editioned several times.

at all. *Fountain* remains the only object that Duchamp openly attempted to exhibit in a discursive way and the majority of the remaining works were, rather than institutional critiques, merely intended as extensions to his living environment. Duchamp regularly used the readymades to adorn his apartment, not as aesthetic objects but to disrupt the functionality of architecture. His *Trebuchet*[90] for instance, was a coat-rack nailed across the floor of his apartment and specifically placed to trip people over. Other readymades, such as *In Advance of a Broken Arm*, *Hat Rack* and *Bottle Dryer* were hung from the ceiling of his studio not only as objects, but elements in the creation of ambience, through the projection of shadows throughout the day. Here the objects were deployed for their spatial effects, engaged in the exhibition of architectural space and the representation of its edges through shadow.

That the *readymades* were spatial is clear from Duchamp's own intention to use a building as one—the Woolworth Building in New York—lamenting that he was unable to think of an appropriate title for the work and thus abandoned it.[91] Duchamp had also evoked the idea of the city as a work of art on numerous occasions, and especially in relationship to New York. In 1915, Duchamp had remarked "Look at the skyscrapers! Has Europe anything to show more beautiful than these?"[92]. In the same year he declared that "New York is itself a work of art, a complete work of art"[93]. Even more architectural is the emphasis that he placed on windows throughout his creative life, chosen twice as readymades—in *Fresh Widow* (1920) and *La Bagarre Austerlitz* (1921)[94]—and frequently as an aesthetic quandary

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[90] The title is a pun on the French terms "trebuchet", meaning a trap for birds and "trebucher" meaning to trip. Duchamp's positioning of the object across the floor clearly evoked this allusion as the displaced function of the work. See: Arturo Schwarz, "The Philosophy of the Readymades," p. 127.

[91] Dated January 1916, a scribbled fragment from Duchamp reveals the reminder: "[find inscription for Woolworth Building as readymade." See: Arturo Schwarz, *Notes and Projects for the Large Glass* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1969), [note. 59]. The fragment is also published in: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *The Writings of Marcel Duchamp*, p. 75.

[92] Marcel Duchamp (1915), quoted in: Tomkins, *Duchamp*, p. 152.

[93] Marcel Duchamp (1915), quoted in: Tomkins, *Duchamp*, p. 152.

[94] On the architectural characteristics of La bagarre d' Austerlitz, see: Albert Cook, "The Meta-Irony of Marcel Duchamp," *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* **44** 3 (Spring, 1986), p. 265; James Housefield, "Marcel Duchamp's Art and the Geography of Modern Paris," *Geographical Review* **92** 4 (October 2002), p. 494.

which blurred the functionality of architecture with the radical dematerialisation of the art object. As Duchamp recalled in the 1950s, he had "used the idea of the window to take a point of departure, as […] I used a brush or I used a form of expression […]. I could of made twenty windows with a different idea in each one, the windows being called 'my windows' the way you say 'my etchings'"[95]. As extensions of his living environment, Duchamp saw these windows as architectural quandaries, stripped of functionality and exhibited in a fragmentary form that connoted architecture but in the register of art. More related to architecture than to the institution of art, the readymades that inhabited Duchamp's studio are, for the most part, unsigned, uncurated and (given that many of them were lost) *unwanted* except in the specific architectural context that Duchamp had employed them in.[96]

Evidence of the spatial context of the readymade is a theme in the writing of Arturo Schwarz, which, expanding upon the "signature", argues that there are four characteristics of the readymade, based on Duchamp's own, self-regulating instructions for their use. For Schwarz,

> the elevation of a common object to the level of a work of art did not consist in merely choosing and signing it. It implied following a set of four rules: decontextualisation, titling, limiting the frequency of the act and, the most esoteric of all, the necessity of a "rendezvous"—the meeting of artist and object.[97]

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[95] Marcel Duchamp, in an interview with Harriet Janis (1953) quoted in: Anne d'Harnancourt (ed), *Marcel Duchamp*, p. 295.

[96] Only one of Duchamp's original readymades or "assisted readymades" was signed by hand—the *Fountain* (1917) signed by R. Mutt— and only five contained attributions: *In Advance of a Broken Arm* (1915) attributed to Marcel Duchamp in an engraving on the handle; *Comb* (1916) which, as well as the attribution to Duchamp, includes the date, and time of the attribution engraved along the object's edge; *Fresh Window* (1920) attributed to "Copyright Rrose Salevy"; *La Bagarre d'Austerlitz* (1921) jointly attributed to Marcel Duchamp and Rrose Salevy; *Why Not Sneeze Rrose Salevy* (1921) attributed in the title to Rrose Salevy. The remainder contained no attribution or, in most cases, titles. *The Bottle Rack* (1914), for instance, was given a title that Duchamp could not even recall. All of the re-editioned copies, most dating to the 60s, contain both an attribution and edition verifying their emergence as art objects.

[97] Arturo Schwarz, "The Philosophy of the Readymades," p. 126.

Two aspects of this are central to architecture. Firstly, the decontextualisation of the object is, as has been shown, regularly related to the object's *spatialisation* as an architectural element, not only through display but also as an extension of the architectural environment or its surfaces. Secondly, the "rendezvous" is significant as frequently the city and architecture provided the backdrop to this transaction.[98] The readymade positions art practice as a "discovery" rather than invention, which enables architecture to function as a *found object*, employed in a range of contexts outside of the traditional models through which it is *produced*.

One critical example of architecture as a *found object* is the doorway that Duchamp had constructed inside his apartment at *Rue 11 Larrey*, where he lived from 1927 to 1942. Duchamp commissioned a carpenter to construct the doorway in such a fashion that it swung between two existing openings: one to Duchamp's bedroom and the other to the bathroom. Regardless of whether the doorway is a "readymade" or not, it critiques the functional characteristic of the doorway, in that it can paradoxically be both open and closed at the same time. In this instance, it is not the doorway that is "readymade" but the spatial situation that Duchamp exploits, finding an "architecture" and then employing the art object to exhibit it (or, in Bürger's sense, *negate* it). However the process with which this architectural situation was transformed into an art object has been less widely discussed.

Following Duchamp's departure from Paris, the door became an anonymous (but functional) space saving element of the apartment for the future tenant, before its existence was rediscovered in 1964. At this point, the door was excised from its original

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[98] This became a particular preoccupation of surrealism and its legacy. Both Breton and Aragon experienced architecture through the availability of the commoditised readymade where architecture and display intersected. The surrealist exploration of the city is frequently described as the pursuit of the readymade object, which the architecture of the city effectively fetishises. On this, see: Roger Cardinal, "Soluble City: The Surrealist Perception of Paris," in Dalibor Veseley (ed), *Architectural Design Profile* **11** 2-3, *Surrealism and Architecture* (1978), pp. 143-149.

location and then placed on display as an art object in a museum.[99] To account for the void left in the apartment, an exact replica was made in its place, constituting a reproduction of the original handcrafted object.[100]

Bürger's argument about the institutionalisation of art is, in this instance, tenuous. While accepting the readymade as a foundational strategy of the avant-garde, Bürger places too much emphasis on their institutional character and exaggerates the importance of their influence on future artists.[101] He also assumes that the intention of the *readymades* is to dismantle the boundaries between art and life when, in a number of instances, it is clearly far less deliberate or strategic. It is unlikely that Duchamp's signing of a bottlerack was intended as a deliberate attack on the evolution of the autonomous artwork in bourgeois society but, more likely, a provocative witticism that tied the everyday with the artistic in a novel way. The overwhelming characteristic of the readymade was not critical towards the institution of art but *indifferent* towards art altogether. This is an aspect of Bürger 's theory that has, to date, received little attention.

This dissertation presents a variation of Bürger's argument, placing architecture and architectural space as a central concern of the historical avant-garde. The argument presented here is that architecture functions as an *objet trouvé* for the avant-garde, used selectively (but strategically) to reconnect aesthetic practices with life processes. Architecture is continually framed as the container of life and, in the context of Bürger's theory, it is the sublation of discursive artistic practices with passive spatial contexts that the practices of Dada and surrealism negate the categories of the work of art. This argument is based on three critical observations. Firstly, the readymades were inherently architectural, in that they responded to architectural and spatial contexts more directly and frequently than they attacked institutional ones. Secondly, in the practices of the historical

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[99] Amongst the galleries (or collections) where the work has been exhibited are *Galerie Schmela* (Dusseldorf), *Cordier & Eckstrom* (New York) and the *Mary Sisler Collection* (New York). See: d'Harnancourt (ed), *Marcel Duchamp*, p. 300.

[100] d'Harnancourt (ed), *Marcel Duchamp*, p. 300.

[101] Bürger also assumes that the found object is always institutionalised, and, as a result, rarely contextualised. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 57.

avant-garde, architecture was conceptualised as thoroughly practical, historical and experiential and (as representative of these qualities) assumed a dialectical relationship to the art object embodying the “praxis of life” (and its sublation). Thirdly, architecture functions as a counterpoint to modernity in avant-garde practice, inherently opposed to autonomy but equally embodying the repressed spaces of nineteenth century bourgeois society. This spatiality, and its historical timeframe, will be explored in greater detail in the subsequent section.

Timeframes

> It is always tempting to consider the notorious gaps of architectural history, those shadowy areas where ideas have been eclipsed by built reality. If the documents concerning the relationship between architecture and Dada, between architecture and surrealism are so rare, one should perhaps try to understand why, and try to speculate retroactively, what the inevitable architectural implications of their provocative experiences are. It will then become clear that rather than dealing with obvious formal [artefacts] such as Chiricoesque landscapes or buildings in the shape of breasts, a quite different set of questions is to be asked.
>
> —Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and its Double* (1978)[1]

Writing in the closing remarks to his influential essay "Surrealism: The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia", Walter Benjamin wrote that "[the surrealists] exchange […] the play of human features for the face of an alarm clock that, in each minute, rings for sixty seconds".[2] The description is an apt one. Benjamin was thinking of the pressing urgency of the current situation and the spectre of revolution that presided over the landscape of Europe, especially in the context of the radicalised Marxism that he was actively engaged in promoting at the time. However, the description also brings into play a number of associated ideas related to issues of time and the extraordinary degree to which they are focussed around the activities of Dada and surrealism and their continuing legacy in architecture.

Dada and surrealism, as well as instigating a new schema of time, dismantled the notion of *work* and the aesthetic categories that were attached to it. In his most famous essay, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Benjamin quotes Breton, who argues "the work of art is valuable only in so far as it is vibrated by the reflexes of the

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[1] Bernard Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," in Dalibor Veseley (ed), *Architectural Design Profile: Surrealism and Architecture* 11 2-3 (1978), p. 111.

[2] Walter Benjamin, "Surrealism: the last snapshot of the European intelligentsia," in *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Schocken Books, 1978), p. 192.

future."[3] The issue of time and its impact on the work of art is a central motif in the essay, as Benjamin struggles with the rampant acceleration of aesthetic production and the mechanisation of the creative process. However, Benjamin's writing on Dada and surrealism not only highlights the connection between time and production but also the relationship that the avant-garde has to both history and architecture. Surrealism, in particular, occupied a stance in opposition to modernism, preferring to revive historical and forgotten modes of production at the same time as it dismantled new ones. This drew into precise focus the issues of the past, the future and the present that were all inherently tied to the avant-gardiste work.[4] Benjamin saw the surrealist fascination with outmoded phenomena as a merging of the past with the present, whereby historicised forms of practice assumed a radical potential by being recontextualised in opposition to the temporal and aesthetic conditions of the present. For Bürger, this was the significant redefinition of artistic means that characterised the avant-garde as a break with the historical evolution of aesthetic production. Where authors such as Foster and Vidler dwell on the "outmoded" forms of surrealist activity, Cunningham, for instance, prefers to see surrealism as a period of "conflicting temporalities" that, rather than pertaining to a historical period, are characterised by a particular relationship to the future in which work and its interpretation is undertaken.[5] Both readings are accurate and represent the anachronistic nature of avant-garde practice and, more importantly, the works it produced.

More than any other concept, it is an understanding of the avant-garde as a specific *time* in the production of history that is fundamental to Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde*.

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[3] André Breton quoted in Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), p. 249 [note. 17].

[4] This is a term employed by Bürger, characterised as a negation of the bourgeois "work of art" and constitutes a critical chapter. The topic and its influence is dealt with in detail in subsequent chapters of this dissertation. See: Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1984), pp. 55-82.

[5] The issues of time and surrealism are central to two of Cunningham's essays. See: David Cunningham, "Blanchot, Surrealism and the Time of Fragment," *Papers of Surrealism* 1 (Winter, 2003), pp. 1-17; David Cunningham, "The Futures of Surrealism: Hegeliansim, Romanticism and the Avant-Garde," *SubStance* 34 2 107 (2005), pp. 47-65.

The temporal context of the avant-garde, positioned within an evolutionary understanding of aesthetics, shapes not only Bürger's theory but also the contextual framework within which it is conceived: as an extension of the radical Marxist resurgence that characterised the 1970s. Bürger had conceded that, by 1974, the writings of Adorno, Marcuse and Lukacs were "already historical"[6] and any rejuvenation of avant-garde theory had to take into account both the specific context of the historical avant-garde and a cultural awareness of the "prejudices" (in Gadamer's sense) of the contemporary political and social landscape. Central to this was an awareness of the temporal audience within which the avant-garde operated and the inherent pressures that this placed on the work of art.

That a theory of avant-garde practice is inseparable from a concrete understanding of time is evidenced in a number of the posthumous critiques of Dada and surrealism, which struggle to reconcile the creative practices with the political turbulence that foreshadows them.[7] Bürger saw the historical avant-garde as a specific phenomenon that presumes a number of "constants" in relation to Dada and surrealist practice. The fact that recent criticism has revised the understanding of these "constants" and, more importantly, shifted emphasis on to new ones, does not diminish the significance of Bürger's work. It does, however, require a detailed contextualisation of the critical forces that have been seeking to bind Dada and surrealism since the construction of Bürger's argument.

This chapter provides a backdrop to the issues of time and history that have affected the scholarship of Dada and surrealism and, more importantly, their relationship and integration with architecture. The chapter sketches a history of, in Bernard Tschumi's words, the "shadowy areas" between architecture and the transgressive avant-garde, applying a focus to the considerable holes that still remain to be plugged. The chapter

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[6] See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 57. Bürger also describes Adorno's work as "historically conditioned" (p. 63) and, in a footnote, demonstrates that his writing is unable to separate nineteenth century modernism, avant-garde practices, or neo-avant-garde practices as a result of the lack of specificity or historicism with which he approaches the subject (p. 115-116 [note. 9]).

[7] See: Theodor Adorno, "Looking Back on Surrealism," trans. Rolf Tiedemann and Shierry Weber Nicholsen, in Theodor Adorno, *Notes to Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), pp. 86-90 [orig. 1956, written 1953]; Raoul Vaneigem [Paul Vermont], *A Cavalier History of Surrealism*, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Edinburgh: AK Press, 1999).

concludes that it is through a focus on the *found object* and the *readymade*, as key strategies in which Dada and surrealism approached the physical world, that architecture and the avant-garde should be reconceptualised. This is embodied effectively in the reclamation of decaying modernist works in the 1960s, which reproduces the surrealist fascination with the outmoded in a transformed contemporary context.

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While drawing from Benjamin, and with a detailed awareness of the methodological approach of Marx, Bürger is deliberate in setting up a specific historical context for artistic production that is central to his methodological approach. One important characteristic of Bürger's approach is that it operates within a broader context of aesthetics and makes use of the entrenched categories that are attached to that field, especially as they are interrogated in the work of Adorno. Arguing that "[aesthetic] categories are radically historical"[8], Adorno adopted the position of Marx, whereby the relationship between the subject and its interpretation is conditioned by the categories upon which this interpretation is based.[9] Marx had argued that "even the most abstract categories, despite their validity […] for all epochs, are nevertheless […] a product of historical relations and possess their full validity only for and within these relations."[10]

Bürger's writing on the tactics of Dada and surrealism places a specific emphasis on the time period that spans between the origins of Dada (primarily in the readymades of Duchamp) and the migration to early surrealism,[11] as the period in which the claims of avant-gardism were first formulated and pursued. Contained in an extended footnote,

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[8] Theodor Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (London: Continuum, 1997), p. 454 [orig. 1970].

[9] Adorno argues that, as a result of the historical nature of aesthetics "this endows its development with an element of coercion that, given its illusory aspect, stands in need of criticism yet nevertheless has enough force to break the hold of an aesthetic relativism that inevitably portrays art as an arbitrary juxtaposition of artworks." Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 454.

[10] Karl Marx, *Grundrisse: Foundations of the Critique of Political Economy*, trans. Martin Nicolaus (London: Penguin, 1973), p. 105; a longer form of this passage is quoted in Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 16.

[11] See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 109.

Bürger provides an important passage that synthesises his theory and the extent to which Dada and surrealism are the principle examples of it. Bürger writes:

> [t]he concept of the historical avant-garde movements used here applies primarily to Dadaism and early surrealism […]. A common feature of […] these movements is that they do not reject individual artistic techniques and procedures of earlier art but reject that art, in its entirety, thus bringing about a radical break with tradition. In their most extreme manifestations, their primary target is art as an institution as such as it has developed in bourgeois society.[12]

This timeframe—characterised by the emergence of collage, montage, the readymade and automatism—was one of productive invention where the traditional techniques of artistic production were radically challenged. Given that this timeframe is central to this dissertation (providing a framework for conceptualising the role of architecture in Dada and surrealism and the subsequent influence of the avant-garde on architecture) it is worth contextualising this period in the broader context of architectural production and history.[13]

Dalibor Veseley, who remains one of the most important writers on the subject, specifically set out to dismantle this entrenched historical structure of surrealism, denying the relevance of the "avant-garde" period of surrealism and positioning the movement as a passive undercurrent to *life* generally and modernism specifically. Veseley argues that

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[12] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 109 [note 4].

[13] Dada and surrealism are, in their nature, difficult historical paradigms. The movements were extremely diverse, collecting not only a range of approaches and individuals, but, more fundamentally a range of media, from literature and poetry to sculpture, photography, drawing, installations and architecture. Even within painting, enormous contradictions emerge in a movement that can happily incorporate such seemingly incongruous approaches as the experimental abstractions of Miro and Ernst on one side and the figurative realism of Dali and Magritte on the other. Temporally, they spanned four decades, of which two at least can be attributed to important and insightful creative production. There is also geographic diversity, as both movements managed a number of divergent "fronts" on several continents and with quite different social and political values and objectives these movements. While primarily associated with events of the 1920s and 30s surrealism didn't formally cease activities until the death of Breton, in 1967 and, in many countries, including the United Kingdom, still continues as a critical movement with its own independent membership. More than with Dada, this historical dislocation is matched by the equally problematic interpretive rifts that have profoundly complicated any coherent definition of surrealism as a movement, or the principles that it represented. A number of the historiographical issues in relationship to surrealism are covered in: Simon Baker, *Surrealism, History, Revolution* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2007), pp. 25-64.

> attempts to reduce surrealism to a set of principles and goals—such as automatism, objective chance, transformation of the world and life—do not reveal the primary goal of the movement: to reach an absolute point of reconciliation of dream and reality[14].

For Veseley, *surrealism* needs to be considered outside of the doctrines that were produced by "Surrealism" and its most prominent members[15] and be regarded as a philosophical and psychological strategy for seeing the world, rather than a specified historical phenomenon. Veseley sees the relationship between Dada and surrealism as part of a historical framework, whereby the negative tactics of Dada were transformed, through surrealism, into positive affirmations of life. In contradiction to Bürger, Veseley is clearly wary of the frenzied period of creativity and experimentation that emerged during the collapse of Dada, arguing that

> [b]etween 1919—the date of the first automatic text—and 1922—the end of French Dada (as far as the Surrealists were concerned)—the surrealist movement is dominated by rebellious confrontations, in which the surrealist consciousness had developed a new dramatic form: fury, provocation and disgust in the name of truth.[16]

For Veseley, the nihilistic tendencies of Dada, which figure centrally in the dialectical approach of Bürger[17], predate the primary concerns of surrealism and are disconnected from the real world and the experience of life that structured much of surrealist doctrine. This is antithetical to Bürger's reading, which sees the negation of art process in Dada as the direct conflation of art and life. Veseley, in contrast, argues that "[s]urrealism does not begin in 1919 or 1924, but much earlier, in the romanticism of the nineteenth century and, to some extent, even earlier in the esoteric hermetic traditions of the Renaissance."[18] In this hermeneutical construct, works such as Hieronymus Bosch's *The Garden of Earthly*

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[14] Dalibor Veseley, "Surrealism, Myth and Modernity," in Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, p. 87.

[15] See: Veseley, "Surrealism, Myth and Modernity," p. 87. The capitalisation here refers to the Surrealism Movement, officially led by Andre Breton and whose membership is restricted to the signatories to the various manifestoes of Surrealism.

[16] Veseley, "Surrealism, Myth and Modernity," p. 89.

[17] Bürger evokes Dada as the most extreme manifestation of the avant-garde on a number of occasions. See, for instance: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 22, p. 53, p. 56.

[18] Veseley, "Surrealism, Myth and Modernity," p. 89.

Delight or the Gothic Castle are entitled to be understood as surrealist archetypes (despite their historical disconnection) marrying the philosophical ambitions of the movement with a fantastical architectural representation.

Arguing for surrealism as a sublation of dream and reality, Veseley contends that architecture was not a primary concern of Dada and surrealism as it was "so much embedded in every-day life."[19] Veseley observes that "reality was always a bitter encounter for the surrealists" and that, while the mediums of poetry or painting could achieve this in the viewer's consciousness, architecture was unable to transcend its status in the real world, marginalising its relevance as a disciplinary activity. While accepting the formative emphasis that Veseley places on reality in Dada and surrealism, there are a number of aspects of this position that are underdeveloped. By focussing on architecture as a solitary medium, independent of drawing, painting, the readymade or literature, Veseley imbues architecture with a privileged status that was far from representative of the merging of experimental strategies in the period.[20] In this sense, Bürger's work is critical, as it not only stresses the dissolution of autonomous techniques (and their merging into hybrid and fragmented forms of each other) but it also proselytises the sublation of art and life through the avant-gardiste work of art, demonstrating that "reality" and "functionalism" were specific strategies of the avant-garde assault on bourgeois aesthetic conventions.[21] It is in this way that architecture can be reconnected with the practices of Dada and surrealism, functioning as the negation of the practices of modernism and as an independent historical trajectory.

While Veseley is sceptical about the role of architecture in the formation of explicitly *avant-garde* aesthetic strategies, he does illustrate the importance of the readymade object to

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[19] Veseley, "Surrealism, Myth and Modernity," p. 91.

[20] Consider, for example Schwitters, writing in 1920, who stated: "The medium is as unimportant as I myself. Essential is only the forming. Because the medium is unimportant, I take any material whatsoever if the [artwork] demands it." See: Kurt Schwitters, "Merz," trans. Ralph Mannheim [1921] in Robert Motherwell, *Dada Painters and Poets* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1951), p. 59.

[21] After diagnosing the avant-garde tendency to conflate art and life, Bürger also articulates the dangers of this process, include the loss of criticality that art assumes with the collapse of its autonomy. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 50.

the historical relationship between architecture and surrealism. Veseley demonstrates that the readymade provided a bridge between the negations of Dada and their positive redemption in the surrealist object and functioned as "[a reminder] of the link which once existed between the spirit of Dada and surrealism, between negation and [the] positive exploration of the new."[22] Veseley's emphasis on the exploration of the new as a strategy beyond the nihilism or negation of Dada is not without its problems. Bürger, as well as criticising the overdependence on the category of "the new" in Adorno's work,[23] demonstrates its futility in the critical discussion of the historical avant-garde, as the transformations that were taking place were directed against the entire institution of art rather than simply marking inventions in technique or interpretive frameworks. The category of the "new", as Bürger concludes, is both "too general and nonspecific"[24] and ties interpretation to a particular development of technical ability that is counterproductive in relationship to Dada and surrealism. However, it is not just the dialectical relationship between old/new (Dada/surrealism) that is problematic but also the attempt to redeem surrealist practices in the name of the *new*.[25] What Veseley considers the "positive exploration of the new" was, to be more precise, an exploration of the old because, as Veseley is aware,[26] it was historical and ruined architectures that became the primary inspiration for surrealism.[27] Related to this is the role of negation that the surrealists

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[22] Veseley, "Surrealism, Myth and Modernity," p. 89.

[23] See the section "The New" in: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 59-63.

[24] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 63.

[25] "New" architecture was subjected to continual ridicule by the surrealists, and by Breton and Dali in particular. Breton had listed contemporary architecture as the most ineffective of the creative practices, with poetry as the most effective. He refers to modern architecture famously as "the most violent and cruel automatism." See Andre Breton, "Surrealist Situation of the Object," André Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, trans. Richard Seaver and Helen Lane (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1972), p. 259. For Dali's reclamation of art-nouveau architecture in opposition to modernism, see: Félix Fanés, *Salvador Dali: The Construction of the Image, 1925-1930* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), pp. 90-91, pp. 162-164.

[26] In this sense, Veseley is contradicting his own argument that urges surrealism to be seen outside of the avant-garde historical timeframes, and connected inherently to the past and the future. See, for instance, the passages already cited in: Veseley, "Surrealism, Myth and Modernity", p. 89.

[27] First argued by Walter Benjamin, one of the most authoritative accounts of the outmoded in surrealism is the chapter "Outmoded Spaces" in: Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press,

undertook and especially their systematic negation of modernity. The retroactive project of Dada and surrealism was incompatible, in a temporal sense, with the utopianism of modern architecture.[28] Benjamin's famous quote from *Passagenwerk* linking Breton and Le Corbusier captured this: "[t]o embrace Breton and Le Corbusier – that would be to draw the spirit of contemporary France like a bow which strikes with knowledge to the heart of the present."[29]

However, there is also a deeper distinction that needs to be made and one that is critical to the relationship between architecture and the avant-garde. The strategies that are associated with the avant-garde, as well as being historically tied to the first decades of the twentieth century, are not only distinct from the history of modernism but, frequently, a *negation* of modernism itself.[30] The historical characteristics of modernism emerge in the wake of the Enlightenment and it is customary to associate the *project* of modernity (to employ Habermas's terminology)[31] with a series of transformations that first began in the

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1995), pp. 157-191; See also: Foster, "The ABC of Contemporary Design," *October* 100 (Spring, 2002), pp. 195-196; Hal Foster, *Design and Crime and Other Diatribes* (London: Verso, 2002), pp. 138-139.

[28] In his essay on surrealism, Benjamin asked: "are [the surrealists] successful in welding this experience of freedom to the other revolutionary experience that we have to acknowledge […]. How are we to imagine an existence oriented solely toward Boulevard Bonne-Nouvelle, in rooms by Le Corbusier and Oud." Benjamin, "Surrealism," p. 189.

[29] Walter Benjamin, *Passagenwerk*, quoted and translated in Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1992), p.151; the same passage (and translation) also appears as a conclusion in: Anthony Vidler, "Fantasy, Uncanny and Surrealist Theories of Architecture," *Papers of Surrealism* 1 (Winter 2003), p. 12.

[30] The emphasis on Bataille in contemporary readings of surrealism is testament to this. His anachronistic position, celebrated disproportionately in French poststructuralism and American critical theory, is as much a critique of modernism as a radical attack on morality. In this sense, see: Raymond Spiteri, "Georges Bataille and the Limits of Modernism," *Melbourne Art Journal* 4 (2009), pp. 1-27; Susan Rubin Sulieman, "Bataille in the Street: The Search for Virility in the 1930s," *Critical Inquiry* 21 1 (Autumn, 1994), pp. 61-79.

[31] First raised in his influential "Modernity: An Unfinished Project" [translated as "Modernity and Postmodernity"] the paper has been the source of ongoing debates concerning modernism and the avant-garde. See: Jürgen Habermas, "Modernity versus Postmodernity", trans. Seyla Ben-Habib, *New German Critique* 22 (Winter, 1981): 3-14; see also: Maurizio Passerin d'Entréves and Seyla Ben-Habin (ed), *Habermas and the Unfinished Project of Modernity: Critical Essays on The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1997). Bürger, whose category of the "post-avant-garde" is cited

closing decades of the eighteenth century. The avant-garde, by contrast, occupies a much tighter historical focus and, more significantly, has its own internal historical forces that, while overlapping with the historical development of modernism, are essentially unique.[32] In this regard, the emphasis that Bürger (and Adorno) place on negation, is significant, defining the extent to which avant-garde practice is differentiated from modernism. Matei Calinescu, opposing the interchangeable use of the terms modernism and avant-garde, argues that

> [t]he avant-garde, despite its various and often contradictory claims, tends to be regarded as the most extreme form of artistic negativism—art itself being the first victim. As for modernism, whatever its specific meaning in different languages and for different authors, it never conveys that sense of universal and hysterical negation so characteristic of the avant-garde.[33]

This "negativism" is a central strategy in Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* and, to a large extent, is understood as the motivating principle of avant-garde activity.[34] This aspect of avant-garde production in architecture has not received much attention to date[35] and while Veseley's historical theorisation of architecture and surrealism focuses on the symbolic and mythical meanings attached to architectural forms,[36] there is an inherent

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by Habermas, wrote a direct response to this piece: Peter Bürger, "The Institution of 'Art' as a Category in the Sociology of Literature," *Cultural Critique* 2 (Winter, 1985-1986), pp. 5-33.

[32] One of the primary limitations of Renato Poggioli's theorising of the avant-garde is its inability to apply a more precise differentiation between the broad history of modernism and the narrow moment of the historical avant-garde. For a critique of this, see: Jochen Schulte-Sasse, "Theory of Modernism versus Theory of the Avant-Garde," in Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. vii-xv.

[33] Matei Calinescu, *Faces of Modernity: Avant-Garde, Decadence, Kitsch* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), p. 140.

[34] Habermas describes how "modernity then unfolded in various avant-garde movements" (p. 3). For Habermas, the failure of the surrealist program to negate art is a particular crisis of modernity: the end of avant-garde creativity. See: Habermas, "Modernity versus Postmodernity," pp. 10-11.

[35] One of the exceptions, offering valuable insights into the relationship between Benjamin's theory and modern architecture (primarily in the work of Adolf Loos), is: Massimo Cacciari, *Architecture and Nihilism: On the Philosophy of Modern Architecture*, trans. Stephen Sartarelli (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993).

[36] An example is his emphasis on "intra-uterine" architecture. Veseley writes that "it is through a full understanding of the symbolic meaning of our body (house, cave and tomb) and our mother (as an earth,

violence that transcends this formalism in a number of critical works of Dada and surrealism where architecture and negation exist in symbiosis. As will be argued, these architectural strategies are characteristic of the avant-garde and are assembled in opposition to the primary concerns of modernism.

In architecture, in particular, there is evidence of an alternate consciousness to history[37] that, outside of the hegemonic structures of academic scholarship, reveals a deep-seated relationship to avant-garde practice. Habermas, who saw the negation of artistic production in Dada and surrealism as a cathartic moment, argued that

> [t]he modern, avant-garde spirit has sought […] to use the past in a different way; it disposes over those pasts which have been made available by the objectifying scholarship of historicism, but it opposes at the same time a neutralized history, which is locked up in the museum of historicism.[38]

It is with this historical consciousness in mind,[39] that an expanded critical framework binding architecture and the historical avant-garde can be constructed. Despite being

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cave, protection) that architecture receives its first rather obvious symbolic meaning." Dalibor Veseley, "Salvador Dali and Architecture," in Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, p. 138.

[37] Giedion had argued that the architecture of the nineteenth century, for surrealism, fulfilled "the role of the subconscious." This passage was quoted by Benjamin in *Passagenwerk* and was central to Hal Foster's interpretation of the outmoded. Hal Foster draws from this reading to argue for a "spatial unconscious" that ran through surrealist practice which saw the transformation of "these architectures as psychological spaces." Foster, *Compulsive Beauty*, p. 170; a similar argument is developed in from a different direction in: Detlef Mertins, "Walter Benjamin and the Tectonic Unconscious: Using Architecture as an Optical Instrument," in Alex Coles (ed), *The Optic of Walter Benjamin* (London: Black Dog Publishing, 1999), pp. 196-221. Benjamin's quotation, which appeared in the "Exposé" to *Passagenwerk*, was taken from: Siegfried Giedion, *Bauen in Frankreicht: Bauen in Eisen—Bauen in Eisenbeton* (Leipzig: Klinkhardt and Biermann, 1928)*;* Siegfried Giedion, *Building in France: Building in Iron—Building in Ferro-Concrete*, trans. J. Duncan Berry (Los Angeles: The Getty Centre for the Study of Art and the Humanities, 1995); Giedion returned to this theme after the death of Benjamin. In his postwar discussion of the collages of Ernst (who he knew personally), Giedion concluded that "drops from the nineteenth century flowed in his veins." See: Siegfried Giedion, *Mechanisation Takes Command: A Contribution to Anonymous History* (New York: W. W. Norton Company, 1969), p. 361.

[38] Habermas, "Modernity versus Postmodernity," p. 5.

[39] Habermas refers to it as a "time consciousness" that is a condition of the avant-garde. See: Habermas, "Modernity versus Postmodernity," p. 5.

generally opposed to the inclusion of negation as a strategy of surrealism,[40] Veseley does hint at the prospect of architecture operating as an *objet trouvé* [found object] in surrealist practice shifting concerns away from the *production* of architectural form and towards the creative reappropriation of its fragments.[41] It is this aspect of Veseley's historicisation of Dada and surrealism that, when framed in regard to Bürger's theorisation of the avant-gardist work of art, will form the primary trajectory that this dissertation will pursue. Given this, the experimental period of Dada and surrealism that Veseley dismisses (1912-1924) is of primary importance, as it is in the discovery of the strategies of the readymade, collage, montage, drawing and photography, that the role of architecture is made explicit as a central concern of avant-garde activity. It is with an understanding of the importance of this transformation that the historical relationship between Dada, surrealism and architecture can be recast.

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While downplaying the obvious continuities that existed between Dada and surrealism[42] and neglecting the significance of negation as an avant-garde strategy[43], Veseley's requestioning of the relationship between surrealism and architecture is of deep historical importance in the context of the architectural culture of the 1970s. As well as coinciding with Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, Veseley's dehistoricisation of Dada and

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[40] Again dispelling the nihilism of Dada, Veseley argues that "Surrealism, unlike Dada, exploited the results of negation for its own positive goals, developing and cultivating the technique of surprise and bewilderment toward [the] surrealist crisis of the object." Veseley, "Surrealism, Myth and Modernity," p. 91.

[41] More than 30 years later, Veseley came to an identical conclusion in regard to the surrealist conceptualisation of architecture: Dalibor Vesely, "The Surrealist House as a Labyrinth and Metaphor of Creativity," in Jane Allison, *The Surreal House* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, Barbarican Art Gallery, 2010), p. 40.

[42] For an account of the incestuous nature of these movements, see: Gerard Durozoi, *History of the Surrealist Movement*, trans. Alison Anderson (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), pp. 1-62; see also: Matthew Gale, *Dada and Surrealism* (London: Phaidon, 1997), pp. 5-8; Mary Ann Caws, *Surrealism* (London: Phaidon, 2004), pp.17-21.

[43] Tschumi was acutely aware of the importance of negation, stating that his essay on Dada and surrealism (one of the major contributions to Veseley's volume) was part of a forthcoming (but ultimately aborted) book entitled *Architecture and Negation*. See Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 116.

surrealist tactics[44] had obvious polemical implications, allowing the philosophical practices of the avant-garde to be projected into the present with renewed vigour and relevance.[45] Originally writing in 1978, today Veseley occupies an important "perspective" in regards to the history of surrealism, embodying a particular moment in history that made the essays pertinent, as well as providing a prescient forum for (in the words of Goodbun and Cunningham) the "soon-to-be-famous": Bernard Tschumi, Rem Koolhaas[46] and Kenneth Frampton all wrote formative essays in this volume.[47] While not necessarily the first history of architecture and surrealism[48] it is by far the most significant, provocatively linking a number of dynamic voices with the specific moment when Dada and surrealism received a new critical voice in the fine arts. Veseley's edited volume coincided with the *Dada and Surrealism Reviewed* exhibition (11 January—27 March, 1978)[49] at the Hayward Gallery in

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[44] While titled "Surrealism and Architecture", the volume blurs the distinction between Dada and surrealism, and is implicit, rather than explicit in a lot of the connections that are made. See, for instance: Stuart Knight, "Observations on Dada and Surrealism", in Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp.101-110; Kenneth Frampton, "Has the Proletariat No Use for a Glider?" in Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 96-100.

[45] This argument is also made in: James Williamson, "Acropolis, now!," in Thomas Mical (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture* (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 318-332.

[46] The essay of Koolhaas, evidence of his fascination with the paranoid-critical method, was added, virtually unaltered, to *Delirious New York*. See: Rem Koolhaas, "Dali and Corbusier: The Paranoid Critical Method," Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 152-163.

[47] See: Jon Goodbun and David Cunningham, "On Surrealism and Architecture: with some Stylistic Apologies to André Breton," in Samantha Hardingham (ed), *Architectural Design Profile: The 70s is Here and Now* 75 2 (March/April, 2005), pp. 66-69. This is echoed by Anthony Vidler, who argues that Veseley's volume is "entirely prescient joining of Tschumi and Koolhaas in two of the most important preliminary manifestoes of their individual careers." See Vidler, "Fantasy, the Uncanny and Surrealist Theories of Architecture," p. 2.

[48] A preliminary, and generalist history of architecture and surrealism is found in Sarane Alexandrian's work on *Surrealist Art*, which begins the section on architecture with:

> Surrealist architecture includes: designs for towns or for houses which the painters and poets of the movement set out in their works: the work of both classical and contemporary architects whom they admired; and finally various constructions from the designs of decorators and builders who were connected with the surrealist movement. It is an irrational architecture which does not fall in with any ideas of comfort; it is figurative, even metaphorical. Its aim is to make habitable monumental pieces of sculpture, preferably representing creatures or objects. (p.177).

See: Sarane Alexandrian, *Surrealist Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1970), pp. 177-189.

[49] See: Dawn Ades, *Dada and Surrealism Reviewed* (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1978).

London, which was the first major retrospective after the death of Breton in 1967.[50] Curated by Dawn Ades, the exhibition was a significant event shifting the scholarship of Dada and surrealism away from the historical fetishisation of the "art objects" that had popularised the movement and towards the broader study of critical journals that the respective movements used to promote their work. While the retrospective included a large number of works from all of the key figures of both Dada and surrealism (following both across several continents) it was distinguished by the emphasis it placed on the written word and the philosophical attempt to represent these movements as social and cultural phenomena, rather than narrow moments in the history of art. The journals were also significant on a number of other fronts, creating a forum for young writers, as well as pioneering the visual style of both Dada and surrealism characterised, in both instances, by innovative typography and photographic experimentation.[51] It was through these journals that a number of the primary rifts of Dada and surrealism emerged and, for instance, the contrary intellectual approaches to surrealism that were pursued by Georges Bataille and Andre Breton.[52]

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[50] As well as the reproduction of Colquhoun and Miller's plans and axonometrics for the design of the entire exhibition (p. 137), Veseley's volume contained three separate accounts of the exhibition and its relevance to architecture, demonstrating the popular fascination with this show and its influence. See: Alan Colquhoun and John Miller, "Dada and Surrealism Reviewed: the Architectural Components," Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 136-137; George Melly, "Dada and Surrealism Reviewed," Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 135; Peter F. Smith, "Architecture, Symbolism and Surrealism," Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 150-151.

[51] The best English language collection, retaining the fragmentary style of the Dada journals, is: Dawn Ades (ed), *The Dada Reader: A Critical Anthology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006).

[52] Many of the artists that are collected in this rejuvenated surrealism at the Hayward were, in fact, much closer to Bataille's circle than Breton's, with an emphasis on the works of Alberto Giacometti, Jacques-André Boiffard, Hans Bellmer and Andre Masson. This shifting emphasis has continued at the curatorial level, with major Bataille inspired shows in the last 20 years, most notably *Formless* (May 22—August 26, 1996) at the Pompidou Centre and *Undercover Surrealism* (May 11-July 30, 2006) at the Hayward Gallery in London. Bataille's model of surrealism corresponds with a convenient critical space that enables a particular reading of Freud, and the recognition of new and undervalued currents relating to sexuality and subjectivity. Occurring simultaneously with this change has been a broadening of surrealism, extending its boundaries and collapsing the inherent inwardness of the movement. Some critics have questioned the emphasis that this has placed on the writings of Bataille. See, for instance: Cunningham, "The Futures of Surrealism," pp. 47-48; see also: Dawn Ades and Simon Baker, *Undercover Surrealism Georges Bataille and Documents* (London: Thames and

It was from the same historical vantage point in 1978, and writing in the pages of Veseley's epochal issue, that Bernard Tschumi lamented the failure of architecture to engage with Dada and surrealism in a more proactive manner in the 1920s, concluding that "it indicates that architecture was not ready at the time to explore the spaces of the unconscious, too busy, as it were, discovering new formal or technological breakthroughs."[53] For Tschumi, in 1978 the social conditions were perfect for revisiting the relationship between architecture and the ideas of Dada and surrealism. As a result, he contends, "the questions that remained unanswered in the 20s and 30s can now be raised again."[54]

As well as problematising the historical relationship between surrealism and architecture, Tschumi's essay was amongst the first critical texts in English to predict the emerging influence that Bataille would have on the future interpretive work of Dada and surrealism.[55]

Hudson, 2006); Yve Alain Bois and Rosalind Krauss, *Formless: A User's Guide* (New York: Zone Books, 1997).

[53] Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 111. The historical context of Tschumi's essay, and its prescient importance in the scholarship of surrealism, has been discussed in more detail in: Michael Chapman, "Loose Threads: Architecture and Bondage in the Perversions of Tschumi, Battaille and Sade," presented at: *Erotic Screen and Sound: Culture, Media and Desire—15 18 February, Griffith Centre for Cultural Research* (Brisbane: Griffiths University, 2011) [up] abstract published.

[54] Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 111. Reinforcing this fact, Vidler argued that "despite the apparent obliviousness of surrealism to architecture, architecture would seem to be the most fruitful of all media for a truly surrealist practice." Vidler, "Fantasy, the Uncanny and Surrealist Theories of Architecture," p. 3.

[55] Tschumi's text predated Rosalind Krauss's influential essay in *L'Amour Fou* by seven years. Krauss's essay, originally published in *October*, shifted the emphasis placed on the writings of Georges Bataille in art, and mirrored the broader interest in his work in critical theory and philosophy. Ten years later, Hal Foster's equally influential *Compulsive Beauty* again followed Tschumi in attributing greater emphasis to Bataille but, more directly, in shifting the legacy of Dada and surrealism to the darker and more discursive aspects of the movement. The ruminations of this began in the 1970s, particularly with the publication of Denis Hollier's book, *Against Architecture* which, as a number of scholars have demonstrated, Tschumi was aware and, to some extent, conceptually accommodated in his design for *Parc de la Villette*. See: Rosalind Krauss, "Corpus Delicti", *October* 33 (Summer, 1985), pp. 31-72; The essay is reproduced in: Rosalind Krauss and Jane Livingston, *L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985), pp. 57-100; See also: Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1995); Dawn Ades and Fiona Bradley, "Introduction," in Ades and Baker, *Undercover Surrealism,* pp. 11-16; Denis Hollier, *Against Architecture: The Writings of Georges Bataille,* trans. Betsy Wing (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press,

Bataille, while clearly associating with surrealism, was by no means a surrealist and the shift towards an emphasis on his thought in surrealism has tended to polarise the differences between Breton and Bataille.[56] However, the epistemological shift in emphasis on Bataille is significant, especially within the context of an architectural reading of surrealism.[57] Bataille saw architecture dialectically as an oppositional force to life, inevitably structuring the praxis of life through authoritarian organisation. For Bataille, the inherent connection between architecture and form provided an obvious barrier to transgression and his materialist theorisation of economics, based primarily on his concept of the *informe* (or formless).[58] Tschumi's emphasis on the writing of Bataille, particularly given its temporal context, enabled a discursive reading of architecture that was external to form,

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1989); For the connections between Bataille and Tschumi, see: Louis Martin, "Transpositions: On the Intellectual Origins of Tschumi's Architectural Theory" *Assemblage* **11** (April, 1990), pp. 22-35.

[56] This polarising is in no doubt a result of the heated exchanges between the two, mostly from the side of Bataille. While Breton referred to Bataille in the *Second Manifesto* as a "philosopher of excrement" Bataille had responded with a series of vitriolic assaults, attacking the foundations of surrealism and its leader. The majority of these texts are now published in *The Absence of Myth*. In the essay "Nightwalkers", Krauss illustrates that Breton and Bataille had more in common than in difference. Michael Richardson makes a similar point. See: Georges Bataille, *The Absence of Myth: Writings on Surrealism*, trans. Michael Richardson (London: Verso, 1994); Rosalind Krauss, "Nightwalkers," *Art Journal* **41** 1 (Spring, 1981), p. 36; Michael Richardson, "Introduction," in Bataille, *The Absence of Myth*, pp. 4-11.

[57] Tschumi's writing on Bataille is heavily influenced by the work of Denis Hollier, which argues for the centrality of architecture to Bataille's work. This emphasis has been challenged more recently, most succinctly in the work of Michael Richardson, who argues that Hollier's reading of "the deleterious effects of architectural principles and the unhealthy effects of building" (p. 12) overlays a predisposed argument onto Bataille for which there is no evidence in the collected writings from which they are drawn. The argument is based on isolated fragments from Bataille, many of which are reproduced by Tschumi. In his critique of Bataille, Richardson concludes that the connections between Bataille and architecture are overstated, and "[b]y means of a vast store of erudite ignorance, Hollier assumes authority to tell us how to think." See: Michael Richardson, *Bataille* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 13.

[58] In the words of Bataille: "Formless is not only an adjective having a given meaning but a term that serves to bring things down in the world, generally requiring that each thing have its form." See: Georges Bataille, "Formless", in *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, trans. Allan Stoekl (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1985), p. 31.

focussed on human experience and essentially critical of the organisational instincts of architectural production.[59]

This relationship between architecture and experience had been central to the theorisation of the avant-garde and especially in relationship to Dada and surrealism. Veseley's work was framed in a radical context in time, inviting practitioners to engage with it.[60] In particular, issues of Marx and the commercialisation of architecture that had underpinned Bürger's writing, were a part of the optimism that accompanied the redemption of Dada and surrealism in architecture in the same time period. Recent scholarship has lamented the profession's failure to adopt the radical imperative of Veseley's anthology. Goodbun and Cunningham, in their reappraisal of the work thirty years on, point to both the commercialisation of surrealism and its passive adoption as a marketing strategy as evidence of the failure of surrealism to genuinely engage with urban life. [61] They describe the decades since the publication of Veseley's special issue as indicative of "a kind of mourning of missed opportunity, of a chance meeting that never quite happened, either on the dissection table of the drawing board or in the haunted spaces of built form."[62]

Bürger follows Marx in positing that all "historical knowledge relates to the present."[63] The reclamation of surrealism as a topic in architectural theory in the 1970s, like Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* itself, is recognition of the dramatic miscarriage between the

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[59] It is also important to note that the work of Hollier, while originally published in 1974 in French, was not translated until 1989, meaning that the majority of scholarship in architectural theory did not have access. Tschumi's interpretation of Bataille's work is still one of the first critical accounts in English. The original publication is: Denis Hollier, *La Prise de la Concorde* (Paris: Editions Gallimard, 1974). Tschumi's quotations of the work were translated especially for his essay.

[60] Williamson argues that "[t]he edition was important in its anticipation of the significance of surrealism for architecture, rather than its analysis of significant examples of this relationship" (p. 318). Williamson argues that the volume predated the concerns of practice, and, if published a decade later, would of included the "the work of Hejduk, Rossi, Scarpa, and the subsequent theoretical and soon-to-be-published projects of Tschumi and Koolhaas among many others." See: Williamson, "Acropolis, now!" p. 329 [note 2].

[61] Goodbun and Cunningham, "On Surrealism and Architecture," pp. 66-69. This is quite different to Veseley's position which, 30 years on, remains firmly unaltered in all of the critical aspects. See: Vesely, "The Surrealist House as a Labyrinth and Metaphor of Creativity," pp. 34-41.

[62] Goodbun and Cunningham, "On Surrealism and Architecture," p. 66.

[63] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 21.

radical discourse of the avant-garde and its ultimately ineffective historical impact. Such an intertwining of historical threads forms a constant backdrop to the study of Dada and surrealism and it has continued to reshape the understanding and relevance of these movements and particularly their relationship to architecture and the built environment. If Dada was an avant-garde of the present, then surrealism was both of the past and of the future. Even the relationship between the two was conditioned by the unsettled transition between the two that saw the invention of one movement from the ashes of the previous.[64] This has made the history of Dada, which has a distinct fiery closure, more definitive that the complicated history of surrealism which, even in the early 21st century, still has a claim to being an active and viable movement in the creative arts.[65] At the same time, this has also set up the characteristic blurring that has occurred between Dada and surrealism and has seen these distinct phenomena merge into one another in a number of critical contexts. It is through a more detailed understanding of the *historical* (giving special attention to the anachronistic) that architecture can be positioned as a radical avant-garde strategy, indelibly linked to the revolutionary timescapes of both Dada and surrealism.

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In the preface to a reprint of his *Manifesto of Surrealism* in 1929, Breton, evaluates the concept of time and its pressing urgency to surrealist activities by conceding that "indeed [it must] be admitted, we're in bad, we're in terrible, shape when it comes to time."[66] Breton, also retrospective, was writing in the same year as Walter Benjamin's nostalgic

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[64] One of the most thorough accounts of this is the section "After Dada" in: Alan Young, *Dada and After: Extremist Modernism and English Literature* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1981), pp. 110-170.

[65] The most robust example of this continuation of surrealism is "The Paris Group of the surrealist movement" who are still actively engaged in the dissemination of surrealist ideas and activities. For more on this group, see: Jill Fenton, "Re-enchanting the city: The utopian practices of the Paris group of the surrealist movement," in Thomas Mical, *Surrealism and Architecture* (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 209-219.

[66] In this passage, Breton cites an exchange between André Gide and Arthur Craven, in regard to time:

> [s]till very much apropos is the famous question Arthur Craven, "in a very tired and weary tone" asked André Gide: "Monsieur Gide, where are we with respect to time?" To which Gide, with no malice intended, replied: "Fifteen minutes before six."

—André Breton, "Preface for a Reprint of the Manifesto (1929)" in Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, p. x.

reappraisal of the legacy of surrealism that, among other things, praised their proselytising of "outmoded" forms of architecture, as one of the movements primary legacies.[67] When Benjamin wrote of the human "alarm clock" that, characteristic of surrealism, is continually ringing,[68] he deliberately evokes the pressures of time that the early avant-gardes operated under and the incredible urgency with which they went about their business.[69] He also positions the activities of surrealism as historical, chained, as it were, to a particular timeframe of which the avant-garde movements were both conscious of and antagonistic towards. The writing of Dada maverick Richard Huelsenbeck, nine years prior, reflects Benjamin's attitudes, where he argues that "[t]he best and most extraordinary artists will be those who every hour snatch the tatters of their bodies out of the frenzied cataract of life, who, with bleeding hands and hearts, hold fast to the intelligence of their time."[70]

The manifesto, blurring the praxis of life with the passage of time in a way that is reminiscent of Bürger, serves to illustrate that the concerns of Dada and surrealism were radically historical, at least in the sense in which they saw themselves. Radical activity has always had a strong affiliation with time: the revolutionaries in Paris in 1789 saw, as one of their first steps, the introduction of a new calendar and one of the most symbolic forms of violent protest by the insurgents of the July Revolution was to shoot out the clocks in the clock towers.[71] As Benjamin observed, these symbols, rather than recording time, are "moments of a historical consciousness" and their desecration is a violation of the

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[67] As well as being central to Foster's understanding of surrealism in *Compulsive Beauty*, this regressive fascination with the past is an important gateway to psychoanalysis functioning as a recovery of lost spaces, that are both architectural and psychological. Foster's thesis is that "surrealism works through historical as well as psychic repression […] primarily through a recovery of outmoded spaces." Foster, *Compulsive Beauty*, p. xx.

[68] This passage is quoted earlier in this chapter. See: Benjamin, "Surrealism," p. 192.

[69] The radical relationship between time and space in the period between 1880 and 1918 is theorised in Stephen Kern's classic account which situates cubism within a revolutionary schema of the past, present and future. See: Stephen Kern, *The Culture of Time and Space, 1880-1918* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1983).

[70] Richard Huelsenbeck, "Collective Dada Manifesto" in Motherwell (ed), *The Dada Painters and Poets*, p. 243.

[71] See: Hubert Damisch, "Ledoux with Kant," *Perspecta* 33 Mining Autonomy (2002), p. 14; Benjamin recalls this history in Walter Benjamin, "Thesis on the Philosophy of History," in *Illuminations*, pp. 261-262.

continuum of history.[72] It is also important to acknowledge, in this context, that the avant-garde, as a historical phenomenon, was traditionally associated with revolutionary battle and has only subsequently been tied to artistic production. As a Parisian (rather than French) term, Poggioli demonstrates how the idea of an avant-garde emerged in the context of the 1848 revolution in Paris and implied a "[subordination…] to the ideals of a radicalism which was not cultural but political."[73] The avant-garde retained this political affiliation as its primary meaning for several decades up until the turn of the century and, while being tentatively applied to the visual arts in the second half of the nineteenth century, it still retained the expectation of radicalism and the politicisation of art practice.[74]

The relationship between time and revolution is not lost in the writing of Benjamin. Discussing the Dada and surrealist fascination with the "outmoded" he describes the "revolutionary nihilism" which activates history in a highly politicised manner. Similarly, for Bürger, the historical avant-garde acts in a "revolutionary" way in that it "destroys the traditional concept of the organic work of art and replaces it by another"[75] thus enacting an aesthetic and historical revolution of values. In Habermas's essay entitled "Modernity versus Postmodernity" he argues that Benjamin uses "the spirit of surrealism" to construct a post-historicist position, which conceptualises "the present as a moment of revelation; a time in which splinters of a messianic presence are enmeshed."[76] For Habermas, the activities of Dada and surrealism (where the avant-garde movements reached their climax) were reflective of a "changed consciousness of time" which characterizes what he refers

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[72] Walter Benjamin, "Thesis on the Philosophy of History," p. 262.

[73] Renato Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 1968), p. 9.

[74] See: Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 8-12; Poggiolo goes into the connection between the avant-garde and politics in greater detail in: Renato Poggioli, "The Avant-Garde and Politics," *Yale French Studies* 39 (1967), pp. 180-187.

[75] Bürger*, Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 59.

[76] Habermas, "Modernity versus Postmodernity," p. 5.

to as "aesthetic modernity"[77]. Reading the "anticipation of an unknown future" by the avant-garde as "the exaltation of the present,"[78] Habermas argues that

> [t]his time consciousness expresses itself through metaphors of the vanguard and the avant-garde. The avant-garde understands itself as invading unknown territory, exposing itself to the dangers of sudden, shocking encounters, conquering an as yet unknown future. The avant-garde must find a direction in a landscape into which no-one seems to have yet ventured.[79]

While accepting Habermas's proposition of a "time consciousness" that runs through avant-garde activities, the emphasis that Habermas places on "modernity" as a vital strategy of the avant-garde needs to be more carefully articulated. As demonstrated, recent authors[80] have tended to isolate the avant-garde from the broader history of modernism, in order to diagnose more scientifically the specific trajectories.[81] One of the major aspects that distinguishes modernity generally, from the avant-garde specifically is that the "time consciousness" of modernism, drawn from the present and a utopian projection of the future, is inherently contradictory to the "time consciousness" of the avant-garde, which, in Dada and surrealism at least, was often regressive in nature and dystopic in outlook.

Given this, the writing of Benjamin is important for any dissertation setting out to reframe architecture within the temporal landscape of Dada and surrealism and especially within the context of Peter Bürger's work. In the context of the broader avant-garde project of

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[77] Habermas, "Modernity versus Postmodernity", p. 5.

[78] Habermas, "Modernity versus Postmodernity", p. 5.

[79] Habermas, "Modernity versus Postmodernity", p. 4.

[80] See: Andreas Huyssen, "The Search for Tradition: Avant-Garde and Postmodernism in the 1970s", *New German Critique* **22** (Winter 1981), pp. 23-40; also published in: Andreas Huyssen, *After the Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 160-178. David Harvey makes a similar point in relationship to Bürger's work in: David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (London: Blackwell, 1990), p. 12.

[81] The separation of the avant-garde and modernity has been a theme in the scholarship of Hilde Heynan. See especially: Hilde Heynen, "What Belongs to Architecture? Avant-Garde ideas in the Modern Movement," *Journal of Architecture* **4** (Summer, 1999), p. 143.

radicality, the task of historicising the relationship between Dada, surrealism and architecture began with Benjamin, although it is sometimes framed as an extension of Marx's broader concept of history. Benjamin was closely linked to the key agents in both Dada and surrealism and an emphasis on architecture foreshadows his writing. He had personal connections with both Bataille[82] and Breton and, as well as completing an essay dedicated to surrealism,[83] he returned to the creative strategies of Dada and surrealism on a number of occasions throughout his writing.[84] Significantly, he knew a number of the members of Berlin Dada personally from his time in Berlin and had been later introduced to the circle of surrealism in Paris by Franz Hessel, with whom he had collaborated on a translation of Proust.[85] It is also clear that Benjamin saw the historical concerns of surrealism as linked to his own arcades project, which he fittingly described as "the philosophical realisation of surrealism—and hence its *sublation*"[86].

It is not accidental that Benjamin's most concentrated writing on surrealism—his essay on its demise—was completed as he had discovered the work of Siegfried Giedion.[87] Benjamin drew from Giedion a fascination with "outmoded" constructions and especially those of the nineteenth century that embodied both the emergence of technologies such

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[82] Benjamin had met Bataille in 1937 and had joined the College of Scoiology that Bataille was affiliated with shortly thereafter. Benjamin had left a number of unfinished documents (including his famous *Passagenwerk*) with Bataille on his flight from Paris in 1940. See: Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings, "Chronology," in Howard Eiland and Michael W. Jennings (ed), *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings, vol. 4—1938-1940* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2003), p. 442 [427-448]; for the philosophical overlapping, see: Allan Stoekl, "Introduction," in Georges Bataille, *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1985), pp. ix-xxv.

[83] Benjamin, "Surrealism," p. 177-192.

[84] The practices of Dada (and, to a lesser extent, surrealism) feature heavily in Benjamin's two critical Marxist essays of the mid-1930s. See: Walter Benjamin, "Author as Producer," in *Reflections,* pp. 220-238; Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," pp. 217-251.

[85] See: Benjamin Brewster, "Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project," *Perspecta*, 12 (1969), p. 161.

[86] Benjamin, in a letter to Gerhard Scholem quoted in: Brewster, "Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project," p. 161. The original German term for "sublation" is *aufhebung.*

[87] For more on the connection and correspondence between Giedion and Benjamin, see: Detlef Mertins, "The Enticing and Threatening Face of Prehistory: Walter Benjamin and the Utopia of Glass," *Assemblage* 29 (April, 1996), p. 9.

as iron, as well as their historical supersession. While privileging architecture and, more specifically, the interior, Benjamin was, by the mid 30s, fundamentally concerned with the notions of radicality and the extent to which avant-garde practices could transcend the intellectual and connect with broader popular forces and energies. These themes had also engaged Giedion in the same period.[88] Benjamin, on a number of occasions, referred to architecture as a passive medium that (as in "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction") is consummated by "a collectivity in a state of distraction."[89] In the essay on surrealism, Benjamin argues that a discursive reading of time not only connects and empowers architecture (reclaiming buildings through retrospection) but can equally engage the kind of "revolutionary nihilism" that modernity found itself fundamentally at odds with.[90] Benjamin's writing on surrealism highlights the ambivalence that the surrealists had to the architecture of their time, as well as their ability to engage the architectures of the past within the broader surrealist project, shattering the ticking clock of history and reinventing its objects within new temporal landscapes.

What Benjamin also illustrates, however, is that the primary concerns of Dada and surrealism, as well as politicising the machinery of time, conceptualised it as an extension of the body. Recently it has been popular to theorise the activities of both Dada and surrealism as anthropomorphic strategies, seeking to marry the body with the mechanisation of technique and to envisage a crisis in the male body that, historically at

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[88] See, for instance: Heynen, "'What Belongs to architecture?" pp. 129-147. According to Heynen, "Benjamin radicalised ideas which Giedion formulated in a more subdued and hesitant tone" (p. 136). See also: Hilde Heynen, *Architecture and Modernity: A Critique* (London: The MIT Press, 1999); Mertins, "The Enticing and Threatening Face of Prehistory, " pp. 7-23.

[89] Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the age of Mechanical Reproduction", p. 239; The reverse is the medium of film which dictates the experience of the spectator and "no sooner has [a viewer's] eye grasped a scene than it is already changed." (p. 238). The historical importance of "distraction" is a theme in Crary's historical account of "attention" in: Jonathon Crary, *Suspensions of Perception: Attention, Spectacle and Modern Culture* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1999).

[90] Benjamin, "Surrealism," p. 230. Benjamin argued that "[n]o one before these visionaries and augurs perceived how destitution—not only social, but architectonic, the poverty of interiors, enslaved and enslaving objects—can suddenly be transformed into revolutionary nihilism".

least, is a response to the butchery of the First World War.[91] However in Benjamin's synopsis, there is a shift that can be detected from the *anthropomorphic* to the *temporal*, where time becomes an extension of the body and a presence that it must continually acknowledge and obey. Benjamin's assertion—that "[the surrealists] exchange […] the play of human features for the face of an alarm clock"[92]—is indicative of this shift. Literally replacing the historical physiognomic characteristics of the face with the fluidity of time, examples such as Raoul Hausmann's 1920 *Self Portrait of the Dadaspoh* further serve to articulate this marrying of the spatial and temporal aspects of the body, where the facial features of the artist are replaced with the controlling mechanisms of the machine (in this case a scale) shifting the emphasis from the "work" to its automated creation. Even more literal, from the same year, is Hausmann's *Mechanical Head*, fittingly subtitled *The Spirit of Our Age*[93] which takes the head of a wig-maker's dummy and implants it with the technology of time and measurement: impregnated with the mechanism of a watch in servitude to the former; skewered and bound by a ruler and tape in respect for the later.[94] These glued prosthetics become an extension of the head and, implicitly, its thought processes regulating the body to the discipline of time and space. Automatism, a key strategy in Bürger's analysis, is the surrealist reification of this, where the body surrenders its autonomy to the controlling forces of speed, operating not only against *reason* but predominantly against *time*.

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[91] This is the primary thesis of Hal Foster in *Prosthetic Gods*, where he explains certain avant-garde activities as a manifestation of a "masculinity in crisis" speculating that they emerge as a direct response to the experience of trauma and the need for an "armouring of the male ego". This is witnessed primarily through the proliferation of automatons in the work of artists such as Hans Bellmer and Max Ernst. A similar approach, without the psychoanalytical framework is found in the work of Biro, which investigates the cyborg in Berlin Dada. See: Hal Foster, *Prosthetic Gods* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004); Matthew Biro, *The Dada Cyborg: Visions of the New Human in Weimar Berlin* (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

[92] Benjamin, "Surrealism," p. 192.

[93] The original German reads "Der Geist unserer Zeit" personalising the more traditional *zeitgeist*. See, Leah Dickerman, *Dad*a (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2005), p. 130.

[94] In a childish drawing entitled "Vis-à-Vis" by Francis Picabia, lines merge carrying two distinct phrases: "what disfigures [*ce qui défigure*]" and the implied answer "the measure [*la measure*]". Originally published in: Francis Picabia, *Without a Mother: Poems and Drawings of the Daughter Born* (New York: Collins, 1918), p. 4.

In a number of ways this sense of "urgency"—the ticking clock of an avant-garde anxious to continually dismantle its own representations—was instrumental in the collapse of Dada which, as a result of a number of internal forces, disbanded to isolated pockets scattered across the landscape of post-war Europe, while others gravitated to the emerging surrealist movement. However, when Benjamin wrote his "Surrealism: Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia" in 1929, surrealism was far from a deflated movement and, in art at least, was about to experience its most productive decade. Benjamin's polemical point, however, was that by 1929 the *moment* of Surrealism had passed and the movement was facing, in his opinion, the limited options of dispersal or tired repetition. While looking back with a sense of nostalgia, Benjamin was clearly looking forward with an overwhelming sense of both urgency and trepidation.

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Corresponding to the urgency with which Benjamin conceptualised the practices of Dada and surrealism was a dramatic acceleration of artistic production that accompanied the early tactics of the avant-garde and triggered a conceptual repositioning of the art object in relationship to both space and time. David Harvey, in his analysis of the avant-garde, is acutely aware of the relationship between time and artistic production, clearly differentiating avant-garde activities from the broader concerns of architecture and modernism.[95] For Harvey, there was a dialectical opposition between the temporal nature of avant-garde experimentation and the inherently permanent status of the architectural object. Articulating the pressures of time that bore down on modernism in the 1920s, Harvey argued that

> [m]odernism could speak to the eternal only by freezing time […]. For the architect, charged to design and build a relatively permanent spatial structure, this was a simple enough proposition. Architecture, wrote Mies van der Rohe in the 1920s, "is the will of the age conceived in spatial terms." But for others the "spatialisation of time" through the image, the dramatic gesture, and instantaneous shock, or simply by montage/collage was more problematic […]. Resorting to the techniques of

[95] The critical passage is: David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An inquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing, 1990), pp. 19-22.

> montage/collage provided one means of addressing this problem, since different effects out of different times (old newspapers) and spaces (the use of common objects) could be superimposed to create a simultaneous effect.[96]

While the passage of modernism in the 1920s was experiencing the technical perfection of the architectural object, which sat in relative isolation from its spatial and temporal contexts, Dada and surrealism developed new strategies for articulating an alternative relationship between space and time.[97] Exemplary of this embodiment of time was Man Ray's idiosyncratic *Object to be Destroyed* with its relentless ticking and motion, which connected with ideas of action, production, monotony and boredom, evoking both the pressures of working and waiting and, in an autobiographical way, the melancholic and infinite nature of time. Given the ongoing transformations that the work was subjected to, it supports a more methodical historical analysis as it serves to articulate a number of important characteristics of avant-garde activity, including the "time consciousness" of Habermas and the negation of the work of art, which was a primary concern of Bürger.

In *Object to be Destroyed* the "alarm clock" of Benjamin is replaced by a fragmented human face, where only the eye remains and is appended to the hypnotic machinery of modern life and the relentless nature of time that controls its destiny. It is also representative of the pressures of "work" itself, bound up in bourgeois notions of productivity and the nineteenth century notion of industrialisation where both time and space intersected with capitalism. The framework marries the roles of artist (worker), object (product) and viewer (consumer) and, in the reading of Janine Mileaf, allows agency to be repositioned continuously between the three categories. Mileaf writes: "with each

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[96] Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, p. 21.

[97] Time was a key motif in a number of works from Dada and surrealism, and the subject of some of the most iconic image making. Dali's well-known 1931 painting *The Persistence of Memory* is one of the most famous examples, visually collapsing the certainties of time and reconfiguring its inherently geometrical structure. For more on the painting and a high quality reproduction see: Dawn Ades and Michael R. Taylor, *Dali* (New York: Rizzoli, 2005); p. 148-152 (plate 89); Dali discussed the formulation of the painting in his 1942 autobiography. See: Salvador Dali, *The Secret Life of Salvador Dali* (New York: Dial Press, 1942), p. 317. Stanford Kwinter uses Duchamp's *Large Glass* as a critical example in his extended discussion of architecture and time in: Stanford Kwinter, *Architecture's of Time: Toward a Theory of the Event in Modernist Culture* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2001), pp. 193-203.

stroke, the object asserts its capacity to aggress its maker or viewer, but also tempts that person to take control and destroy the work."[98] However, the most significant characteristic of the *Object to be Destroyed* is that, rather than constituting a work itself, it is an instrument through which works are constructed: separated from the object and operating as a strategy through which time and space are integrated.

As well as corresponding to the categories implicit in Bürger's definition of the avant-gardiste work of art, *Object to be Destroyed* was a work that was literally tied to time; bridging between Dada and surrealism and, over the course of the object's perpetual reinventions, the neo-avant-garde practices of the 1960s.[99] In the original version Man Ray clipped a photo of an anonymous eye to the metronome to simulate the feeling that he was being watched.[100] In doing so, the paths of vision and technique were both tied to time and, in typical Dada fashion, violence (the fragmented eye)[101]. Sharing a fate familiar to a number of early Dada artworks,[102] Man Ray had destroyed the object in 1923, having been dissatisfied with the outcome of this time-centric technique of production and, rather

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[98] Janine Mileaf, "Between You and Me: Man Ray's Object to be Destroyed," *Art Journal* **63** 1 (Spring 2004), p. 6.

[99] Originally conceived in 1922, when Man Ray was heavily involved in Dada activities, Man Ray wrote "I had a metronome in my place which I set going when I painted […]. Its ticking noise regulated the frequency and number of my brushstrokes. The faster it went, the faster I painted: and if the metronome stopped then I knew I had painted too long. I was repeating myself, my painting was no good and I would destroy it". Man Ray, quoted in: Arturo Schwarz, *Man Ray: The Rigour of Imagination* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977), p. 206.

[100] Man Ray made it clear that "an artist needs an audience". Man Ray, quoted in Schwarz, *Man Ray*, p. 206.

[101] The symbolism of the eye and its affiliation with violence in both surrealism and architecture will be covered in more detail in the subsequent chapter on "Coop Himmelb(l)au".

[102] The destruction of the art object, to some extent, became a favourite activity in the opening years of Dada, and most notoriously in the *Dada Early Spring* exhibition. Showcasing the work of Max Ernst and Johannes Baargeld (the pseudonym of Alfred Grünwald) the exhibition contained a wooden sculpture by Ernst accompanied with a hatchet mounted on the wall inviting viewers to destroy the parts of the sculpture they didn't like. Baargeld's nearby 'Fluidoskeptrik', containing a fishbowl full of blood and human limbs, was also destroyed in the process. See: Georges Hugnet, "The Dada Spirit in Painting," in Motherwell ed., *The Dada Painters and Poets*, p. 161.

than destroying the painting, he chose to destroy the metronome itself.[103] For Man Ray, the moment of destruction functioned as a kind of primal scene as, in a Dionysian sense,[104] the inevitable destruction of the work was tied to not only the destruction of time but also its enduring rebirth.[105] In this sense, the *Object to be Destroyed* paralleled the cycles of the historical avant-garde and is an important temporal artefact, reinvented by its author and its audience continuously, in various settings and at crucial stages in the passage of art in the twentieth century.[106]

However, if the first incarnation of the object was in a Dada guise, the second, was undeniably surrealist. Bending to pressure to recreate the work for exhibition, and reflecting obsessively upon the recent departure of muse Lee Miller from his life, Man Ray recreated the metronome with a new title—*Indestructible Object*—and for a new "surrealist" audience. No longer the fated premonition of the *Object to be Destroyed*, time now functioned as an adversary, continuously hounding the artist and rather than dictating

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[103] In discussion with Arturo Schwarz, Man Ray recalls "one day I did not accept the metronome's verdict, the silence was unbearable and since I had called it, with a certain premonition, *Object to be Destroyed*, I smashed it to pieces." Man Ray, quoted in: Schwarz, *Man Ray,* p. 206.

[104] The role of Dionysus in the avant-garde has been a theme in a number of recent studies, and with particular emphasis on the aspects of time stressed in both Benjamin and Habermas. See, for instance: Soraya Tlatli, "The Intoxication of the Avant-Garde in Benjamin and Habermas," in Stephen Barker (ed), *Signs of Change: Premodern, Modern, Postmodern* (Albany: State University of New York, 1996), pp. 289-296; R. Bruce Elder, *Harmony and Dissent: Film and Avant-Garde Art Movements in the Early Twentieth Century* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2008), p. ix.

[105] While assuming the same form over the course of its life, the work was renamed consistently and with predictable regularity. The full taxonomy of names is as follows: *Object to be Destroyed* (1922-3), *Indestructible Object* (1932) *Lost Object* (1945), *Indestructible Object* (1958) *Last Object* (1966) and *Perpetual Motif* (1972); See: Paris. Mileaf, "Between You and Me", p. 5. Throughout his life Man Ray described his relish for destroying the object and, more recently, its fate has been tied to Man Ray's own sado-masochistic fantasies and sexual perversions. See, for instance: Amy Lyford, *Surrealist Masculinities: Gender Anxiety and the Aesthetics of Post-World War 1 Reconstruction in France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007), pp. 155-164; Man Ray's own autobiography acknowledges in detail a number of his sado-masochistic fantasies, and provides a lot of the material for both Mileaf and Lyford. See: Man Ray, *Self Portrait* (Boston, Little Brown, 1988), p. 82.

[106] Once again citing Hal Foster, the artwork constitutes a literal "re-enacting" of the major themes of avant-garde practice and, in each context, can be seen to be "enact[ing] its project for the first time." Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996), p. 20.

the speed of work, the metronome was placed in the documentation of monotony, boredom, sorrow and desire. In this incarnation it was a drawing, rather than an object, constructed in oblique with a traced outline of Lee Miller's eye extracted from her face and clipped to the metronome.[107] Accompanying its reproduction in *This Quarter*, were the following instructions:

> [c]ut out the eye from a photograph of one who has been loved but is seen no more. Attach the eye to the pendulum of the metronome and regulate the weight to suit the tempo desired. Keep doing to the limit of endurance. With a hammer well aimed, try to destroy the whole at a single blow.[108]

As will be demonstrated,[109] the emphasis on architectural drafting is characteristic of the Dada and surrealist assaults on aesthetic representational traditions, aligning their work with mechanical production and, in this case, evocative of the alchemical blurring of media as it continuously flows from one medium into the next. Through the fixing of the picture to the motion of time, Man Ray was clearly hinting at the destruction of both time and vision, reflecting bleakly on the burden of time as Miller's pejorative glance stared blankly back at him.[110] This sado-masochistic translation of desire into destruction was a popular theme in psychoanalysis. No longer tied to the production of art, the melancholy of their separation had disrupted his production entirely and Man Ray wallowed in self-pity to the ticking clock of an empty gaze. In the context of Benjamin, he had literally replaced a human face, with a ticking alarm clock of despair.

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[107] Following Miller's departure, Man Ray had handwritten a note on the back, that referred to the eye as "material indestructible" renaming the metronome at the same time *Indestructible Object*. Man Ray's inscription, added October 1932 upon Lee's departure, reads: "Postscript, Oct. 11, 1932: With an eye always in reserve/material indestructible…/forever being put away/taken for a ride…/put on the spot…/the racket must go on—/I am always in reserve. MR." See: Mundy (ed), *Surrealism*, p. 161.

[108] Man Ray, "Object of Destruction," *This Quarter: Special Surrealist Issue* 5 1 (September 1932), p. 55. This drawing was also exhibited in Alfred Barr's 1936 exhibition *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism* at the MoMA in New York. See: Alfred H. Barr, *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1936).

[109] This will be covered in more detail in the subsequent chapter on "Drawing".

[110] The eye that Man Ray had used in the creation of the object was from his 1929-30 work *Lee's Eye.* For a reproduction of the work, and the handwritten inscription on the back, see: Mundy (ed), *Surrealism*, p. 161; Miller comments on the use of her eye in the work in: Mario Amaya, "My Man Ray: An Interview with Lee Miller," *Art in America* 63 3 (1975), p. 57; See also: Mileaf, "Between You and Me," pp. 11-15.

The final incarnations of the *Indestructible Object* were, once again, in a very different creative landscape, and, undoubtedly, for a very different audience. The 1932 version did not survive Man Ray's flight from Paris in 1937 and was lost. In 1957, a recreated form of the metronome was targeted by a radical group of French students while being exhibited in Paris as part of a major Dada retrospective. Protesting against the nihilism of the historical avant-garde (and clearly seeking media attention) the group stole the work and, not far from the gallery, sat it on the ground and fired a pistol into it.[111] With the money that Man Ray received from the insurance payout, he created an edition of 100 versions of the work that, released in 1965, are the surviving remnants of the piece and sit in galleries as diverse as the Tate Modern in London, the Reina Sofia in Madrid and the Museum of Modern Art in New York. This re-editioning of works was fashionable at the time for artists of the historical avant-garde[112] but also parallels a number of themes that have governed the history of Dada and surrealism and its ongoing connection to architecture and the neo-avant-garde.

While each of the three incarnations of the object have their own specific context, the argument that will be presented here is that it is only in its originary form that the metronome functions as an "avant-gardiste work of art", at least in the context of Bürger's theory. The attributes that are essential in this categorisation are a separation between the object and its author and a fragmentation of the different levels of meaning in narrative. In its surrealist recreation, the personal and specific context of the object is inevitably tied to its author, assuming romantic and nostalgic qualities that, for both Benjamin and Bürger,

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[111] Man Ray, described the act melodramatically as a demonstration "against history" claiming "[t]hese things were done 40 years ago." See: Ray, *Self Portrait*, p. 305; Neil Baldwin, *Man Ray: American Artist* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, 1988), p. 323.

[112] In the same year Marcel Duchamp authorised five replica reproductions of his Large Glass, one of which, is displayed prominently in the Tate. Rosalind Krauss's essay "The Originality of the Avant-Garde" argues that the avant-garde *represses* the notion of the copy, and is characterised by repetition rather than originality. This became a major theme in Duchamp's life and influenced a range of creative practices including those of Sherrie Levine that Krauss documents. See: Rosalind Krauss, "The Originality of the Avant-Garde: A Postmodernist Repetition," *October* 18 (Autumn, 1981), pp. 47-66; Also published in Rosalind Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge. Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1986), pp. 151-172.

were outside of the primary concerns of the avant-garde. Equally, in its contemporary "editioned" context, it is indicative of the "neo-avant-garde" conditions described by Bürger, where the avant-gardiste negation of the work of art, is effectively overturned as these negations are embraced as gallery objects[113]. No longer used in the production of art or as a critique of its institutionalisation, the object functions as a celebration of the institutional contexts into which Dada and surrealism have now been coerced.

While the *Object to be Destroyed* is a critical work of the historical avant-garde, the spatialistation of time was equally evident in a number of other Man Ray works from the same period, such as *Anxiety* (1920), which enclosed the mechanics of time in a rectilinear transparent shell. Consisting of fragments of a shattered alarm clock, the work translates time into an architectonic form that allows the geometries of modernism to collide with the emotional and psychological pressures of time. More anarchic still, works like Man Ray's *Gears and Gauze* (1924) completely disassembled time and space, severing the relationship by placing the exploded clock against the surface of the picture plane. All of these avant-gardiste works have a relationship to architectural space, controlled or enabled by a specific (and highly discursive) attitude towards time.

What will be argued in the following sections is that the characteristics of the "avant-gardiste" work of art directly engage architectural space (in a way that the romanticist, or neo-avant-gardiste work cannot) and that, in the historicisation of Dada and surrealism in architecture, this connection has been consistently overlooked. Where Burger's categorisation of the avant-gardiste work of art enabled an expanded role for architecture in avant-garde activity, this was not realised or exploited in the 1920s in the medium of architecture, but in the creative practices of drawing, collage, photography and the readymade. In fact architecture remained largely ambivalent to avant-garde concerns throughout this period, to the point where the "avant-gardiste work of architecture" is virtually indiscernible. Without doubt time was one of the major barriers to architecture in its flirtation with the avant-garde and it still conditions its anachronistic influence.

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[113] Bürger describes this process in detail in *Theory of the Avant-Garde*. He argues that "once [an avant-gardiste work] has been accepted as an object that deserves a place in a museum, it no longer provokes; it turns into its opposite." Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 52.

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The only avant-gardiste "work of architecture" that comes even close to emulating the conceptualisation of time and space that is central to the early avant-gardes (or embodied in the *Object to be Destroyed*) is Kurt Scwitters' *Merzbau* project which, having begun as a series of independent sculptures,[114] grew to engulf several rooms of Schwitters' house in Hannover. Having described Dada as "the serious morality of our time,"[115] Schwitters had constructed the *Merzbau* as a literal embodiment of time, growing and evolving over a seventeen-year period and, like the *Object to be Destroyed*, the work was ignobly destroyed although, in this instance, by allied bombing in 1945. Constructed from found objects and personal mementos, the *Merzbau* contained niches and alcoves that were themed, often dedicated to individuals and housing objects (or bodily fluids) obtained from them.

Functioning as a form of spatial collage,[116] Schwitters' ongoing experiment was a marriage between the spatial permanence of architecture (that Harvey observed as a condition of modernism) and its dissolution through the simultaneous accumulation of incompatible objects in both time and space. Schwitters, like Breton[117], was essentially a collector and the architectural idiosyncrasy of the *Merzbau* emerged out of an obsessive need for both

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[114] Dietrich looks at the relationship between memorials and the "Victory Column" as a foundation for a study of Merzbau. See: Dorothea Dietrich, "The Fragment Reframed: Kurt Schwitters' Merz-Column," *Assemblage* 14 (April, 1991), p. 14.

[115] Kurt Schwitters, quoted in I. K. Bonset, "Characteristics of Dadaism," trans. Claire Nicholas White in Lucy Lippard, *Dadas on Art* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1971), p. 112 [orig. 1923].

[116] The links between the *Merzbau* and Schwitters' collages are developed in detail in: Dorothea Dietrich, *The Collages of Kurt Schwitters: Tradition and Innovation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); see also: Jaleh Mansoor, "Kurt Schwitters's Merzbau," *Lotus International* 123 (2004), p. 42-59. Despite his emphasis on collage, Schwitter's had questioned the proliferation of advertising to the exterior of houses (at the expense of beauty). See: Kurt Schwitters, "Dadaism in Holland [January 1923]," trans. Michael Kane in Ades (ed), *The Dada Reader*, p. 291-292.

[117] On this, see: Krzysztof Fijalkowski, "'Un salon au fond d'un lac': The domestic spaces of surrealism," in Mical (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 11-30.

preservation and commemoration.[118] However the *Merzbau* was also a recognition of the Dadaist collapse of medium, where the categories of writing, drawing, painting and sculpture all merged into a singular hybrid form which was, in the subsequent histories, the effective negation of its origins.[119] Bürger, for instance, had argued that the avant-gardiste work of art was the antithesis of the traditional categories of the institutionalised work of art and, in the case of Schwitters' *Merzbau*, the extent of this negation grew and expanded throughout the duration of the life of the work.[120] Schwitters, in line with Bürger's position, had argued that "there are no art forms, they have been artificially separated from each other. There is only art."[121] This process of dismantling the autonomous fields of art production had begun as early as 1918, where Schwitters had argued for the heterogenous multiplicity of art medium and its conflation, in Merz.[122] Schwitters acknowledged that

> at the end of 1918, I realized that all values only exist in relationship to each other and that restrictions to a single material is one-sided and small-minded. From this insight I formed Merz, above all as the sum of individual art forms, Merz-painting, Merz-poetry.[123]

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[118] For a similar reading, see: Leah Dickerman, "Merz and Memory: On Kurt Schwitters," in Leah Dickerman and Matthew S Witkovsky (ed), *The Dada Seminars* (Washington: Centre for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts, 2005), p. 117.

[119] This was one of the defining characteristics of "Merz" and linked to the evolution of art away from figurative realism. On numerous occasions, Schwitters demonstrates that "the medium is unimportant" and is an artificial demarcation of creativity. See: Schwitters, "Merz," p. 59.

[120] The possible connection between Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* and Schwitter's *Merzbau* is evident in Kuenzli's description, where he writes "[a]ll aspects of life could become art." Rudolf Kuenzli, *Dada* (London: Phaidon, 2006), p. 117.

[121] Schwitters, "Dadaism in Holland," p. 295.

[122] The word Merz was chosen arbitrarily. In Schwitters account it was "nothing more than the second syllable of COMMERZ." See: Kurt Schwitters, "Watch Your Step!" trans. Michael Kane in Ades (ed), *The Dada Reader*, p. 299.

[123] Kurt Schwitters, "Sturmbilderbuch" (1920) quoted and translated in: Elderfield, *Kurt Schwitters*, p. 49. Schwitters elsewhere wrote that "[t]he artist creates by choosing, dividing, and deforming the materials" thus "shortening the path between intuition and the moment the work of art becomes visible." Kurt Schwitters, "Merz Painting," trans. Rose-Carol Washton Long in Rose-Carol Washton Long, *German Expressionism:*

In a similar context, Gamard argues that, as the Merzbau expanded, the traditional modes of artistic production were eradicated and media became increasingly incompatible with Schwitters's artistic endeavours.[124]

John Macarthur, in his investigation of Tafuri's dialectical theory of the avant-garde, concedes that "[w]hile De Stijl, Theo van Doesburg and international constructivism make a convincing arc from painting to building, it is hard to see what an architecture of Dada might be, other than Schwitters' studio and house in Hannover."[125] Drawing from Tafuri's argument in relationship to chaos and order, Macarthur goes on to argue that the *Merzbau* was not only an effective (and convenient) dialectic for an oppositional theory of the avant-garde but was equally instructive in marrying romantic and baroque forces with the historical passage of modernism. *Merzbau* is one of the few avant-gardist "works" that is fundamentally architectural, embodying spatial, programmatic, experiential[126] and structural concerns. It is also, more than any other work of architecture, an embodiment of the peculiar collision of space and time that structured avant-gardiste activities in the 1920s and expanded the disciplinary boundaries and conventions that had historically been tied to aesthetic production. However, despite its obvious avant-garde credentials, the *Merzbau* is fundamentally tied to the production of architecture. While the readymade and the *objet trouvé* were littered throughout its construction, the installation maintained a clear separation between architectural space and the lived objects that were sculpturally displayed or concealed within it.

As a broader extension of the concerns of Dadaism, it has been popular in recent scholarship to explore the collapse of artistic medium in *Merzbau* and with particular

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Documents from the end of the Wilhelmine Empire to the Rise of National Socialism (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1995), p. 278.

[124] See: Elizabeth Burns Gamard, *Kurt Schwitters' Merzbau: The Cathedral of Erotic Misery* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2000), p. 11.

[125] John Macarthur, "Schwitters and Benjamin: the modernity of the baroque and romanticism," *The Journal of Architecture* 15 3 (2010), p. 284.

[126] Writing even before construction on the Merzbau had begun, Schwitters' had prophetically announced that: "architecture pays too little consideration to habitability, it takes too little account of the fact that people alter a room by their presence." See: Schwitters, "Dadaism in Holland," p. 296.

emphasis on the way that the architectural construction related to the drawing and collage processes of Schwitters.[127] Architecture is inevitably cast as the product of these explorations, constituting an inhabitable art object that is representative of the transformation of two-dimensional explorations into three-dimensional space. However a characteristic of the peculiar crisis in relationship to time that occurred in the 1920s is the reversal of this process: where architecture, instead of unfolding from two-dimensional explorations, came to inhabit (and permeate) the two-dimensional object itself. In these avant-garde strategies there was a *flattening* of architecture, rather than a *spatialisation* of art. While the *Merzbau* work is the exemplary model of the former, this dissertation is primarily concerned with the strategies of the latter.

With the exception of the *Merzbau*, Dada didn't produce any definitive architecture as such. Texts from Dada connecting with architecture are relatively rare.[128] Architecture figures in a number of poems by Arp, referred to in one instance, as "repressed aesthetics"[129]. There are also a number of important, but obscure, essays from the Hungarian-Bulgarian,[130] Dutch[131] and Croatian[132] movements providing the primary material

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[127] In this category see, for instance: Dietrich, "The Fragment Reframed," p. 14; Dickerman, "Merz and Memory," pp. 103-126; Mansoor, "Kurt Schwitters's Merzbau," pp. 42-59.

[128] One of the most thorough surveys of the writing of Dada and Surrealism on architecture is: Knight, "Observations on Dada and Surrealism," pp. 101-110.

[129] Associating architecture with rationality, Arp's poem "The Elephant Style versus the Bidet Style" makes an argument for ornament in architecture. The poem continues: "On the ruins of rational architecture, elephant style architecture rises, peacock style, bell style etc/ the last architects are sitting on pedestals with mummy faces." See: Hans Arp, "The Elephant Style versus the Bidet Style," translated in Knight, "Observations on Dada and Surrealism, " p. 101.

[130] See: Lajos Kassâk, "Pictorial Architecture," trans. George Cushing, *The Hungarian Avant-Garde: the Eight and the Activists* (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1980), pp. 114-117 [orig. 25 March, 1922]; this text was reproduced in Kuenzli, *Dada*, pp. 258-261. Kassâk's work will be dealt with in more detail in the subsequent chapter on "Drawing".

[131] The journal Mécano published a number of articles on architecture, under the stewardship of van Doesburg, and in collaboration with Tristan Tzara. For one of the essays on architecture see: I. K. Bonset, "Archachitektonica," trans. Michael White in Ades (ed), *The Dada Reader*, p. 266 [orig. July 1922].

[132] Led by the radical poet Dragan Aleksic, the Zagreb movement was collected around the journal *Dada-Tank*. For one of their texts on architecture, see: "Architecture," trans. Celia Hawkesworth in Ades (ed), *The Dada Reader*), p. 276 [orig. c. 1922].

on architecture and Dada and a provisional attempt to theorise it. The prose in these texts is almost always oppositional in regard to architecture—"nothing apart from Dada is strong enough to stamp this sleep *cucumberarchitecture* into the ground"[133]—but is indicative of the adversarial themes that ran through the depth of Dada practice. A number of well-documented connections between modernism and Dada have been influential in the scholarship of Dada and architecture, focussed primarily on Adolf Loos.[134] Hans Richter, one of the major figures of Zurich Dada and later the Berlin movement, had studied architecture and maintained an interest in the medium throughout his life.[135] There is virtually no evidence, however of the chief protagonists of Dada being involved in the production of architecture, outside of their various curatorial endeavours or performances at the Cabaret Voltaire[136].

Given their preoccupations with internal experience and external reality the contemporaneous connections between architectural practice and surrealism are also

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[133] I. K. Bonset, "Archachitektonica", p. 266.

[134] Tristan Tzara had commissioned Loos to design a house for him and, according to Kenneth Frampton, Loos was "perhaps the only true Dadaist in architecture." The house is published in: Benedetto Gravagnuolo, *Adolf Loos: Theory and Works* (New York: Rizzoli, 1989), pp. 188-190; See Frampton, "Has the Proletariat No Use for a Glider?" p. 97; Frederick Kiesler, who also became associated with surrealism, had worked in the office of Loos ("on a post-war slum-clearing project" according to Philips) and had considered him a friend. Like Schwitters, Kiesler's connection with the circle of Dada is relatively tenuous given his strong affiliations with constructivism and de stijl at this time and his friendships with other emerging avant-gardes. Kiesler was a friend of Schwitters, and had some connection with the more modest Dada movements in Hannover and Amsterdam. See: Lisa Philips, (ed), *Frederick Kiesler* (New York: Whitney Museum of Modern Art, 1989), p. 139.

[135] As well as being the author of one of the canonical histories of the movement, architecture and design are a backdrop to his own journal and writings. Richter's underrated journal *G*, brought together a collection of architects from the historical avant-garde, including amongst its editors, Lissitsky, Schwitters, Frederick Kiesler and Mies van der Rohe. See: Ades (ed), *The Dada Reader*, p. 306; see also: Hans Richter, *Dada: Art and Ant-Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1965).

[136] According to Tristan Tzara's, "Zurich Chronicle" the Cabaret was located "in the most obscure streets in the shadow of architectural ribs, where you will find discreet detectives amid red street lamps". Lenin famously lived across the street. See: Tristan Tzara, "Zurich Chronicle (1915-1919)," in Motherwell (ed), *Dada Painters and Poets*, p. 235-242 [1951]. See also; Hugo Ball, "Cabaret Voltaire," in Ades (ed), *The Dada Reader*, p. 20; The Cabaret was restored and reopened in 2002.

surprisingly few. The surrealists gravitated towards the architecture of Gaudi[137] as well as taking a well-documented interest in the vernacular hand-built architecture of Cheval[138] and, in the case of Dali, art nouveau[139]. Kiesler was the only accredited architect member and he built very few works, preferring to focus on theatre, shopfronts and unbuilt projects despite practicing for most of his life. Man Ray, who had studied architecture and drafting intensively in high school,[140] had turned down a scholarship to further his study of architecture. The second-wave Surrealist Roberto Matta had trained as an architect and worked in the studio of Le Corbusier before turning to art and had later penned a short piece on a possible surrealist architecture[141] but in general the surrealists were happy to document and inhabit space, rather than to actively create it. However, if Schwitters's *Merzbau* was instrumental in connecting architecture with the more esoteric dimensions of both time and space, it was the rediscovery of a ruined modernism, which, a generation later, functions as the most significant historical moment in the avant-garde in relationship to the discourse of architecture. When Veseley pioneered the interest in connections

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[137] See: Salvador Dali, "The Vision of Gaudi," trans. Francis Lionnet in Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, p. 141-142 [orig. 1933].

[138] Breton refers to Cheval as the "undisputed master of mediumistic architecture". See: Knight, "Observations on Dada and Surrealism," p. 108.

[139] See: Dali, "Art Nouveau Architecture's Terrifying and Edible Beauty," in Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, p. 139 [orig. 1933]. Originally published in the second issue of Minotaur, the essay was illustrated with images of Hector Guimard's Paris Metro stations, photographed by Georges Brassai. Dali gravitated towards the insect-like anthropomorphism of Guimard specifically and art-nouveau generally. In his autobiography, he had revealed that his attraction to art noveau was "a deliberate revolt against the dominant fashion in Paris." See: Dawn Ades, *Salvador Dali* (London: Thames and Hudson, 83; Salvador Dali, *The Secret Life of Salvador Dali*, trans. Haakon M. Chevalier (New York: Dial Press, 1942), p. 306. For more on the connection with Guimard, and also photography, see: Dawn Ades, "Photography and the Surrealist Text," in Krauss and Livingston, *L'Amour Fou*, p. 179.

[140] See: Durozoi, *History of the Surrealist Movement*, p. 28.

[141] Roberto Matta, "Sensitive Mathematics-Architecture of Time," in Mary Ann Caws (ed), *Surrealist Painters and Poets: An Anthology* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2001), pp. 299-300; Matta had also designed an intra-uterine interior for a surrealist bachelor pad (this had also been a preoccupation of Dali). For more on the connections between Matta and architecture, see: Anthony Vidler, "'Architecture-to-Be': Notes on Architecture in the Work of Matta and Gordon Matta-Clark," in Michelle Piranio (ed), *Transmission: The Art of Matta and Gordon Matta-Clark* (San Diego: San Diego Musuem of Modern Art, 2006); Bryan Dolin, "Matta's Lucid Landscapes," in Mical, *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 53-59.

between architecture and surrealism in the late 1970s, modernism was no longer the hegemonic force that it presented to the historical avant-garde. On the contrary, its values were deeply contested, to the point where the concerns of Dada and surrealism with experience and the praxis of life had an essential role in framing the postmodernist critique of utopian modernism.

As has already been argued, it was not in the *production* of architecture that the relationship with Dada and surrealism is consummated but rather in its rediscovery, as a *found object*. When Bernard Tschumi visited the *Villa Savoye* in the 1960s, as the rediscovery of surrealism was just beginning, he found the quintessential architectural object of high-modernism presented as an outmoded waste-product of cultural production. Covered in weeds and excrement in the same way that the symbols of surrealism—the locomotive[142] and the Gothic castle[143]—were reclaimed by the oppositional forces of nature, the modernist icon was revealed as an aging symbol of disrupted progress symbolic of the historical avant-garde's mistrust of reason and the dialectical relationship between nature and the city. Tschumi recalls the "squalid walls of the small service rooms on the ground floor, stinking of urine, smeared with excrement and covered with obscene graffiti."[144] His unscripted return to the scene of the modernist crime was an acknowledgment of the historical structures of architectural production where the categories of the "new", in the space of three decades, had been radically overturned. For Tschumi, this decay was evocative of death, and the inability of architectural modernism to surrender its immortality: as Tschumi put it, in the decomposition of modernism, "white bones did not possess the intolerable aspect of

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[142] Breton had described the anonymous image of a locomotive covered in forest in the opening of *L'Amour Fou*, although without a reproduction of the image. Breton was drawn to the idea of a "speeding locomotive abandoned for years to the delirium of a virgin forest". See: André Breton, *Mad Love* [L'Amour Fou], trans. Mary Ann Caws (Nebraska: The University of Nebraska Press, 1987), p. 10 [1937]. The image was published in: *Minotaur* 10 (1937). It is a recurring theme in surrealist texts from this period.

[143] Breton had written, in the first "Manifesto of Surrealism" of a ruined "castle" in a rustic setting not far from Paris. See: Andre Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," in Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism,* p. 16. The passage is quoted in: Veseley, "Surrealism, Myth and Modernity," p. 91.

[144] Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996), p. 73.

corrupt flesh."[145] Like the surrealists, Tschumi saw an inherent contradiction between the hygienic fantasies of modernism and the lived desires of the body, ultimately reconciled through the ruin, which embodied not only decay but the illusion of immortality. The architecture that Tschumi discovered at the *Villa Savoye* in the 1960s, simply verified this illusion, removing the mask that had concealed the historical connections between surrealism and modernism and enabling their future reconciliation through the found object. This was not just a "discovery" of architecture but, as Tschumi acknowledged in the caption, its "survival" against the rationalising forces of a technological society that was anxious to preserve the illusion of its indefatigable form. By transgressing the "limits of history", the *Villa Savoye* became a monument that rejuvenated the values of the historical avant-garde by disproving the ideological biases of the present.

While there have been several scholarly attempts to reclaim the objects of Corbusian high-modernism[146] as the by-product of Dada and surrealist influence, it is in their degradation over a course of a generation, that the temporal concerns of surrealism reach their full realisation. Writing in regard to Le Corbusier's *Pavilion Suisse*, Breton describes the building as a demonstration of "the conditions of dryness and rationality one has come to

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[145] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 73.

[146] The relationship between Le Corbusier and surrealism has already been widely explored, even though it remains contested territory. While Le Corbusier was often indifferent to surrealism, he had written favourably of the surrealists in an essay wherein he praised their approach but dismissed its relevance to architecture with the conclusion that it denied functionality, which was central to architecture. Le Corbusier was certainly not diametrically opposed to surrealism and, if anything, revered the surrealists as a source of inspiration as his faith in the pure modernism from the 1920s was beginning to wane. The surrealist collector Beistegui had commissioned Le Corbusier in 1929 to design a house and, while an object of discussion in scholarship in the area, it could not be read as entirely surrealist and is more representative of the themes of early modernism. Despite this, Curtis writes that it is indicative of the moment when Le Corbusier's "flirtation with surrealism became a full-blown affair." Curtis also argues that the building coincides with an experimentation with Surrealist technique in Corbusier's painting revealing "a new pattern of oddities" (p. 9). More recently it has been demonstrated that Le Corbusier had met Bataille and had a marked-up copy of *The Accursed Share* which Bataille had personally given him. The definitive essay on the connection between Corbusier and surrealism is: Alexander Gorlin, "The Ghost in the Machine: Surrealism in the Work of Le Corbusier," *Perspecta* 18 (1982), pp. 50-65; republished in: Mical (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 103-118; William J. R. Curtis, *Le Corbusier: Ideas and Forms* (London: Phaidon, 1986), p. 9, p. 110; On Bataille and Corbusier, see: Nadir Lahiji, "'…the gift of time': Le Corbusier reading Bataille," in Mical (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture,* pp. 119-139.

expect in the last few years."[147] When Tschumi arrived at the ruined Villa Savoye his response had echoed the concerns of Breton but, in a truly Bretonian sense, was also "vibrated with the reflexes of the future."[148] Acknowledging the rationalist ambitions, Tschumi's caption to the image of the desecrated interior read: "Sensuality has been known to overcome even the most rational of buildings."[149] The relationship between nature and the city—a theme in the writing of Tafuri—is reified in the ruined cube embodying the "simultaneity" of avant-gardist concerns in a despatialised way.

Echoing the importance of both negation and dialectic in this regard, Tschumi saw the conflation of rationality (reason) and sensuality (experience) as profoundly erotic, boasting that when carried to excess architecture "will reveal both the traces of reason and the sensual experience of space. Simultaneously."[150] While the emphasis on experience, at the expense of reason, is a familiar surrealist trope it is also central to avant-gardist concerns and a characteristic of Bürger's "avant-gardiste work of art". More importantly however, the ruined and outmoded fragments of modernism that Tschumi discovered in the late 70s constituted a "found" architecture, eroded by time and functioning as a negation of its original historical (new) and architectural (clean) aspirations. This found architecture, more than any of the spatial experiments that Dada and surrealism undertook, establishes a trajectory that is outside of the historical concerns of modernism and connects architecture with the spatial and temporal practices of the historical avant-garde.

Following a particular insight made apparent in the work of Veseley, this dissertation will pursue an argument that architecture functioned not as an autonomous object but as an

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[147] Breton quoted in: Knight, "Observations on Dada and Surrealism," p. 109.

[148] The full quote, cited at the start of this chapter, is that "the work of art is valuable only in so far as it is vibrated by the reflexes of the future." André Breton quoted in Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," p. 249 [note. 17].

[149] The caption is almost a response to Breton's reading of Bretonian modernism, acknowledging the defeat of rationalism by the sensual. See: Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 75. The poster originally dates from 1975, contemporaneous with the publication of Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde*.

[150] See: Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 75. There is a correlation between this caption and Harvey's argument regarding "simultaneity" as an avant-garde strategy where time and space are merged. See Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, p. 21.

objet-trouvé [found object] in the creative practices of Dada and surrealism. The concerns of Dada and surrealism were not grounded in the production of architecture but in its negation through both time and function. This became a primary avant-garde strategy and can be read as central to the concerns of avant-gardism at large, particularly with respect to the sublation of art and life which Bürger identifies as the primary motivating force. However, in order to develop this argument, a more detailed understanding of Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* is required and especially in regard to its relationship to architecture.

Part Two: Architectures of the Historical Avant-Garde

The collision between the fantasies of the surrealist movement and the hygienic machinations of the modern movement could not have been more dramatic, operating on vastly different trajectories across the landscape of Paris in the 1920s. At the heart of this tension was a dialectical rupture between the city as technological organism and the city as living site of eroticised desire. Pulling in fundamentally different directions, the intellectual battles to repossess the city created a climate of opposition where art and literature became the forum through which polemical attitudes towards the city were presented and politicised. Reflecting the functionalism and social praxis that the avant-garde sought to reconnect with, architectural space was recreated through experimentations across the range of creative practices, finding a rejuvenated and polemical role in the transgressive strategies of the readymade, drawing, collage and montage and photography.

Marked as a site of gratification and heterogeneity, the dynamic landscape of the pedestrian city bridged the space between domestic life and the unconscious and, for the surrealists, became the literal site of dream sequences and spatial incongruity.[1] In both Dada and surrealism, architecture was reconsidered as an agent in the production of life rather than art and, in Bürger's theorisation of the sublation of the two, architecture provided a contextual connection with the real world and its social and functional imperatives. While leading figures of the historical avant-garde (like Kurt Schwitters and André Breton) were also fanatical collectors of objects, assembling domestic collections of ancient statues and filling their houses with anthropological artefacts,[2] it was the city that constituted the museum of surrealist experience, carefully organised and arranged as the space of unpredictable but carefully orchestrated desire. While both Dada and surrealism

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[1] On this theme, see: Roger Cardinal, "Soluble City: The Surrealist perception of Paris" in Dalibor Veseley (ed), *Architectural Design Profile: Surrealism and Architecture* 11 2-3 (1978), pp. 143-149; M. Stone-Richards, "Latencies and imago: Blanchot and the shadow city of surrealism," Thomas Mical (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture* (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 249-272; Raymond Spiteri, "Surrealism and the irrational embellishment of Paris," Mical (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 191-208.

[2] On this, see: Krzysztof Fijalkowski, "'Un salon au fond d'un lac': The domestic spaces of Surrealism," in Mical (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 11-30. See also: Brian Dillon, "An Approach to the Interior," Jane Allison (ed), *The Surreal House* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), pp. 54-61.

produced little that could be considered architecture (in its traditional form) there is no doubt that there was a spatial and architectural consciousness that accompanied all of their activities.

While this spatiality is not central to the concerns of Bürger, it is a recurring theme in the investigations of the historical avant-garde in the period since his work was published and especially in the investigations of the Octoberist critics. As already demonstrated, Rosalind Krauss has argued for a spatiality in the work of Duchamp which is antivisual in nature[3] and Hal Foster has drawn attention to the *outmoded* as a spatial model through which to reposition surrealist practice.[4] In both readings, architecture exists as a found context against which creative acts and works are projected. As Walter Benjamin argued, surrealism was an avant-garde not of the *new*, but of the *old*, radically repositioning the outmoded objects of everyday life in opposition to technology and the rampant consumer fetishism that had continually absorbed increasing percentages of the visual landscape.[5] For Benjamin, architecture was a critical, and overlooked, aspect of surrealism and had been instrumental in articulating their radicalised relationship to history. Illustrating this in his essay on surrealism, Benjamin argued

> [surrealism] was the first to perceive the revolutionary energies that appear in the "outmoded"—in the first iron constructions, the first factory buildings, the earliest photos, objects that have begun to be extinct, grand pianos, the dresses of five years ago, fashionable restaurants when the vogue has begun to ebb from them. The relation of these things to revolution—no one can have a more exact concept of it than these authors. No one before these visionaries and augurs perceived how destitution—not only social, but architectonic, the poverty of interiors, enslaved and enslaving objects—can suddenly be transformed into revolutionary nihilism.[6]

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[3] See: Rosalind Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1994), p. 12.

[4] See: Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1995), pp. 157-191; See also: Foster, "The ABC of Contemporary Design," *October* 100 (Spring, 2002), pp. 195-196; Hal Foster, *Design and Crime and Other Diatribes* (London: Verso, 2002), pp. 138-139.

[5] Walter Benjamin, "Surrealism: the last snapshot of the European intelligentsia," in *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Schocken Books, 1978), p. 192.

[6] Walter Benjamin, "Surrealism: The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia" in *Reflections,* p. 230.

This outmoded revolutionary potential is a significant theme in the work of Bürger who demonstrates that Adorno's theory of modern art has an overdependence on the category of the *new*.[7] Historically, as in the case of Greenberg,[8] the *new* was entwined with the concerns of the avant-garde and central to its definition and interpretation. Adorno's essay on surrealism had argued that it was "paradoxical for something modern, already under the spell of […] mass-production, to have any history at all."[9] For Bürger however, the new was not a characteristic of modernism but a pre-requisite of all historical epochs and it was of little use in explaining the tactics of the historical avant-garde as they were radically outside of the established traditions against which the new could be evaluated.[10] The historical avant-garde undertook a systematic negation of the entire institution of art and, as a result, the stylistic concerns of technique were inconsequential in relationship to this broader catharsis. Equally importantly, the most discursive practices of the avant-garde were not innovative in a technical sense but provocative in an experiential sense. This

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[7] Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1984), pp. 59-63; Bürger is primarily concerned with the passage at the start of Aesthetic Theory where Adorno explains the new as a dialectical opposition to tradition. See: Theodor Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory,* trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: The Minnesota University Press, 1997), pp. 45. In an extended analysis of Adorno's theory in relationship to the avant-garde, Peter Osborne has argued that Adorno's constructs a theory of modernism divided between dissonance and the new. See: Peter Osborne, "Adorno and the Metaphysics of Modernism: The Problem of a Postmodern Art," in Andrew Benjamin (ed), *The Problems of Modernity: Adorno and Benjamin* (London: Routledge, 1989), pp. 23-48.

[8] See, for instance, the contemporaneous: Clement Greenberg, "Counter Avant-Garde," *Art International* 15 (May 1971), pp. 16-19. The focus of both Greenberg and Michael Fried was "presentness" which was indelibly entwined with the new. See also: Michael Fried, "How Modernism Works: A response to T. J. Clark," *Critical Inquiry* 9 (September 1982), pp. 217-234.

[9] See: Theodor Adorno, "Looking Back on Surrealism," trans. Rolf Tiedemann and Shierry Weber Nicholsen, in Theodor Adorno, *Notes to Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p. 88 [1956].

[10] In this regard, Poggioli makes a similar argument several years earlier. In the final section of his *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, Poggioli argues that

> [w]hat characterises avant-garde art is the myth of the new. It is often said that the taste or cult of the new is not a new thing, and that is very well said. There is no great difference in the concrete concept that the ancients and the moderns have of the new; but there is an enormous difference in their respective evaluations of it.

Poggioli concludes that "nothing is more new and modern that the modern cult of the new." See: Renato Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Belknap Press, 1968), p. 214.

distinction was a fundamental insight of Bürger's argument and distinguished it from the earlier positions of both Lukacs and Adorno.[11] Dada and surrealism were lived (rather than artistic) phenomena and it was in the ramshackle flea-markets of Paris or the aging Cabaret Voltaire that the experiences of Dada and surrealism were framed and, more importantly, that a discovered architectural context made its way into artistic production.[12]

While the sublation of art and life is a perennial theme throughout Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde*,[13] the role of experience, as a by-product of life, has been more widely explored in its aftermath, and especially in relationship to Dada and surrealism. Schulte-Sasse focuses on this aspect of avant-gardism in his analysis of *Theory of the Avant-Garde*[14] and Bürger, in his more recent writing, has established a concrete connection between the avant-garde and the pursuit of experience.[15] For Bürger, experience was the antidote to bourgeois social conservatism and the work of art was the bridge that enabled this transgression to be consolidated. In an essay from 1992, Bürger argues

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[11] While Adorno had also drawn attention to the experiential qualities of Surrealism in his essay on the topic, where he argued that "[s]urrealism gathers up the things the *Neue Sachlichkeit* [New Objectivity] denies to human beings" through a process which "salvages what is out of date" and its inherent "idiosyncrasies". See: Adorno, "Looking Back on Surrealism," p. 90; What is critical, however, is that Adorno's analysis of art had an overdependence on technique which prevented the experiential aspects of avant-garde production to be integrated with his analysis. Herbert Marcuse refers to this schism in Adorno's thought (specifically as it relates to surrealism) in: Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man* (London: Sphere, 1968), p. 73 [note 13].

[12] For two eye-witness accounts of the spatial characteristics of Dada, both emphasising the consideration given to architectural organisation, see: Richard Huelsenbeck {Alexis], "A Visit to the Cabaret Dada," trans. Mel Gordon in Mel Gordon (ed), *Dada Performance* (New York: PAJ Publications, 1987), pp. 83-85 [1920]; Ben Hecht, "Dadafest," in Gordon (ed), *Dada Performance*, pp. 80-81.

[13] The critical passage, in this regard, is: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 49-50.

[14] Jochen Schulte-Sasse, "Theory of Modernism versus Theory of the Avant-Garde," in Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. vii-xv. Schulte-Sass also demonstrates that this is a theme in Bürger's earlier work, such as: Peter Bürger, *Der französische Surrealismus: Studien zum problem der avant-gardistischen Literatur* (Frankfurt am Main: Athenaum, 1971).

[15] Bürger is particularly concerned with the relationship between social experience and literary production in: Peter Bürger, "The Institution of 'Art' as a Category in the Sociology of Literature," *Cultural Critique* 2 (Winter, 1985-1986), pp. 11-13, p. 22, pp. 32-33; the experience of alienation is a backdrop to the essay: Peter Bürger, "Aporias of Modern Aesthetics," trans. Ben Morgan, *New Left Review* 1 184 (November-December, 1990), pp. 47-57.

> [t]he surrealists rose up from their writing desks to find out whether it was still possible to have experiences. They thereby opened themselves up to the problematic constellation that arrived with bourgeois society with the expressed intention to solve it, not through thinking but in reality. The constellation is the following: the bourgeois individual who presents himself as an autonomous, self-responsible subject experiences the society into which [they were] born as a world that inhibits everywhere his possibilities for actualisation and that simultaneously is the result of human activity and thus his own activity. Where the solace of a better world beyond slips away, only art remains to close the gap and to reconcile the subject with the world. The symbolic artwork uniquely joins form and matter, subject and object, to a completed image at the cost of separating the sphere of art from the cultural battles of [the individual] and the world. The surrealists are not satisfied with this solution.[16]

This section will demonstrate how this avant-garde predilection for experience has a natural affiliation with architectural space, which functioned as a framing element that disfigured the bourgeois contexts within which art traditionally and conventionally operated. By placing unprecedented importance on the sublation of art and life as an avant-gardiste preoccupation, Bürger inadvertently provides the dialectic through which a theory of architecture in the historical avant-garde can be established. Architecture, as the predominant frame of social praxis is connected to art not as *art*, but as a fragment of *reality* that becomes a recurring strategy of both freedom and constraint. The Dada assault on the institution of art was as much an exhibition of art's interior and its spatial operations as a critique of aesthetic production. Architecture was interrogated for its attached "bourgeois" values in some contexts as much as for its social and functional symbolism in others. Habermas has argued that the sublation of art and life that accompanied avant-garde practice was from a distinctive viewpoint (the proletariat or artistic individual) and was certainly not from the perspective of the cultured bourgeois. From their perspective, the transformation in the functional role of art was no longer a complimentary sublation of art and life (as historically it had been) and was now a fundamental critique of its social praxis (the specific *separation* of art from *their* life). Habermas writes

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[16] Peter Bürger, "Inversions," in Peter Bürger, *The Thinking of the Master: Bataille Between Hegel and Surrealism*, trans. Richard Block (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2002), p.107.

> [i]n the artistically beautiful, the bourgeoisie once again could experience primarily its own ideals and redemption, however fictive, of a promise of happiness that was merely suspended in everyday life. But in radicalised art, it soon had to recognise the negation rather than the complement of its social practice.[17]

That architecture fulfilled both roles—deployed for polemical effect in these opposing contexts—further complicates the relationship between the historical avant-garde and modernism. The systematic negations of Dada and surrealism challenged the autonomy of the architectural object but at the same time embraced the experiential and symbolic characteristics of nineteenth century commerce, allowing Habermas to argue that the sublation of art and life that the avant-garde intended was ultimately ineffective due to the limited sphere in which its influence was felt. Referencing the work of Bürger, Habermas asks whether the "failure of the surrealist rebellion" is symptomatic of a "farewell to modernity" and equally a transition towards post-modernity.[18] The work of Habermas is centred around a basic faith in the idea and implementation of modernism and the modern project, characterised by the articulation of independent spheres—science, art and morality—which are, for the first time, isolated and "autonomous". In Habermas's critique, he argues that the activities of the avant-garde, while radical, were only ever directed at one of these spheres—the sphere of art—and as a result their impact would never amount to a universal collapse, but purely to the collapse of this one distinct field.[19]

As has already been argued, in the case of architecture these fields are less clearly established and its disciplinary scope implies an ambiguous relationship to autonomy. In a direct response to Habermas's essay, Bürger is critical of the oversimplification that enables these three spheres to be discussed without reference to the "ruptures" that tend to interpenetrate and complicate them. Bürger argues that Habermas "neglects the fact that there are structural differences between the respective spheres and that the spheres

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[17] Jürgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis*, trans. Thomas McCarthy (Boston: Beacon Press, 1975), p.78

[18] Habermas, "Modernity and Postmodernity," p. 11.

[19] Habermas, "Modernity and Postmodernity," p. 11.

themselves differ in social status."[20] For Bürger, the project of the avant-garde was directly tied to the collapse of the autonomy of art, rupturing the autonomising forces of modernism and independently engaged in marrying the production of art with the praxis of life.[21] Again, Bürger argues that the surrealist drive is differentiated from the operations of capitalism and is directed towards experience and the intensity and virility of life.[22] While this doesn't enable a collapse of, for instance, the spheres of "science" and "morality," the collapse of the autonomous sphere of art does entail a redistribution of knowledge and experience in the other two. The inherent complexity of architecture (and its ties to concerns specifically outside of aesthetics) gives it currency not only in the redistribution of knowledge that Bürger describes but as an agent in the collapse of the categories that shape it.

This section considers architecture as a contextual backdrop to the praxis of life, which operates outside of the concerns of both aesthetics and the institution of art and is deployed for its oppositional relationship to these categories. In this respect, architecture is distinct from the sociology of art and its effects that *Theory of the Avant-Garde* constructs. When Bürger situates art as a "subsystem" (rather than a sphere) of society architecture is manifested as a critique of this system, rather than an organic by-product

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[20] Peter Bürger, "The Significance of the Avant-Garde for Contemporary Aesthetics: A reply to Jurgen Habermas," trans. Andreas Huyssen and Jack Zipes, *New German Critique* 22 (Winter, 1981), p. 20; some of these ideas are developed further in: Peter Bürger, "Literary institution and modernisation," *Poetics: Journal of Empirical Research on Literature, the. Media and the Arts* 12 4-5 (1983), pp. 419-433; a version of this paper is published in: Peter Bürger, *The Decline of Modernism* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), pp. 3-18.

[21] Habermas's response to the "flattening" of art and life is that "[t]hese experiments have served to bring back to life […] exactly those structures of art which they were meant to dissolve." Habermas, "Modernity and Postmodernity," p. 10; In a similar vein, Reiner Nägele argues that "all-pervasive experience […] can appear only negatively in the text, in its gaps and ruptures." Nägele refers to a "totalising, internalised structure of experience." See: Rainer Nägele, "Modernism and Postmodernism: the Margins of Articulation" in *Studies in 20th Century Literature* 5 1 (Fall: 1980), pp. 2-25; similar terminology is used in: Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity*, p. 12.

[22] As Bürger elaborates, "the more bourgeois society emerges to a single context of functioning […] the less it allows one to make individual experiences […]. In a society that tendentially eliminates the possibility of experience, the surrealists seek to regain this experience." Quoted and translated in Schulte-Sasse, "Theory of Modernism versus Theory of the Avant-Garde," p. xliii.

of it.[23] Bürger—who singles out Marx's writing on self-criticism as being of particular importance to the methodological study of art[24]—argues that the institution of art is characterised by autonomy from society and it is through the emergence of the historical avant-garde that this status is radically questioned. By engaging in this self-criticism of the role of art, the avant-garde articulated art as an institution for the first time and was able to operate in a space that was antagonistic to these boundaries. The by-product of this formulation is that, once the institution of art is made evident, art practice is inevitably entwined within its categories, either through tacit acceptance or negation.[25] The avant-garde must either annihilate the institution of art completely, or subsequently surrender to its organisational categories.

The autonomy of art that had been achieved by the bourgeois in the nineteenth century was equally the institutionalisation of art, which developed the apparatuses through which it was preserved. Autonomy is two-fold. It exists at the social level, underpinning the relationship between the "work" and its social context. However there is also the autonomy internal to art that sees painting, sculpture, writing and architecture as independent fields that are, in a critical sense, unrelated. This internalised autonomy was

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[23] Bürger warns that there is no precondition for a crisis in society to be manifested as a crisis in the subsystem and, by implication, that ruminations in the subsystem may have no direct bearing on society as a whole. Architecture thus provides an avenue where the effects of art can be felt outside of the specific domain of aesthetics. Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 23.

[24] For Marx, historical knowledge is of critical value only to the degree that it relates to the present and, to avoid the mere accumulation of historical ideas, he arrives at the necessity for a self-criticism of the present. Self-criticism, in a Marxist sense, seeks to step outside of the received and internalised categories of a system, and present a critique of the system itself. Using Marx's infamous critique of religion as an example, Bürger explains that "self-criticism presupposes distance from mutually hostile religious ideas. This distance, however, is merely the result of a fundamentally more radical criticism and that is the critique of religion as an institution" (p.21). This is of profound importance in the formation of Bürger's theory as it enables a critique of art as an institution, as opposed to merely its aesthetic or historical forms. Bürger concludes that "only when art enters the stage of self-criticism does the objective understanding of past periods of development of art become possible" (p. 22). See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 21-27.

[25] Bürger returns to this point later, arguing that once the "readymade" of Duchamp is accepted as an artwork in a gallery, it no longer serves as a negation, but confirmation of this institutional status. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 52.

(as has been demonstrated) central to the criticism of Greenberg[26], which sought to subject art to critiques that were wholly contained within the formalistic properties of the medium and had historical precedent in the method of Heinrich Wöfflin for example.[27] For Greenberg, "[t]he essence of modernism […] lies in the use of the characteristic methods of a discipline itself not in order to subvert it, but to entrench it more firmly in its area of competence."[28] One of the side-effects of this model of criticism was the divergence, both critically and historically, of architecture and art.[29] Architecture was more integrated in the history of art in the nineteenth century, than the twentieth, where the inherent autonomy of modern art was seen as a burden to the functionalism of architecture and necessarily chained to social forces and forms.[30] By exploring art in an expanded social context, tied to the forces of production and the historical shifts in technique, Bürger is able to conflate the various modes of avant-garde practice and he, indirectly, enables architecture to be implicated in the same avant-garde phenomenon that structured the history of art.[31] Rather than accepting the autonomous nature of art, the avant-garde sets out to dismantle it. As the medium that is most resistant to the claims of autonomy (ie. the most assimilated with the forces of life) architecture is deployed to polemical effect, defining the groundwork for avant-garde practice and the future terms of its influence.

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[26] Greenberg's definitive essay on "autonomy" in this sense, is: Clement Greenberg, "Modernist Painting," in Clement Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism: Modernism with a Vengeance, 1957-1969*, ed. John O'Brian (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 85-93.

[27] The seminal example of this demarcation of media into "drawing", "painting", "sculpture" and "architecture" is: Heinrich Wöfflin, *Principles of Art History: The Problem of the Development of Style in Later Art,* trans. M. D. Hottinger (New York: Dover, 1950) [orig. 1915].

[28] Clement Greenberg, "Modernist Painting*," Art and Literature* **4** (Spring 1965), pp. 193-201.

[29] For an investigation of this, see: Katherine Fischer Taylor, "Architecture's Place in History: Art or Adjunct?" *The Art Bulletin* **83** 2 (June 2001), pp. 342-346.

[30] For the connection between architecture and autonomy in an Italian context, see: Pier Vittorio Aureli, *The Project of Autonomy: Politics and Architecture within and Against Capitalism* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2008; see also: Christopher Wood, "Why Autonomy?" *Perspecta* **33** (2002), pp. 48-53; Tahl Kaminer, "Autonomy and Commerce: The integration of architectural autonomy," *ARQ* **11** 1 (2007), pp. 63-70.

[31] For a discussion of the issues of architectural form, culture and autonomy, coinciding with the publication of Bürger's thesis in English, see: K. Michael Hays, "Critical Architecture: Between Culture and Form," *Perspecta* **21** (1984), pp. 14-29.

This is fundamentally different to the position of Greenberg, who saw the only viable social role of the artist as in isolation from the corrupting forces of the mainstream. Greenberg vigorously defended the autonomous status of art, as well as its organisation though the conventional categories of medium. The function of art was aesthetic rather than social, and the social structures that impacted on the individual artist were those that were prescribed by bourgeois artistic values. Greenberg was categorical on this front: "things that purport to be art do not function, do not exist, as art until they are experienced through taste."[32] Equally implicit in Greenberg's theory is that the categories of art (painting, sculpture, architecture) need to be defended and it is the role of the avant-garde to ensure this differentiation is vigorously maintained.[33]

Despite the obvious political divides, the divergence in these positions can be explained through the historical and social conditions that each author positions their theory of the avant-garde against. Greenberg's understanding of the avant-garde is far from sociological and aims at an internal structuring of the history of art, with a particular emphasis on the passage from Impressionism to abstraction in painting. In contrast, Bürger's theory of the avant-garde is relatively ambivalent to art history, positioning itself against major transformations that have structured society and against which art is the passive by-product. The historical avant-garde is, for Bürger, a direct consequence of unprecedented social conditions, whereas for Greenberg it is a loosely defined artistic elite, characterised by technical innovation in representation, rather than historical timeframes or collusion with social forces. While already implicit in the criticism of Adorno, Lukacs and Marcuse, Bürger's theory concretised the relationship between artistic practice and social transformation, establishing it as an extension of (and reaction to) the development of capitalist systems of production. The effect of Bürger's theory was to reposition art in a dramatically expanded social and cultural context that radically

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[32] Clement Greenberg, "Avant-Garde Attitudes: New Art in the Sixties," in Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism: 1957-1969*, p. 293.

[33] On this front, Wood has argued that the evolution of autonomy was also the splintering of architectural history from art history; where the autonomy of art was preserved, while the autonomy of architecture was inherently compromised. The nineteenth century histories of art included architecture, while those of the Twentieth century accounts tend to polarise the two. See: Wood, "Why Autonomy?" p. 49.

overturned the narrowly aesthetic categorisations of Greenberg and coincided with a systematic revision of the primary concerns of art criticism and the political and social motivations that had been excluded up until that point. The English translation of Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* coincided, ironically, with a resurgence of critical writing on Greenberg's work and a reinvigoration of debates regarding the political and social contexts that had been absent in his investigation of the avant-garde.[34] As demonstrated, architectural space played a formative role in this reappraisal.

This section will argue that the historical avant-garde discovered architecture and deployed it for polemical effect, as a fragment torn from life and discovered through experience. With an understanding of the historical nature of the aesthetic categories that characterise *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, this section will extend Bürger's emphasis on means (or technique) through the exploration of four seminal "techniques" that were endemic to both the historical and aesthetic production of Dada and surrealism. These categories are the *objet-trouvé*, drawing, collage (and montage) and photography. In each case there was a specific attempt to dismantle the medium itself and, as will be shown, architecture played a definitive role in the transformations that took place. By focussing on the aspects of avant-garde production that have preoccupied Bürger, the section will demonstrate a role for architecture in the concerns of the historical avant-garde and one that challenges the formalist categories of Greenberg through a radicalisation of experience, at the expense of form.

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[34] See, for instance: Susan Noyes Platt, "Clement Greenberg and the 1930s: A new perspective on his Criticism," *Art Criticism* 5 3 (1989): pp. 47-64; Thierry de Duve, "The Monochrome and the Blank Canvas," in Serge Guilbaut (ed), *Reconstructing Modernism: Art in New York, Paris and Montreal* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1990), pp. 244-310; Kay Larson, "The Dictatorship of Clement Greenberg" *Artforum* 25 10 (Summer, 1987), pp. 76-79.

(Found) Architecture

> It is in discovery alone, that one recognises the marvellous headlong rush of desire. It alone can enlarge the universe, causing it to relinquish some of its opacity, letting us discover its extraordinary capacities for reserve, proportionate to the innumerable needs of the spirit. Daily life abounds in exactly this sort of small discovery […] You only have to know how to get along in the labyrinth.
>
> André Breton, *L'Amour Fou*[1]

The exact nature of an architecture of the historical avant-garde remains open-ended and especially in relationship to Dada and surrealism where, despite the scholarly interest in the topic, there is a virtual consensus that architecture was not their primary concern.[2] Despite its ready adaptability to architecture, Bürger's argument that the avant-gardiste work functions as a negation of the nineteenth century work of art, is not one that has attained much traction in the scholarship of architectural history. Numerous authors retracing the connections between architecture and the historical avant-gardes have lamented the failure of Dada and surrealism to *produce* architecture[3], or have focussed on

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[1] André Breton, *Mad Love* [L'Amour Fou], trans. Mary Ann Caws (Nebraska: The University of Nebraska Press, 1987), pp. 15-16.

[2] Veseley argues that the surrealists were "not particularly interested" in architecture (1978) and it "did not become an integral part of surrealist endeavour" (2010); Frampton maintained that "the surreal in architecture does not exist"; Mical saw architecture as the "unfulfilled promise of surrealist thought"; Vidler concedes that "architecture did not apparently play an extensive role in Surrealist concerns." See: Dalibor Veseley, "Salvador Dali: On Architecture" in Dalibor Veseley (ed), *Architectural Design Profile: Surrealism and Architecture* 11 2-3 (1978), p.138; Dalibor Veseley, "The Surrealist House as a Labyrinth and Metaphor of Creativity," in Jane Allison (ed), *The Surreal House* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), p.41; Kenneth Frampton, "Has the Proletariat No Use for a Glider" in Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, p. 138; Thomas Mical, "Introduction", in Thomas Mical (ed), Surrealism and Architecture (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 2; Anthony Vidler, "Fantasy, The Uncanny and Surrealist Theories of Architecture," *Papers of Surrealism* 1 (Winter 2003), p. 1.

[3] The exception is Kurt Schwitters *Merzbau*, which has attracted a large amount of scholarly interest in the last two decades, and especially in relationship to its avant-garde credentials. See, for instance: John Macarthur, "Schwitters and Benjamin: the modernity of the baroque and romanticism," *The Journal of Architecture* 15 3 (2010), pp. 283-300; Elizabeth Burns Gamard, *Kurt Schwitters' Merzbau* (New York: Princeton Architectural

architectural objects that are historically (rather than definitively) surrealist.[4] The surrealists' preoccupation with the work of Cheval and Gaudi has further tended to narrow investigations in this field, providing a stylistic model that the philosophical concerns of Dada and surrealism can be accommodated within, but without any deeper scrutiny of, the architectural possibilities that lie beyond it.

Given this, there is a failure in the scholarship of Dada and surrealism to place an appropriate emphasis on *negation* in avant-garde activities and especially as it relates to architecture and production. Veseley acknowledges the role of negation in Dada and, like Bürger, sees Duchamp as a pivotal figure on this path, instrumental in separating the trajectories of modernism and the avant-garde.[5] Veseley quotes Breton, who identifies a "line of demarcation between the two [positive and negative] spirits that will tend to oppose one another more and more in the very heart of the modern spirit."[6] However, for Veseley, negation functioned in a productive capacity in surrealism, transforming the conventions of life through imagination and experience. Veseley argues several decades later that "the relation of surrealists to architecture was limited almost exclusively to the discovery of buildings and places appreciated as a result of objective chance (*objet trouvé*)."[7]

It is clear that the historical avant-garde already understood and articulated the psychoanalytical aspects of the *objet-trouvé* and its transformative qualities. In 1905 Freud had written in his *Three Essays on Sexuality* that the "finding of an object is in fact a

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Press, 2000); Dorothea Dietrich, "The Fragment Reframed: Kurt Schwitters' Merz-Column," *Assemblage* 14 (April, 1991), pp. 14.

[4] Le Corbusier's house for Beistegui or Adolf Loos's house for Tristan Tzara are two clear examples. See, for instance: Kenneth Frampton, "Has the Proletariat No Use for a Glider," p. 138; Alexander Gorlin, "The Ghost in the Machine: Surrealism in the Work of Le Corbusier," *Perspecta* 18 (1982), pp. 58-60.

[5] Dalibor Veseley, "Surrealism, Myth and Modernity", in Dalibor Veseley (ed), *Architectural Design Profile: Surrealism and Architecture* 11 2-3 (1978), p. 88.

[6] André Breton, *What is Surrealism?: Selected Writings*, trans. Franklin Rosemount (London: Pluto Press, 1978), p. 14.

[7] Dalibor Veseley, "The Surrealist House as a Labyrinth and Metaphor of Creativity," p.40.

refinding of it"[8] and in the 1930s Breton had compared the act of discovery to the transformative experience of the dream.[9] While Veseley acknowledges the role that discovery played in surrealist attitudes towards architecture, he neglects the transformative nature of this discovery, which indelibly altered the avant-gardiste work of art and shifted the emphasis onto an unprecedented spatiality in creative production. Dada and surrealism, as already illustrated, continually undertook the erosion of the historical categories of artistic production and, as a result, "the avant-gardist work of architecture" should be understood as not only a negation of the traditional categories of architecture but an accumulation of collective strategies that were traditionally outside of the concerns of building (including those of collage, photography and drawing). Bürger's work, on this front, is instructive as it promotes an investigation of the historical categories of architectural production, rather than the aesthetic categories of architectural form. If the avant-gardiste work of art negated the aesthetic "production" of art, then it follows that the avant-gardiste work of architecture was, similarly, not linked to the production of architecture but its rediscovery or negation. As the avant-garde *discovered* the *objet-trouvé* and presented it as an affront to bourgeois aesthetics, Dada and surrealism drew upon a forgotten architecture, which was repackaged as an affront to the aesthetics of modernism, retaining the baggage of the nineteenth century but, at the same time, reconnecting the avant-garde with the experiential stimulation that they craved.[10]

As in art, the most blatant assaults on the category of the "work of architecture" came from Duchamp although considerably after his experimentations with the readymades in art. At the invitation of Breton, Duchamp was given two opportunities to directly combat

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[8] Sigmund Freud, "Three essays on the Theory of Sexuality," trans. James Strachey in *Standard Edition of the Complete Works of Sigmund Freud* 7 (London: Hogarth Press, 1905), p. 255. Schwitters echoes Freud in his pronouncement that "MERZ does not want to build, MERZ wants to rebuild." See: Kurt Schwitters, "Dadaism in Holland [January 1923]," trans. Michael Kane in *The Dada Reader: A Critical Anthology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), p. 296.

[9] The exact quote is: "the finding of an object serves here exactly the same purpose as the dream, in the sense that it frees the individual from paralysing affective scruples, comforts [them] and makes [them] understand that the obstacle [they] might have thought insurmountable is cleared." Breton, *Mad Love*, p. 32.

[10] In this regard, Jane Allison refers to a *maison trouvée* as a surrealist trope in: Jane Allison, "The Surreal House," in Allison (ed), *The Surreal House*, p. 21.

the architectural orthodoxies of the nineteenth century by subverting the role of space in the institutional display of art. The 1938 *Exposition Internationale du Surrealism*—the first major exhibition of surrealist works in Paris[11]—took place in the Galerie Beaux-Arts, Paris, via an invitation from the gallery itself, then managed by the Wildenstein family who were widely seen as astute, but conservative, patrons of contemporary art.[12] That surrealism was being not only associated, but pursued, by the conservative right-bank gallery was seen, both at the time and by subsequent critics,[13] as a submission to the institutional structures of (bourgeois) art as surrealism moved from a radical oppositional force (of the 1920s), to a mainstream success (in the late 30s).[14] Max Morel and Jean Bazaine, for

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[11] While the *Exposition Internationale du Surrealism* was the first major retrospective exhibition in Paris, there had been, in the proceeding years, a number of international exhibitions of their work. The two most important (and influential) shows were Alfred Barr's *Fantastic Art, Dada, Surrealism* at the Musuem of Modern Art and the *International Surrealist Exhibition* at the New Burlington Galleries in London. While this was the first major retrospective, the surrealists, the group had maintained a commercial gallery in Paris since February 1937 but by August of that year it was already threatened with closure. Entitled Gradiva (a longstanding muse in Surrealist painting), the glass doors of the gallery were designed by Duchamp. See: Gérard Durozoi, *History of the Surrealist Movement*, trans. Alison Anderson (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), pp. 329-330; see also: Lewis Kachur, *Displaying the Marvellous: Marcel Duchamp, Salvador Dali, and Surrealist Installations* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2001), p. 27-28.

[12] Elena Filipovic describes the Galerie Beaux-Art as "conservative, highly nationalist and filled with the *grands maîtres*." See: Elena Filipovic, "The Exhibition at War," in Raymond Spiteri and Donald LaCoss, *Surrealism, Politics and Culture* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2003), pp. 189.

[13] See: Kachur, *Displaying the Marvellous*, p. 23.

[14] While the popularisation of surrealism was beginning in France, it had, unintentionally, received a major boost in Germany through the *Degenerate Art* [Entartete Kunst] "anti" exhibition in Munich (opening on July 19, 1937 and running for four months) which had showcased a number of Dada and surrealist works negatively for propaganda reasons, presenting them as the antithesis of acceptable artistic values. Ironically, the unprecedented popularity of the exhibition exposed Dada and surrealism to a much broader audience than it had otherwise received (over 2 million people visited during the Munich show including nearly 40 000 in a single day). Following the closure in Munich the works toured in 1938 to 1939 from Leipzig, Berlin, Düsseldorf, Chemnitz, Frankfurt am Main and Vienna. For accounts of the role of Dada and surrealism in the *Degenerate Art* exhibtion see: Elena Filipovic, "The Exhibition at War," pp. 186-188 [pp. 179-203]; Neil Levi, "'Judge for Yourselves'—The 'Degnerate Art' Exhibition as Political Spectacle," *October* 85 (Summer 1998), pp. 41-64; for the vilification of architecture see: Stephanie Barron, "Modern Art and Politics in Prewar Germany," in Stephanie Barron (ed), *Degenerate Art: The Fate of the Avant-Garde in Nazi Germany* (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, 1991), pp. 9-23; See also: Berthold Hinz, "'Degenerate' and 'Authentic': Aspects of Art and Power in the Third Reich," in Dawn Ades and Tim Benton (ed), *Art and Power: Europe*

instance, lamented that the marrying of surrealism and the corporate gallery was evidence of "one more revolution that fades into that which it wished to overturn."[15] The association, in many ways, echoes the criticisms of Bürger against the commercialisation of art at the expense of its political agency.

However, when Breton and Paul Eluard (who had been given the role of organisation) invited Duchamp to curate the exhibition,[16] the intention was not to reinforce the institutional nature of the space but to subvert it entirely. Duchamp was acutely aware of the architectural characteristics of display and had remarked that Frederick Kiesler, "as an architect, […] was far more qualified than I to organise a surrealist exhibition."[17] Duchamp countered the organisational logic of the nineteenth century gallery space with a haptic experiential interior. By removing the traditional emphasis from the walls (and paintings) and dramatising the ground and ceiling of the space, Duchamp systematically replaced the visual with the tactile, negating the form of the building through a sensory immersion in its labyrinthine bowels. After hanging paintings on recycled revolving doors installed haphazardly across the space, Duchamp had 1200 coal sacks suspended from beneath the glazed ceiling, blocking out all of the lights in the room and thrusting the artwork into subdued darkness. The central interior space was transformed into a grotto, with furry branches strewn across the uneven floor emitting a scent that, together with the coal, filled

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Under the Dictators, 1939-1945 (London: Thames and Hudson, 1995), pp. 330-333; David Elliott, "The End of the Avant-Garde," in Ades and Benton (ed), *Art and Power,* pp. 195-199.

[15] Max and Morel and Jean Bazaine, translated and quoted in: Martica Sawin, *Surrealism in Exile and the Beginning of the New York School* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1995), p. 8; on this point, Lewis demonstrates that the commercialisation of surrealism had begun in the 1920s, and, by the late 30s, almost all of the works in the *Exposition* were for sale. See also: Lewis, *Displaying the Marvellous*, p. 27.

[16] Duchamp was given the title "générateur-arbitre [producer-adjudicator] of the exhibition: See: Dawn Ades, Neil Cox and David Hopkins, *Marcel Duchamp* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1999), p. 143.

[17] Duchamp, quoted in Pierre Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, trans. Ron. Padgett (New York: Da Capo, 1987), p. 86 [orig. 1971]. On the collaborations between Kiesler and Duchamp, see also: Michael Chapman, "Alien doubles: Magic, myth and taboo in the spatial experiments of Frederick Kiesler," *Cultural Crossroads: Proceedings of the 26th International SAHANZ Conference* (Auckland: SAHANZ, 2009), p. 16 [CD ROM available].

the space.[18] The very real risk of explosion and flammability[19] added to the heightened sense of spatial disorientation. At the entry, recalling the surrealist fascination with the shop window, Duchamp set up a surrealist street where all of the artists dressed their own mannequin in a parody of the commercialised outside world.[20] The installation functioned as an archetypal surrealist interior, setting up a paradigmatic avant-garde laboratory, where the model of a miniature world was constructed from experience rather than aesthetics. This was a theme in Breton's writing, where architecture is frequently evoked as a crystallisation, as well as reification, of experience that accommodated the surrealist urge for gratification.[21]

That the exhibition was intended to be sensual, rather than visual, was confirmed by the supply of torches to view the artworks. The fact that the battery life was exceedingly small

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[18] Duchamp reveals that, as part of the exhibition, "[t]here was another amusing detail, the smell of coffee. In a corner we had an electric plate on which coffee beans were roasting. It gave the whole room a marvellous smell; it was part of our exhibition. It was rather surrealist altogether." Duchamp, quoted in: Pierre Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, trans. Ron Padgett (New York: Da Capo, 1987), p. 81 [orig. 1971].

[19] Duchamp's concept was to have the coal sacks hanging over a coal grate. As he recalls, "the grate was electric, but the insurance companies said no. We did it anyway and they accepted it." Duchamp also reveals that the coal sacks, which were sourced from La Villette, were empty, containing only coal dust. See: Pierre Cabanne, Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp, trans. Ron. Padgett (New York: Da Capo, 1987), p. 81 [orig. 1971]. The coal sacks (in reduced number) are now displayed at the *Dali Theatre-Museum* in Figueras, along with a recreation of the *Rainy Taxi* (retitled Rainy Cadillac) which was Dali's addition to the entry of the Exposition: See: Dawn Ades, *Dali* (London: Phaidon, 1997), p. 308.

[20] Labelled with provocative street titles (Street of Lips, All Devils Street, Blood Transfusion Street), the street is described by Alyce Mahon who reads the mannequins as commodified "ladies of the night". For Mahon, the *Rue Surrealiste* "subverted the role of the street in the city as a space of commerce, communication and social order, and evoked instead […] the glamorous decadence and brothels of 1930s Paris". This "seedy" transformation of the bourgeois gallery replaced the safety of the art environment with "a nightmarish scene of orgiastic desire." See: Alyce Mahon, "Staging Desire," in Jennifer Mundy (ed), *Surrealism*: *Desire Unbound* (New York: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 280-281.

[21] The key passages in this regard are from *L'Amour Fou*, where Breton writes

> the work of art, considered to be such and such a fragment of human life, seems to me lacking in all value if it does not present the same hardness, rigiditiy, regularity and lustre in all its surfaces, both inside and out as the crystal […] the house I live in, my life, my writings, I dream that these things appear from far away just like cubes of rocksalt seen at close range.

—Breton, *Mad Love*, p. 14. Breton describes his "glass house" where "who I am will sooner or later appear etched by a diamond" in: Andre Breton, *Nadja*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Grove Press, 1960), p. 18.

and, following the opening night, they were almost impossible to acquire[22] only added to the antivisual emphasis of Duchamp. The installation constructed a miniature utopia, refuting the political (and encroaching) realities of the outside and the cultural implications of the shell. Critics have pointed to the project as the surrender of surrealism to the forces of spectacle and institutionalization and cite the work as evidence of their focus on "display" at the expense of a more substantial engagement with the built environment.[23]

This model of institutional critique was again evoked when Duchamp was invited to curate the *First Papers of Surrealism* exhibition in New York in 1942. Working with a narrow budget,[24] Duchamp purchased sixteen miles of string for the exhibition but, in the end, used only one.[25] With the help of a number of others,[26] Duchamp used the string to dismantle the otherwise conventional layout of the exhibition, draping the string throughout the space and between the screens that supported the paintings. When finished, the string effectively blocked the major central axis of the space, as well as obscuring a number of the artworks. The flammability concerns of the 1938 show were equally real in the *Sixteen Miles of String* installation and, on the first attempt, the string caught fire after being ignited by a light bulb to Duchamp's great amusement.[27] Further contributing to the

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[22] The only other light was from the coal grate in the centre. The torches were just "in case the visitor wanted to see something." In response to the short battery life, Duchamp's laconic response was "that was really too bad." Duchamp, quoted in Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, p. 82.

[23] Demonstrating his indifference, when the exhibition opened, Duchamp was already on a boat destined for America missing the opening and finished spectacle altogether. Duchamp later revealed: "I have a horror of openings. Exhibitions are frightful…." See: Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, p. 82.

[24] The benefits of the exhibition were intended to support the *Coordinating Council of French Relief Societies*, with the aim of raising money and supplies for French prisoners and children. Fashionista Elsa Schiaparelli, who sponsored the show, had instructed the organisers to "spend as little money as possible on the installation." Salvador Dali, as a friend and collaborator of Schiaparelli, was a notable exclusion, excluded by Breton for his commercial success, as much as his ideological differences. See: Calvin Tomkins, *Duchamp: A Biography* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1996), p. 332.

[25] Accounts differ in regard to the exact amount of string used, but generally agree that 16 miles was the amount that Duchamp had purchased. See: Lewis, *Displaying the Marvellous*, p. 179, p. 185.

[26] Amongst his collaborators were Max Ernst, André Breton, Frederick Kiesler and Jacqueline Lamba. See: Mary Ann Caws, *Surrealism* (London: Phaidon, 2004), p. 117.

[27] See Duchamp's discussion of this event in: Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, p. 86. Duchamp reveals that the string was made of "gun-cotton" which is highly flammable and burns without a flame. See

anarchy, Duchamp had invited children to play within the space on the opening night, running energetically in and out between the warrens of string. As Tomkins reveals, "[i]f anyone objected, the children had been instructed to say that 'Mr Duchamp told us we could play here'"[28]. This combination of programmatic and visual interference completely subverted the function of the space in a direct, and quite literal manner.

John Schiff's classic photograph of the room is taken from the exact front and centre of the room, magnifying the violence of Duchamp's gesture and reinforcing the tapering perspective of the art space (and its hegemonic layout). Juxtaposing the bourgeois interior with Duchamp's vectorial anarchy, the string draws attention to the ornate decadence of the space, while simultaneously undermining its authority and architectural pretensions. More recently it has been discovered that the photographs taken of the work exaggerated the impact that the string had on viewers, and contemporary accounts of the show also overstressed its role as a visual barrier.[29] As Taylor has argued, it is more likely that the string "traversed the ceiling and hugged the edges of the room to demarcate the space into individual viewing zones."[30] This notwithstanding, the string presents a formidable physical and psychological barrier, not only dismantling the function and programme but the architectural structure of the bourgeois interior. Disregarding the imposed symmetry, orthogonality and perspective of the space, the string transgresses the conventions of both function and representation and the traditional categories through which architectural volumes are demarcated. Despite the inherent playfulness of this gesture, it was clearly intended to operate as a subversion of the visual, effectively preventing arriving visitors from gaining access to any of the works and disrupting the traditional encounter between the viewer and the work of art.[31] Demos has read this gesture as a continuation of

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also: Michael R. Taylor, "The Genesis, Construction, Installation and Legacy of a Secret Masterwork," in Michael R. Taylor (ed), *Marcel Duchamp: Étant donnés* (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Art, 2009), p. 47.

[28] Tomkins, *Duchamp* (New York: Henry Holt, 1996), p. 333.

[29] Taylor, "The Genesis, Construction, Installation and Legacy of a Secret Masterwork," p. 47.

[30] Taylor, "The Genesis, Construction, Installation and Legacy of a Secret Masterwork," p. 47.

[31] That the installation was intended to subvert the traditional conventions of the display of art was further extended in the catalogue for the exhibition, where, at Duchamp's request, the portraits of the artists were

Duchamp's long-term opposition to painting and the visual[32] but it can equally be read as a critique of architecture's ready compliance with the institutional forces of commercial art.

Like the *Exposition Internationale du Surrealism*, the *Sixteen Miles of String* was installed in a nineteenth century bourgeois art space and the shell of the building was accepted without alteration, despite the radical violations made within its interior. One interpretation of this (dovetailing with Bürger's argument) is that Duchamp was offering the institution of art as a category, embodied symbolically in the shell of the buildings as a readymade object stripped of its traditional contextual function. Effectively embodying the values of bourgeois aesthetics, the buildings were an objective counterpoint to Duchamp's two interventions that simultaneously exhibited the institution as an object and, at the same time, negated its function. As such, the shell becomes an assisted readymade, being denied its function by the anarchy taking place within.[33] This violation of the traditional functions of architecture was a recurring strategy of the historical avant-garde and, by the mid-30s Breton had claimed that surrealism "attempted to present interior reality and exterior reality as two elements in a process of unification, of finally becoming one"[34].

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replaced with "compensation portraits" where participating artists chose alternate portraits (or identities) to accompany their biographical statements. Duchamp's was the image of an emaciated female farmer living in rural France. As the exhibition was a celebration of the immigration ("First Papers") of a number of surrealists, the gesture was a questioning of the artistic identity and its relationship to the work of art. See: Ades, Cox and Hopkins, *Marcel Duchamp*, p. 145.

[32] Demos, "Duchamp's Labyrinth: First Papers on Surrealism, 1942," *October* 97 (2001), pp. 91-119; a similar argument can be found in: Taylor, "The Genesis, Construction, Installation and Legacy of a Secret Masterwork," pp. 46-47.

[33] In the case of the 1938 Exposition, this anarchy spilled over to the exterior. Visitors arriving were greeted with Dali's *Rainy Taxi*, where the artist used sprinklers mounted inside a conventional taxi to drench mannequins seated inside. One of the mannequins is enclosed in a shark jaw and all three are covered in snails. For a description of this, see: Robert Radford, *Dali* (London; Phaidon, 1997), pp. 168-169; Ingrid Schaffner, *Salvador Dali's Dream of Venus: The Surrealist Funhouse from the 1939 World's Fair* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2003), p. 132. Schaffner focuses on the inversion of inside and out, which was a theme in Duchamp's installation as well. Raoul Ubac's photographs of the exterior are reproduced in: Dawn Ades and Michael R. Taylor, *Dali* (New York: Rizzoli, 2005).

[34] Andre Breton, "What is Surrealism?" p. 116.

Both of Duchamp's interventions were effectively concerned with the exhibition of a discovered spatiality at the expense of art as an object. That both exhibitions place a specific focus on "experience" in dialectical opposition to "space" is of significance. As Bürger illustrated, the emphasis on the praxis of life was a vital motivating strategy of the avant-garde and central to the transformation of the avant-gardiste work of art. Where modernism had conflated functionality and space (at the expense of experience), Duchamp's experiments exposed the spatial and functional characteristics of architecture as counter-productive to experience. Duchamp critiqued "architecture" with the same vigilance that the readymade critiqued the work of art, questioning the aesthetic content and the bourgeois values that were attached to it but at the same time dismantling functionality in a transgressive and nonvisual way. Where earlier spatial forms (such as Schwitters' *Merzbau*) could be seen as sculptural encroachments upon architecture, Duchamp's exhibitions were undisputedly architectural in both their form and subject and engaged in critiques that were at the heart of what architecture stood for.

While effectively dismantling the functional requirements of architecture, Duchamp was unable to confront the commercial aspect of architectural space to the same extent in his curatorial activities as he had in his art. While the avant-gardiste works of art of the 1920s were characterised by the absence of any commercial value, the exhibitions (and the galleries) were intended to promote commerce,[35] deploying the spectacular to enhance the commercial value of the works presented. As Lewis demonstrates, in the 1938 exhibition, "most if not all of the pieces […] were for sale, so the spectacular aspect of the installations was intended to attract not only critical but commercial interest."[36] The deployment of the "commercial" opportunities inherent to architecture was not new to surrealism. The commercial shop-window, as the fetishisation of the commodity, was a fascination of both Dada and surrealism and, while featured heavily in both literature and

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[35] Of particular interest here is the establishment of the *Gradiva* gallery, which Breton himself operated. As Lewis observes: "Breton running his own gallery is a rather astonishing development, an episode played down in subsequent histories. It arises from a complex nexus including his self-avowed financial woes." A major incentive for Breton had been the patronage of Alfred Barr and the MoMa, who had, since the early 30s begun aggressively collecting surrealist art. See: Lewis, *Displaying the Marvellous*, p. 27.

[36] See: Lewis, *Displaying the Marvellous*, p. 27.

photography, it had a special relationship to architecture. However, in Duchamp's curatorial exploits the installations, while disruptive, are essentially warehouses for the commercial sale of art and lack the radical indifference of the works from the 1910s and 1920s.

Despite this, both exhibitions function as the *negation* of architecture, setting up a collision between the "institutional shell" and its experiential inhabitation. They are not "works-of-architecture" but negations of the traditional categories of architecture that openly violate functionality and programme and, to a lesser extent, the experience of space itself. Duchamp's exhibitions engage in the problematisation of architecture, rather than its production and, in this sense, serve to initiate a critique of architecture and its complicity with commercial systems. The string, in *16 Miles of String*, doesn't *produce* space. It draws attention to the problem of space: compounding, rather than reconciling, the relationship between architecture and art.

Duchamp's exhibitions are instructive in the context of Bürger's theory and serve to articulate an alternative trajectory in relationship to the avant-garde in architecture. As has been argued, while the *production* of architecture was a central concern of modernism, it was not typically a concern of the avant-garde. This does not mean that the avant-garde had no interest in architecture but that they gravitated towards the discovery of architecture, rather than its production. While Duchamp's exhibitions are exemplary of this negation of architectural production, they operate outside of the timeframes that are normally attached to avant-garde experimentation and are retrospective in their relationship to Dada and surrealism. However, this "problematisation" of space had begun much earlier and Duchamp's interventions were not the origin but the *catharsis* of these strategies, seeking to represent space as a fragment of reality through which the avant-garde redefined aesthetic production.

While the exhibition installations are naturally associated with architecture and surrealism, a number of critics[37] have argued that the *Sixteen Miles of String* work had evolved over

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[37] Baker argues that the passage from Sculpture for Travelling to Sixteen Miles of String was characteristic of Duchamp's "laconic" nature "moving the concept slowly from the studio to the exhibition space." See: George

several decades of Duchamp's life and was first articulated in 1918 in his enigmatic *Sculpture for Travelling* which traversed his tiny Buenos Aires apartment and (like a number of other readymades) implied a critique of architecture's functional pretensions. Again, the lines traverse the space drawing attention to its surfaces and edges but, in this earlier reincarnation, it is not the institutional gallery but the domestic home that is being transgressed. There is also a dematerialisation of the work of art in this period of Duchamp's life and Demos has observed that, in all of the photographic reproductions, the junction between the string and wall is never shown.[38] Surface and space never actually meet. Duchamp was investigating the way that space and objects intersect, drawing attention to the nature of space as the anti-object (or the negation of the artwork). The logical extension of the development of the readymade was an exploration of its context and it was through an understanding of architectural space and its properties that Duchamp set out to re-discover the inhabited world and reposition art as a direct extension of life. This approach, which is central to Bürger's theory, was a formative component of the earliest experiements that the avant-garde undertook preceding the gallery works and already pre-empting these later critiques.

Equally, Duchamp's installations from the 30s and 40s were not unique to surrealism[39] and the radical intervention as an architectural strategy had been a recurring theme in the tactics of Dada nearly two decades prior. While Ernst and Baargeld's impromptu show in

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Baker, *Artwork Caught by the Tail: Francis Picabia and Dada in Paris* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2007), p. 64; see also: T. J Demos, *The Exiles of Marcel Duchamp* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2007), p. 67-126.

[38] Demos, *The Exiles of Marcel Duchamp*, p. 68. Demos compares this to Duchamp's *Shadows of Readymades* (1916) which also removes the subject (the readymade) in favour of its effect (the shadow). Joselit refers to the architectural or spatial characteristics of shadows in Duchamp's work primarily through an analysis of his painting *Tu'um*. See: David Joselit, *Infinite Regress: Marcel Duchamp, 1910-1941* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998), p. 62-67.

[39] Duchamp had continually distanced himself from the association with surrealism conceding that, while they "liked me a lot" his contribution brought "ideas which weren't antisurrealist, but which weren't always Surrealist either." The capitalisation in the original implies a distancing from the "official" Surrealism, but an affiliation with the themes of surrealism. See: Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, p. 81.

the back rooms of a Cologne Brewery in 1920 is recognised as a seminal Dada moment,[40] the spectacle of the *First International Dada Fair* held at the Otto Burchard Gallery in Berlin (30 June—August 25) in 1920 rivals Duchamp's coal sacks in initiating anarchy as a negation of architecture's traditional function.[41] Frames of paintings merged with doors and architraves; posters were plastered across walls and mannequins were suspended from the ceiling and littered throughout the spaces of the gallery. Housing over two hundred Dadaist works, the most notorious installation was a Prussian officer's uniform that had been stuffed with a makeshift wire-mesh torso and then decapitated and replaced with a *papier mâché* pig's head.

One of the rooms contained Johannes Baader's architectural assemblage entitled *The Great Plasto-Dio-Dada-Drama: Germany's Greatness and Decline or the Fantastic Life of the Superdada*. Writing in regard to this mock tower haphazardly assembled from architectural trimmings, artworks, found machinery and an assortment of objects and newspaper clippings, Dickerman argues that Dada nihilism regularly "took the form of a kind of exploded mimicry, the adoption of the structures of modernity in hyperbolic or transformed ways."[42] Furthering the dialectical schism between the avant-garde and the architecture of modernity, the cover of the catalogue for the *First International Dada Fair*

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[40] Camfield has argued that this moment marked the cathartic end of Dada in Cologne and "angered the audience in a manner worthy of the legendary position it came to acquire in the history of Dada." The *Early Spring* exhibition also betrayed emerging rifts between Ernst and the Berlin Dada movement which, to some extent, were central to the dispersal of a number of key members to Paris in the immediate years that followed. On this, See: William Camfield, *Max Ernst: Dada and the Dawn of Surrealism* (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1993), p. 74. For more on the tensions between Cologne and Berlin Dada that emerged through these two exhibitions, see: Denis Crockett, *German Post Expressionism: The Art of the Great Disorder 1918—1924* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University, 1999), pp. 79-80.

[41] As with Duchamp's installations, the provocations extended to the catalogue. In the case of the *International Dada Fair*, the various texts and written documents were covered with drawings and stamped images rendering large sections indecipherable and negating the linguistic properties of the text. For reproductions of the catalogue, see: Robert Motherwell ed., *The Dada Painters and Poets: An Anthology* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press, 1979), pp. 88-90. Keunzli describes the exhibition as "the last great event of Berlin Dada" and the end of its collaborative ethos. See: Rudolf Kuenzli, *Dada* (London: Phaidon, 2006), p. 27.

[42] Leah Dickerman, "Introduction," in Leah Dickerman, *Dada* (Washington: The National Gallery of Art, 2005), p. 9.

reproduced the polemical montage of John Heartfield and George Grosz[43] entitled *Life and Activity in the Universal City at 12:05 in the Afternoon*.[44] The photomontage married the experiential phenomenon of the city, crammed with bustling crowds and activity. Everyday fragments, torn from urban life, positioned the city as a backdrop to the praxis of life[45] and, as Bürger argued, employed collage to disrupt the holistic (or organic) systems of meaning that were attached to it.[46]

In the introduction to the catalogue Wieland Herzfelde had established that "the production of pictures was not important" and that the "only programme that the Dadaists recognise is the duty to make current events"[47]. The scandalous reception that the exhibition received from the local press[48] shifted the emphasis away from the spatial and architectural themes that permeated this period of Dada production. Despite this, the critique of the bourgeois gallery space became a recurring trope in the exhibitions of both Dada and surrealism, presenting the bourgeois art-space as an outmoded forum for the representation of art and reinvented, through the readymade, as a negation of its

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[43] The figurative nature of Grosz's work became a point of contention to Raoul Hausmannn, who argued that "if one wants to break convention one should not fall into the conventional." Hausmannn, quoted and translated in: Kuenzli, *Dada* (London: Phaidon, 2006), p. 27.

[44] The German title of the work is *Leben und Treiben in Universal-City, 12 Uhr 5 Mittags*. Crowds and public space were a recurring theme in Grosz's work and an indication of his political allegiance. For a more detailed investigation of this, see: Brigid Doherty, "Figures of the Pseudorevolution," *October* 84 (Spring, 1998), pp. 75-80.

[45] For a more detailed discussion of this work see: Wieland Herzfelde, "Introduction to the First International Dada Fair," trans. Brigid Doherty, *October* 105 (Summer, 2003), pp. 93-104.

[46] See: Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1984), pp. 73-78; this aspect of Bürger's theory will be covered in more detail in the subsequent chapter on "Collage".

[47] Wieland Herzfelde, "Introduction: First International Dada Fair," trans. Rose-Carol Washton Long in Rose-Carol Washton Long, *German Expressionism: Documents from the end of the Wilhelmine Empire to the Rise of National Socialism* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1995), pp. 273-274.

[48] Gertrud Alexander, reviewing the show for the KPD, asked in the leftist journal *Rote Fahne*: "Do these gentleman really believe they can harm the bourgeoisie with that? The bourgeoisie laughs at it." Gertrud Alexander, quoted and translated in: Peter Jelavich, *Berlin Cabaret* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1996) p. 145.

traditional role. Hausmann, in the catalogue, had trumpeted the failure of the exhibition to conform to any of the expectations of art criticism and had concluded that

> the works in this exhibition are on such a low level that one wonders how an art gallery could dare show these concoctions for such a high admission price. The perhaps misled owner of this gallery should be warned—but the dada should receive merciful silence.[49]

While the centrality of space to Dada strategies of exhibiting art has not received widespread critical attention, these manifestations demonstrate the institutional critique of the "space" of the exhibition that was central to Dada and its subsequent negations of bourgeois aesthetics. Bürger's argument that the avant-gardiste work sought to reconnect artistic production with the praxis of life provides a model for extending this argument.

Architecture was not engaged in the historical avant-garde for its aesthetic or formal characteristics, but because of its spatial and experiential qualities, that necessarily drew the viewer into the work and, by association, becoming part of it. These strategies undertook a flattening of life and its transferral into art. The picture plane was no longer adequate to record life in its totality and so had to be spatialised in order for the individual to inhabit the work and transform it from a picture into a spectacle. The mannequin, as the dehumanised spectator, is a recurring trope in this period, literally tied to the architecture and reinforcing the dialectical opposition between lived experience and the ossified art object. Architecture, as with the readymade, was no longer the *context* of the picture but a fragmented ingredient in its totality, inseparable from the work of art, in the same way that it was inseparable from reality. In a number of works of Dada and surrealism, architecture is, in fact, reality.

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[49] Raoul Hausmannn, "A Dadasoph's opinion of What Art Criticism Will Say about the Dada Exhibition," trans. Gabrielle Bennet, in Lucy Lippard (ed), *Dadas on Art: Tzara, Duchamp, Arp and Others* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1971), p. 58. As Brigid Doherty illustrates, the exhibition "failed as a commercial venture" and, despite charging for both admission (3.30 marks) and the catalogue (1.70 marks) they failed to make a profit. Less than 400 people visited the show throughout its two-month duration and only one work was sold. See: Brigid Doherty, "Berlin," in Dickerman, *Dada*, p. 99.

One seminal example is the photograph of a smiling Francis Picabia holding his work *Danse de Saint Guy* from 1921.[50] The work consists of an empty frame, traversed by string which, as well as replacing the surface of the work, also supports the title, which is inscribed on labels that are affixed to the string.[51] George Baker's analysis of this work has stressed its architectural characteristics, referring to Picabia's specification that the work could not be hung against a wall as it needed to be hung in the centre of a space and appreciated from both sides.[52] As with Duchamp's later *Sixteen Miles of String* intervention, the string functions as the symbolic entrails of the space, wrapping and weaving but, at the same time, removing the distinction between space and void.

More significantly though, in this work, is the frame that effectively exhibits space in all of its three-dimensional and experiential contexts as a primary concern of the historical avant-garde. The frame of Picabia makes it clear that what is being exhibited is space itself and space as it is discovered through inhabitation and the work, rather than produced through architectural construction.[53] While Baker draws attention to transparency and movement in his discussion of this work, the predominantly architectural themes are left relatively untrammelled.[54] That the Dadaist period of Duchamp and Picabia's work

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[50] The photograph was probably taken by Man Ray, and was first published in *The Little Review* in 1922. See: Baker, *Artwork Caught by the Tail*, pp. 50-52.

[51] See: Francis M. Naumann, "Aesthetic Anarchy," in Jennifer Lundy (ed), *Duchamp, Picabia, Man Ray* (London: Tate Publishing, 2008), pp. 70-71.

[52] Picabia is clear that the "painting was made to be hung in a room" and that "one can only hang this painting far from the wall, outside the reach of the wall that would only obstruct it." In fact, in Picabia's description, the work becomes a wall as it "divides space into two volumes." Picabia, in an interview with Georges Charbonnier, quoted and translated in: Baker, *Artwork Caught by the Tail*, p. 52.

[53] The staging, as Baker has illustrated, has resonances with the image of Duchamp grappling with a glider, photographed by Man Ray in the early 1920s. Duchamp's posed photo acknowledges a debt to the Neoclassical architect Jean Jacques Lequeu who's picture *He is Free* from the early nineteenth century shows a similar arch and escape. A photograph of the arch, without Duchamp inside, is entitled "Glider Containing a Water Mill in Neighbouring Metals (1913-1915). It is reproduced in: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *The Writings of Marcel Duchamp,* p. 132; See Baker, *Artwork Caught by the Tail*, p. 52; See: Philippe Duboy*, Lequeu: An Architectural Enigma* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986) pp. 349-352. This will be dealt with in more detail in the subsequent chapter on "Diller + Scofidio".

[54] The most architectural sequence in Baker's analysis is his discussion of the stage set for *Maison de'l Oeuvre* (pp. 58-62) and the connections with Duchamp's spatial investigations (p. 64). While his analysis also

demonstrated a generalist fascination with space (as opposed to architecture) is already well-documented. Duchamp conceived objects such as his readymade *Comb* as "a generator of space"[55] where the teeth literally cut through a hypothetical space and organised it three-dimensionally. Duchamp argues that not only is there the "possibility […] of generating space from a flat surface" but, more critically, "[y]ou can do it with any surface."[56] While Duchamp borrowed from the mathematical theories of Bernhard Riemann's thinking on four-dimensionality that was topical in the 1920s[57] and was obsessed with the connection between two-dimensional, three-dimensional and four-dimensional schemas, what is more important in the context of the avant-garde is his argument that space can be discovered through found objects and can be exhibited in relationship to them as well. This effectively made it possible, as Joselit argues, to transform any two-dimensional surface into a three-dimensional volume[58], enabling art to transcend the representational surface and become a container for life experience.[59]

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examines the mechanical drawing techniques of Picabia, the connections with architecture remain implicit rather than explicit. See: Baker, *Artwork Caught by the Tail*, p. 68.

[55] Marcel Duchamp, in an interview with Arturo Schwarz in: Arturo Schwarz, *The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1969), p. 461.

[56] Marcel Duchamp, in: Schwartz, *The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp*, p. 461. Growing out of his investigations of linear perspective Duchamp discusses the fourth-dimension through a series of drawings, proceeding from a line (one-dimensional) to a plane (two-dimensional) to a volume (three-dimensional) implying that this leads to the conceptualisation of space within a fourth dimension. The most detailed discussion of his thinking on this concept is in his notes published in: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *The Writings of Marcel Duchamp*, pp. 88-99.

[57] Tomkins demonstrates that while Duchamp was aware of the work of, and even cited it on various occasions, he frequently denied it as an influence in interviews later in his life. The initial influence probably came from Apollinaire who had written and lectured about the fourth dimension. See: Tomkins, *Duchamp*, p. 59-60.

[58] See: Joselit, *Infinite Regress,* pp. 67-69

[59] In regards to Duchamp's *Sculpture for Travelling* (1918) Demos describes it as a "liminal condition, in other words one existing *between* forms, spaces and representations." The role of the work is to both exhibit and negate the architectural space. See: Demos, *The Exiles of Marcel Duchamp*, pp. 67-126.

Duchamp's thinking on the fourth-dimension was derived from a study of shadows and particularly the way that objects engaged with space.[60] While Duchamp's reinvention of the everyday object is a formative moment in the historical avant-garde, his conceptualisation of the relationship between space and the found object is critical for its relationship to architecture. Duchamp postulated that a systematic investigation of shadows would demonstrate this relationship and establish the framework for its extrapolation. By observing and plotting shadows cast onto a flat plane, then a two-dimensional surface and finally a three-dimensional curvature.[61] For Duchamp, the investigation established the conditions of the object, its spatial context and its relationship to both light and perspective. It also established an expanded theory of dimensionality that, as Tomkins argues, was based on a simple formulation: "since light falling on a three-dimensional object produced a two-dimensional shadow image […] why couldn't our own, three-dimensional world be seen as the projection of another reality in four dimensions?"[62] By recontextualising the art-object in a three-dimensional context and then exhibiting this context and viewer as an extended work of art, Duchamp shifted the institutional frame within which art was experienced and engaged the work in a profoundly spatial manner. In his explorations for the *Draft Pistons* in 1914, Duchamp had photographed gauze painted with dots and hung within an open window. As the gauze was blown and distorted Duchamp recorded the shapes that emerged from its flattened contortions allowing the surface to embody the complexity of space.[63] Duchamp's concern with the construction of perspective,[64] the path of shadows and the mechanical construction of lines all stemmed

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[60] The spatial characteristics of Duchamp's work in this period is a theme in: Dawn Ades, "Camera Creation," in Lundy (ed), *Duchamp, Man Ray, Picabia*, pp. 88-113.

[61] The most detailed description of this is in the passage entitled "Cast Shadows" in: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *The Writings of Marcel Duchamp*, pp. 72-73; see also: Joselit, *Infinite Regress,* pp. 62-63.

[62] Tomkins, *Duchamp*, p. 60.

[63] On this, see: Ades, "Camera Creation," pp. 88-113.

[64] In Tomkins biography of Duchamp, he describes how, in 1912, the artist "put himself through a crash course in Renaissance perspective, which the cubists had relegated to the dustbin of art history." See: Tomkins, Duchamp, p.128. This was a theme in Krauss's writing on Duchamp and the "optical unconscious". For a more detailed discussion of perspective see: Taylor, "The Genesis, Construction, Installation and Legacy of a Secret Masterwork," pp. 63-69; Rosalind Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1994), pp. 119-120.

from a fundamental interest in the spatial context of objects and the manner in which a viewer engaged with them. While this relationship was negated most radically in the installations of 1938 and 1942, this spatial consciousness was evident as a primary concern during the formation of avant-garde practices and its origins can be detected in the earliest investigations of the found object. Just as the discovery of an object was, as Breton had argued, comparable to a dream in its transformative effect, the discovery of architectural space—as the marrying of both art and experience—was a critical transformation in the avant-gardiste work of art. Dada replaced the artistic object with an architectural experience that transformed the relationship between art and life by engaging the viewer with the work in an inherently spatial way. Developing this as a theme in her writing on Dada, Brigid Doherty employs the language of Bürger, to advance an understanding of this connection. She writes,

> [i]n place of the work of art as a means of seeking the inner lives of individuals, the Dadaists collaborative "product" insists on the exteriority of the object and its subject: the artwork is a thing mounted with devices and artefacts of everyday life, not a magical landscape into which we gaze, not a sacred sculpture that promises to transport us to a better world.[65]

Of most significance in this was that the "viewer" was now a part of the artwork and, by inhabiting the space and engaging with its expanded medium, became central to both the completion and negation of the work. These avant-garde strategies married the art object with a discovered space embodying the dialectic of art and life and offering spatial experience as an integral aspect of the work of art (rather than the institutionalised context that traditionally represented it). However where Dada exhibited a neutral or hypothetical space, awaiting inhabitation, the surrealists depicted a deserted city that had been abandoned and awaited rediscovery through architectural experience. In both cases architecture functions as an *obet-trouvé* linked to a trajectory away from the modernist concerns with form and technology and initiating new models through which the work of art was produced and, more importantly, experienced.

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[65] Brigid Doherty, "The Work of Art and the Problem of Politics in Berlin Dada," *October* **105** (Summer, 2003), p. 81.

Drawing

> *Bildarchitektur* is constructed not inwards from the plane but outwards from it. It takes the surface simply as a given foundation and does not open perspective inwards, which may be illusory at al times, but with its layers of colour and forms steps out into real space, and thus the picture is given natural perspective, the unlimited potentialities of the life of a picture […] Decoration is filling up the flat surface, *Bildarchitektur* is building on the flat surface. Its pictures are therefore not "like", but are what they are […]. *Bildarchitektur* does not confine itself to particular materials and particular means; like Merz-art it regards all kinds of materials and means as useful to express itself.
>
> —Lajos Kassák, "Pictorial Architecture" (1922)[1]

As a critical connecting element between a number of disparate forces of Dada in Vienna in the 1920s, Lajos Kassák played an important role in articulating the broader themes of architecture in relationship to Dada using his critical journal *Ma* as a vehicle for framing an avant-garde attitude towards space. Collecting work from influential figures as diverse as Kurt Schwitters, Hans Richter, Viking Eggeling, Raoul Hausmann, El Lissitsky, Lászlo Maholy-Nagy and Hans Arp, *Ma* became a forum for the theorisation of an avant-garde architecture, made explicit through Kassák's 1922 text "Pictorial Architecture" which connected architecture and the picture plane in a radical and inherently spatial way.[2] Heavily influenced by Schwitters and the spatial doctrine of Merz,[3] Kassák argued that architecture had a role in spatialising artistic production and, inversely, the work of art

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[1] Lajos Kassák, "Pictorial Architecture," trans. George Cushing in George Cushing, *The Hungarian Avant-Garde: the Eight and the Activists* (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1980), pp. 116; originally published as: Lajos Kassák, "Keparchitektura," *Ma* **7** 4 (25 March, 1922), p. 98.

[2] Kuenzli has argued that by focussing on the representational or figurative aspects of this relationship, Kassák marginalised Maholy-Nagy who drifted from the circle as a result of his concern for the political aspects of this relationship which he thought were being neglected. See: Rudolph Kuenzli (ed), *Dada: Themes and Movements* (London: Phaidon, 2006), p. 36.

[3] Schwitters had theorised architecture in relationship to painting in his 1923 text: Kurt Schwitters, "Dadaism in Holland [January 1923]," trans. Michael Kane in Dawn Ades (ed), *The Dada Reader* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), p. 296.

became an extended frame for architectural space and the *experience* of its inhabitation. Referring to this concept as "building on a flat surface"[4], what Kassák's text proposed was a marrying of architecture and the work of art through an expanded definition of drawing, effectively delimiting the relationship between figure and ground. Drawing thus became the boundary between figure and ground, functioning as an act of notation that drew attention to architectural space and re-framed it within an artistic sphere.

Echoing the concerns of Kassák, Meyer Schapiro had written in 1936 that critics and historians of architecture generally "overlook the degree to which the designs of the architect are affected by pictorialism, by the modes of seeing and drawing developed in modern and especially abstract painting."[5] If the historical avant-garde was concerned with a rediscovery and representation of architectural space, then it was through a radicalised attitude towards the potential of drawing that this aspect of artistic production was made tangible. As well as entwining the work of art with its context, this model of "drawing in space" was evidence of the dissolution of the picture-plane, replacing the two-dimensional figurative window with a three-dimensional experience of both art and life. In the process, this transformation initiated a disfiguring of the traditional ground of artistic representation and the historical conventions that had constructed it. What occurs in these works is not a merging of figure and ground but the repositioning of architectural space *as* "ground" against which the various figurative experiments take place.[6] The picture plane becomes a literal battlefield, where the experiential and psychic qualities of architecture are employed in opposition to the figurative and narrative aspects of artistic

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[4] Lajos Kassák, "Pictorial Architecture," p. 116.

[5] Meyer Schapiro, "The New Viennese School," *Art Bulletin* 18 (June, 1936), pp. 258-266.

[6] In regard to her theory of an optical unconscious, Rosalind Krauss argues that the history of modern art is linked to the sublation of "figure" and "ground". As well as being central to the emergence of abstraction, this dyad also structures the relationship between architecture and the picture plane. See: Rosalind Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT press, 1994), pp. 13-23. For more on the relationship between "figure" and "ground" in architecture, see: Michael Chapman, "Fore and Against: Science, aesthetics and visual complexities of figure-ground in urban analysis," in James Coulson, Dirk Schwede and Richard Tucker (ed), *Towards Solutions for a Liveable Future: Progress, Practice, Performance, People, 41st Annual ANZAScA Conference, 14-16 November* (Deakin: ANZASCA, 2007), pp. 62-69.

production. Lines become trajectories, dissecting space and drawing the two-dimensional plane into a three-dimensional reality.

George Baker's 2007 book *The Artwork Caught by the Tail: Francis Picabia and Dada in Paris*[7] develops an argument that the well-known Dada experiments with drawing were, as with their other experiments, conscious and deliberate movements away from the medium of drawing; an attempt, in the work of Francis Picabia in particular, to escape the confines and values attached and specific to the medium of drawing.[8] In the Dada forays into drawing, the line no longer resides passively on the edges of architectural space but assumes an instrumental role in shaping and conditioning space as well as controlling the experience of it.[9] Equally, the use of architectural drafting techniques and processes is conspicuous, providing a framework for interpretation and integration within the broader history of architectural production and representation. These adventures in space constitute a kind of unravelling of the medium of drawing and a repositioning of its inherent boundaries into the medium of architecture. Baker associated these Dada practices with a "libidinisation" of the creative act[10] which, as well as escaping the inherent medium of drawing, provided a framework through which desire was integrated into artistic production and, indirectly, architectural space.

Further developing the idea of a "pictorial architecture" that was first articulated in the writing of Kassák, this chapter will explore the role of drawing in framing avant-gardiste conceptions of space, particularly as they relate to the figure-ground dichotomy central to

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[7] See the chapter on "*Le Saint des Saints*: Dada Drawing" in: George Baker, *Artwork Caught by the Tail: Francis Picabia and Dada in Paris* (Cambridge, Massachussetts: The MIT Press, 2007), pp. 31-94.

[8] In a separate essay, Baker argues that "there is no such thing as a single Dada strategy. Their strategies were multiple; they were, rather, dedicated to the production of multiplicity." See: George Baker, "Entr'acte", October 105 (Summer 2003), p. 160.

[9] That Dada had an unconventional relationship to drawing is apparent by Picabia's 1919 description of Duchamp's *Tzanck Cheque* as an archetypal "Dada Drawing." The *Tzanck Cheque* was a fictional cheque made out to Duchamp's dentist to acknowledge an unpayable debt. For more on the cheque and its relationship to Duchamp's thinking, see: Thierry de Duve, "Marcel Duchamp, or The Phynancier of Modern Life," trans. Rosalind Krauss, *October* 52 (Spring, 1990), pp. 60-75.

[10] Baker, *Artwork Caught by the Tail*, p. 66.

representation and the art-life dyad that structures the work of Bürger. With an emphasis on the relationship between the work of art and its spatial context, the chapter will focus on the radicalisation of drawing and the expansion of its traditional role through the assimilation with both space and performance. Two critical aspects of the development of drawing will be investigated: the notion of framing in relationship to architectural space and the role of drawing in discovering space and giving form to its pictorial aspects. Both of these are central to the creative practices of Duchamp which structure a number of the most important evolutions in avant-garde techniques and have a particular resonance with Kassák's notion of a "pictorial architecture" built upon the representational picture plane.[11]

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Dust Breeding is the name of a Man Ray photograph from 1920 which depicts, as its subject, a horizontal surface covered in dust. The surface, belonging to Marcel Duchamp's *Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelor's Even…* (equally well-known as the *Large Glass*) is significant, marking a transformation in avant-gardist conceptions of the picture plane and the origin of a "pictorial architecture" that extends outwards from it. However in Man Ray's photo the characteristics that make the *Large Glass* recognisable and distinctive are notably absent. Its characteristic frontality (or verticality) is replaced with a foreshortened horizontality that, in an architectural sense, transforms its spatiality from elevation to plan. Equally, the transparency that distinguishes the surface of the work and its representational qualities, is here replaced with substance, not only opaque but microscopic and, as the title reflects, in a state of open procreation.

The breeding of dust on the surface of the glass opens up a number of trajectories for analysis that engage important aspects of architecture and its relationship to the avant-

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[11] Aspects of this chapter have been published, or presented, previously as: Michael Chapman and Michael Ostwald, "Disfigured ground: Architectural space and representation in the creative practices of Dada and surrealism," *South African Journal of Art History* 24 (2009), pp. 67-74; Michael Chapman, "Entrails: Drawing and architectural space in the transgressive experiments of Dada," *Interstices Under Construction Symposium: The Traction of Drawing* (Auckland: November 2009) [published abstract]; Michael Chapman, "Love is a battlefield: Architecture and desire in the spatial fields of Marcel Duchamp," *Field/work: 6th International Conference of the Architectural Humanities Research Association* (Edinburgh: November 2009) [published abstract].

gardiste work, particularly in relationship to the dismantling of the categories of artistic production and the discovery of architecture as an *objet-trouvé*. The photograph, reproduced for the first time in Breton's journal *Littérature,*[12] had been taken in Duchamp's New York Studio in 1920 to the immediate delight of both Duchamp and Man Ray. In Kuenzli's reading, the combination of the skewed camera angle and the strong light-source from the side successfully "[transforms] the image of mechanical desire into a landscape."[13] For Molesworth, it is symptomatic of Duchamp's indifference to housework and the laconic approach he took towards work and labour.[14] More significant in relationship to architecture, Man Ray's photo of the *Large Glass* has all of the characteristics of an architectural plan. Seen in detail, the lines begin to articulate spaces, organisation and directionality. Stripped of their figurative and representational qualities they become vectorial in nature, defined, as such, by the spaces they enclose and the surfaces that they cling to. Duchamp's works from this early Dada period are teaming with movement. The lines become conduits and idle surfaces, as in Man Ray's photo, become breeding grounds. Duchamp had created these contours with lead wire that was later painted in a metallic earthy tone to indicate the surfaces that were enclosed by it.[15] These lines also replicate, whether deliberately or not, the rhythms of architecture: enclosing, enveloping, disappearing and defining.

There is a unique synthesis that connects the lines in this composition with the surface that supports it and, in Man Ray's photo, binds them together; literally married to the

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[12] There are two versions of this photo which are similar, but taken from slightly different angles. The image published in *Littérature* is the less widely-published version, showing a white "horizon" beyond the representational field. With authorship attributed to both Duchamp and Man Ray, the work was published in *Littérature* 5 (October, 1922). The caption read: "view from an airplane". See: Rudolf Kuenzli, *Dada* (London: Phaidon, 2006), p. 84.

[13] Kuenzli, *Dada*, p. 84.

[14] Molesworth's essay looks at this in the context of a broader social/cultural argument about work, drawing from Taylorist ideas of industrialisation and streamlining. Helen Molesworth, "Work Avoidance: The Everyday Life of Marcel Duchamp's Readymades," *Art Journal* 57 4 (Winter 1998), pp. 51-61.

[15] For the connection between the electrical wires and the notion of currents, see: Hellmut Wohl, "Beyond the Large Glass: Notes on a Landscape Drawing by Marcel Duchamp," *The Burlington Magazine* 119 896 (November, 1977), p. 771.

spatial games that Duchamp then constructs on top of it. The *Large Glass* was a seminal work, not only in the oeuvre of Marcel Duchamp but in the history of avant-garde production, spanning the length of Duchamp's most creative period and facilitating his immanent departure from art.[16] The work was officially begun in 1915, although work had started as early as 1913 and the preliminary notes were first published as a box in 1914. The work was famously left unfinished by Duchamp in 1923 after the project had preoccupied him for over a decade, serving as a transition from the figurative futurist works of 1911-1912 to the radical readymades that characterised his creativity from 1917 on. *The Green Box*, containing the numerous and extensive notes for the project, was published (in a limited edition) in 1934 and is inseparable from the artwork itself.[17] The mechanical drawings that accompany the work are overladen with a spatial understanding of visual perspective, two-dimensional drafting and construction which, initially undertaken on the walls of his apartment, serve to deepen the affiliation that the work has with architectural space.[18]

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[16] Duchamp's transition from painting to the readymade is theorised in great detail in: Thierry de Duve, *Pictorial Nominalism: On Marcel Duchamp's Passage from Painting to the Readymade* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota, 1991).

[17] For an investigation of its importance see: Susi Bloch, "Marcel Duchamp's Green Box" *Art Journal* **34** 1 (Autumn 1974), pp. 25-29. *The Green Box* was also central to Tschumi's reading of the work in: Bernard Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," in Dalibor Veseley (ed), *Architectural Design Profile: Surrealism and Architecture* **11** 2-3 (1978), pp. 112-113.

[18] The work was inherently spatial and, throughout its life, was tied to the architectural contexts that Duchamp found for it. As Tomkin demonstrates, the first sketches of the work took place on the "newly plastered walls" of his apartment, which he used to plot the future of the work. Tomkin writes:

> [c]arefully and precisely, using the exact calculations he had worked out over many months, he drew on it in pencil a full-scale perspective rendering of the Large Glass, with all the elements that he had plotted so far in his preliminary drawings and sketches. For the next year and a half this wall drawing would be his principle guide and checkpoint, to which other elements were added as he worked them out in his drawings and studies.

The passage makes clear the connection between architecture and drawing in the work. See: Tomkins, *Duchamp*, p. 131.

The spatial structure of the *Large Glass* is already well known.[19] A mechanical bride (complete with gears and pistons) is positioned forlornly in the top panel, surrounded by the mist of a "milky way" or what Duchamp also refers to as the Cinematic Blossoming, retaining all of its sexual connotations in his numerous references to it in his notes.[20] The bottom half of the screen contains the bachelors, taking the form of Nine Malic Moulds[21] who are actively engaged in the production of gas and its distribution. Machines proliferate the bottom half of the work. A chocolate grinder, a recurring onanistic reference in Duchamp's work,[22] supports a pair of scissor blades which open and close relentlessly; the chariot[23] parades horizontally from side to side not involved in the transition of the gas or its liquefaction.[24] The sieves[25] transport the gas and, most critically the occulist witnesses[26] are engaged in mirroring and projecting the events of the bottom half directly into the brides domain.[27] As Joselit explains "the bachelors flow of illuminating gas is […]

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[19] For a detailed description see: Schwarz, *Notes and Projects for the Large Glass*; see also: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller,* p. 74-101; of Schwarz's numerous essays on the work, the most comprehensive description is: Arturo Schwarz, "Éros c'est la vie (Rrose Salevy)" in Arturo Schwarz (ed). *Marcel Duchamp* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1970), pp. 2-36; for an exhaustive analysis, see: Linda Dalrymple Henderson, *Duchamp in Context: Science and Technology in the Large Glass and Related Works* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998).

[20] See, for instance, Duchamp's description of the "Milky Way" translated in: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller,* p. 76.

[21] Debating the spelling as either "Malique" or "Malic", Duchamp notes that "[e]ach of the 8 malic moulds is cut by an imaginary horizontal plane at a pnt. called the pnt. of sex." For Duchamp's description, see: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller,* p. 51-53.

[22] Duchamp writes: "*the bachelor grinds his chocolate himself*." Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller,* p. 68. For more on this connection, see: David Joselit, *Infinite Regress*, pp. 115-116.

[23] Variously, in Duchamp's notes, either "chariot", "sleigh" or "glider" the element is described (evoking Bürger) as a "buffer of life" but the "onanism" of the reference is also made explicit (p. 56) in the notes. For Duchamp's description of the chariot, see: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller,* p. 56-60.

[24] For the role of the "illuminating gas" see: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller,* p. 50.

[25] Duchamp describes the sieves as "a reversed image of porosity" implying a sexual connection with the Malic moulds. See: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller,* p. 53.

[26] The "Oculist Witnesses" central to Diller + Scofidio's reading, are described in: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller,* p. 63-65.

[27] The spatial arrangement is kept in place by the juggler, or "handler of gravity". See: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller,* p. 65. Emphasising the role of plumbing, Joselit explains that "the bachelors flow of

continually transformed—from gas to solid to liquid and finally to optical quality with no physical dimension whatsoever."[28]

In elevation, and restored, the *Large Glass* has an entirely different spatial presence, exaggerated in the famous photo of Duchamp playing chess with a naked Eve Babitz, photographed, and clearly staged, in the Pasadena Museum of Modern Art in 1963.[29] The dusty breeding ground has evaporated, vaporised into a spatial vacuum from which the forlorn bride hovers in mid air, suspended dramatically and imperceptibly in architectural space. This levitating apparatus projects itself into the space beyond, casting shadows onto the physical ground and shaping the movement and programme of the space around the work.[30] As well as reinforcing the gender demarcations that underpin this vertical compartmentalisation, the staging of the photograph establishes clearly the architectural and spatial characteristics of the room and the role the glass plays in reframing it. The notion of the battlefield, constructed through oppositional and gendered pairings is clear in the horizontal field of the chessboard.[31] The photograph makes a strong spatial

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illuminating gas is […] continually transformed—from gas to solid to liquid and finally to optical quality with no physical dimension whatsoever." David Joselit, *Infinite Regress*, pp. 114.

[28] Joselit, *Infinite Regress*, p. 115.

[29] The photograph was taken by Julian Wasser to accompany a major retrospective of Duchamp's work, curated by Walter Hopps and opening in Autumn 1963. The exhibition coincided with Duchamp's growing popularity amongst a circle of Californian artists and so received widespread publicity and acclaim, furthering Duchamp's reputation as the model upon which neo-avant-garde practices were grafted. For a description of the event, see Tomkins, *Duchamp*, pp. 419-425. Eve Babitz is described by Tomkins as an "art groupie" (p. 424) who volunteered for the early morning photo-shoot.

[30] Wohl argues for the architectural interpretations in his reading where he reveals that "[c]ages in the 1916 postcard can be rendered not only by "cages" but also by frameworks, as in frame constructions—architectural cages sheathed in wood—or glass." See: Wohl, "Beyond the Large Glass," p. 771.

[31] The connection between love and battle is reinforced by the boxing match which, while never executed in the work, was planned for the lower half of the work and had been meticulously constructed by Duchamp. See the drawing and description reproduced in: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller,* p. 66-67; for the connection between Duchamp's work and chess, with an emphasis on spatiality, see: Hubert Damisch, "The Duchamp Defense," trans. Rosalind Krauss, *October* 10 (Autumn, 1979), pp. 5-28; Larry List, "Chess as Art," in Jennifer Lundy, *Duchamp, Picabia, Man Ray* (London: Tate Publishing, 2008), pp. 132-143.

connection between the evaporated "field" or "background"[32] and the horizontal "board" of the chess game, the mechanics of which had obsessed Duchamp and are dramatised in his work from the period.[33] Such was Duchamp's concern with the three-dimensional possibilities of chess, he even developed a system for playing chess vertically on the wall, replicating the spatial structure of the large glass and becoming, in the process, a working artwork.[34] Drawing, for Duchamp, was movement and, as with chess, abstract and unequivocal. The line operated as the trajectory; independent of surface or context and unrestrained by systems of representation. Lines were released from the "ground" of the drawing, as chess pieces were independent from the contexts and geography that situated them.[35] The mechanics of chess provided the system and scenario through which action and experience could be integrated. While chess embodied a model of drawing on a two-dimensional plane, Duchamp's experiments with the Large Glass sought to translate these trajectories (as well as there gendered demarcations) into three-dimensional space.

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[32] The problem of "ground" that was eradicated in the *Large Glass* was an ongoing theme in Duchamp's thinking. His intention to create a "waterfall" as a landscaped contextual element in the Large Glass (never realised) was evidence of the evacuation of space that his tactic had triggered. Hellmut Wohl has shown how a number of the drawings of the Large Glass insist upon a traditional figurative context, and the collapse of the figure-ground in the work was less confident in the notes and sketches. See: Wohl, "Beyond the Large Glass," p. 771

[33] For a comprehensive discussion of this relationship, see: Francis M. Naumann, Bradley Bailey and Jennifer Shahade, *Marcel Duchamp: The Art of Chess* (New York: Readymade Press, 2009).

[34] Duchamp had also developed a system of playing chess vertically with pieces made of card and nails. This turned the horizontal chessboard into a vertical, wall-mounted piece of art. For more on this, see: Larry List, "Chess as Art," in Lundy, *Duchamp, Picabia, Man Ray*, pp. 132-143.

[35] The relationship between chess and Duchamp's creative production is developed in more detail in: Hubert Damisch, "The Duchamp Defense," pp. 5-28. In the 1920s Duchamp had revealed that "I am completely ready to become the chess maniac—everything around me takes the form of a knight or a queen and the external world has no interest for me than its transposition into winning and losing traditions." Marcel Duchamp, quoted in Ann D'Harnoncourt and Kynaston McShine (ed), *Marcel Duchamp* (New York: The Musuem of Modern Art, 1973), p. 131.

Described, in the work of Taylor, as "the aerial view of a lunar landscape"[36], the alchemical relationship between solid and void is inflected in Man Ray's flattened photgraph of the glass, which effectively transforms the transparent backdrop of the work into a solid mass. While *Dust Breeding* evoked the notions of architectural drawing and the spatialisation of the surface as a "pictorial architecture", it was a completely different moment in the evolution of this work that physically tied its history to the architectural space that provided its context.[37] Having completed, by the culmination of the First World War, the primary mechanisms of the bride and the bachelor, the capillary tubes and domains of the sieves, the glider and chocolate grinder, Duchamp was dissatisfied. He assembled a toy cannon, armed it with matchsticks dipped in paint and took aim at the surface of his precious and ongoing artwork from the periphery of his New York studio.[38] Completing nine shots in all,[39] the marks left on the glass were drilled into the surface, becoming, in the index, the nine shots.[40] Representing a "splatter of spermatic gas" the shots can be read as the "anamorphic" moment when the bachelors escape their glass cage and the structured perspective that organises it. The act positions the work at the frontline of the creative battlefield of architectural space extending the work from the surface of the glass, to all of the possible trajectories upon which it can be fired upon.

This model of drawing in space was not new to Duchamp. His three standard stoppages had inverted the conventions of drawing by taking three one metre lengths of string and dropping them from the height of one metre, tracing the curve that is created to make a template which was essentially a drawing of space and a trajectory through it.[41] However,

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[36] See: Michael R. Taylor, "New York Dada," in Leah Dickerman, *Dada* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2005), p. 296.

[37] For more on this connection see: See: Tomkins, *Duchamp*, p. 131.

[38] For Duchamp's description of this process, see: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller,* p. 35. In this passage, Duchamp draws a connection between the "shots" and the laws of visual perspective, arguing that the "target […] corresponds to the vanishing point."

[39] Three separate shots from three distinct points. See: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller,* p. 35.

[40] See: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller,* p. 35.

[41] Duchamp referred to this process as "The Idea of Fabrication" and wrote: "if a straight, horizontal thread one meter long falls from a height of one metre into a horizontal plane distorting itself as it pleases and creates a new shape of the measure of length—". See: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller,* p. 22. The three

while Duchamp had played with the spatialisation of drawing in this manner, the nine shots were more dramatic as the lines became not only marks but trajectories connecting the work with its architectural context. Up until that point the surface had passively housed and received all of the representational marks of Duchamp's constructed machine. Through the nine shots the work is literally violated from outside, exploded from a two-dimensional surface into a three-dimensional spatial volume and representing, through drawing, the limits of this volume. The effect is, as Brandsetter observes, that "even the spectator is enclosed since [they] can't perceive this glass 'sculpture' without seeing [themselves] in it."[42]

In his 1937 review of the *Large Glass*, Frederick Kiesler[43] described the work as the first ever "X-ray of architectural space"[44]. Praising the work's transparency, as well as the seamless integration of painting, sculpture and architecture, Kiesler saw the *Large Glass* as paradigmatic in defining a new conception of drawing in space where, instead of passively residing in a room, the art object would take a role in the psychological and perceptual construction of architectural space. Duchamp's fascination with architectural

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"stoppages" were later used in the production of the painting *Network of Stoppages* (1914). Joselit's analysis of this work is amongst the most thorough. See: Joselit, *Infinite Regress*, pp. 9-18.

[42] Gabriele Brandstetter, "Defigurative Choreography: From Marcel Duchamp to William Forsythe," trans. Marta Ulvaeus, *TDR* 42 4 (Winter 1998), p. 39.

[43] Dalibor Veseley, for instance wrote that "the only surrealist architect, whose formal legitimacy cannot be questioned, was Frederick Kiesler." The positioning of Kiesler as the sole "architectural" voice of surrealism neglects that both Man Ray and Matta, key members of the movement, had studied architecture to varying degrees and, in their respective works, had demonstrated a distinctly surrealist technique for articulating it. Matta had worked in the studio of Le Corbusier before turning to painting and his "Architecture and the Mathematics of Time" is, despite being short, one of the most important texts linking architecture with the surrealism. While Kiesler may have been the sole "functioning" architect of surrealism, his association with the movement and any of its members came relatively late in both his, and the surrealist movement's, creative life. See: Dalibor Veseley, "Surrealism, Myth and Modernity" in Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, p. 93.

[44] Frederick Kiesler, "Kiesler on Duchamp," *Architectural Record* 81 (May 1937), p. 54. In his role as critic for the mainstream American magazine *Architectural Record*, Kiesler had written an article about the Large Glass arguing for it as an exemplary model of a new paradigm in interior organisation, where the art object, rather than sitting passively within a space, has an active role in creating and redefining it. Duchamp found the article worthwhile enough to send a thank-you note to Kiesler and, while they had met before, the two became friends through the correspondence. When Duchamp moved to New York he stayed in Kiesler's apartment for an extended period of time and they worked on a number of projects together up until Duchamp's death.

drawing is, in the *Large Glass*, physically projected *into* space, mounted as contours on the surface of the glass and, through shadow, etched onto the architectural surfaces of the room.[45] This spatialisation of the act of drawing dismantles the narrow "field" of representation into a continuous and ever-changing spatial labyrinth where the viewer is directly implicated in the construction and completion of the work.

Duchamp's glass was definitely not the *first*, and certainly not the *only* of the avant-garde attempts to "x-ray" space.[46] X-ray technology was a cultural fascination in the first decades of the twentieth century and was of particular insight to the radical decentring of creative production that was a central aim of the historical avant-garde. The x-ray was unprecedented in its ability to condense physical space into a single two-dimensional image dramatically reforming the course of both art and medicine[47]. X-ray photography was discovered in 1895 by Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen, whose experiments with cathode rays had led to their accidental discovery, even preceding Thompson's identification of the electron by two years. As Dalrymple Henderson has shown, the exact nature of x-rays was still the subject of speculation and contention well into the second decade of the twentieth century.[48]

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[45] Duchamp had referred to the work as "the execution of the picture by means of luminous sources and by drawing the shadows on these planes." See: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller,* p. 72.

[46] Borrowing from the contemporary language of scientific x-ray, Francis Picabia's *La Ville de New York aperque a' travers le corps* was produced in New York in 1913, coinciding directly with the Armoury Show at the MoMA. The image was a painted representation of an x-ray of New York. Considerably earlier, Duchamp had been linked to x-rays, frequently in regard to the halo that appears in *Portrait of the Artist's Father* (1910). Duchamp's brother, Raymond Duchamp Villon worked at the Salpétriére Hospital at the same time as the pioneering research of Albert Londe was taking place. See: Tomkins, *Duchamp*, pp.43-44.

[47] For the influence of x-rays on contemporary art see: Linda Dalrymple Henderson, "X Rays and the Quest for Invisible Reality in the Art of Kupka, Duchamp, and the Cubists," *Art Journal* XLVII (Winter, 1988), pp. 323-340; for their popular reception see: Nancy Knight, "The New Light: X Rays and Medical Futurism," in Joseph J. Corn (ed), *Imagining Tomorrow: History, Technology and the American Future* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1986), pp. 10-34.

[48] Henderson describes the experiments of Max von Laue which established the similarity between x-rays and light rays. She also charts the discovery that x rays were simply a kind of electromagnetic radiation that had a wavelength shorter than normal or UV light; See: Linda Dalrymple Henderson, "X Rays and the Quest for Invisible Reality in the Art of Kupka, Duchamp, and the Cubists," *Art Journal* XLVII (Winter, 1988), p. 324.

Röntgen's discovery was heavily dependent on the invention of William Crookes two decades earlier whose development of the Crooks-tube (or cathode-ray tube) and the Radiometer had directly influenced the scientific development of the x-ray.[49] The x-ray was symptomatic of not only the evolution of science in the first decades of the twentieth century but also the flattening of life and the fossilising of the figure-ground relationship that would come to characterise artistic production thereafter. This was of particular significance to the creative practices of Dada and surrealism, which both set out to radically transform the nature of medium generally and the spatial characteristics of surface specifically.[50]

However, while the surfaces of the *Large Glass* provided evidence of the spatialisation of the act of drawing that was a central strategy of the avant-garde, there is an equally powerful mechanisation of this process that sees the emergence of architectural drafting techniques as a primary concern in this period. Baker has argued for a libidinisation of the act of drawing that, as well as transgressing the medium of drawing, engages a sexual or erotic urge in its production. For Baker, there was an overemphasis on the anarchical nature of Dada activity, which had tended to discourage analysis of their motives. Baker's argument is that "[r]ather than embracing nihilism or anti-art, most Dada work has a structure. It can be made to answer to an analysis that we might call formal, or at least structural."[51] It is the relationship between sexuality and space that structures a large part of this analysis. To introduce this sexualised model of drawing into the context of architecture Man Ray's *Monument to Sade* is an important gesture as it positions architecture in relationship to both the (sexualised) body and the drawn line.

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[49] For the influence of these devices on contemporary art see: Linda Dalrymple Henderson, "Francis Picabia, Radiometers and X-rays in 1913," *The Art Bulletin* 71 1 (March, 1989), pp. 114-123.

[50] Kurt Schwitters draws attention to the aesthetic qualities of x-rays in a poem from 1923 where he argues that, while his "doctor friend" produced them, he was clearly the "creator of the work as it was I who recognised the artistic content." See: Kurt Schwitters, "P…Pornographic-i-poem," trans. Michael Kane in Dawn Ades (ed), *The Dada Reader: A Critical Anthology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), p. 298.

[51] George Baker, "Entr'acte," p. 160.

The photo effectively traced an architectural envelope around the female body, creating a symbolic "frame" around the human buttocks and enclosing, through a simple white line, the space of a cross. As well as its anthropomorphic connotations, the line demarcated the plan shape of a church and, equally symbolically, Christianity: juxtaposing religious morality with the libertine and spiritual godfather of surrealism, the Marquis de Sade. Furthering this connection, the gesture was repeated as the cover for Man Ray's own copy of Sade's *120 Days of Sodom*,[52] creating a cross-shaped hole making visible the same anatomical space. As both line and plan, the contour traces the moral boundaries that the avant-garde sought to transgress, charting the confluence that exists between the living, bracketed body and the objective (and moral) frame that positions it.

Architectural drawing (drafting specifically) was a major component of Dada process and central to a number of its primary aesthetic advancements. Where Dada drawing deliberately dismantled the accepted boundaries of media such as painting and collage, they readily accepted not only the processes but the techniques of architectural representation in a number of their works.[53] For Baker, the introduction of mechanical drawing to Dada "initiated not just a regime of the copy [but it also] let loose drawing as a form of promiscuity."[54] While this fascination runs through the preparatory drawings for the *Large Glass*,[55] it was in Francis Picabia's *Mechanomorph* drawings that a new representational medium was discovered. Picabia used mechanical drafting to dismantle the emotional content of his works, anthropomorphising the machine by giving it human characteristics, discernible only through the title of works. A fetishisation of the act of drawing, Picabia's works—such as the 1915 *Paroxysm of Suffering* or *Daughter Born without a Mother* from a few years later—are torn between the orthogonal machinery of the two-dimensional image and the emotive content of the title.

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[52] This work will be dealt within more detail in a subsequent chapter on "Diller + Scofidio".

[53] For a more detailed investigation of the role of mechanical drawing in Dada, see the chapter "From Painter To Engineer" in: Henderson, *Duchamp in Context*, pp. 31-33; pp. 59-64.

[54] Baker, *Artwork Caught by the Tail*, p. 69.

[55] Duchamp's studies of the Chocolate Grinder were a turning point in this regard not only in the use of the object, but the mechanisation of its representation. See his discussion of the discovery and representation of this object in: Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, p. 37.

These works embody the sublation of art with the praxis of life by embracing the dehumanising characteristics of the mechanically drafted line and then animating it with individual experience and melancholy. In this sense, the drawings challenge the position of Baker (among others) as they are neither "radical" or (as he argues) an inherent collapse of the medium of drawing.[56] They embrace the mechanisation of drawing as a strategy for mediating desire, celebrating the migration of architectural representation techniques into the armoury of the historical avant-garde but accepting the conventions inherent to the medium. This collision between the drawn and the lived is at the heart of the representational practices of the historical avant-garde and is embodied, most radically, in collage.

The practices of Dada are underpinned by an economy that, in the spirit of representation, is appended to productivity, mechanisation and architectural space. The *Large Glass* is a mechanism, equivalent to a game of chess where the visual transaction is inconsequential compared to the spatial/mechanical one that controls it. The microscopic traces of dust breeding are the only evidence of the surfaces that, no longer tied to content or programme, became breeding grounds of the idle and animal. Lines roam free in architectural space, evolving complex sexual economies and metaphors, exploring and transgressing rules and conventions.[57] Given the emphasis that Duchamp placed on movement in this period, and the spatialisation of the work of art into a three dimensional realm, it is not surprising that his experiments began to automate the idle "field" of representation by mobilising the ground through the continually transforming rotor relief. Assembling glass plates to a mechanical steel structure, Duchamp created a machinery that placed the "ground" in a state of constant motion, effectively removing representation from the work and implicating its spatial environment as a direct extension of the work.

Central to Krauss's formation of a "spatial unconscious"[58], the tactic became violently spatial when Man Ray arrived to photograph the work. After capturing the blurred figure of

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[56] See: Baker, *Artwork Caught by the Tail*, p. 69.

[57] A similar argument regarding the line has also been made in: Catherine Ingraham, *Architectures and the Burdens of Linearity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998).

[58] Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*, p. 12.

Duchamp behind the spinning planes, the *Rotary Glass Plates* became a literal battleground as Man Ray was nearly decapitated when one of the discs broke free from the machinery and nearly decapitated him in the process.[59] In this moment, the relationship between figure and ground reached a dramatic reconciliation. Where the toy cannons of Duchamp had been trained at the surface in the *Large Glass*, the flying disc saw the surface of Duchamp's "precision optics" careering towards the figure as it was freed from the "work" and discharged into space. Here these experiments became "tactics" in the most militaristic form of the word, as both the lines and surfaces of the Dada drawing began to escape the conventions of the work of art. These tactics left indelible traces in architectural space as a new representational ballistics invaded the two-dimensional work and radicalised its relationship with the room that encloses it.

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[59] The moment is described in: Jennifer Mundy, "The Art of Friendship," in Mundy, *Duchamp, Picabia, Man Ray*, pp. 28-29.

Collage and Montage

> The collage of the future will be executed without scissors or razor or glue etc. in short, without any of the utensils that were necessary until now. It will leave behind the worktable and the artists cardboard surfaces and it will take place on the walls of the big city, the unlimited field of poetic achievements. […] With or without the consent of these [individuals], posters, once inanimate and still, will awake, and poetry will devour the walls.
>
> Leo Malet, *How Poetry Devours Walls* (c. 1936)[1]

No invention is more central to the legacy of the historical avant-garde than collage and montage. Schulte-Sasse, for instance, argues that "the success of any theory of the avant-garde can be measured by how convincingly it can anchor the formal principle of collage and montage."[2] For Peter Bürger, the essential aspect of collage and montage is that, as visual strategies, they are able to reconcile incompatibilities that, to the viewer, are registered as shock.[3] Through collage, spatial and temporal boundaries can be erased and the entrenched traditions of creative production are subverted. While pioneered by Picasso and Braque in the early decades of the twentieth century, it was the radicalisation of collage as a political instrument that was the primary interest of both Walter Benjamin and Bürger. In the work of Heartfield, for instance, photomontage was transformed from a visual strategy into a political one that concentrated the technical advancements of the twentieth century onto the narrow plane of two-dimensional representation.[4]

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[1] Leo Malet, *La poésie mange les murs* (unpublished manuscript), republished in: Leo Malet, "A New Art Medium: How Poetry Devours the Walls," trans. Judith Applegate, *Leonardo* 2 4 (October, 1969), pp. 419-420.

[2] Jochen Schulte Sasse, "Theory of Modernism versus Theory of the Avant-Garde", in Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. xxxix.

[3] See Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 73-74.

[4] Bürger uses the terms collage and montage interchangeably on occasions. In this chapter, the works of Heartfield will be considered photomontages, and the works of Ernst as collages. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 76

If Heartfield's collages had a resonance with politics and the interpretation of avant-garde practices, then the collages of Max Ernst embodied architecture, literally transplanting the interiors of the nineteenth century as backdrops to surrealist soap-operas. Ernst's collages embodied a number of the contradictions that became central to the legacy of the historical avant-garde and distinguished its practices from those of modernism. Ernst's work unearths a nostalgic and psychological architecture that, overladen with historical baggage, is reconfigured for use in modern life. The power of these images gave form to the "outmoded" architectures of history, which became a fascination of Benjamin and Giedion and are central to the historical re-reading of surrealism in Hal Foster.

While not particularly drawn to the practices of either Dada or surrealism, Buchloh's writing on collage is informative, as it recognises the power of collage to integrate with the inhabitation of the city. In an essay from 1991, Buchloh draws upon a passage from Leo Malet (a second-wave surrealist) who argues that "the collage of the future" will not be produced by scissors or glue but "will take its place on the walls of the big city, the unlimited field of poetic achievements."[5] Buchloh's analysis makes reference to Malet's naïve utopianism, which he sees as a characteristic of second-generation surrealism[6] and distanced from the political realities of the 1920s. Paradoxically, the decades after Malet's statement saw the walls of the city effaced not with "unlimited poetic achievements" but, as Buchloh demonstrates, Nazi propaganda, in the first instance, and advertisement a decade later. As the post-war consumerist culture began to articulate itself at the urban scale and with ever-increasing aspirations, collage shifted from a creative strategy to a lived reality. The city was transformed into a colossal inhabited collage, immersed in the consumerist forces which used images to adulterate the static surfaces of architecture prophetically, in the case of Malet, "devouring its walls" in the process.

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[5] Leo Malet, quoted in Benjamin Buchloh, "From Detail to Fragment: Décollage Affichiste," *October* 56 (Spring, 1991), pp. 98-110. By far the most authorative account of Malet's work in English to date is: Michelle Emanuel, *From Surrealism to Less-Exquisite Cadavers: Leo Malet and the evolution of French Roman Noir* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 1994). The work focuses on Malet's attempts at detective fiction.

[6] Buchloh, "From Detail to Fragment," p. 99.

While a paradigm of post-war urbanism, Kurt Schwitters had noticed this collaging of the architectural surfaces of the city, much earlier, when he wrote

> [h]ouses are not advertising pillars. But the empty gable is the underpants of the house. And here in Berlin the underpants of the houses are painted with advertising. Is that supposed to be beautiful? Is it really? It is Dada when one is wearing Dadaist advertising in one's underpants. Or is the house supposed to be a Janssen's meat vol-au-vent? […] But I say to you, your houses are mostly dada, but very rarely Janssen's meat vol-au-vents. Advertising is a sign of our times.[7]

The point that Schwitters makes in this passage is that there is a correlation between architecture and collage and, more specifically, the construction of architecture creates surfaces that are easily appropriated towards collagist ends. Buchloh argues that the development of the techniques of mechanical reproduction invaded the interiors of the domestic home through the evolution of the magazine, necessitating a crisis in architecture which saw the increasing privatisation of the urban and domestic realm and with the subsequent effect that "the embattled *public* space of the city would gradually be *evacuated*."[8] That this process was a legacy of the mechanisation of reproduction techniques and the despatialising characteristics of collage also fuels Bürger's argument that the authentic avant-garde occurred in the 1920s and the post-war period was merely a stage of its commercial reproduction. The natural affiliation between architecture and fragmentation meant that the realm of the city was particularly vulnerable to the effects of this process, visually represented on its surfaces and experienced (through vacation) at its centre.

While the *decollaging* of architecture is a significant characteristic of neo-avant-garde practices, this chapter will focus on the emergence and discovery of architecture in the two-dimensional collages of the historical avant-garde and especially in relationship to the photomontages of Heartfield and the book collages of Ernst. In the work of these two figures, the boundaries of the work of art are expanded and its political function is

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[7] See: Kurt Schwitters, "Dadaism in Holland [January 1923]," trans. Michael Kane in Dawn Ades (ed), *The Dada Reader* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), pp. 291-292.

[8] Buchloh, "From Detail to Fragment," p. 100.

questioned and transformed. With an emphasis on the dialectic set up by Bürger between the institution of art and the liberating avant-garde, the chapter will demonstrate how the architecture of the nineteenth century was both truncated and problematised as a rediscovered fragment of the outmoded spaces of the bourgeoisie.[9]

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As has already been established, collage and montage were two of the most important strategies in avant-garde production and were central to the diagnosis offered by Peter Bürger of its tactics. Bürger understood collage and montage as a critical evolution in avant-garde strategies of representation and central to the sublation of art and life. Bürger's position is that the historical avant-garde use of montage radicalises the techniques of reception, rather than production/conception, forcing the individual viewer to connect the spaces between fragments and, in this process, reconstruct the work in an individualised (and de-institutionalised) way. While, as Benjamin demonstrates, montage is ultimately easily integrated with the forces of production, in the context of the historical avant-garde it disrupts the traditional reception of art and necessitates a collapse in the autonomy of the artwork. The fragmentation of a holistic, organic structure of meaning is the most significant contribution that montage makes to the field of art. As Bürger writes

> [the…] refusal to provide meaning is experienced as shock by the recipient. And this is the intention of the avant-gardiste artist, who hopes that such a withdrawal of meaning will direct the reader's attention to the fact that the conduct of one's life is questionable and that it is necessary to change it. Shock is aimed for as a stimulus to change one's conduct of life; it is the means to break through aesthetic immanence and to usher in (initiate) a change in the recipient's life praxis.[10]

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[9] Aspects of this chapter (or earlier versions) have been published, or presented, previously as: Michael Chapman, "Fore and Against: Science, aesthetics and visual complexities of figure-ground in urban analysis," in James Coulson, Dirk Schwede and Richard Tucker (ed), *Towards Solutions for a Liveable Future: Progress, Practice, Performance, People, 41st Annual ANZAScA Conference, 14-16 November* (Deakin: ANZASCA, 2007), pp. 62-69; Michael Chapman and Michael Ostwald, "Disfigured Ground: Architectural Space and Representation in the Creative Practices of Dada and Surrealism," *South African Journal of Art History* 24 (2009), pp. 67-74.

[10] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 80.

It is in Bürger's analysis of the montages of John Heartfield that his theory of collage and montage begins to become more concrete. Opposing the late Berlin Dada images to the originary canvasses of Cubism, Bürger sees a hybrid Dada category that he terms "images for reading."[11] Photomontage is a technique inherently tied to Berlin Dada, although debates as to its exact origin are ongoing.[12] Regardless, the stylistic structure of photomontage in Berlin Dada is unique and distinctive.[13] For Bürger, there is a primitivism to the montages of Cubism that, while establishing the "fragment", refuses to integrate it into a new aesthetic system, or within a revised context of medium, thus enhancing the effects of shock that can be attached to it. This is clearly not the case in the montages of Dada where the "cut" itself is barely legible,[14] and the fragment is fundamentally recontextualised within the political message that consumes it.[15] In this sense, Bürger sees it as a link between the photomontage of film and the montage of painting, with the

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[11] The original German term is lesebilder. See Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 75. The influence of this tactic on the neo-avant-garde will be examined in a subsequent chapter on "Bernard Tschumi".

[12] Debates on this topic are split between those who attribute the first photomontages to Heartfield, (the cover of *Jederman sein eigner Fussball* [Everybody his own soccer ball]) and the claims of George Grosz and Raoul Hausmannnn who both claimed to have independently or collaboratively invented the technique; on this, see: Brigid Doherty, "Berlin," in Leah Dickerman (ed), *Dada* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2005), pp. 90-99; Matthew Biro, *The Dada Cyborg: Visions of the New Human in Weimar Berlin* (Minnesota: University of Minneapolis Press, 2009), p. 32; Hans Richter, *Dada: Art and Ant-Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1965), pp. 114-118.

[13] Benjamin saw this as the primary legacy of Dada, particularly in the development that occurred in the work of Heartfield, where the political and the artistic came together. The most critical passage in this regard is: Walter Benjamin, "The Author as Producer", in *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Schocken Books, 1978), p. 229; see also; Peter Demetz, "Introduction," to Benjamin, *Reflections*, p. xxxviii; Andreas Huyssen, "The Cultural Politics of Pop: Reception and Critique of US Pop Art in the Federal Republic of Germany," *New German Critique* 4 (Winter, 1975), p. 92.

[14] The "cut" is a major theme in Baker's work. Where Bürger focuses on its concealment through technique, Baker focuses on its exploitation as a symbol of castrative urges in the avant-garde. See: George Baker, *Artwork Caught by the Tail: Francis Picabia and Dada in Paris* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2007), pp. 77-80.

[15] That Heartfield possessed an overactive political conscience is evident from his 1920 manifesto (with George Grosz) on art production and the class struggle entitled "Art Scab". See: John Heartfield and George Grosz, "The Art Scab," Anton Kaes, Martin Jay and Edward Dimendberg (ed), *The Weimar Sourcebook* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), pp. 483-486; see also: Brigid Doherty, "The Work of Art and the Problem of Politics in Berlin Dada," *October* 105 (Summer, 2003), p. 81.

implication that the photomontages of Berlin Dada have integrated both the aesthetic effects of film as well as the intentions of the fragment in painting.

One example of this reification of experience as an aesthetic strategy of the avant-garde is in the influential films of Hans Richter and Viking Eggeling[16] that, as well as flattening experience onto a horizontal plane, sought to articulate a fluid and ephemeral architecture which directly inhabited the screen of the cinema and brought its static surface to life. As already illustrated, Richter had studied architecture and maintained a fascination with space and volume throughout his creative life. In Richter's films there is a discovered architecture that emerges through the manipulation of time and the conflation of figure and ground. The films were created by layering different sized fragments of paper (each coloured in slight variations of white and grey) against the surface of the film and then varying the speed and scale with which they were reproduced.[17] Originally conceived as scrolls, the result was an affront to the medium of painting but led naturally into a new conceptualisation of film that, inadvertently, became an original mode of architecture.[18] Moving beyond abstraction, these films imply a spatiality to cinema, where the screen becomes the liquid surface to a volume, which is articulated and reproduced through cinematic time.[19]

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[16] Eggeling's untimely death in 1925 limited his production and, arguable, subsequent influence as a member of the avant-garde. The most thorough document in English of his important oeuvre is: Louise O' Konor, *Viking Eggeling, 1880-1925: Artist and Film-maker, Life and Work* (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1971).

[17] Emmanuelle de L'Ecotais and Mark Levitch note the influence of Chinese scrolls in the development of this process, which tends to link the process to a spatialisation of the act of drawing. See: Emmanuelle de L'Ecotais and Mark Levitch, "Dada Films," in Dickerman, *Dada*, p. 411.

[18] For the transformation from painting, to scroll to film, see: Elena Simon, "Dada on Film: Richter's *Rhythmus*," *Thousand Eyes* 2 (February, 1977), p. 2. Rudolf Kuenzli, *Dada* (London: Phaidon, 2006), p. 67; the works of both Richter and Eggelling, in their original form as film sequences, are reproduced in: de L'Ecotais and Levitch, "Dada Films," pp. 411-412.

[19] That Richter was aware of these concepts is clear from his essay: Hans Richter, "The Film as an Original Art Form," *College Art Journal* 10 2 (1951), pp. 157-161.

While Richter's works have been traditionally positioned as works of cinema,[20] they resonate more strongly with collage and particularly as it is evoked in the temporal writing of Benjamin. Rupturing both space and time, the works are interstitial, and have architectural and spatial characteristics which transcend the medium of cinema and, to a large extent, negate its traditional categories. If Richter's work discovered a *found* architecture through film, then the photomontages of Raoul Hausmann created a representational architecture through which fragments could be assembled and reproduced. Hausmann's distinctive style is synonymous with Dada collage and montage, embodying the confluence of spatial and temporal fragments upon the surface of the picture plane. There is also an implied spatiality to the picture plane, which uses a distortion of perspective to accommodate the discord that emerges between incompatible elements. The surrealist painters—particularly Dali and Magritte—loved playing games with the relative flatness of the painted surface and this gave rise to the characteristic experimentations with perspective. Where photography demonstrates a fascination with "flattening" architectural space by collapsing the figure-ground, the techniques of collage and montage attempted to escape this flatness through visual illusions and an exaggeration of figure and ground. As a model for incorporating contradiction, the technique of collage and montage enables a disruption of the "organic" form of the work of art and requires a degree of insight and interpretation on the part of the viewer in order to assemble the fragments into some kind of intelligible form.[21] As assaults upon the autonomy of bourgeois aesthetics, collage and montage were critical interventions into the holistic form of the work of art, directly challenging the representational hegemonies of the nineteenth century and dismantling the structures of meaning that were attached to them.

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[20] Amongst the most lucid investigations of the problematic category of "Dada Cinema" is: Thomas Elsaesser, "Dada/Cinema?" in Rudolf Kuenzli (ed), *Dada and Surrealist Film* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996).

[21] In the Marxist critiques of aesthetics, this process of engaging the viewer also invited a transformation of their life praxis by forcing contemplation and action. See, for instance: Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," p. 238.

This duality is reflected, in Bürger's theory, through the dialectical pairing of the categories of the organic and non-organic work, adopted from the writing of Benjamin.[22] The organic work—evolving through an intrinsic connectivity to society and as an embodiment of its values—is juxtaposed with the non-organic work, which is the assemblage of fragments devoid of social context and without a clear narrative through which they should be interpreted or decoded.[23] Embodying the sublation of art and life, the collage provided a forum through which the everyday could be assembled as art. In a critical passage from "Author as Producer" Benjamin described the process as

> [s]till lifes put together from tickets, spools of cotton, cigarette butts that were linked with painted elements. The whole thing was put in a frame. And thereby the public was shown: look, your picture frame ruptures time; the tiniest authentic fragment of daily life says more than painting.[24]

With its emphasis on reality fragments and experience, Benjamin's thinking had a significant impact on Bürger's attitude to collage. One of the primary criticisms that Buchloh makes in regard to Bürger's thesis is his selective appropriation of Benjamin's work and the lack of specificity in regard to the concept of the organic/non-organic work of art that he applies.[25] For Buchloh, the transformation in this concept from Benjamin's original writing on the Baroque in the mid 1920s, to the Marxist essays of a decade later is significant and not sufficiently incorporated in Bürger's thinking. Bürger draws primarily from the section on allegory in Benjamin's *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*[26], where

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[22] The influence of the concept of organic and non-organic works of art on Bürger's thinking is immense, but it is also a characteristic of the broader aesthetic theory of the Frankfurt School and endemic to the historical and social analysis of art that frames Bürger's thinking. In the 1970s, these categories were indelibly tied to discussions of autonomy and art and had been central to the critical exchanges that had taken place between Benjamin and Adorno in the 30s and 40s. See, for instance: Theodor Adorno and Walter Benjamin, *The Complete Correspondence, 1928-1940* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2000), p. 61-79, p. 111, pp. 295-304.

[23] Bürger describes these categories in: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 72-74.

[24] Benjamin, "The Author as Producer," p. 229.

[25] Benjamin Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde," *Art in America* (November, 1984), p. 21.

[26] Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (London: Verso, 1998), pp.174-185 [orig. 1928]. While Benjamin only published the work in 1928, he wrote the work between May 1924 and

Benjamin juxtaposes the "[images] of organic totality" of classicism with the "amorphous fragments" of the baroque.[27] As well as dissolving the symbolism that is attached to the "work of art", in Benjamin's argument it is through this decentring of the art object in the baroque that the "false appearance of totality is extinguished"[28]. In Bürger's reading of this passage, he makes the argument that Benjamin is writing with a very strong view towards the present and, while masked in a discussion of the baroque, it is essentially an explanation of avant-garde practice that he is really undertaking in this analysis.[29] The evidence for this argument (both in Bürger's writing and in Benjamin's work) is largely circumstantial but it does serve to articulate the critical position of Bürger, who redeems avant-garde practice in order to critique his own present (in this case, the practices of the neo-avant-garde) and seeks an alignment with the earlier approach of Benjamin. While Benjamin's writing on the organic in the baroque positions it *against* classicism, in his later writings the work of art is politicised, non-organic in nature, but inherently opposed to the established audiences for art and the criteria used to define the work of art itself.

While Hausmann's work is distinctive in developing the medium of montage and its visual language, Bürger focuses entirely on the work of John Heartfield, who had embraced the newspaper and the emerging techniques of reproduction to recast the relationship between images and words. That Bürger focuses on a certain period of production in Heartfield's work is significant: aligning strongly with the theory of montage that he is trying to set up as well as the political ideologies that underpin Heartfield's approach. It is also

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April 1925. He also published excerpts in 1925. See George Steiner, "Introduction," in Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p. 7.

[27] Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p. 176.

[28] Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p.176.

[29] Bürger argues that "it was Benjamin's experience in dealing with works of the avant-garde that made possible both the development of the category and its application to the literature of the baroque." Bürger argues that Benjamin's theory of allegory, while developed in regard to the baroque, finds its ultimate expression in "the avant-gardiste work". Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 68. In a similar vein, more recently, John Macarthur has argued that Benjamin's *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* "concerns the theory of art in Benjamin's time as much as it does the seventeenth century, and it contains the germ of much later thinking on modernism." See: John Macarthur, "Schwitters and Benjamin: the modernity of the baroque and romanticism," *The Journal of Architecture* 15 3 (2010), p. 291.

coincidental that Heartfield is the only artist, of the numerous Dada artists who were concerned with the evolution of photomontage, singled out by Walter Benjamin for attention. Benjamin, like Bürger, pointed selectively to the "revolutionary" Dada photomontages of Heartfield "whose technique," he observed "made the book cover into a political instrument"[30]. Benjamin was critical, however, of the way that technology had assimilated these radical processes and transformed them into mainstream media, desensitizing the public to their radical intentions and minimising access to the authentic original. They were no longer "techniques" of the class-struggle, but ultimately ineffective by-products for the advancement of production.[31] Avant-garde practice had initiated technical and aesthetic revolution without a meaningful transformation to the status of production. Within a few years they bore no "revolutionary" qualities whatsoever, having been assimilated into everyday life.[32] In short, photography could no longer depict reality due to the saturation of aesthetics that had bracketed it. In this sense, montage became a counter-technique, restoring its power, but also dismantling its documentary qualities.

As a result, Heartfield is cited as an example of a political artist who transforms the nature of the reception of art and transforms the "viewer" into an agent of political action. Heartfield's work is idiosyncratic and, in the context of art history, relatively marginal to the mainstream passage of art. In fact its significance is almost always aligned to the efforts undertaken by Heartfield to transform the political function of art and to develop a revised conception of the audience that art was addressing.[33]

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[30] Walter Benjamin, "The Author as Producer", p. 229.

[31] Heartfield himself, like Benjamin, challenges the failures of art to address the broader political issues effecting the worker and the means of production, and is angry with art that "pints the world in a calming light" (p. 483). In regard to the importance of connecting art with the issues effecting proletariat revolution, Heartfield is unequivocal. See: Heartfield and Grosz, "Art Scab," p. 483.

[32] As a result, Benjamin argues, photography "can no longer depict a tenement block or a refuse heap without transfiguring it". See: Benjamin, "The Author as Producer", p. 230.

[33] This is a theme in: Doherty, "The Work of Art and the Problem of Politics in Berlin Dada," p. 81.

Buchloh, for instance, cites Heartfield on numerous occasions as a "counterexample"[34] whose alterity has made his work the subject of "complete neglect"[35] and "decades of indifference"[36]. For Buchloh, Heartfield's work was marginalised specifically because it represented a turning point in art history: "one of those historical moments in which a set of traditional assumptions about the structures and functions of art are being effectively challenged."[37] In fact, in this sense, Büchloh (more than Bürger) draws attention to the political significance of Heartfield's art, referring to "the avant-garde attempts […] to construct an emerging proletarian public sphere, dramatically [affecting the] conception and reception of art in the prewar and postwar period."[38]

Despite previously being critical of Bürger's over-emphasis on the politicisation of art in his *Theory of the Avant-Garde*,[39] Buchloh's writing on Heartfield places his work firmly within a political frame and, more importantly, suggests that this agenda has necessitated the "ambivalence" with which the work has been received. In this sense, for both Bürger and Buchloh, it is through the attempts to alter the reception of art that the work attains the category of an avant-gardiste work, operating not just in an institutional context, but a deeply social and political one as well. This is slightly different to Adorno's writing on montage, which Bürger draws from heavily and on a number of fronts.[40] In *Aesthetic Theory* Adorno had positioned montage centrally, as one of the "new" mediums capable of challenging the culture industry, while at the same time assimilating with it.[41] Adorno

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[34] Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, *Neo Avant-Garde and the Culture Industry: Essays on European and American Art from 1955 to 1975* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 2003), p.280 n. 5.

[35] Buchloh, *Neo Avant-Garde and the Culture Industry*, p. 204.

[36] Buchloh, *Neo Avant-Garde and the Culture Industry*, p. 204.

[37] Buchloh, *Neo Avant-Garde and the Culture Industry*, p. 206.

[38] Buchloh, *Neo Avant-Garde and the Culture Industry*, p. 206.

[39] Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde," p. 19.

[40] Huyssen argues that the differences between the positions of Benjamin and Adorno are primarily contextual in nature, related to Benjamin's association with Soviet communism and Adorno's concern with (and opposition towards) American capitalism. See: Andreas Huyssen, "The Cultural Politics of Pop", p. 92-93.

[41] Adorno's primary writing on montage is in: Theodor Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (London: Continuum, 1997), p. 202-204; see also: Gevork Hartoonian, *Modernity and Its Other: a Post-script to Contemporary Architecture* (College Station, Texas: Texas A & M University Press, 1997).

writes from a different perspective to Bürger in that, rather than historicising the practices of the avant-garde, he tends to see them as embedded in the broader project of modernism which is, in itself, mounted as a perpetual challenge on all fronts to the traditional modes of art. Adorno sees montage in a nihilistic sense as an acceptance of art's "impotence" in the face of the culture industry, inaugurating, with this realisation, its own abolition. He argues that "[m]ontage is the inner-aesthetic capitulation of art to what stands heterogeneously opposed to it"[42] with the effect that "the negation of synthesis becomes a principle of form."[43] For Adorno, the inclusion of "reality fragments" in the techniques of montage makes the viewer aware (even conscious) that they are not looking at an organic repetition of reality but a visual rupture of it, using the break between representation and reality to achieve a heightened aesthetic effect. Bürger, elaborating on this passage from Adorno, writes:

> [t]he insertion of reality fragments into the work of art fundamentally transforms that work. The artist not only renounces shaping a whole, but gives the painting a different status, since parts of it no longer have the relationship to reality characteristic of the organic work of art. They are no longer signs pointing to reality. They are reality.[44]

The writing of Benjamin, Bürger and even Adorno is highly selective and fails to take into account the broader creative innovations of photomontage, or, more importantly, the way that these had informed architecture. What unites all three writers is an emphasis on the importance of "reality fragments" which transform the artwork and, in the process challenge its inherent meaning, deferring reception to the audience.

The role of the fragment was a central characteristic of the work of Max Ernst, which, in its earliest forms, drew from the surfaces of architecture for inspiration. In his 1937 text, *Beyond Painting*[45], Ernst described the importance of architectural surfaces in the

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[42] Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 203.

[43] Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 203.

[44] Adorno, quoted in Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 78.

[45] Max Ernst, *Beyond Painting: and other writings*, trans, Dorothea Tanning (New York: Winterborn and Schulz, 1948) [orig. 1937]. A revised translation appears in: Mary Ann Caws, *Surrealism* (London: Phaidon, 2004), p. 215.

development of his early thinking about art.[46] Architecture also featured heavily in the development of his creative process of "frottage"; a practice where architectural surfaces (usually floors) are reproduced through rubbing graphite against a sheet of paper placed directly against the surface.[47] "Grattage", a related practice, involved scraping paint off a canvas against a textured surface to leave the imprint of its contours.[48] In each case architecture is buried in the surface of the image, directly encrypted in the canvas as the ground against which figures are revealed. In a number of ways, the experiments of Ernst with collage and overpainting[49] embodied the same spatial structure as the photomontages of Heartfield[50], with an image sandwiched between lines of text. Ernst's work from this period works with found graphics, suppressed by the selective covering up of the surface of the original with paint, and its ritualistic uncovering for dramatic effect.

One of the most suggestive and iconic examples, again from the formative Dada period, is Max Ernst's *The Pleiades*[51] from 1921. Central to the evolution of surrealism,[52] the overpainting drew from a nineteenth century photograph of a woman reclining, inverting

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[46] Ernst remembers how his "obsession" started with a childhood memory of "a panel of false mahogany" and an adult memory of a timber floor, glimpsed, "in rainy weather in a seaside inn". Ernst was taken by the grooves in the floor and "produced from these floorboards a series of drawings by placing over them at random leaves of paper I then rubbed with lead." See: Ernst, *Beyond Painting*, p. 48.

[47] For Ernst, *frottage* was "nothing but the intensification of the irritability of the mind by appropriate technical means." He describes the evolution of the technique (and its naming) in: Ernst, *Beyond Painting*, p. 49,

[48] For a description of the *grattage* technique and its influence, see: Werner Spies, "Nightmare and Deliverance," in Werner Spies and Sabine Rewald (ed), *Max Ernst a Retrospective* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 12-13.

[49] The German term is *Übermahlung*. See: Krauss*, The Optical Unconscious* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1994), p. 46.

[50] A more extended investigation of Heartfield's photomontages in this is undertaken in a subsequent chapter on "Bernard Tschumi".

[51] A number of authors refer to this work as *La puberté proche*, drawn from the first line of Ernst's text. See: Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*, p. 46. In regard to this collage, Rosalind Krauss described it as "a work which, from the point of view of its sexual axis, can […] be read as extremely ambivalent" (p. 41).

[52] The work was amongst the 56 images that Ernst mailed to Paris at the request of Breton, becoming amongst the first images to be considered in the framework of surrealism. Breton referred to the works as "readymade images". See: Mary Ann Caws, *Surrealism* (London: Phaidon, 2004), p. 72; Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*, p. 42.

the figure and removing the spatial context, effectively replacing the depth with a patinated layering of pigment and texture. While essentially flattening the work, the process draws out aspects of the original and, in this case, removes the architectural context in favour of a highly sensual and tactile surface. Unlike the collages of Heartfield, however, the text, rather than decoding the work is an eclectic jumble of Dada nonsense which, at best, suggests a title for the work and, at worst, makes a point to undermine the image completely.[53] Here the process of collage serves not to disguise the "cuts" but to exaggerate them, tearing the various elements apart and dismantling the structure that unites them. In his 1920 collage entitled *Architecture*, Ernst went beyond the surfaces of architecture by framing literal fragments torn from buildings in an assemblage technique that was reminiscent of the *Merz* explorations of Schwitters.[54] Like the frottage processes, the technique literalises the architectural surface and its representational qualities.

This drawing together of architectural fragments into the frame of collage was a recurrent theme in Ernst's work, which saw architecture and the picture plane as irrevocably connected. Equally poignant, were Ernst's experiments with spatial perspective, which used collage to reposition graphic material in an architectural and spatial context. In *The Flamingos,* Ernst takes an aerial photograph and completely dismantles it by allowing elevation, plan and perspective to intersect in a single constructed image. The process creates an anarchy of architecture, negating its representational principles at the same time as it discovers new ones. Adorno is drawn to these processes (more than those of Heartfield) as they provide an assault on the classical structure of the organic work while

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[53] The full inscription reads: "The onset of puberty has still not taken away the slender grace of our Pleiades/ The gaze of our eyes full of shade is drawn towards the pavement, about to fall/The gravitation of undulations does not yet exist." See: Caws, *Surrealism*, p. 72.

[54] A number of Schwitters' *Merzbild* works are contemporaneous with Ernst's explorations but embody different values. As Shearer West has argued, the work of Schwitters sought to create a "calm aesthetic space" whereas Ernst's assemblages were pursuing an art of "chaos and disruption", as Hugo Ball had described it. See: Shearer West, *The Visual Arts in Germany, 1890-1937: Utopia and Despair* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 102; For more on Schwitters assemblages, including the relationship to architectural fragments and *Merzbild*, see: Dorothea Dietrich, *The Collages of Kurt Schwitters: Tradition and Innovation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

operating, for the most part, outside of the political context that underpins Heartfield's production.

In *The Master's Bedroom*, from 1920, Ernst began with an encyclopaedia image depicting a zoology of animals. The reworked collage removes all but five species and then recreates the scene in a spatial context, framed by foreshortened walls and with the grooves between a timber floor disappearing towards the horizon in order to create the illusion of both depth and space. A work central to recent scholarship on Ernst and heavily theorized by Rosalind Krauss[55] and Hal Foster, [56] the collage inverts the traditional flattening of figure-ground, creating a deepening of the picture plane and the artificial discovery of a manufactured space. Drawing from Breton's naming of the process as "readymade images", Rosalind Krauss finds the work central to the practices of Dada, arguing that even a blank canvas is "already organised" by the tapering lines of perspective that, even inadvertently, serve to automatically spatialise the virgin sheet. The problematical nature of this imposed perspective is a central theme in Krauss elucidation of the "optical unconscious" which seeks to impose a ground upon every figure. In Krauss's words,

> the ground of *The Master's Bedroom* is not a latency but a container already filled, [… so] that the perspective projection is not felt as a transparency opening onto a world but as a skin, fleshlike, dense and strangely separable from the objects it fixates; these features present a visual model that is at one and the same time the complete reversal of traditional perspective and the total refusal of its modernist alternative.[57]

In this context, one aspect of Ernst's work that is of particular significance for both architecture and a theory of the avant-garde is its dependence on the historical interiors of the nineteenth-century. Ernst's *La Femme 100 tétes* drew from imagery cropped from nineteenth century journals and illustrated books, transforming these scenes into a surreal collision between figure and context. The architecture retains its spatial characteristics but

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[55] Rosalind Krauss, "The Master's Bedroom," *Representations* **28** (1989), pp. 55-76; Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*, pp. 53-58.

[56] See Hal Foster, *Prosthetic Gods* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004), pp. 211-220.

[57] Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*, p. 54.

is radically reprogrammed, inheriting an array of bizarre events and becoming a stage for the projection of a self-indulgent avant-garde dreamscape. Architecture, through this process, is discovered (and reproduced) as an *objet trouvé*, stolen from the outmoded interiors of the nineteenth century bourgeoisie. Throughout these collages, the surfaces and elements of architecture are instrumental in creating the perception of perspective while feminine bodies either hover mysteriously outside the frame, or are imprisoned within it. That Ernst drew, in his collages, from Diderot's work is already established.[58] Having a lasting impact on visual imagery, Diderot had created a method of documenting objects (or tools) and their spatial environment, revolutionising the practices of spatial representation and the traditions that accompanied it.[59] As Werner Spies has demonstrated, the majority of the material that Ernst drew from in the formation of his collages was "solely functional, in origin and experience."[60] For Giedion (who knew Ernst personally) the collages were firmly embedded in the nineteenth century and served to reinvigorate the structures of bourgeois society through critique and disorientation. Giedion writes, in regard to Ernst,

> [d]rops of the nineteenth century still seemed to flow in his veins. […] Here irrational images unmask the devaluation of symbols at work. Following one another without regard to external logic, the picture cycles are not to be read for their naturalistic meaning. What matters is their psychic comment. They are collages, fragments culled and pasted from the long forgotten woodcut books of the last century. Max Ernst raised them to the status of "objects." The scissors cut them asunder and the artist's fantasy, taking up the elements, combines them anew.[61]

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[58] This argument is made in: Werner Spies, *Max Ernst: Collages* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1988), pp. 102-104; see also: Pepe Karmel, "Terrors of the Encyclopedia: Max Ernst and Contemporary Art," in Spies and Rewald (ed), *Max Ernst*, pp. 81-106.

[59] The connection between space and labour in Diderot is covered in more detail in: Michael Chapman and Michael Ostwald, "Fortifying Sisyphus, or the Architectural Machinery of Modern Punishment," in Maryam Gusheh and Naomi Stead (ed), *Progress: The Proceedings of the 20th Annual Conference of the Society of Architectural Historians Australia and New Zealand* (Sydney: Society of Architectural Historians Australia and New Zealand, SAHANZ, 2003), pp. 50-55.

[60] Spies, *Max Ernst*, p. 102.

[61] Siegfried Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command: a contribution to anonymous history* (New York: W.W.Norton, 1969), p. 361-2 [orig. 1948]. In a similar vein, Breton had described Ernst as "midway between

Giedion's passage implies a rediscovery of architecture through the act of collage, which tears it from its historical roots and repositions it within a distorted *contemporary*. There is a connection to be made between the emphasis that Ernst places on the nineteenth century interior and the dialectic that Bürger sets up between the avant-garde and the bourgeois aesthetic practices of the previous century. A number of scholars connect Ernst's obsession with the nineteenth century interior to the recurring psychoanalytical forces that underpin his work. For Adorno, these works were "the attempt to uncover childhood experiences by blasting them out."[62] In the context of Bürger, the collages proposed a dialectic between modernism and the avant-garde, marrying experience with context and recovering, in Benjamin's terms, the "revolutionary nihilism" of the nineteenth century.[63] As has already been shown, the outmoded (and its dependence on architecture) is a key aspect of Hal Foster's writing on surrealism. First problematised in Benjamin's work,[64] Foster draws from the proliferation of outmoded interiors in Dada and surrealism and their radical potential in subverting the traditions of art.[65] Foster takes this one step further to imply that the nineteenth century interiors that feature prominently in Max Ernst's work were also the scenes of childhood for many of the surrealists—"representations residual in surrealist childhoods"[66]— as well as the bourgeois backdrop to Freud's writing on sexual discovery. Foster sees a clear confluence between the discovery of psychoanalysis and the architectural context where this occurred, most explicitly in the ornamental interiors of the nineteenth century home. Foster refers to the "becoming-hysterical" of these interiors whereby

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his own birth and ourselves". See: André Breton, *Surrealism and Painting*, trans. Simon Watson Taylor (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2002), pp. 160 [1928].

[62] Theodor Adorno, "Looking Back on Surrealism", trans. Rolf Tiedemann and Shierry Weber Nicholsen, in Theodor Adorno, *Notes to Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), pp. 86-90 [1956].

[63] See the chapter on "Outmoded Spaces" in: Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1995), p.157-191.

[64] The outmoded is a theme in: Walter Benjamin, "Surrealism: The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia," in *Reflections*, pp. 177-192.

[65] On this, see also: William Camfield, *Max Ernst: Dada and the Dawn of Surrealism* (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1993), p. 116.

[66] Foster, *Compulsive Beauty*, p.177.

> [i]mages evocative of "perverse" desires (eg., sodomy, sadomasochism) erupt in these rooms, most often in the spaces of representation—in paintings or mirrors on the walls. Here the mirror as a reflection of perceptual reality, the paradigm of surrealist painting, becomes a window onto psychic reality, the paradigm of surrealist art.[67]

This emphasis on the interior was a preoccupation of the Frankfurt school and especially in the 1930s. The confluence of ideas relating to withdrawing, solitude, isolation and contemplation (heavily romanticised in Nietzsche's writing) were connected in Adorno's dissertation to a nostalgia for the nineteenth century interior as a response to an internalised intellectual spirituality, glimpsed through Kierkegaard.[68] Similarly, in Benjamin's work of the same period, the interior is characterised by its opposition to work and production; a characteristic of modernism at the same time as it is a reaction against it. Again the nineteenth century interior assumes the qualities of otherness, allowing respite from the banality of work and where the family, in all of its psychoanalytical dysfunction, replaces the collective as the unit of social interaction. These anxieties are given form in the collages of Ernst, blurring the public and private realms and juxtaposing the nineteenth century interior with its modernist antithesis.

The window is a critical theme in Ernst's collages from the late 1920s invariably positioning women floating mysteriously outside of windows or enclosed within them. Architecture becomes the frame, within a frame, through which the body is located and, in this case, excluded. These windows create a rupture in the picture plane establishing, through collage, irreconcilable events either side of the architectural openings that separate them. In these images architecture becomes the threshold between the external reality and the internal desires of the artist, not only organising the composition but also positioning the body outside of it.[69] Reinforcing the connection to Bürger, Breton had described the collages, as early as 1928, as "pregnant with events, destined to be realized on the plane

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[67] Foster, *Compulsive Beauty*, p.177.

[68] See: Theodor Adorno, *Kierkegaard: Construction of the Aesthetic*, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989) [1933]. Hal Foster makes this argument in: Foster, *Compulsive Beauty*, p. 178.

[69] This is a theme in: Spies, *Max Ernst*, pp. 70-72; see also: Spies, "Nightmare and Deliverance," p. 10.

of reality."[70] Again, this discovered ground is forced upon the figures, imposing an architecture through representation onto the otherwise flattened surface. For Krauss, the process animates the architectural surfaces, rendering them flesh-like[71] and dialectically opposed to the mechanisations of modernism. Krauss writes

> [g]leaming and new, this architecture will admit no crime, no deviation. It will be a machine, stripped down for work, a machine to live in. Bet there, suddenly, on the stretch of one of its concrete flanks, a protuberance begins to sprout. Something bulges outward, pushing against the house's skin. Out it pops in all its nineteenth century ugliness and absurdity, a bay window with its scrollwork cornices, its latticed windows. […] It is the underbelly of the prewar technorationalism, the unconscious of the modernist *Sachlichkeit*. It is surrealism, connecting us, through the irrational, with the other side of progress, with its flotsam, its discards, its rejects. Progress as obsolescence.[72]

Krauss's critical passage evokes the inevitable contradictions that are embodied in the collages of Ernst (and the historical avant-garde generally), embracing the contemporary through the redemption of the past.[73] Collage, as a process, enables these contradictions to occur simultaneously, not only tolerating the spatial and temporal incongruity but also exaggerating it. These aspects of Ernst's production begin to approach the *decollage* effects described at the beginning of this chapter, where architecture becomes a platform which supports the production and dissemination of images. This became a central theme in the influence of the historical avant-garde and one of the areas where art and architecture have collided most forcefully.[74]

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[70] Breton, *Surrealism and Painting*, p. 159.

[71] For Breton, the "spirit inhabiting Max Ernst has never been the prisoner of that elegant envelope of human flesh" and the connection between flesh and architecture runs through his analysis (p. 163, for instance). See: Breton, *Surrealism and Painting*, pp. 161-162.

[72] Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*, p. 34.

[73] For an exploration of this, see: Robert Storr, "Past Imperfect, Present Conditional," in Spies and Rewald (ed), *Max Ernst*, pp. 51-67.

[74] Writing in regard to the "pastiche" postmodernism of Michael Graves, for instance, Hal Foster argues for a repetition of modernist practices (primarily those of collage) but without critique or insight. Foster writes, in the context of Graves's work, "Modernist practices of critical collage have become mere devices, instrumental

The centrality of collage to the visual practices of the historical avant-garde—and its influence on subsequent practices in architecture—should not be underestimated. As well as redefining the graphic and aesthetic structure of the picture-plane, it inherently overlapped with all of the associated techniques of the avant-garde and, as a result, was symbolic of the collapse of medium that was symptomatic of Dada and surrealism. Collage was instrumental in not only the discovery of architecture—either cropped from the nineteenth century interior or manufactured through spatial perspective—but in the development of new tactics that could represent it. As Ernst had argued, these tactics reduced ("to the extreme"[75]) the role of the artist (or author), enabling a new mode of reception whereby the artist "is present, indifferent or passionate, at the birth of his work and watches the phases of its development."[76] This shift in the relationship between production and reception is at the heart of the historical transformation that Bürger describes in *Theory of the Avant-Garde*. By literally connecting lived experience with the work of art, collage was the most effective and prolonged strategy through which the sublation of art and life was undertaken. That architecture was a prominent and recurring theme in these experiments demonstrates the extent to which the avant-garde sought to "discover" the existing rather than reproduce the new, creating a framework through which the dialectical alternatives to modernism could be articulated and preserved.

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tricks: the sign, fragmented, fetishized and exhibited as such, is resolved in a signature look, enclosed within a frame. The traditional unity of architecture or painting as a discipline is reaffirmed, not challenged." This can be contrasted with the work of Eisenman, for instance, which seeks a deconstruction of the disciplinary constraints of architecture from within, using models and drawings, rather than collage, in order to produce, in Foster's terms, "both object and representation". Foster argues that these historically paired processes of collage—pastiche, in Graves, or textuality, in Eisenman—are essentially linked, schizophrenically to a mourning for the loss of the subject: an architecture which is, in its nature, autonomous. See: Hal Foster, *Recodings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics* (New York: The New Press, 1985), p. 131.

[75] Ernst, *Beyond Painting*, p. 48.

[76] Ernst, *Beyond Painting*, p. 48.

Photography

> For whoever is expert enough to navigate the ship of photography safely through the bewildering eddies of images, there is the whole life to recapture as if one were running a film backwards, as if one were to be confronted suddenly by an ideal camera in front of which to pose Napoleon, after discovering his footprints on certain objects. O life, reluctant life. Mortally interesting game, game capable only of lasting too long! […] An absurd shyness hovers between our eyes, reflected by the pupils. Nothing that surrounds us is object to us, all is subject.
>
> —André Breton[1]

As has already been established, when Peter Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* was first translated into English, it coincided with a period of critical revision of the practices of surrealism and this was particularly concentrated on the medium of photography. While photography had long been accepted as one of the primary domains of surrealist experimentation, the transformative role of photography as an artistic medium and an avant-garde strategy had been historically overlooked. Photography had been widely employed as an accompaniment to the surrealist text or as a part of the visual polemics that characterised surrealist journals.[2] However, tainted through their association with both fashion[3] and advertising[4], the works of the surrealist photographers were rarely, if ever,

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[1] André Breton, *Surrealism and Painting*, trans. Simon Watson Taylor (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2002), pp. 33-35 [1928].

[2] See: Dawn Ades, "Photography and the Surrealist Text,' in Rosalind Krauss and Jane Livingston, *L'Amour Fou: Surrealism and Photography* (New York: Abbeville, 1985), pp. 155-194.

[3] Man Ray, Lee Miller and Dora Maar were all heavily involved in fashion photography and had a stylistic impact on the direction of fashion journals in the 1920s and 30s. On the relationship between surrealism and fashion, see: Richard Martin, *Fashion and Surrealism* (New York: Rizzoli, 1990); Ghislaine Wood, *Surreal Things: Surrealism and Design* (London: V & A Publications, 2007), pp. 139-176; Whitney Chadwick, "Lee Miller's Two Bodies" in Whitney Chadwick and Tirza True Latima (ed), *The Modern Woman Revisited: Paris Between the Wars* (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 2003), pp. 199-221.

[4] On this subject, see: Amy Lyford, "Advertising Surrealist Masculinities: André Kertész in Paris," in Raymond Spiteri and Donald LaCoss, *Surrealism, Politics and Culture* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2003), pp. 73-91; Tag Gronberg, "Beware Beautiful Women: The 1920s Shop Window Mannequin and the Physiognomy of Effacement," *Art History* 20 3 (September, 1997), pp. 375-396; from the perspective of advertising, see:

exhibited as art and, historically at least, seen as contextual print-media rather than autonomous art products. The major revisionist works in the history of surrealism and photography since the 1970s[5] have established its centrality to the experiential aspirations of the avant-garde as well as its critical role in shaping representational practices by engaging associated disciplines and especially those of architecture and literature.[6] Two critical themes have helped to define this discussion: a critical emphasis on the surrealist journals, where photography assumed a polemical role in furthering the ideas of the avant-garde[7] and a renewed interest in the relationship between surrealism and urban

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Pamela M. Homer and Lynn R. Kahle, "A Social Adaptation Explanation of the Effects of Surrealism on Advertising," *Journal of Advertising* 15 2 (1986), pp. 50-54, p. 60.

[5] The most critical work, on this front, in repositioning "darkroom" photography as a primary concern of surrealism is: Krauss and Livingston (ed), *L'Amour Fou*; a counter-argument to this influential exhibition is the work of Ian Walker, which argues for an emphasis on the documentary work of Brassai and Cartier-Bresson; see, for instance: Ian Walker, *City Gorged with Dreams: Surrealism and documentary photography in Interwar Paris* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002); Ian Walker, *So exotic, So homemade: Surrealism, Englishness and Documentary Photography* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2007); More recent works have sought to further divide surrealist photography along the lines of its "documentary" or "darkroom" allegiances. See, for instance: Anne Marsh, *The Darkroom: Photography and the Theatre of Desire* (Melbourne: Macmillan Publishers, 2003); John Roberts, *The Art of Interruption: Realism, Photography and the Everyday* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998); Clive Scott, *Street Photography: from Atget to Cartier-Bresson* (London: I. B. Taurus and Co, 2007).

[6] On the relationship between text and photography in surrealism, see: David Cunningham, "Photography and the Literary Conditions of Surrealism," in David Cunningham, Andrew Fisher and Sas Mays (ed), *Photography and Literature in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2005), pp. 67-86; Marja Warehime, "Photography, Time and the Surrealist Sensibility," in Marsha Bryant (ed), *Photo-textualities: Reading photographs and literature* (New Jersey: Associated University Presses, 1996), pp. 25-42; for a comprehensive account of collaborative surrealist books, see: Renée Riese Hubert, *Surrealism and the Book* (California: The University of California Press, 1988).

[7] A critical moment in this regard was Dawn Ades *Dada and Surrealism Reviewed* exhibition which took place from 11 January until 27 March in 1978. The exhibition was critical as it was the first major "retrospective" of Dada and surrealism, effectively reproducing their work as historical for the first time. More significantly, it was the first exhibitions to treat the surrealist journals as art objects in a museum, providing copies of a number of the various journals, as well as articulating the divisions between Breton and Bataille. See: Dawn Ades, *Dada and Surrealism Reviewed* (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1978); for more on the layout and its relationship to architecture, see: See: Alan Colquhoun and John Miller, "Dada and Surrealism Reviewed: the architectural components," in Dalibor Veseley ed. *Architectural Design Profile: Surrealism and Architecture* 11 2-3 (1978), p. pp. 136-137; George Melly, "Dada and Surrealism Reviewed," in Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 135.

experience,[8] where photography became a medium that documented the body in all of its sensual contexts as it sought out new adventures in the modernist city.[9] In both scenarios, photography served to flatten and reproduce the three-dimensional world by rediscovering architecture as a spatial context for experience and an x-raying of the everyday.

Recently a vast and expanding literature has been assembled which looks at the role of photography in surrealism, charting the obsession with external reality and internal desire. This chapter will step outside of the arguments internal to photography and look primarily at the relationship between architectural space and surrealist photography, particularly as it is "framed" in surrealist practice as a polemic against the totalising utopias of the modern movement. *Architecture*, as an *objet-trouvé*, is conspicuous throughout the surrealist distortions of photography and functions as a rigid frame from which the trajectories of the avant-garde are mapped. Photography is not used as a medium to represent but as a polemical model to psychologically map the social and subjective spaces of architecture against the cold tabula rasa of modernity.

This chapter will explore further this flattening of three-dimensional space through an analysis of the experimental techniques of surrealism and the role of architectural fragments in reshaping them. The work of Man Ray, Raoul Ubac and Maurice Tabard will be examined in more detail, with a specific focus on the relationship between architectural space and the picture plane. In the work of all three photographers, the camera functions as a "room within a room" where architecture provides a frame that mediates between the

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[8] This was largely a result of the emerging importance of the Situationist movement which used the city as a vehicle for political agitation and revolt. On these connections, see: Mikkel Bolt Rasmussen, "The Situationist International, Surrealism and the Difficult Fusion of Art and Politics," *Oxford Art Journal* 27 3 (2004), pp. 365-387; Tom McDonough, "Delirious Paris: Mapping as a Paranoiac-Critical Activity," *Grey Room* 19 (Spring 2005), pp. 6–21; Michael Löwy, *Morning Star: Surrealism, Marxism, Anarchism, Situationism, Utopia* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009), pp. 29-42; Alyce Mahon, *Surrealism and the Politics of Eros: 1938-1968* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2005), pp. 195-197.

[9] See, for instance: Rosalind Krauss, "Nightwalkers," *Art Journal* 41 1 (Spring, 1981), p. 33-38; Therese Lichtenstein, "The City in Twilight," in Therese Lichtenstein, *Twilight Visions: Surrealism and Paris* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), pp.11-71; Roger Cardinal, "Soluble City: The Surrealist Perception of Paris" in Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 143-149; Dawn Ades, "Photography and the Surrealist Text" in Krauss and Livingston (ed), *L'Amour Fou*, p. 153-189.

body and the lens. Deployed in this way, architecture is discovered as a residual aspect of life and the vessel through which the ephemeral desires of the avant-garde are both collected and preserved. These strategies had a profound influence on the representation and conceptualisation of architecture in the neo-avant-garde.[10]

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Despite its centrality to the writing of Walter Benjamin, Peter Bürger is noticeably silent on the question of photography[11] and particularly as it relates to avant-garde production. In his extensive theorisation of Breton's writing generally, and *Nadja* specifically, Bürger neglects the role of photography in "intervening" with the text and creating the visual and spatial context for Breton's literary excursions.[12] Equally, while acknowledging the centrality of "experience" and "life" in his writing on Bataille,[13] Bürger overlooks the role

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[10] Aspects of this chapter have been published, or presented, previously as: Michael Chapman and Michael Ostwald, "Curated Desires: film, photography and the visual transformation of urban space in surrealism," in Sarah Chaplin and Alexandra Stara (ed), *Curating Architecture and the City* (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 39-50; The paper was presented, in an earlier form, as: Michael Chapman, "Curated Desires: Photography and the Visual Transformation of Urban Space in Surrealism," *Curating Architecture and the City: Fourth Annual AHRA Conference—16-17 November, Kingston University* (London: Architectural Humanities Research Association, 2007) [up] abstract published; Michael Chapman and Michael Ostwald, "Disfigured Ground: Architectural Space and Representation in the Creative Practices of Dada and Surrealism," *South African Journal of Art History* 24 (2009), pp. 67-74; Michael Chapman, "Spatial entrails: Themes from surrealism and psychoanalysis in the interiors of Sugar Suite," *IDEA* (2009), pp. 96-109.

[11] Bürger writes dismissively of the impact that photography (as a sub-system) has on painting arguing that such "reciprocal influences […] should not be given excessive weight." For Bürger, this is not a cause-effect relationship, but needs to take into account the broader social development of art and especially in the context of bourgeois society. See Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 33.

[12] While Benjamin draws attention to the role of the caption and its relationship to the image, Bürger focuses on the role of the caption, Bürger focuses on the literary aspects of Breton's work and the collapse of narrative that automatism necessitates. Bürger's analysis of Nadja can be found in: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 79-80. For Benjamin's writing on the caption, see: Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1968), p. 226. Both the caption and narrative, as surrealist strategies, will be addressed in more detail in the subsequent chapter on Bernard Tschumi's work.

[13] See the title essay in: Peter Bürger, *The Thinking of the Master: Bataille between Hegel and Surrealism*, trans. Richard Block (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2002), pp. 24-55.

that he played in "curating" visual images through his journals[14] as an organisational counterpoint to aesthetics preferring to focus on his transgressive literary experiments. In fact, Bataille's polemical use of dialectical images[15] has been central to his legacy and an important undercurrent in surrealism throughout the 1920s. As Simon Baker has argued, images play a disruptive role in *Documents* unsettling the conventional architectures of representation through fragmentation and disorientation. As Baker argues, "objects are reproduced in close-up, at confusing scales; illustrations turn up uninvited in the wrong places; images act as spanners in the smooth workings of the earnest, determined arguments and echo uncannily in the spaces between unrelated ideas."[16]

Despite Bürger's focus on other media, photography is of vital interest to the theory of the avant-garde that he presents and, as much as the strategies of the readymade or collage, underwent a process of transformation that saw architecture become a central concern. What the surrealists shared with modernism in general (and Le Corbusier in particular)[17] was a faith in the photographic image as a supplement to the pervasive polemics of the written word. However, where machines and technology dominate the photographs of

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[14] For an excellent account of this process, see: Linda Marie Steer, *Found, Borrowed and Stolen: the use of photography in French surrealist journals, 1924-1939* (Binghampton: The State University of New York, 2006), pp. 105-163 [PhD dissertation].

[15] Dawn Ades and Fiona Bradley have written of the fashion in Parisian journals in the 1920s with "doubling" where pictures where deliberately laid out in contradictory pairs, with a combined title that united them. As with Breton's *L'Revolution Surrealiste*, the graphic layout was designed to emulate the scientific journals of the time, but with images offered as contradiction rather than evidence. They also parodied more conservative journals in a polemical way. One example is the 1928 publication of Eli Lotar's images of slaughter, to coincide with an issues of the *Cahiers d'Art* which published photographs of the functional, economic and hygienic aspects of the abattoir in Lyon, as a an exemplary model of modern architecture. See: Dawn Ades and Fiona Bradley, "Introduction" in Dawn Ades and Simon Baker (ed), *Undercover Surrealism: Georges Bataille and Surrealism* (London: Hayward Gallery Publishing, 2006), p.13-14; For the images of abattoirs, see: Christian Zervos, "Marche aux bestiaux et abbatoirs de la mouche â Lyon," *Cahiers d'Art* 8 (1928), p. 343.

[16] Simon Baker, "Doctrines: The Appearance of Things" in Ades and Baker (ed), *Undercover Surrealism*, pp. 36.

[17] On this see: Beatriz Colomina, "Le Corbusier and Photography," *Assemblage* (October, 1987), pp. 6-23; Alexander Gorlin, "The Ghost in the Machine: Surrealism in the Work of Le Corbusier," *Perspecta* 18 (1982), pp. 56-57.

Corbusier, it is the feminine body,[18] constructed and positioned through an organizing gaze, that is used to narrate the city and its various trajectories in surrealism. While most scholarship has, quite rightly, focussed on the problematic representation of femininity in the work of surrealist photographers,[19] there is evidence that architecture is equally incriminated in this framing of the body, with the city and the female form blurring as alternate metaphors of male desire.[20]

Rosalind Krauss, who has mapped the connections between surrealist photography and the city as a central stream of her writing on the subject, has argued that the alleyways, flea-markets and back lanes of Paris functioned as a "breeding ground for […] experience"[21] which was recorded and documented through the invasive lens of the camera. Krauss argues that in both Aragon and Breton's writing the city functions as a "chain of representations" effectively mapping lived experience "onto the labyrinth of

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[18] For a feminist reading of Corbusier's use of photography see: Luis E. Carranza, "Le Corbusier and the Problems of Representation," *Journal of Architectural Education* 48 2 (1994), pp. 70-81.

[19] Critical works on this topic are: Mary Ann Caws, "Seeing the Surrealist Woman: We are a Problem" in Mary Ann Caws, Rudolf Kuenzli and Gwen Raaberg (ed), *Surrealism and Women* (Cambridge, Mass: The MIT Press, 1991), pp. 11-16; Mary Ann Caws, "Ladies Shot and Painted", in Susan Sulieman (ed), *The Female Body in Western Culture* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1986), pp. 262-287; Katharine Conley, *Automatic Woman: The representation of Women in Surrealism* (Nebraska: The University of Nebraska Press, 1996); Natalya Lusty, "Disturbing the Photographic Subject" in Surrealism, Feminism, Psychoanalysis (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, 2007), pp. 81-96; Rudolf Kuenzli, "Surrealism and Misogyny," in Caws, Kuenzli and Raaberg (ed), *Surrealism and Women*, pp. 17-27; Penelope Rosemount, "All My Names Know Your Leap: Surrealist Women and their Challenge," in Penelope Rosemount (ed), *Surrealist Women: An International Anthology* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998), pp. xxix-lviii.

[20] The one-sided directionality of this desire has also been acknowledged. While a number of important and creative women were involved in the surrealist circle, especially Dora Maar, Meret Oppenheim and Lee Miller (all three posing in a number of iconic Man Ray photographs) the surrealists never successfully managed the transition from "woman as creative muse" to "woman as creative participant in surrealist activity". Despite this, it was only Aragon who seemed aware, or embarrassed by this gender imbalance. See: Kuenzli, "Surrealism and Misogyny," p. 19; see also: Lisa Wegner, "How it Came to Be: Meret Oppenheim's Path to Becoming an Artist as Told by Herself," in Therese Bhattacharya-Stettler (Ostfildern: Hatje-Cantz, 2007), pp. 39-50. More recently, attention has been drawn to the themes of masculinity, in particularly as an alternative to the more traditional feminist readings. On this front, see: David Hopkins, *Dada's Boys: Masculinity after Duchamp* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007); Amy Lyford, *Surrealist Masculinities: Gender Anxiety and the Aesthetics of Post-World War 1 Reconstruction in France* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007).

[21] Rosalind Krauss, "Nightwalkers," *Art Journal* 41 (Spring, 1981), p. 38.

[…the] unconscious"[22]. Photography became the primary medium through which these experiences were concretised. Having described the surrealist city as "convulsed and disrupted,"[23] Krauss argues that Benjamin's project to document the passageways of Paris effectively conceptualised "the city as ideogram" and this spatial experience was central to "the representation of the grounds of possibility of new cultural forms and meanings." [24] For Krauss, photography has a particular relationship to the "real", equivalent in its status to the readymade, comprising found artefacts torn from the everyday world.[25] For Krauss, the photograph is literally "stencilled […] off the world itself"[26] and is thus privileged by a direct relationship to experience which doesn't retain the alienating qualities of abstraction that are inherent to modernism. As Krauss concludes elsewhere, "photography seems to offer a direct, transparent relationship to experience, to the objects of one's experience [and] does not involve us in that sense of deprivation and attack that we feel in much of modernist painting and sculpture."[27]

This relationship between urban experience and surrealist photography is not unique to Krauss. Writing in her book *On Photography*, Susan Sontag argued that a recurring strategy of surrealism was the flattening of experience, which is manifested through "their taste for the grotesque, their professed innocence with respect to their subjects, their claim that all subjects are merely *objets-trouvés*."[28] For Sontag, photography was naturally inquisitive and had a role in re-discovering the details of a moment that the ephemeral

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[22] Krauss, "Nightwalkers," p. 38.

[23] Krauss, "Nightwalkers," p. 38.

[24] Krauss, "Nightwalkers," p. 38.

[25] Krauss writes: "one form that the real might take is the photograph, which, like the readymade, is independent of any imaginative manipulation." See: Rosalind Krauss, "Michel, Bataille et moi," *October* 68 (Spring 1994), p. 13.

[26] Krauss maintains that photography "enters the space of exchange […] as a heterogenous object: a splinter under the skin of meaning, a fly that lands on the lecturer's nose." See: Krauss, "Michel, Bataille et moi," p. 13.

[27] Rosalind Krauss, "Stieglitz/Equivalents," *October* 11 (Winter, 1979), p. 129.

[28] Susan Sontag, *On Photography* (London: Penguin, 1978), p. 46; on this subject, see also: Richard J. Williams, "Surreal City: The Case of Brasilia," in Thomas Mical (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture* (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 244.

experience of life failed to register.[29] Sontag argues that "[p]hotographs really are experience captured and the camera is the ideal arm of consciousness in its acquisitive mood."[30] This aspect of the camera, which naturally records life through the freezing of experience, has a natural affiliation with Bürger's work and establishes a trajectory of avant-garde production that is relatively underexplored.

Man Ray's photography was discussed in a previous chapter for its role in articulating a new model of drawing in space that is characterised by the contours of architectural space and form. In this chapter, his work will be examined from the point of view of experience and particularly the role of photography in framing the body and its architectural context. The flattening of life detected in the theoretical writings of both Krauss and Sontag is nowhere more clearly articulated than in the *rayograph*[31] technique that Man Ray developed in the 1920s, where artefacts of everyday life were literally documented as an extension of the picture plane. Michael Taylor argues that the discovery of the technique allowed Man Ray to replace paint with light, creating directly onto the picture plane with objects (life), rather than technique (art).[32] Man Ray's description equated the representational force as equivalent to finding "the undisturbed ashes of an object consumed by flames."[33]

The *rayograph* evoked the techniques of x-ray already discussed,[34] flattening the three-dimensional volume of experience horizontally against the picture plane.[35] What this

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[29] Sontag, *On Photography*, p. 3.

[30] Sontag, *On Photography*, p. 4.

[31] The first use of the term *rayograph* was in *The Little Review* (1922), p. 60, and was later distinguished from the term *Schadograph*, which was an alternate model of photogramme developed by Christian Schad. Man Ray sent some of his *rayographs* to *Vanity Fair*, who subsequently published them. See: Francis M. Naumann, *New York Dada, 1915-1923* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1994), p. 218.

[32] See: Michael R. Taylor, "New York Dada," in Leah Dickerman, *Dada* (Washington: National Gallery of Art, 2005), p. 296.

[33] Man Ray, quoted in: Rosalind Krauss, "Photography in the Service of Surrealism," in Krauss and Livingston (ed), *L'amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism*, p. 24.

[34] See: Naumann, *New York Dada*, p. 218; Linda Dalrymple Henderson, "X Rays and the Quest for Invisible Reality in the Art of Kupka, Duchamp, and the Cubists," *Art Journal* XLVII (Winter, 1988), pp. 323-340;

enabled was a representation of architecture that was no longer literal, but multi-facetted, implicating architectural elements in the everyday experiential reality of life.[36] However, while the *rayograph* was a literal flattening of the fragments of experience against the picture plane, there was an architectural residue that encroached on a number of his later photographic works and which served to articulate an important connection between the body and its spatial context. While the *rayograph* functioned as a fixed visual window onto experience it was essentially a reduction of the three-dimensional world onto the two-dimensional picture plane. What took place in a number of Man Ray's later photographs was the emergence of architecture as a frame itself, literally enclosing the body and leaving its residual traces directly against the skin of the feminine subject. Man Ray undertook a number of portraits of Lee Miller over a period of several years beginning in the early 1920s and culminating in the *Untitled* photographs from the early 1930s. This series of images serves as the primary example of the window, space and the body in a state of hierarchical composition. In its first instance, entitled *Return to Reason* (1923), Hal Foster describes this photographic format as the "richest instance of the surrealist woman as phallus"[37] and architecture figures prominently in his extended description of the work. Foster writes,

> [t]his nude is cropped at the neck and navel, posed in the near dark by a window hung with lace; she is also turned in a such a way that a veil of refracted light and shadow striated her body almost to the point of dissolution into the liquescent space of the room (which is also the liquescent surface of the print; this slippage is a recurrent effect of surrealist photography). This type of image must have fascinated Man Ray, even arrested him, for he returned to it often enough.[38]

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[35] This is a theme in Dawn Ades discussion of the *rayograph* technique in: Dawn Ades, "Camera Creation," in Lundy (ed), *Duchamp, Man Ray, Picabia*, pp. 88-113.

[36] Emphasising the avant-garde sublation of art and life, Naumann describes the process of the rayograph as "an imprint left by an object, in a process that turns that object into the residue of an event." See, Francis M. Naumann, *Making Mischief: Dada Invades New York* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1997), p. 251.

[37] Hal Foster, *Prosthetic Gods* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004), pp. 242.

[38] Foster, *Prosthetic Gods*, pp. 242.

Foster's reading, like those of Krauss and Sontag, draws attention to the flattening of space as the "liquescent" surface merges with the architectural space. Architecture is represented as a frame for the experiential body, glimpsed only in residual traces that mark the body and exaggerate its contours. This framing plays a direct role in the sublation of art and life, creating the experiential context through which the artistically positioned body is viewed. The "traces" of architecture, articulated through shadow, are conspicuous across the picture-plane, locating the figure and articulating it and blurring the edges between (in Bataille's sense) the organising imperative of architecture, and the fluid compositional strategies of avant-garde photography. Rather than a flattening of the three-dimensional into the frozen two-dimensional, Man Ray's studies of Lee Miller depict a spatialisation of photography, which uses architecture to examine the body and mediate the desires of the voyeuristic viewer. That Man Ray's photography from this period adopts a "male gaze" has already been widely established.[39] However the inherent role of architecture in perpetuating this visual hegemony is less widely represented. Rosalind Krauss describes the figure in these portraits as "submitting to the possession by space"[40] Implicating architecture in the insatiable mobilisation of vision.[41] Seen only in traces, architecture becomes the witness to the work of art, revealing its sensual effects on the three-dimensional surface of the lived body, as opposed to the ossified x-raying of the picture plane.

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[39] In this regard, see the chapter "A Little Anatomy" in: Foster, *Prosthetic Gods* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004), pp. 225-226. Foster concedes that this is also a characteristic of Lee Miller's work from the same time and that "one can cast a 'male gaze' and not be male" (p. 226).

[40] Rosalind Krauss, "Corpus Delicti," *October* 33 (Summer, 1985), p. 50. The essay is reproduced in: Krauss and Livingston, *L'Amour Fou*, pp. 55-100.

[41] Walter Benjamin had argued that the camera had a naturally depersonalising characteristic. Using the example of a screen actor, as opposed to a traditional actor, Benjamin argues that the camera not only selectively records the performance, subjecting it to editorial and artistic interpretation, but also becomes the audience, preventing the actor from engaging with the audience directly, depersonalising the audience and enhancing its critical (and unemotional) reflex. As Benjamin concludes, "the audience's identification with the actor is really an identification with the camera." Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), p. 228.

Foster, in regard to these studies has drawn attention to their fetishistic nature[42] both in the extent to which Man Ray returned to them as a thematic element of his work and, more significantly, in the way that they transform the feminine body into a cropped phallic element.[43] "Headless and footless", as Mary Ann Caws describes it,[44] the feminine body is rendered without a head, voice, vision or mobility, existing primarily as a fragmented torso detached from both space and reality.[45] With reference to the *Untitled* portraits of the early 1930s, Krauss has argued that the body becomes an "inscription of the body by space […] in which boundaries are indeed broken and distinctions truly blurred."[46] Where Foster focuses on the role of the veil in articulating the psychoanalytical themes that underpin these investigations, Krauss establishes architecture as a denuding element framing the body through its absence. Krauss ties these operations to the camouflaging instincts of Roger Caillois which conceptualise the body as a physical extension of three-dimensional space.[47] Viewed through the lens of surrealism, these figures not only does the context of the figure infiltrate its representation but the figure itself comes to embody the architecture that encloses it. In these portraits, the body is represented frontally, with the traces of the veiled curtains reflected as oblique streaks emerging from the adjacent window and

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[42] Foster, *Prosthetic Gods*, pp. 226.

[43] Foster argues that "these nudes reshape the female body in fetishistic form […] The subject is clearly a woman, but she is more phallic than fetishistic; in a sense she is woman *as* phallus." Foster, *Prosthetic Gods*, p. 239.

[44] See: Caws, "Seeing the Surrealist Woman: We Are a Problem," pp. 11-16.

[45] The two main poles of the surrealist depiction of women that emerge are the female body cropped and fragmented beyond recognition or, equally paradigmatic, the terrifying woman returning the male gaze aggressively in a "medusan" stare (the obsessive depiction of the hair and the eyes are common themes in these portraits). These images, at least in the hands of their Freudian interpreters, speak equally of the male anxiety towards the phallus and castration, as the erotic desire which is central to the more familiar, and it would seem more explicit reading of the imagery. See, for instance: Hal Foster, "Obscene, Abject, Traumatic," *October* 78 (1996), pp. 106-24. This argument is developed in more detail in: Chapman, "Spatial entrails," pp. 96-109.

[46] Krauss, "Corpus Delicti", p. 31-72.

[47] The role of mimesis in Caillois work will be covered in a subsequent chapter on the work of "Diller + Scofidio".

tracing the contours of the monolithic feminine figure. The construct is "predatory"[48] in the sense that the figure and space are forced into a mimetic harmony as architecture disfigures the body and its animalistic environment. As Caillois himself noted, in an animalistic sense, "space is inextricably both perceived and represented."[49]

Charting the sublation of art and life, Man Ray's work from this period provides an extended meditation on the window that is merely a continuation of the broader themes of the historical avant-garde. The shop window was one of the most significant motifs in both Dada and surrealist imagery and, as well as its role in the economy of display, was also valued for its reflective and mimetic qualities. Eugene Atget's iconic photograph *Boulevard de Strasbourg*, depicting a street window crammed with corsets, is one of the most explicitly architectural renderings of this framing of commodified desire. Storefronts, full of mannequins, gloves, corsets and shoes married the conspicuous lust for consumable goods with the internal fascination with objects.[50] This dimension of Atget's work was not lost on Walter Benjamin who saw in these "photographs of deserted Paris", an excavated crime-scene. Benjamin argued that,

> [t]he scene of a crime, too, is deserted; it is photographed for the purpose of establishing evidence. With Atget, photographs become standard evidence for historical occurrences and acquire a hidden political significance. They demand a specific kind of approach; free-floating contemplation is not appropriate to them. They stir the viewer; [the viewer] feels challenged by them in a new way.[51]

This imagery played not only upon the array of fetish items presented in the commercial shopfront, but equally the reflection of the street and city behind, marrying erotic desire

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[48] This term comes from Sontag, who argues, "there is something predatory in the act of taking a picture. To photograph people is to violate them, by seeing them as they never see themselves, by having knowledge of them that they can never have; it turns people into objects that can be symbolically possessed." See: Sontag, *On Photography*, p. 14.

[49] Roger Callois, quoted and translated in: Krauss, "Corpus Delicti", p. 50 [in the original form of this paper the "inextricably" is left out of the translation. For this version see Krauss and Livingston, *L'Amour Fou,* p. 78.]

[50] For a more detailed exploration of this aspect of surrealist photography, see: Scott, *Street Photography*, pp. 3-48; Tag, "Beware Beautiful Women," pp. 375-396

[51] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," p. 226.

with the everyday heartbeat of the city.[52] This representation of the window as a storehouse of commodity married the psychoanalysis of Freud with the commercial fetishism of Marx, creating a screen against which desire was literally projected and reflected.[53] Romantic sojourns are replaced with meandering searches for consumable objects, in each case functioning as a symbol of sexuality and displacing lust onto the fetishistic commodity. The body in the window is replaced with its disassembled fragments and the window, like the documentary photos that permeate Breton's novels, functions as an index to experience, bridging desire and contextual reality. Mirroring the screen of the lens itself, these images can be read as a spatialisation of photography and its marrying with the "luminescent" screen of its production.[54]

If the body coalesces with this "luminescent" screen in the work of Man Ray, then it is imprisoned within it in the experiments of the Belgian photographer Raoul Ubac.[55] The flattened, fossilised and solarised images of Ubac are a primary example of the photographic inversion of this where bodies, instead of receding into space, are frozen at its edge, such as in the violent *Battle of the Amazons*. Where Man ray had compared the rayographic technique to the discovery of the ashes of an object, Ubac literally burnt the surface of the photographic film, in a technique that he entitled *brûlage*.[56] While again drawing attention to the spatial characteristics of Ubac's work, Krauss has been criticised for not acknowledging the chauvinistic overtones of this sea of contorted female bodies

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[52] This was recognised by Benjamin. See: Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," p. 226.

[53] This is despite being routinely ridiculed by both Freud and the French Communist Party, causing their eventual estrangement from both. See: Gérard Durozoi, *History of the Surrealist Movement*, trans. Alison Anderson (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997).

[54] The term comes from: Foster, *Prosthetic Gods*, p. 242.

[55] As well as his own idiosyncratic darkroom works, Ubac is recognised for his documentary work, particularly in regard to the 1938 *Exposition Internationale du Surrealism* where his photographs of the event are the primary legacy. A number of his photographs of mannequins along the *Rue Surrealiste* have become iconic images of surrealism, of which his authorship is not always acknowledged.

[56] See: Rosalind Krauss, "The Photographic Conditions of Surrealism," in Rosalind Kraus, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1986), p. 102. The relationship between fire and surrealist automatism will be discussed in a subsequent chapter on "Coop Himmelb(l)au."

frozen against the picture plane.[57] Krauss prefers to read the image as a manifestation of the automatic processes of Ubac; an attempt to subvert what Ubac claimed was the "rationalist arrogance"[58] of photography. Ubac's solarised images have a slightly disturbing architectural quality where the gyrating forms of figure and ground melt into each other beginning to resemble labyrinthine plans. The tangled sea of bodies represents the same architectural framing that permeates surrealist photography more generally and marries the competing forces of figure and ground. In Krauss's work, this became a governing rule of surrealist photography: "[r]otate the image of the body and you produce a different geography […] that undoes the *form* of the human form".[59]

This architectural character becomes explicit in the fossilised images such as *Paris Opera*, first published in Minotaur in the late 1930s.[60] In these flattened images, architecture is revealed as sculptural relief, lacking any depth at all. In Dawn Ades' depiction, the flattened surface becomes, in itself, an architectural fragment, rich with the material qualities of the embellished surface. Ades writes,

> [b]y a complex process of montage and solarization, Ubac succeeds in creating a texture like that of a crumbling plaster wall, in which the remains of the building emerge in an ambiguous negative-positive effect resembling a fossil […]. The variations notwithstanding, all these images and texts show that the city was in no sense a symbol of progress and modernity for the surrealists.[61]

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[57] See: Kuenzli," Surrealism and Misogyny," pp. 17-31.

[58] Raoul Ubac quoted in: Krauss, "Photography in the Service of Surrealism," in Kraus and Livingston (ed), *L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism*, edited by Rosalind Krauss and Jane Livingston (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985), p. 24.

[59] Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*, p. 157.

[60] Ubac's image was fittingly published as an accompaniment to Benjamin Peret's (1939) essay on architectural ruins. This connection is a central theme in both Hal Foster and Dawn Ades's reading of the work. See: Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1993), pp. 166; Dawn Ades, "Photography and the Surrealist Text," in Krauss and Livingston (ed), *L'Amour Fou*, p. 179.

[61] Dawn Ades, "Photography and the Surrealist Text," p. 179.

Architecture, in these photographs, is represented as an abandoned ruin, devoid of inhabitation. Ubac, more than any of the surrealist photographers,[62] represents architecture as an objet-trouvé discovered, through the invasive techniques of the camera and darkroom and exploited through a flattening of its otherwise spatial characteristics. The removal of detail and conflation of figure and ground renders the cropped buildings as ancient, discovered and even historicised works that—overlooked by contemporary culture—are rediscovered through avant-garde techniques. Ubac's renderings of the *Eiffel Tower* and *Opera House* are evocative of Benjamin's description of the ruined "monuments of the bourgeoisie" that embody the irreconcilable divergence between modernism and history.[63] The monumental force of Ubac's dehumanised fossils is, for Foster, to be read as a natural, rather than cultural, phenomenon. In Foster's analysis, we should regard

> these contradictory monuments, historicist and technologistic, as zoological remains; they appear arrested in time as if by natural catastrophe. […] In this surrealist vision the historicity of the bourgeois regime is imagined through an accelerated archaism of its forms: its transcendental ambitions are contested through the very presentation of its wish symbol as ruins.[64]

There is a resonance between these images and the work of Tabard where the figure (as a female form) and the "ground" as architectural frame flow into each other and are frozen as one against the picture plane. While distinctive in its treatment, Tabard's work returns to the primary themes of Man Ray, of a feminine figure depicted next to a window.[65] While the shadows still permeate the feminine form, the mood in the work of Tabard is darker,

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[62] While central to the analysis of both Krauss and Foster, Ubac's work is often overlooked in investigations on surrealism and photography in part, as a result of its timing (towards the latter-end of surrealist influence) and its idiosyncratic nature, no longer resembling a "work" of photography in the traditional sense. For an anthology that fails to mention either Ubac or Tabard, see: David Bate, *Photography and Surrealism: Sexuality, Colonialism and Social Dissent* (London: I. B. Taurus, 2004).

[63] This is the last line of: Walter Benjamin, "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century," in *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Schocken Books, 1978), pp. 162.

[64] Foster, *Compulsive Beauty*, p. 166.

[65] On the use of the body in Tabard's work see: Paul Linwood Gittings, "Focus Your Brain First: The Story of Maurice Tabard," *PSA Journal* 14 (November, 1948), p. 584.

and more sinister. The shadows begin to decapitate the figure, imprisoning it against the surface and, evoking the Amazonian studies of Ubac, displacing the body in a sea of architectural fragments. Tabard's work also undertakes a layering of visual information more akin to the process of collage where the architectural context and the figure melt into each other. Linked by Krauss to the uncanny of Freud,[66] this "mirror-reversing" of the negative and the layering of visual information is, as with the work of Man Ray, a re-framing of the figure within architecture. Camouflaging the figure with its spatial environment, the lens of the camera frames the architectural enclosure, which then positions the body, and melts into it. This was the surrealist technique through which the body is "curated" within the window of a constructed male architecture.

Tabard's work supports the reading of Dalibor Veseley, which argues that the legacy of surrealism should be understood as the rediscovery of a network of fragments, subsequently developed as a visual language through the various experiments of the avant-garde[67]. For Veseley, the encounter between the illusionistic and architectural aspects of surrealism transformed the "work of art" into a "work of life" which has obvious correlations with Bürger's theory.[68] Surrealist photography transcended the representation of architectural space in order to dismantle it as an extended concern of the body. Running through all of these moments in surrealist production is the dialectical relationship that Caillois alludes to in regard to the simultaneous "perception" and "representation" of space.[69] Architecture not only dismantles the autonomy of the subject, but actively creates a new hybrid one out of the fragments. As has been demonstrated, the role of

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[66] See: Krauss, "Corpus Delicti", pp. 31-72.

[67] Dalibor Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in the Shadow of Production* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004), p. 342. Note that Dalibor Veseley changed the spelling of his name mid-career, and so while "Veseley" is used throughout the text for consistency, "Vesely" is used in the citation of later works for bibliographic reasons.

[68] Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation*, p. 342.

[69] In a passage cited by Krauss, Caillois writes: "It is with represented space, that the drama becomes clear: for the living being, the organism, is no longer the coordinates, but is one point among others; it is dispossessd of its privilege and, in the strongest sense of the term, no longer knows where to put itself." The passage resonates strongly with the photography of Tabard. Caillois quoted in: Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*, p. 157 [italics in original].

photography in flattening the praxis of life, gives the medium of photography an important status in relationship to the avant-garde as well as the work of art. Veseley's summary of the legacy of surrealism has a particular resonance with the medium of photography, and permeates the work of Man Ray, Ubac and Tabard. Veseley writes,

> [t]he history of surrealism shows interesting similarities with the history of the positive fragment, which began with the restorative power of the word, followed by the discovery of the same power in the image and finally in the space of the city. It is a strange irony that the achievements of the surrealists are seen, even today, as subjective and arbitrary—merely as interesting readings of reality. Such a view fails to recognise that surrealism represents the most admirable effort to date to bring the latent world of our common existence into our awareness, not only in the domain of art, bur also in everyday life. That we have not understood this message may partly explain why the restorative role of fragment was recognised in architecture much later than it was in literature or painting.[70]

The final section of this dissertation will examine this quandary, demonstrating the discovery of the fragment in architecture through a reappraisal of the works of Dada and surrealism. This was not just a discovery of the avant-garde but also a rediscovery of architecture as a found object, decontextualised from its historical and cultural roots.

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[70] Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation*, p. 343.

Part Three: Architectures of the Neo-Avant-Garde

The final section of this dissertation deals with architectures of the neo-avant-garde and, specifically, those that have drawn from the practices of Dada and surrealism. If the historical avant-garde was characterised by the flattening of space and the spatialisation of the picture plane then the neo-avant-garde in architecture was concerned with the marginality of the discipline of architecture and its migration into alternative practices and media. Pursuing the argument that architecture functioned as a "found object" in the transgressive practices of Dada and surrealism, the previous section of this dissertation traced the extent to which the historical avant-garde appropriated architectural space as a tactic in the integration of the praxis of life as well as the systematic dissolution of medium. This section considers the category of "work" in relationship to the institution of architecture, by focussing on three practices which all, in the decades after the 1968 riots in Paris, began to operate outside of the traditional frameworks of architectural practice and pursue avenues of radicality and institutional opposition. Considering the work of Coop Himmlb(l)au, Bernard Tschumi and Diller + Scofidio[1], the section examines the use of historical avant-garde tactics, as well as the instinctive desire of these practices to create architecture which was fundamentally outside of the narrow act of building. The work of each of these architects demonstrates an affiliation with the tactics of Dada and surrealism, primarily through an appreciation of the work of Duchamp (and its historical reception) and the post-Dada experimentations with automatism. In this way, the work of these architects engages issues that are central to the writing of Bürger, and underpin his categorisation of the "avant-gardiste" work of art.

The neo-avant-garde in art is characterised by a resurgence of interest in the practices of Dada and surrealism,[2] with a particular emphasis on the popularisation of Marcel

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[1] Coincidentally, all three of these practices were included in the recent exhibition *The Surreal House*, at the Barbican Centre in London (June 10—September 12, 2010). Of the three, only Coop Himmelb(l)au's work is given any critical attention in the essays. See: Jane Allison (ed), *The Surreal House* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), pp. 230-231, pp. 254-255, pp. 284-287; see also: Dalibor Vesely, "The Surrealist House as a Labyrinth and Metaphor of Creativity," in Allison (ed), *The Surreal House*, p. 41.

[2] On this, see: Scott Rothkopf, "Returns of the Repressed: The Legacy of Surrealism in American Art," in Isabelle Dervaux (ed), *Surrealism USA* (New York: National Academy Museum, 2005), pp. 66-77; Alyce Mahon, *Surrealism and the Politics of Eros: 1938-1968* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2005), pp. 205-215.

Duchamp.[3] That the academic and artistic reception of Duchamp occurred almost three decades after its original production was evidence of the shifting social concerns of contemporary art as well as the anachronistic nature of Duchamp's oeuvre. Rosalind Krauss has argued that the "delayed reception" of Duchamp's work is evidence that there wasn't an earlier "conventionalization of Duchamp"[4] and that his work was reinvented and renewed through the critical practices of the 1960s, in many cases being discovered for the first time. Coincidentally, in architecture, there was a synchronistic re-discovery of the spatial characteristics of Duchamp's work and an extension of his concerns into the domain of architecture and spatial production. This was especially true in regard to the work of both Tschumi[5] and Diller + Scofidio[6] which, echoing concerns in art, provided a detailed and critical framework through which his work could be theorised in architecture. Coop Himmelb(l)au's experimentation with the psychogram pursued a parallel project in regard to surrealist automatism.[7]

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[3] The period immediately after Duchamp's death in October 1968, saw the publication of a number of important works on the artist, including his collected writings, Schwarz's epic *Oeuvre Complete* and the major monographs of his work in English. This flurry of publication fuelled the already rampant interest in the artist's work, but provided new avenues through which it could be considered. Amongst the most important of these was the discovery of *Etant Donnes*, Duchamp's bizarre installation which he had constructed secretly in his apartment in the years prior to his death. Key publications in English on Duchamp from this immediate period include: Arturo Schwarz (ed), *The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp, Vols 1 and 2* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1969); Michel Sanouillet and Elmer Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller: The Writings of Marcel Duchamp* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973); Arturo Schwarz, *Notes and Projects for the Large Glass* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1969); Anne d'Harnancourt (ed), *Marcel Duchamp* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974); Pierre Cabanne, *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971).

[4] Rosalind Krauss, in conversation, in: Rosalind Krauss, Dennis Hollier, Annette Michelson, Hal Foster, Silvia Kolbowski, Martha Buskirk and Benjamin Buchloh, "The Reception of the 60s [Roundtable discussion]" *October* 69 (Summer 1994), p. 14.

[5] Tschumi's major contribution on the work of Duchamp is in: Bernard Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," Dalibor Veseley (ed), *Architectural Design Profile: Surrealism and Architecture* 11 2-3 (1978), pp. 112-113; See also: Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996), p. 14.

[6] The seminal essay, in this regard, is: Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio [Diller + Scofidio], "The Delay in Glass," *Assemblage* 6 (June, 1988), pp. 62-71; see also: Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio [Diller + Scofidio], *Flesh* (New York, Princeton Architectural Press, 1996), pp. 103-131.

[7] See: Vesely, "The Surrealist House as a Labyrinth and Metaphor of Creativity," p. 41.

Building upon the previous chapters, this section draws from the elements of Peter Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* that define the characteristics of an avant-gardiste work, seen as a negation of the bourgeois work of art. The neo-avant-garde, rather than negating the category of work, promoted it, thus surrendering to the institutionalising forces of capitalism and reclaiming the autonomous status that the avant-garde had subverted.[8] While confined to a handful of pages in Bürger's work,[9] the neo-avant-garde is without doubt the aspect of Bürger's theory that has attracted the most attention and, to a large extent, has had the greatest influence.[10] It is also central to the structure of this dissertation and, as a result, requires some contextualisation.

By the time that Bürger's thesis was published, the prefix "neo" was already in widespread usage in art historical contexts, and the term "neo-dada" had previously been used to describe a range of the North American practices that fell under Bürger's broader categorisation.[11] "Neo" was a favourite prefix of Clement Greenberg, which he had applied, as early as 1944, to "romanticism" and, by the late 1960s, had affixed to "Classicism", "Impressionism," "Figurative Art," "Plasticism," "Realism" and "Dada"[12] in his

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[8] See: Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 58.

[9] Bürger's discussion of the neo-avant-garde is confined to just six pages. The vast majority of the remainder is devoted to the tactics (and evolution) of the historical avant-garde. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 58-63.

[10] Sven Lütticken concedes that the work is a starting point for any investigation of the neo-avant-garde, arguing that "any reappraisal seems doomed to begin by repeating what Peter Bürger wrote in *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, even if it then goes on to criticize it." See Sven Lütticken, "Secrecy and Publicity: Reactivating the Avant-Garde," *New Left Review* 17 (September/October, 2002), p. 131. For further evidence of the influence of the concept of the neo-avant-garde, see: Dietrich Scheunemann, *Avant-Garde/Neo-Avant-Garde* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 2005); David Hopkins and Anna Katharina Schaffner, *Neo-Avant-Garde* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 2005); Dietrich Scheunemann, *European Avant-Garde: New Perspectives* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 2000).

[11] For a historical account of this phenomenon, see: Susan Hapgood, *Neo-Dada: Redefining Art 1952-1962* (Michigan: The University of Michigan, 1994).

[12] Greenberg's writing on Neo-Dada was from his seminal essay "After Abstract Expressionism" that, in 1962, predated Bürger's "neo-avant-garde" by more than ten years: See: Clement Greenberg, "After Abstract Expressionism," in Clement Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism: Modernism with a Vengeance, 1957-1969* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993), pp. 132-133.

various descriptions of contemporary art practice. In a number of his essays Greenberg tended to conflate "neo-romanticism" with surrealism, emphasising the figurative dimensions of surrealist art that he was saw as contrary to the more virile forces of abstraction.[13]

Bürger wasn't the first to use the categorisation of a "neo-avant-garde". Although it is now widely connected with his work,[14] it is clear that the term was in general use prior to the *Theory of the Avant-Garde* and was being used to imply a historical influence in a number of academic contexts.[15] What is significant in Bürger's usage of the categorisation was not in the backward/forward lineage of influence that the "neo" prefix usually carried, but in the recognition of a new historical context in which the practices of the avant-garde were being deployed.[16] Bürger's historicisation of the production of art and its reception sets out to concretise avant-gardism as a reaction to specific historical conditions and, primarily, as a response to the nineteenth century institutionalisation of art which, for instance, Marcel Duchamp's readymades set out to destroy. The argument put forward by Bürger is that, by the time of the neo-avant-garde, the shock tactics of Duchamp had, themselves, been institutionalised, no longer offering a critique of the institution of art, but becoming a direct embodiment of it. Similarly, where the avant-garde conflated the praxis of life with the production of art for radical effect, the neo-avant-garde was seeking an entirely different

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[13] Greenberg often married surrealism with a concept of "Neo Romanticism". See, for example: Clement Greenberg, "Romantic Painting in America," in Clement Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism: Perceptions and Judgements, 1939-1944* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 172-174; Clement Greenberg, "Review of an exhibition of Marc Chagall," in Clement Greenberg, *The Collected Essays and Criticism: Arrogant Purpose, 1945-1949* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 83-84.

[14] David Hopkins, "Introduction," in Hopkins, *Neo-Avant-Garde*, p.1.

[15] For an early critical usage of the "neo-avant-garde" category, three years prior to Bürger, see: Miklós Szabolcsi, "Avant-Garde, Neo-Avant-Garde, Modernism: Questions and Suggestions," *New Literary History* 3 1 *Modernism and Postmodernism* (Autumn, 1971), pp. 49-70. Tafuri's use of the term is virtually synchronous with Bürger's. See: Manfredo Tafuri, *Architecture and Utopia: Design and Capitalist Development*, trans. Barbara Luigia La Penta (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1976), p. 148, p. 161.

[16] In a 1968 critique Denise Scott Brown rejected the "avant-garde" as modernism's "worst habit," arguing that, in the context of the "neo-avant-garde" of the 1960s, the "neo" should be replaced with "pseudo" in recognition of the general collapse of radical intentionality. See: Denise Scott Brown, "Little Magazines in Architecture and Urbanism," *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 34 4 (1968), pp. 223-33.

effect for a dramatically different audience, which was no longer "shocked" by these tactics but enamoured by them.[17]

There is no doubt that there is an inherent pessimism with which Bürger views the art of the 1960s and a frustration with its lack of impetus. The failure of the historical avant-garde was an acknowledgement that the "institution" of art had absorbed the intended shocks and, by the 1960s, was effectively reproducing them in a commercialised context. The very tactics of the historical avant-garde were being used in the service of the institutions of art that they were originally intended to dismantle.[18] The result is that the "efforts to sublate art"[19] are misdirected and the emphasis on the act and its effect is replaced by the overwhelming status it assumes as a "work" or an art object, through the institutionalisation rather than sublation of art and life. Bürger argues that "[i]t is the status of their products, not the consciousness artists have of their activity, that defines the social effect of works."[20]

However, one of the most glaring oversights in Bürger's writing on the neo-avant-garde is the limited range of examples that he uses, and his complete neglect of Conceptual Art, which was primarily a critique of the institutionalisation of art and an attack on its material and commercial properties.[21] As already demonstrated, Hal Foster and Benjamin Buchloh have provided two of the most pervasive criticisms of Bürger's work through a critique of his understanding of neo-avant-garde practice. In this sense, both Buchloh and Foster[22]

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[17] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 58.

[18] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 58.

[19] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 58.

[20] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 58.

[21] This argument is made in: Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde", p. 21; Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, "The Primary Colors for the Second Time: A Paradigm Repetition of the Neo-Avant-Garde," *October* 37 (Summer 1986), pp. 51; See also: Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, *Neo-Avantgarde and Culture Industry: Essays on European and American Art from 1955 to 1975* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2003), p. xxiv.

[22] Foster's writing on the neo-avant-garde is confined to two essays, one of them compiling the first chapter of *The Return of the Real.* See: Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2000), pp. 1-33; Hal Foster, "What's Neo About the Neo-Avant-Garde?" *October* 74 (Autumn, 1994), pp. 5-32; this essay is also published in, Martha Buskirk and Mignon Nixon (ed), *The Duchamp Effect: Essays, Interviews, Roundtable* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996), pp. 5-32.

have gone to lengths to advance the conditions of the neo-avant-garde and, more specifically, to recontextualise the historical structure set up by Bürger.[23] This is not a negation of the category of the neo-avant-garde but a reworking of the historical limits placed upon it and the contextual and political frames that are at its base. While maintaining an emphasis on the ideological forms of aesthetic production, the theorising of both Foster and Buchloh depoliticises the work of the neo-avant-garde, downgrading the intentions placed upon it by Bürger and reformulating their activity as the development of a collection of tactics that are intended to agitate against capitalism and the institution of art, rather than radically and violently pronouncing its destruction. As an alternative to the institution, space and the city are an important and under-recognised theme in the creative activity of this period.

In critical theory the argument for an adoption of architectural strategies by the neo-avant-garde has already been made. Consider, for instance, the writing of Peter Osborne, who identifies a critical "turn" in the 1970s towards "space and spatial relations."[24] In relationship to the work of "post-minimalist" and "post-conceptual" art, Osborne points to the "architecturalisation of art" in the 1980s as a paradigmatic shift in the institutional structure of the modern city.[25] Engaging a number of the broad themes in Bürger's writing, Osborne argues that

> Minimalism effaced the boundary between painting and sculpture, drawing attention to the art object's relations to its institutional space; post-minimalist art often moved outside of the physical locality of the gallery altogether. This new type of work situates itself at the boundaries between architectural space and its environment at a time when the distinction between architecture and infrastructure is itself being challenged

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[23] Also of interest here is the essay by Rosalind Krauss that deals with Bürger's theory. See: Rosalind Krauss, "The Master's Bedroom," *Representations* 28 (Autumn, 1989), pp. 55-76.

[24] See the section "Art and Space" in: Peter Osborne, "Non-places and the spaces of art," *Journal of Architecture* 6 (Summer, 2001), pp. 186-187.

[25] There are correlations between the position of Osborne, and the writing of Krauss from the late 1970s. See, in particular: Rosalind Krauss, "Sculpture in the Expanded Field," *October* 8 (Spring, 1979), pp. 30-44; the essay is reproduced in: Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 276-290.

> by newly integrated forms of urban planning, made possible by new design technologies and building processes and materials.[26]

Osborne's history illustrates that there was greater alignment between art and architecture in the 1970s than previous epochs, as a result of shifts in critical paradigms and the development of building technology. For Osborne, Dan Graham and Gordon Matta-Clark[27] are important provocateurs in this cultural transformation, developing innovative ways through which the limitations of architecture could be expressed through an innovative art practice. It is not the intention of this dissertation to engage in the discussions of the neo-avant-garde in art, or the historical conditions that have undermined its activities, despite the fact that this is one of the primary shortcomings of Bürger's thesis.[28] On the contrary, the dissertation is concerned with the way that the rejuvenation of the historical avant-garde in the critical theory of the last two-and-a-half decades has opened up a space where the frameworks of Bürger's theory can be applied to architecture in a productive way. It is important to note, however, that the application of the categorisation of the "neo-avant-garde" to architecture, while necessary to some extent, is tenuous. In art, the category articulates a stylistic and procedural repetition between two distinct timeframes. It also predetermines that the motivations of the historical avant-garde have some resonance with their "neo" incarnations. This has different implications in the application to architecture, to the point where the categorisation of the "neo-avant-garde" is reflective more of the timescapes in which the theory is applied, than a direct repetition of practices or institutional contexts. The migration of tactics of the historical avant-garde into architectural representation has no logical precedent in architecture and conforms to its own separate category.

All of the processes that are examined in this dissertation find expression in architecture for the first time in the 1970s and 1980s and are a radical departure from the traditions of architectural representation and practice up until that point. While they demonstrate an

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[26] Osborne, "Non-places and the spaces of art," p. 186.

[27] Osborne warns of the depoliticisation of Matta-Clark's legacy, arguing for its centrality to the development of art as an urban, rather than aesthetic, concern. See: Osborne, "Non-places and the spaces of art," p. 186.

[28] An exhaustive account of this type is: Szabolcsi, "Avant-Garde, Neo-Avant-Garde, Modernism," pp. 49-70.

affiliation with Bürger's theory, it is not as an incarnation of the historical avant-garde processes in a repetitive form but their migration into an expanded cultural context within which the avant-garde's activities were previously, relatively restricted. This is in keeping with the concerns of the Octoberist critics for an expansion of the definition of medium and a repositioning of its categories. There is no doubt that the three architectural practices described in this section did not have, as a priority, "the destruction of art" as was the case in the work of Duchamp, Picabia and Heartfield. These practices enabled the migration of the tactics originally employed towards the destruction of art, to be given a form in architectural representation and production.

Given this, it is important to clarify that this shifting of emphasis in no way implies that architectural strategies (or the architectural practices discussed here) are not susceptible to the criticisms that Bürger levels at the neo-avant-garde or, for that matter, that art and architecture are equivalent platforms upon which these criticisms can be made. What needs to be acknowledged is that there is a shifting of categories that takes place, so that the criteria upon which "neo-avant-garde" practice is assessed, is not compatible with the institutional contexts of architecture. It is also important to illustrate that the "neo-avant-garde" is a relatively small dimension of Bürger's treatise and the primary focus remains on his theorisation of the historical avant-garde. In this sense, this section maps the migration of historical avant-garde strategies into architecture, as opposed to their depoliticised repetition within transfigured institutionalised contexts.

Bernard Tschumi

> Only one mediocre book has been written about celebrated escapes. What you must know is that beneath all the windows that you may take a notion to jump out of, amiable imps hold out the sad sheet of love by the four cardinal points. My inspection had lasted only a few seconds before I knew what I wanted to know. The walls of Paris, what is more, had been covered with posters showing a man masked with a black domino, holding in his left hand the key of the fields: this man was myself.
>
> —André Breton, *Soluble Fish* (1924)[1]

The closing passage of André Breton's 1924 text *Soluble Fish* concludes with an ambiguous passage interweaving windows, posters, Paris and escape. While an iconic text of surrealist automation, the passage is reminiscent of the poster (and advertisement) series that Bernard Tschumi undertook in the 1970s, which was aimed at disrupting the orthodoxy of architectural criticism and re-aligning architectural practice with a more destructive and revolutionary current. Amongst the most well known of these posters is the photograph of a man jumping (or being pushed) from an open window, which carries the caption: "to really appreciate architecture, you may even need to commit a murder". Beneath the "window" in Tschumi's poster is a textual fragment that, in a number of ways, is indicative of the broader themes that preoccupied Tschumi in this period. It reads

> [a]rchitecture is defined by the actions it witnesses as much as by the enclosure of its walls. Murder in the street differs from Murder in the Cathedral in the same way as love in the street differs from the Street of Love. Radically.[2]

Breton had expressed similar sentiments fifty years prior when, in the "Second Manifesto of Surrealism," he revealed that "the simplest surrealist act consists of dashing down the

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[1] André Breton, "Soluble Fish," in André Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, trans. Richard Seaver and Helen R. Lane (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1972), p. 109.

[2] The poster is reproduced in: Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996), p. 100.

street, pistol in hand, and firing blindly, as fast as you can pull the trigger, into the crowd."[3] Both of these acts privilege violent human experience, for which architecture becomes both the witness and context. Tschumi's "advertisement", as well as dramatising architectural experience, provides a specific visual structure where image, text and caption are entwined. This is a significant form in the representational tactics of Dada and is embedded in the stylistic weaving of images and text in surrealist fiction. Both Dada and surrealism used posters widely to disseminate ideas to a broader audience and Tschumi was aware of the precedent they had set with these tactics. The journals of both Dada and surrealism developed a graphic style and logic that connected the fragmented text with an illustrative image that, while cropped and torn from its context, developed a dialogue between images and text, where the two fragments worked in unison.[4] This relationship could be described as "indexical"[5], and is developed in Peter Bürger's writing on montage, where he categorises works of this category as "images for reading"[6]. Tschumi's posters engaged with this representational model, uniting image and text in a way that preserved the fragmentary nature of the elements, but enabled architectural ideas to be translated into a new representational language, intended for a new and expanded audience.

That Tschumi was engaged with the ideas of Dada and surrealism in this period is evident from the essay that he contributed to the 1978 edition of *Architectural Design* on the

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[3] André Breton, "Second Manifesto of Surrealism," in Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, p. 125.

[4] For more on this interplay between word and image in the avant-garde journals, see: Dawn Ades, "Introduction," in Dawn Ades (ed), *The Dada Reader: A Critical Anthology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006), pp. 12-14.

[5] For the relationship between the index, photography and critical theory see: Craig Owens, "Photography En Abyme," *October* 5 (1978), pp. 73-88; Rosalind Krauss, "Notes on the Index: Seventies Art in America." *October* 4 (1977), pp. 58-67; Briony Fer, "The Space of Anxiety: Sculpture and Photography in the Work of Jeff Wall," in Geraldine A. Johnson (ed), *Sculpture and Photography: Envisioning the Third Dimension*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 181-98. For its use in the reinterpretation of surrealist photography see: Rosalind Krauss, "The Photographic Conditions of Surrealism," *October* 19 (1981), pp. 3-34; Ian Walker, "Index and Construct," in *City Gorged with Dreams: Surrealism and Documentary Photography in Interwar Paris* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), pp. 8-29.

[6] The original German term is *lesebilder*. See Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 75.

subject of *Surrealism and Architecture*.[7] As already noted, Tschumi's essay had argued for a contemporaneous reinvigoration of Dada and surrealist concepts and, presciently, singled out the marginalised and discursive practices that lay beneath Dada and surrealism as the archaeological footing through which this project might find inspiration. Tschumi's "Architecture and its Double" was completed in the same year as the poster and was a backdrop to Tschumi's *Manhattan Transcripts* project (ranging from 1976-1980).[8] In all of these separate projects, Tschumi interwove processes native to Dada and surrealism in order to question the representational traditions of architecture and the systems of power that they supported.

For Tschumi, surrealism had failed in its avant-garde project because it hadn't been sufficiently radical and, as a result, he gravitates towards the most extreme models of surrealist practice and, to some extent, those of Dada also. In each case, he develops a coherent link with the historical avant-garde and an affiliation with the radical politics of the 1960s. Anxious to preserve *experience* at the expense of architectural *form*, Tschumi argues, in the opening paragraph of *Architecture and Disjunction,* that "architecture is never autonomous"[9]. Tschumi is proactive in connecting architectural practice with the forces of life and, more specifically, the *real*. In this sense, his approach mirrors the radical culture of Dada and surrealism and its theorisation in the work of Bürger.[10]

The present chapter focuses on Tschumi's engagement with Dada and surrealism, through an understanding of his use of the fragment in both his theory and writing from the late 1970s. The chapter demonstrates the way that Tschumi used tactics from the historical avant-garde to draw out techniques of architectural representation and to dismantle the disciplinary boundaries of architecture. Drawing from the textual montages

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[7] Bernard Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," Dalibor Veseley ed. *Architectural Design Profile: Surrealism and Architecture* 11 2-3 (1978), pp. 111-116.

[8] See: Bernard Tschumi, *Manhattan Transcripts* (London: Academy Editions, 1981).

[9] Bernard Tschumi, "Introduction," in Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 3.

[10] *Experience*, in particular, is a specific concern in the writing of Bürger, receiving detailed critical attention in: Jochen Schulte-Sasse, "Theory of Modernism versus Theory of the Avant-Garde," in Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. vii-xlvii.

of John Heartfield and the discordant narratives embedded in the surrealist novels, this chapter will demonstrate the role of Dada and surrealism in Tschumi's *Manhattan Transcripts* project and position his theory within the context of the neo/historical avant-garde paradigm, with a particular emphasis on Bürger's theory of fragmentation. Drawing from the previous chapters that placed architecture within the context and concern of historical avant-garde practices, this chapter begins to map the migration of neo-avant-garde practices into architecture and, most notably, demonstrate the way that the autonomous architectural object is "marginalised" in the theory and creative practice of Tschumi through an overwhelming emphasis on *experience* and its representation. The chapter concludes by critiquing Tschumi's use of the architectural object in *Parc de la Villette* and the fetishisation of form that accompanies it.[11]

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Writing in 1992, when theorising "deconstructivist" architecture was a major preoccupation in American architectural theory, Anthony Vidler's *The Architectural Uncanny*[12] is an important adversary to the mainstream debates of the early 1990s regarding semiotics and, more importantly, the destabilising concepts of Derrida in relationship to deconstruction. Vidler's thesis, which privileges the role of psychology and the body, is both discursive and timely, presenting an authoritative alternative to the traditional historical account of modernism and preceding Hal Foster's influential reading on the uncanny in surrealism by a year.[13]

While *The Architectural Uncanny* deals with Dada and surrealism frequently, in the discussion of Tschumi's work the themes of the *transgressive* avant-garde are virtually

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[11] Aspects of this chapter have been published, or presented, previously as: Michael Chapman, "Regimes of Pleasure: Power, Space and Constraint in the organisational theories of Tschumi, Bataille and Sade," *Power and Space: Transforming the Contemporary City* (Cambridge, 6-8th December, 2007), p. 67 (abstract published); Michael Chapman, "Loose Threads: Architecture and Bondage in the Perversions of Tschumi, Battaille and Sade," *Erotic Screen and Sound: Culture, Media and Desire—15 18 February, Griffith Centre for Cultural Research* (Brisbane: Griffiths University, 2011), pp. 21-22 (abstract published).

[12] Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1992).

[13] In the preface Vidler thanks Hal Foster for "[encouraging] me to explore the uncanny in its contemporary contexts." Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, p. xiv.

absent. Drawing from previous essays originally developed in the mid to late 1980s,[14] Vidler's writing on Tschumi refers either to a generalised model of the "avant-garde" or to the works of Russian Constructivism, which provide an obvious visual precedent to Tschumi's *Parc de la Villette* project. Critical of the failed development of an entirely new spatial language in the historical avant-garde, Vidler sees in Tschumi's project a stylistic restructuring of this received language, whereby the architect "selects a language of elemental forms, already stated in this avant-garde project and submits them to an almost contemptuous disassembling and reassembling."[15] For Vidler, Tschumi adopts the visual language of Russian Constructivism in a de-historicised and depoliticised way, reinforcing the nature of the folly and the radical dimension of its functionless status. Preserving the play between the English *folly* (as a functionless structure) and the French *folie* (meaning madness),[16] Vidler describes Tschumi's approach as "a mad shot in the dark that at once cherishes avant-gardism but comprehends its madness."[17]

Vidler's writing on Tschumi's work argues for both a historical connection with the avant-garde as well as an inherent critique of its processes. However he restricts this influence to Russian Constructivism, mirroring a number of the theoretical interests of the time.[18]

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[14] Vidler's chapter "Trick/Track" is a development of two previous essays: Anthony Vidler, "La Casa Vide," in Bernard Tschumi, *La Casa Vide 1985* (London, The Architectural Association, 1986) [up]; Anthony Vidler, "The Pleasure of the Architect: On the Work of Bernard Tschumi," *A+U* 216 (September, 1988), p. 9.

[15] See: Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, p. 110. In an essay from the previous year, Tschumi had argued, in relationship to the follies that: "[t]he aim is to free the built folie from its historical connotations and place it on a broader and more abstract plane, as an autonomous object that, in the future, will be able to receive new meanings" (p. 149). See: Bernard Tschumi, "Madness and the Combinative," *Precis* (Fall, 1984), pp. 149-157; the essay is also published in: Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 174-189.

[16] The seminal theorisation of this is by Jacques Derrida, and remains one of the formative texts of deconstruction in architecture, and published, originally, in the same volume as Vidler's essay. See: Jacques Derrida, "Point de folie—Maintenant l'architecture," trans. Kate Linker in Tschumi, *La Case Vide*, pp. 4-20; republished in *AA Files* 12 (Summer, 1986), pp. 65-75.

[17] The full passage reads, "[w]ith no revolutionary aesthetic or social aim, and no historicist nostalgia, the allusion to constructivism becomes a mad shot in the dark…" See: Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, p. 110. Vidler's quote draws on the play between folly/*folie* tying the English garden folly with the French term for "madness".

[18] Charles Jencks for instance, argued that "Tschumi's plan […] explicitly recalls Kandinsky's and Klee's aesthetics, […] Chernikov's '101 architectural fictions' [and...] Cedric Price, Archigram and OMA." See:

However, the definitive essay linking Tschumi's work with the historical avant-garde was Catherine Cooke's "Russian Precursors"[19] which connects Tschumi's writing with concepts from the Russian Constructivists and most directly with the works of Iakov Chernikov and El Lissitsky. Cooke points to Lissitsky's *Proun* projects but of equal relevance is Lissitsky's design in the 1928 Soviet Pavilion at the *International Press Exhibition* in Cologne, known as the *Pressa* exhibition, which used architecture as a forum for both images and text. On this groundbreaking installation, which drew inspiration from the production processes of newspapers, George Baker has written

> [h]ere was a project—for it was no longer a "work"—that would occupy in every way the space of the between […]. It was a form called into being by the claims of new audiences, offering new modes of reading, new forms of cultural distribution. […] Lissitsky's *Pressa* design was a form that had reached its telos, achieved its brief destiny.[20]

While the Pressa installation is of interest in the context of Bürger's writing on the avant-garde and provides an important precedent for a number of the concerns in Tschumi's work, it has not been widely explored in an academic context[21].

While it is not surprising that Tschumi's work is heavily tied to deconstruction[22] and Russian Constructivism[23] in this period, it is unusual that the formative influence of Dada

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Charles Jencks, "Deconstruction: The Pleasures of Absence" in Andreas Papadakis, Catherine Cooke and Andrew Benjamin (ed), *Deconstruction: Omnibus Volume* (London: Academy Editions, 1989), p. 123.

[19] Catherine Cooke, "Russian Precursors" in Papadakis, Cooke and Benjamin (ed), *Deconstruction*, pp. 10-19; this should be read in conjunction with: Catherine Cooke, "The Development of the Constructivist Architect's Design Method" in Papadakis, Cooke and Benjamin (ed), *Deconstruction*, p. 20-37.

[20] George Baker, "Entr'acte," *October* 105 (Summer, 2003), p. 162.

[21] For an introduction to the use of media in the *Pressa* exhibition and its relationship to Peter Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, see: Michael Chapman and Derren Lowe, "Space Cadets: Imaginary Trajectories in Lissitsky's Pressa Installation," in Michael Chapman and Michael Ostwald (ed), *Imagining: Proceedings of the 27th International SAHANZ Conference* (Newcastle: Society of Architectural Historians Australian and New Zealand, SAHANZ, 2010), pp. 81-86.

[22] Tschumi had stated the importance of *deconstruction* to his method on a number of occasions and cited it as a direct influence in his projects for both *Manhattan Transcripts* and *Parc de le Villette*. In both the grid acts as an architectural grammar to disrupt the literary; see, for instance: Bernard Tschumi, "Parc de la Villette," Papadakis, Cooke and Benjamin (ed), *Deconstruction*, p. 175; Bernard Tschumi, "Abstract Mediation and

and surrealism is rarely, if at all acknowledged. Deconstruction was only one possible lens through which the fragmentation of narrative in Tschumi's work has been theorised and it can equally productively be read against the interplay between image, text and reality that structured Dada attitudes to montage and the equally radical structural properties of surrealist fiction. More than a decade after writing *The Architectural Uncanny* Vidler, without elaborating, argued that Tschumi's essay on surrealism from 1978 was amongst "the most important preliminary manifestoes of [Tschumi's] career."[24] Even more recently, the themes of pleasure and desire have heavily skewed the emphasis placed on Tschumi's work and its legacy[25] still without a detailed exploration of their derivation in either Dada or surrealism. This notwithstanding, Vidler's argument that Tschumi's project is a critical revising of the broader avant-garde project of *modernism* is significant. That these practices are, for Vidler, revised in a form that is torn from their historical context and *depoliticised* introduces the broader themes of this dissertation and, more specifically, their connection to the theory of Bürger and the category of the neo-avant-garde.

The work of Tschumi was prescient in the 1970s in arguing for a "transgressive"—what he continually refers to as an "erotic"[26]—model of architectural experience, proposed as a

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Strategy," in Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, pp. 197-200. For the connections with Eisenman, see: Jeffrey Kipnis, "/Twisting the Separatix/," *Assemblage* 14 (April, 1991), pp. 30-61.

[23] Tschumi cites the influence of Constructivism, reproducing work by Tatlin, Lissitsky and Malevich in association with his essays "The Pleasure of Architecture" and "Violence of Architecture". Interestingly, Tschumi cites these two essays as the written accompaniment to *Manhattan Transcripts*. In writing, Tschumi makes reference to Lissitsky on a few occasions: see, for instance: Bernard Tschumi, "Architecture and Limits," in Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction,* pp. 117-118; see also: Bernard Tschumi, "The Pleasure of Architecture," in Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 80; Bernard Tschumi, "Violence of Architecture," in Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 119-137.

[24] See Anthony Vidler, "Fantasy, the Uncanny and Surrealist Theories of Architecture," *Papers of Surrealism* 1 (Winter, 2003), p. 2.

[25] See, for instance: K. Michael Hays, *Architecture's Desire: Reading the Late Avant-Garde* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2010), pp. 135-169; Louis Martin, "Transpositions: On the Intellectual Origins of Tschumi's Architectural Theory," *Assemblage* 11 (April, 1990), pp. 22-35.

[26] Examples of Tschumi's use of the term "erotic" include Tschumi's "Fragment 6: Eroticism" in "The Pleasure of Architecture" (p.89), and "Part Two: eROTicism" in "Architecture and Transgression" (pp. 70-76). In this later text, Tschumi's draws from Bataille's writing on decay, capitalising "ROT" to preserve the darker aspects of transgression that Bataille observed but the surrealists typically suppressed. See Tschumi, *Architecture and*

way of subverting architectural convention, functionalism and the political structures of conservatism.[27] This was based on an understanding of architecture as an abstract system of spatial geometry (the *concept*) and the lived, sensual experience of its materiality (*experience*). Central to this spatial alchemy was the synthesis of two distinct bodies: the *architect* and the *user*. Tschumi's radicalised approach to theorising architecture was grafted upon his own experience of the May 68 riots and a personal determination, later romanticised, to displace the existing structures of power and the architectural systems that they supported.[28] The failure of the May 68 riots, as well as marking a political milestone in the intellectual culture of Europe, was set against the backdrop of a youth culture which had embraced sexuality as a means of dismantling bourgeois social conventions and broader cultural conservatism. While the directly political agenda inscribed in Tschumi's theory is clear, the role of this broader culture of "sexual emancipation" is equally inscribed in the strategies that Tschumi pursues for dismantling power in built space: for Tschumi, the junction between the architectural object and the human experience of it is an *erotic* one.[29] Both of these aspects—the *experiential* and the *erotic*—have their origins in the tactics of Dada and surrealism.

Vidler's argument that Tschumi's methodological approach was depoliticised from its historical avant-garde roots is contentious, particularly given the contemporaneous appraisal of Tschumi himself, which makes clear the political aspirations in place when he

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Disjunction, pp. 70-76, p. 89. See also: *Bernard Tschumi*, "The Pleasure of Architecture," *Architectural Design* **47** 3 (1977), pp. 214-218.

[27] Tschumi's formative essay in this regard, written in 1976, sought to integrate surrealist concerns with a discursive model of architectural production. See: Bernard Tschumi, "Architecture and Transgression," *Oppositions* **7** (Winter, 1976), pp. 55-63.

[28] This has been widely acknowledged by Tschumi and other writers such as Arie Graafland. See: Arie Graafland, "Of Rhizomes, Trees, and the IJ-Oevers, Amsterdam," *Assemblage* 38 (April 1999), p. 40 (note 2). Tschumi is more measured in his contemporaneous text "Urban Pleasures and the Moral Good" where he writes that "there is no need to style oneself as a 'cultural revolutionary' or as a radical, red scarves notwithstanding." See: Bernard Tschumi, "Urban Pleasures and the Moral Good," *Assemblage* **25** (December, 1994), p. 11; See also: Martin, "Transpositions," pp. 22-24.

[29] Tschumi theorises the erotic in: Tschumi, "Architecture and Transgression," pp. 58-60.

developed his architectural theories in the 1970s.[30] The architecture of Tschumi is certainly not without, as Vidler suggests, a "hidden political agenda" and, in a number of contexts, is radically political. Tschumi's introduction to *Architecture and Disjunction* stresses the roots of his architectural practice in the aftermath of the Paris riots, drawing specific attention to his early attempts to instigate a guerrilla architecture, through the radical intervention in urban space and research into the lessons of Belfast and Derry[31]. In the same text Tschumi describes his ambition for "an architecture that might change society"[32] and argues that "the urban condition itself could be a means to accelerate social change"[33]. Of equal significance in this regard was Tschumi's proposition that urbanity, in its nature, could resist conservatism and was a place for radical acts to be brought into play. Tschumi was teaching courses at the time such as "Urban Politics" and "the Politics of Space"[34] as well as researching the topic "urban insurgency" with the view to publishing a book on the subject.[35]

Tschumi's conclusion was that, far from being ambivalent in regard to politics, architecture was central to politics and the most mainstream practices of architecture merely reinforced conservative models of social organisation.[36] For Tschumi, architectural form was primarily neutral (in a political context at least) and it was the use of space and its

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[30] The most personal account of the development of Tschumi's thinking is in: Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, pp. 2-23.

[31] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 7.

[32] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 5. In the same passage, Tschumi stresses the need to develop architecture "as a catalyst for change" (p.7)

[33] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 7.

[34] See: Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 6.

[35] This was for a proposed issue of *Architectural Design* which was "finally aborted when publishers acted upon a rumour that bomb threats had disrupted a symposium on the subject at the AA." See: Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 7.

[36] Important in this regard, were the series of essays that Tschumi published in *Artforum* in the early 1980s. See: Bernard Tschumi, "Architecture and Limits (1)," *Artforum* 19 4 (December 1980), pp. 36-44; Bernard Tschumi, "Architecture and Limits (2)," *Artforum* 19 7 (March, 1981), pp. 45-58; Bernard Tschumi, "Architecture and Limits (3)," *Artforum* 20 1 (September 1981), pp.40-52; all three essays are republished in: Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, pp. 101-120.

programming which enabled architects to engage with broader social and revolutionary forces. For Tschumi

> [s]everal precedents pointed […] to the extraordinary power of incidents, of small actions amplified a thousand times by the media, so as to assume the role of revolutionary myth. In these cases, it was not the form of architecture that counted (whether it was contextual or modernist), but the use (and meaning) that was assigned to it.[37]

In this sense, Vidler is correct. Tschumi separates the revolutionary aesthetics of Constructivism from its socialist programmatic components, dismantling function but preserving the political symbolism. The explicit political programmes that are evident in Lissitsky's work, for instance, have become implicit in the spatial and programmatic organisation of Tschumi and its allusion to, rather than quotation of, Soviet sources. Compare the overt political messages in the photo-frieze which Lissitzky compiled with Sergei Sinkin for the *Pressa* exhibition entitled: "The education of the masses is the main task of the Pressa in the transitional period from capitalism to communism." Constructed from a variety of press images, including portraits and cropped images of crowds the frieze was reproduced by Lissitzky in the form of a fold out catalogue, that mimicked the rhythms of the architecture as it was unfolded in print.[38]

This format, as a means of connecting with the public, is dramatically more direct than the stylistic "red" deployed in *Parc de la Villette*, which indirectly connotes issues of socialism to an academic audience, but without a viable architectural framework through which this message is transmitted or decoded. This was one of Walter Benjamin's primary critiques of the intellectual avant-garde movements: they failed to find a medium through which they could use art to communicate with the broader public. Benjamin saw the strategies of avant-garde art as merely a precursor to revolution, laying the foundations for future

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[37] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 8. Tschumi also writes that: "there was no such thing as socialist or fascist architecture, only architecture in a socialist or fascist society:" (p.8).

[38] For more on the use of politics in Lissitzky, see: Christina Lodder, *Russian Constructivism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983) p. 192; Ulrich Pohlmann, "El Lissitzky's Exhibition Designs: The Influence of His Work in Germany, Italy and the United States, 1923-1943," in Margarita Tupitsyn, *El Lissitzky: Beyond the Abstract Cabinet* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), p. 27, p. 52.

radical transformations to build upon.[39] Benjamin had maintained that the academic author must operate in solidarity with the proletariat but at the same time develop techniques that disrupt the cycle of aesthetic production and tend towards revolutionary forms, rather than reactionary ones. While Lissitzky's *Pressa* installation is perhaps an exception in this instance, Benjamin's critique is certainly relevant to the highly intellectual motives that structured Tschumi's *Parc de la Villette*, masking the political content of the work behind a screen of distant historical allusion. It is through the development of both posters and pamphlets that Tschumi's work attempted to bridge this gap. These techniques though, as will be demonstrated, were drawn from the culture of Dada and surrealism and Tschumi's writing from this period demonstrates a conscious awareness of this ancestry. The foundation of the "bureau des reserches surréalistes" in Paris in October 1924 had provided a centre for surrealist activities in the city, many of which were focussed on architecture.[40] One of the earliest strategies that they used was the distribution of posters and leaflets with surrealist aphorisms ("tell your children your dreams")[41] across Paris mirroring the later campaign developed by Tschumi in the 1970s.

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Tschumi's essay on surrealism entitled "Architecture and its Double" is a significant starting point for investigating the currency of Bürger's theory and its application to architecture.[42] Written in 1978, and corresponding with a number of Tschumi's formative creative projects, the essay draws into question the nature of Dada and surrealism's engagement with architecture and its ongoing relevance to contemporary practice. Tschumi's position is clear; the avenues through which Dada and surrealism have been

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[39] Walter Benjamin, "The Author as Producer," in Walter Benjamin, *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Schocken Books, 1978), p. 229.

[40] For more on the Bureau of Surrealist Research, and its relationship to architecture, see: Julia Kelly, "The Bureau of Surrealist Research," in Therese Lichtenstein (ed), *Twilight Visions: Surrealism and Paris* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009), pp. 79-101; for a first-hand account, see: Antonin Artaud, "The Activity of the Surrealist Research Bureau," trans. Helen Weaver in Antonin Artaud, *Selected Writings* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1976), pp. 105-107.

[41] See: Fiona Bradley, *Surrealism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 7.

[42] Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 111.

tied to architecture have been limited by a fascination on the visual and an obsession with objects. Tschumi laments the emphasis on the "Chiricoesque landscapes or buildings in the shape of breasts"[43], preferring an emphasis on the methods and texts of Dada and surrealism and, most importantly, the experience of architecture rather than its superficial representation. Tschumi argues that the evolution of technology that had distracted architecture in the 1920s, had been resolved by the 1970s, prompting a renewed investigation of the major themes of Dada and surrealism and from a novel and skewed perspective.[44] Tschumi aligns this investigation with the work of four radicals—Duchamp, Artaud, Bataille, Kielser—who each attacked surrealism for, in his words, "not going far enough"[45]. These figures refused the "cult of the object" and drew issues of architecture into sharp focus. In their own way, each redirected surrealism away from visual symbolism and towards a practice of radical experience.[46]

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[43] Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 111. In this respect, he is no doubt thinking of the application of the surrealist imagery of de Chirico to the analysis of Le Corbusier in Gorlin's work as opposed to his own analysis of the Villa Savoy covered in urine and excrement, with the pretext "[s]ensuality has been known to overcome even the most rational of buildings." See: Alexander Gorlin, "The Ghost in the Machine: Surrealism in the Work of Le Corbusier," *Perspecta* 18 (1982), pp. 50-65; Republished in Thomas Mical (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture* (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 103-118; See: Tschumi, "Architecture and Transgression," p. 55-57.

[44] Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 111.

[45] These words appear in Tschumi's text in inverted commas, without a reference so, as with a lot of Tschumi's fragmentary texts, the exact attribution is unclear. See: Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 111. For more on Benjamin's concept of the "quotation without quotation marks" in Tschumi's work, see: Martin, "Transpositions," p. 29; See Kari Jormakka, "The most architectural thing" in Mical (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, p. 308.

[46] The emphasis on form and the object coincided with contemporaneous debates in architecture around the autonomy of the architectural object. In this regard, Mary McLeod saw in the deconstruction of Tschumi and Eisenman a focus on process and a dematerialisation of the object, radically challenging its autonomous status. This was in contrast to the formalist practices of Coop Himmelb(l)au, Zaha Hadid and Daniel Libeskind. See: Mary McLeod, "Architecture and Politics in the Reagan Era: From Postmodernism to Deconstruction," *Assemblage* 8 (February 1988), p. 45.

Despite the emphasis on these figures, Tschumi's essay begins with an investigation of the work of Breton[47] and, significantly, a number of the surrealist forays into the city. Tschumi refers to Breton's project, published in the final edition of *Le Surrealisme au service de la Révolution* in 1933, to discover tactics from amongst his fellow surrealists for the "irrational embellishment of a city."[48] This was part of a series of investigations where members of surrealism were asked independently to comment on arbitrary objects or themes including, for example, the random year *409* or a piece of pink velvet cloth. As with the "exquisite corpse", the motivation was to motivate the individual surrealists to operate as a collective,[49] by presenting a scattering of ideas on a given topic that could, abstractly, begin to resemble a discourse. Once the topic was set, a series of questions was drawn up and respondents were invited to respond immediately, without preconceived thought. The transcripts were published in the various surrealist journals over a number of years that they were involved in the practice.[50]

The "embellishment of the city" began a transferral from the traditional themes of automatic practice towards the collective experience of the urban. That this was a departure from the typical surrealist subjects was clear from the diverse range of responses and the overwhelming fascination on "monuments" which the survey gave shape to.[51] Tschumi concentrates on the "symbolic" proposals that were put forward in

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[47] Vidler has pointed to "the delightful misprint that transformed André Breton into the society photographer, Andre Beeton". He is referring to a misprint on page 111. See: Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 111; Vidler, "Fantasy, Uncanny and Surrealist Theories of Architecture," p. 2.

[48] Seven surrealists participated in this survey. They were André Breton, Paul Éluard, Arthur Harfaux, Maurice Henry, Benjamin Péret, Tristan Tzara and Georges Wenstein. Eluard contributed a short commentary. See: André Breton, *Le Surrealisme au service de la Révolution* 6 (15 May, 1933), pp. 10-24.

[49] The importance of collective activity in surrealism was seen, in Bürger's writing as an affront to solipsism. As Bürger contends: "[p]erhaps the strict group discipline was also an attempt to exorcise the danger that solipsism harbors." Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 53; in the notes, Bürger draws attention to the surrealist collective appropriation of the city (pp. 113-114 [note. 20]).

[50] Five in total were published *in Le Surrealisme au service de la Revolution*: the subjects were "a clairvoyant's ball", "A piece of pink velvet", de Chirico's *The Enigma of Day*, the year 409 and "The Irrational Embellishment of a city".

[51] A more comprehensive analysis of this project is to be found in: Raymond Spiteri, "Surrealism and the Rational Embellishment of Paris," in Mical ed., *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 191-208.

the survey. Breton had proposed to relocate the Obelisk to the entry of La Villette abattoir where an "immense gloved hand of a woman would hold it"[52]. He had also proposed replacing the towers of Notre Dame with an "immense oil and vinegar cruet, one bottle filled with blood, the other with sperm"[53]; the cathedral itself was to become a "school for the sexual education of virgins"[54]. In a similar spirit, the Vendome Column was to be transformed into a factory chimney up which the sculpture of a naked woman would be climbing. Tzara, on the other hand, had proposed to place an enormous steel feather directly on top of the Obelisk, doubling the height of the original obelisk, and challenging the forces of gravity that it was bound to. In one of the revered proposals for a surrealist architectural act, he had also proposed to cut the Pantheon vertically down the middle and then, in an act later re-enacted in the work of Gordon Matta-Clark[55], force a half-metre void down the building's centre as the two sides were split apart. In regard to the statue of Clemenceau on the Champ's Elysees, Tzara had proposed that it be surrounded by an enormous flock containing thousands of bronze sheep with one in its midst to be made of camembert cheese. Other proposals were to replace stone with rubber, to make monuments that could move in the wind, to paint bronze monuments in realistic colours, or to use them for the display of ham and meats. The literalness with which the surrealists approached this task was a major point of contention for Tschumi, playing on the literal symbolic and formal properties, but negating their sensual or experiential opportunities entirely.[56] The proposals were all heavily centred on historical monuments or buildings and involved the typically surrealist application of symbolism to embellish established historical meanings. As Tschumi illustrates,

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[52] Breton, translated in Spiteri, "Surrealism and the Rational Embellishment of Paris," p. 200.

[53] Breton, translated in Spiteri, "Surrealism and the Rational Embellishment of Paris," p. 201.

[54] Breton, translated in Spiteri, "Surrealism and the Rational Embellishment of Paris," p. 202.

[55] Matta Clark, as well as being the son of the second-wave surrealist painter Matta, was also the godson of Marcel Duchamp. His connections with surrealism are examined in: Briony Fer, "Networks: Graphic Strategies from Matta to Matta-Clark," in Michelle Piranio (ed), *Transmission: The Art of Matta and Gordon Matta-Clark*, (San Diego: San Diego Musuem of Modern Art, 2006).

[56] This is also a point of contention for Veseley in his account of surrealism and architecture, where he is critical of the over-emphasis on objects and the lack of attention given to their experiential concerns. See: Dalibor Veseley, "Surrealism, Myth and Modernity," in Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, p. 87-95.

> these "monument objects" constituted images exactly comparable to the images they were using in the poems: they were solid, opaque, well-defined objects […]. They viewed the city in the same way that they wrote their texts: they clashed together urban objects just as they did semantic entities. Real spaces were less important than the symbolic images they contained. Architectural spaces—the void, emptiness—were generally neglected.[57]

It is worth noting that Tschumi is very selective in his description of the projects for the embellishment of Paris and is drawn to the "object" proposals that suit his argument. More exactly, his selective description of the proposals demonstrates his strategic allegiance to the materiality of Bataille as a dialectic opposed dualistically to the romanticism of Breton. Bataille argued that surrealism sublimated desire through art, replacing the direct and confrontational nature of human experience with a watered down alternative. Three examples in particular demonstrate the sensual undercurrent that ran through the surrealist embellishment of Paris, but which Tschumi neglects to mention. In relationship to the *Tomb of the Unknown Soldier*, Breton had proposed to "blow it up after burying it in a mountain of manure"[58]. Eluard's proposal for the same site was to "lay it on its side and transform it into the most beautiful public urinal in France"[59]. In relationship to the bronze statue of Clémenceau on the Champs Elysees, Georges Peret had proposed to replace it with a series of urinals, each made from gold. In each case, the broader themes of Bataille—the surrealists had labelled him a "philosopher of excrement" in the "Second Manifesto of Surrealism"[60]—were clear, as were the thematic traces of Tschumi's own proselytisation of the ruined Villa Savoye, covered in faeces and excrement, that has

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[57] Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 112.

[58] Breton, translated in Spiteri, "Surrealism and the Rational Embellishment of Paris," p. 199.

[59] Eluard, translated in Spiteri, "Surrealism and the Rational Embellishment of Paris," p. 199. It is important also not to overlook Eluard's childish response to Frémiet's gilded-bronze equestrian statue, proposing "to place a gilded-bronze turd on her head and a crudely sculpted phallus in her mouth" (p. 200).

[60] Breton launches a lengthy and personal critique of Bataille in the "Second Manifesto". See: Andre Breton, "Second Manifesto of Surrealism," pp. 181-186; For Bataille's response, see: Georges Bataille, "Notes on the Publication of Un Cadavre," in Georges Bataille, *The Absence of Myth: Writings on Surrealism*, trans. Michael Richardson (London: Verso, 1994), pp. 30-31; For a reproduction of the text in French and the original cover, with Eli Lotar's photograph of Breton adorned with a papal crown of thorns, See: Dawn Ades and Simon Baker, *Undercover Surrealism: Georges Bataille and Surrealism* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2006), p. 82.

already been mentioned for its outmoded qualities.[61] The emphasis on the transformative effects of graffiti in Tschumi's recollection of the Villa Savoye was also a theme in Breton's responses to the "embellishment of the city" a generation earlier where he had proposed transform the *Palais de Justice* into "a magnificent graffiti to be viewed from an airplane"[62].

Regardless of Tschumi's selectivity on this front, his broader critique is generally consistent. For Tschumi, these projects were evidence of the extent to which the surrealists misinterpreted the radical potential of architectural experience. In Tschumi's reading, Breton had imagined architecture as a lesser form of either painting or writing, and approached it from an identical direction, attempting to unsettle preconceived meanings and dismantle the embodied language of the city, rather than the medium of architecture as such. In this sense, they denied access to genuine architectural experience or, for that matter, architectural space focussing on ornamental aspects of the built environment and the translation of objects into architectural forms. Tschumi's critique of surrealism at this level is insightful and illustrative of a number of the primary preoccupations of surrealist visual practice in relationship to architecture that have already been discussed.

Beyond the obvious urge to connect architecture with anthropomorphic or personifying characteristics, there is a stream of surrealist practice that seeks to displace architecture from its context in the real world. The architectural works praised by Breton—those of Guimard, Gaudi and Cheval—all conformed to this practice but this literalism is also evident in the representation of architecture more generally.[63] Take, for instance, the work

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[61] In "Architecture and Transgression" Tschumi had remembering the "squalid walls of the small service rooms on the ground floor, stinking of urine, smeared with excrement and covered with obscene graffiti" on his 1965 visit which, he argued, "had never looked so beautiful". Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, pp. 73-74. Tschumi's photograph was used in the 1975 *Advertisement for Architecture* (see p. 75). For more on the connection between Bataille and Corbusier, see Nadir Lahiji, "'…the gift of time': Le Corbusier reading Bataille", in Mical (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 119-139.

[62] Breton, translated in Spiteri, "Surrealism and the Rational Embellishment of Paris," p. 200.

[63] Two seminal essays on this topic, that were instrumental in formulating the surrealist position towards architecture are: Salvador Dali, "Art Noveau Architecture's Terrifying and Edible Beauty," in Veseley, *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 139-140; Salvador Dali, "The Vision of Gaudi," in Veseley, *Surrealism and Architecture*,

of Karl Blossfeld, whose photographs of nature were published in *Documents* in 1928, or the stylistic response of Georges Brassai, published in *Minotaur* a few years later.[64] In both cases, architecture is equated with the "real" world of nature, through structural similarities between buildings and forms.[65] However the images serve to illustrate the surreality of nature as opposed to the "reality" of architecture and are typical of the surrealist mistrust of architecture due to its unshakeable associations with the "real". Throughout this imagery, the evidence of "space" is virtually absent, as architecture is equated with the static, and lifeless constructed object. Tschumi's argument in "Architecture and its Double" is that the surrealists, and Breton in particular, privileged the architectural object at the expense of the architectural experience or, to a lesser extent, the urban event. In this sense, architecture is documented through alternative modes of representation—the novel, the photograph, the film—but rarely, if at all, in its own medium. This degrading of the medium of architecture is also a denial of its validity. Tschumi laments that "surrealist architecture is no more than an offshoot—a poor child—of surrealist poetry, painting or even sculpture"[66]. As a result Breton's surrealism failed to engage with the *medium* of architecture, and consequently, it had yet to describe "a *real* space" [67]. While Tschumi's argument goes on to insist that an advanced spatiality can be found in the works of Duchamp, Bataille, Artaud and Kielser it is worth lingering on his critique of Breton and the impact this has for his own architectural practice and theory. Tschumi criticised the surrealist appropriation of architecture for its inability to preserve the aspects of the *real* world and the specificity of the medium of architecture. In this respect, Tschumi's writing

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pp. 141-142; See also: Dalibor Veseley, "Salvador Dali and Architecture," in Veseley, *Surrealism and Architecture*, p. 138.

[64] The stylistic similarities, as Dawn Ades has demonstrated, are a manifestation of the ongoing intellectual sparring between Bataille's *Documents* and the publications (including *Minotaur*) that Breton was associated with. See: Dawn Ades, "Photography and the Surrealist Text," in Rosalind Krauss and Jane Livingston (ed), *L'Amour Fou: photography and Surrealism* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985), p. 179.

[65] Dawn Ades and Fiona Bradley have written of the fashion in Parisian journals with "doubling" where pictures where deliberately laid out in contradictory pairs, with a combined title that united them. See: Dawn Ades and Fiona Bradley, "Introduction" in Dawn Ades and Simon Baker (ed), *Undercover Surrealism*, p.14.

[66] Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 112.

[67] Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 112, italics in original.

aligns with a number of the primary concerns of Bürger and particularly the issues of autonomy that are central to it.

In the essay, Tschumi's use of the term "real space" is conspicuous, described variously as "less important", "neglected" and "not yet created"[68]. One of the primary issues for Tschumi is that this process of marginalising architectural experience involves a depoliticising of the medium of architecture and an oversimplification of its social role, eliminating the potential for radicality that it carries with it. In juxtaposition to his critique of the objectification of architecture in later surrealist practice, Tschumi speaks positively of the early attempts of Dada and surrealism to orchestrate "events" noting the "urban" backdrop that accompanied this. Tschumi draws attention to the "first surrealist event" arguing that "it was one of the few events organised by Breton that referred to the direct experience of the city."[69] The event was the first of a programme orchestrated by the surrealists for various tours across the city, focussed on venturing to spaces without function—in Breton's words to locations that "had no reason for existing"[70]. The events were promoted through a concentrated poster campaign, transfiguring the walls of the city and inviting participation in an experiential rather than visual appreciation of urban space.[71] Considered by Tschumi one of the definitive moments of Dada and surrealism—the first event of surrealism or the last one of Dada—the first tour, on 14th April 1921, was characterised by its dramatic failure. In pouring rain no one showed up and the rejected surrealists were forced to abandon the tour. Transcending the "visualising" tactics of surrealism, Tschumi praised the initiative for blurring the distinction "between imaginary space and real space" which was central to his critique of the surrealist representation of architecture.[72]

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[68] Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 112.

[69] Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 112.

[70] Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 112.

[71] One of the posters read: "Cleanliness is the luxury of the poor, be dirty". See: Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 112.

[72] Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 112.

Veseley echoes this interplay between the real and the imaginary in his work *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation*.[73] Veseley argues that the surrealist experiments with the city (as opposed to the studio works) tended to concretise real experience, resulting in "a more complete encounter with the reality of everyday life"[74]. Rather than "rejecting" the real, Veseley argues that these events brought surrealist activity into the realm of the real, dismantling the autonomous nature of some of their activities and refocussing their experience on the urban. For Veseley, "[i]t was their concreteness, their spatial and corporeal nature, that brought the poetic interpretation of reality into the domain of architecture."[75]

There is evidence that Breton in particular, had consistently marginalised the "real" both theoretically and aesthetically, elevating dream and fiction to a status which subsumed it. In her influential essay from 1985 entitled "Photography in the Service of Surrealism" Rosalind Krauss argues that surrealism aspired to "a reorganisation of the very way the real was conceived"[76] quoting, as evidence, Breton's remark in the *Manifesto of Surrealism* "for a total revision of real values."[77] Breton was also opposed ideologically to the representation of "the real form of real objects"[78] and *surreality*, in its nature, implied a distancing between the viewer and the concrete nature of reality.[79] This was one of the critiques that Bataille made of the movement and central to his opposition to the romanticism embodied in its values: surrealism was unable to accommodate the moral

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[73] Dalibor Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation: The Question of Creativity in the Shadow of Production* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004), p. 342. As already noted, Veseley changed the spelling of his name for the publication of this work.

[74] Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation*, p. 342.

[75] Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation*, p. 342.

[76] Rosalind Krauss, "Photography in the Service of Surrealism" in Krauss and Livingston (ed), *L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985), p. 15.

[77] Breton, quoted in Krauss, "Photography in the Service of Surrealism," p. 15.

[78] Breton, quoted in Krauss, "Photography in the Service of Surrealism," p. 15.

[79] In this sense, Krauss's focus on the darkroom experimentations, as opposed to the documentary works of surrealist photography tended to exaggerate this, and has been criticised on some fronts. See, for instance, the critique mounted in: Ian Walker, *City Gorged with Dreams*, p. 2.

implications that accompanied the desires that it was geared towards liberating.[80] The emphasis on the *real* (highlighed in Tschumi's text) is significant, amounting not just to a criticism of surrealism, but the broader avant-garde project outlined by Bürger[81].

Tschumi's writing on the early surrealist (or late Dadaist) events is significant, as it demonstrates an understanding and knowledge of their practices and, more importantly, a critical insight into their worth. Rather than being incidental, Tschumi's *Advertisements for Architecture* can be seen as a methodical reworking of Dada and surrealist tactics: the deliberate attempt to subvert the visual hegemony of architectural representation and shift its emphasis to experience. In this sense it was (like the failed first tours of surrealism) an attempt to reorient architectural consciousness away from functionality and towards the sensual and phenomenological forms of architectural experience. The posters were also formulaic, in this sense, drawing together real space (the space of the poster), representational space (the photograph) and fragmentary text. While embedded with allusions to a vast range of secondary media, this structure ran through all nine advertisements, across the nine years that Tschumi was engaged in producing them.[82] These three intertwined characteristics—the real world, the textual fragment and the cropped photographic representation—were a major preoccupation of Tschumi in this period and connect his work strongly with a broader avant-garde ancestry.

While acknowledging the critique that Tschumi mounts against Breton's narrowly visual reading of architecture, there are a number of important and under-recognised connections that can be drawn between Tschumi's projects from this period and the

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[80] On this topic, see: Raymond Spiteri, "Envisioning Surrealism in *Histoire de l'oeil* and *La femme 100 têtes*," *Art Journal* 63 4 (Winter, 2004), pp. 4-18.

[81] The *real* is central to Bürger's argument that the avant-gardiste work reconnects art with the praxis of life, evoking functionalism and pragmatism as creative strategies and requiring "a critical cognition of reality". It is through the "reality fragment" that the avant-gardiste work dismantles the aestheticism of the work of art and presents an affront to its institutionalised status. For Bürger, "they are no longer signs pointing to reality, they *are* reality." See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 78, italics in original.

[82] Tschumi also describes, in the same period, the distribution of his lecture notes and seminars on "leaflets printed on colored paper, to alleviate their serious tone". This was also a tactic of the early Dadaists. Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 7.

broader tactics of Breton. The literary style of Breton, methodically engaged with the production of visual images torn from textual fragments, demonstrates an avant-garde tactic that, in the broader space of Tschumi's transcription of architecture, is instructive. The pyramidal relationship between reality, representation and text is not an innovation of Tschumi, but rather an obsession of Breton, and characterises his most important novels. It is Tschumi's transcription of this structure, in *Manhattan Transcripts*, that inverts the surrealist ossification of architecture, and engages it directly with the spatial representation of experience. It is through this method that Tschumi stalks the "real" architectural spaces that had eluded Breton and surrealist architecture in general.

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There is no doubt that Tschumi had a detailed understanding of the avant-garde concept of montage and, in a number of instances, drew inspiration from it.[83] Tschumi drew heavily from film theory in his formative writings[84] and, in a number of texts, demonstrates his affiliation with the work of Sergei Eisenstein and the avant-garde techniques in film.[85] The process established in Tschumi's *Manhattan Transcripts* is essentially a form of architectural montage where the independent fields of space, event and movement become interchangeable and infinitely variable.

This is, as Tschumi acknowledges, surrealist in nature and, more specifically, related to the avant-garde technique of montage.[86] For Tschumi, his use of the device of montage is

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[83] The best evidence of this is: Tschumi, "Abstract Mediation and Strategy," p. 190-205; see also Bernard Tschumi, "Sequences," *The* Princeton *Journal: Thematic Studies in Architecture* 1 (1983), pp. 29-37.

[84] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction,* pp. 17-18.

[85] Tschumi's debt, in this sense, is most clear in: Tschumi, Manhattan Transcripts, pp. 10-12; see also: Bernard Tschumi, "Sequences," in Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction* (pp.153-168); Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, pp. 106-107; Giuliana Bruno, *Atlas of Emotion* (New York: Verso, 2002), pp. 56-57; Jonathon Hill, *Actions of Architecture: Architects and Creative Users* (London: Routledge, 2003), p. 79.

[86] Tschumi's process, and its relationship to montage is a theme in a recent work by Gevork Hartoonian, that argues that this layering of fragments is connected to an intellectual dematerialisation of the autonomous architectural object, paradoxically related to its simultaneous celebration. See the chapter "Bernard Tschumi: Return of the Object" in: Gevork Hartoonian, *Crisis of the Object: the Architecture of Theatricality* (Routledge: Taylor and Francis, 2006), pp. 72-103.

related to "an art of rupture, whereby invention resides in contrast—even in contradiction."[87] This can be compared with Adorno's definition of montage: "[when] the negation of synthesis becomes a principle of form."[88]

Peter Bürger's theory of montage is central to his understanding of the "avant-gardiste" work of art and the broader relationship to autonomy that he undertakes to document.[89] While positioning montage as a "particular aspect" of Walter Benjamin's concept of allegory, Bürger is quick to define the different modes of montage—in fine arts, literature and film[90]—without specific reference to architecture or the network of contextual associations that are linked to it. Bürger structures his theorisation of "allegory" around the argument presented in Benjamin's *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*[91] that, predating by nearly a decade Benjamin's major investigations of the work of art, provided the preliminary account of the non-organic artwork.[92] The theory of allegory is summarised in Jonathon Hill's writing on montage as the "depletion of the previous meanings and the formulation of new ones by the appropriation and dialectical opposition of fragments set in a new context."[93] Despite having recognised its original application in the tragedy of the baroque, Bürger argues that the concept of allegory is fundamentally geared to Benjamin's contextual present maintaining that "it is only in the avant-gardist work that it finds its adequate object"[94]. Going further, Bürger argues that it was only through

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[87] Bernard Tschumi, "Abstract Mediation and Strategy," in Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 197.

[88] Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 203. On Adorno's concept of montage in architecture, see: Gevork Hartoonian, *Ontology of Construction: On Nihilism of Technology and Theories of Modern Architecture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 57.

[89] Peter Bürger's writing on this can be found in the section on "montage" in: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 73-83; for the connection between Bürger's theory of montage and its application to architecture, see: Hill, *Actions of Architecture*, p. 91-100.

[90] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 73.

[91] See: Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (London: Verso, 1998).

[92] Buchloh argues that Bürger's failure to acknowledge the shifts in Benjamin's writing in regard to the "organic" and "non-organic" works of art demonstrated a clumsiness in his theory that had not been properly accounted for: See: Benjamin Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde," *Art in America* (November, 1984), p. 21.

[93] Hill, *Actions of Architecture*, p. 93.

[94] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 68.

Benjamin's familiarity with avant-garde aesthetics that he was able to develop the concept of allegory in the first place, therefore enabling historical artistic techniques to be juxtaposed with the continual reinvention of new ones.[95] In this sense, Bürger applies his own critical "montage", freeing Benjamin's concept from its baroque literary roots and directly transplanting it within a new and ill-defined avant-garde context. For Bürger, "that this entails the exclusion of those elements that derive from the application to the literature of the baroque goes without saying."[96] Despite this exclusion, Benjamin's conceptualisation of allegory is one of the primary pillars that Bürger's theorisation of the avant-garde "work of art" is structured upon.

Bürger draws his critique from the last section of Benjamin's *The Origin of German Tragic Drama* entitled, in the English translation "Allegory and Trauerspiel". Benjamin's concept of allegory draws from an understanding of the fragment that, in principle, is opposed to the hieroglyphic language of symbolism, in its nature torn from a language of parts. For Benjamin, in the baroque, the written word assumes a "visual" character,[97] functioning in a "hieroglyphic" sense that negates the need for symbolism or the visual representation that stems from it. *Trauerspiel,* Benjamin argues, was originally intended to be read, rather than performed and the sudden transformation of scenes replicates the "appearance of the print when the page is turned"[98]. In this sense, the fragment is "torn" from language by the allegorist, no longer constituting an instalment in a holistic narrative, but the representation of an incompatible progression of sequence after sequence. Truncated from its context, the "allegorist" now assumes control over the fragment—"it is unconditionally in [his/her] power"[99]—and is responsible for the context and meaning that is attached to it. According to Benjamin,

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[95] Bürger concludes that "[t]here is thus nothing forced in the attempt to read Benjamin's concept of allegory as a theory of the avant-gardiste (nonorganic) work of art". Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 68.

[96] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 68.

[97] "…the written word tends towards the visual". See: Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p.176.

[98] See: Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p.176.

[99] Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p.184; Peter Bürger quotes this passage, from the same translation. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 69.

> [in the allegorist's] hands, the object becomes something different; through it [the allegorist] speaks of something different and it becomes a key to the realm of hidden knowledge[100].

For Benjamin, the fragment is diametrically opposed to the symbol—"it is not possible to conceive of a starker opposite"[101]—and he uses it to position the baroque as the dialectical inverse of classicism. If classicism is a language based on a coherent recognition of symbols, then the baroque is composed of the torn fragments, reconstituted on the page so that "the false appearance of totality is extinguished"[102]. The fragmentation witnessed by the allegorist manifests itself as *melancholy*, an aspect of allegory that, for Bürger, is fundamentally tied to the experience of the avant-gardist who, in the case of Dada and surrealism, "can no longer transfigure [their] social functionlessness."[103]

Bürger is particularly interested in Benjamin's concept of allegory for its fixation on the fragment and the obvious connections that pertain to contemporary art. Summarising Benjamin's theory, Bürger posits three critical phases[104]: the isolation of a fragment drawn from its "lived" context; the reconnection of the various isolated fragments and the projection of a new meaning; the transferral of meaning from the artwork to the control of the allegorist and in the process, outwardly, into the frame of reception. For Bürger, the significance of the category of "allegory" and Benjamin's theory pertaining to it, is that it enables the separation of the production of art from its impact: the aesthetic *effect*. The first stages relate to the production of art (Bürger uses the term production-aesthetics) and the latter to its reception (aesthetic effect). In this sense, the concept enables an analysis

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[100] Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p.184.

[101] Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p.176.

[102] Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p.176.

[103] See Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 71.

[104] See Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 69.

that can engage both *production* and *reception* and is, in this sense, adaptable to a theory of the avant-garde.[105]

It is worth, at this point, contrasting Bürger's reading of montage drawn from Benjamin, with the summary of architectural process that Tschumi offers in relationship to *disjunction*. Again, Tschumi proposes three clear characteristics. The first is the "rejection of the notion of 'synthesis'" which, as with Benjamin, tends towards the fragmentation (Tschumi uses the terms *disassociation* or *disjunction*) of the organic. The second characteristic is the separation of function from form. These categories, typically divided in architecture, are now made available to the same processes. With parallels to Benjamin, this second phase is the unification of fragments (however contradictory) in a situation torn from their conventional reality. The third characteristic, in Tschumi's theory, is the development of a "method" through which these fragments are to be modified expanding "the whole into an architectural system, exploding its limits while suggesting a new definition."[106] Again, like Benjamin, this implies the development of a new language of fragments that, dispensing with the myth of the whole, embodies the internal oppositions of its parts. For Veseley, this language was the major legacy of surrealism in the twentieth century and supplies the key interpretive framework through which it should be applied to architecture.[107]

This alternate "language" of fragments is evoked in Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, as a primary characteristic of the avant-garde. Bürger structures his writing on allegory from the conventional polarity between the organic and non-organic work of art that is

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[105] Bürger acknowledges that the concept of allegory is more useful for the analysis of the *production* of art, than its *reception*, where "supplementary elements will be needed". See Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 70.

[106] While Tschumi titles this section "Disjunction and the Avant-Garde" he alludes only tangentially to the avant-garde and doesn't use the term at all except in the title. Bernard Tschumi, "Disjunctions," in Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 212.

[107] Veseley argues that the failure to recognise the importance of "fragments" in linking the domain of art to life "explains why the restorative role of fragment was recognised in architecture much later than it was in literature or painting". The same was the case for Surrealism more generally. See Vesely, *Architecture in the Age of Divided Representation*, p. 343.

developed throughout Benjamin's writing (and adopted also by Adorno)[108]. In this categorisation, the organic work of art is one that has emerged in absolute connection with the living forces of a society. For Bürger, the "artists who produce an organic work […] treat their material as something living [and] respect its significance as something that has grown from concrete life situations"[109]. Bürger, following Benjamin,[110] gives these artists the category of classicists and presents the classical work as diametrically opposed to the avant-gardiste (non-organic) one. Classicism is drawn from a holistic understanding of meaning and representation, whereas the avant-gardiste has a mistrust of embedded meaning altogether and undertakes the erasure of totality and the systems of representation that set out to simplify it. For the classicist the assumption of meaning is embodied in the represented material, while the avant-gardiste approaches the "material" from an altogether opposing perspective. As Bürger explains

> [f]or avant-gardists […] material is just that, material. Their activity initially consists in nothing other than in "killing" the life of the material, that is, in tearing it out of its functional context that gives it meaning. Whereas the classicist recognises and respects in the material the carrier of a meaning, the avant-gardists see only the empty sign, to which they can impart significance. The classicist correspondingly treats the material as a whole, whereas the avant-gardiste tears it out of the life totality, isolates it and turns it into a fragment.[111]

It is possible that it is this metaphorical act of "killing the life of the material" that Tschumi engages in his poster, when he suggests: "to really appreciate architecture, you may even need to commit a murder"[112]. Rather than proposing a literal murder, the poster alludes to a metaphorical murder, where architecture is torn from its reality and then represented as fragments of life experience, redistributed across the urban grid.

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[108] Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, pp. 44-47, pp. 203-205, p. 224.

[109] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 70.

[110] Benjamin considers the baroque "the sovereign opposite of classicism". See Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p. 176.

[111] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 70.

[112] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 100.

What is also embodied in Benjamin's dialectic between the classical and the baroque is an interpretive framework for the multidirectional splintering of modernism and, most importantly the position of the avant-garde within this historical trajectory. As has already been argued, modernism is typically characterised by the inherent autonomy of its works and the synchronicity with both social and technological patterns. For both Benjamin and Bürger, the role of the avant-garde was a preparatory one, shifting the historical path of modernism and undermining its ideological biases. The emphasis on fragmentation, which was most heavily associated with the nihilistic processes of Dada, was an affront to the utopian concerns of modernism, intended to restructure both the conception and reception of art as well as aligning the work with the forces of mechanical reproduction central to the advances of capitalism. When understood as a trajectory distinct from (and antagonistic towards) the historical path of modernism, the fragment becomes a disassembling of the modernist/classical whole, intended not as its destruction, but the origin of its recreation. The failure of the avant-garde was not in its inability to sufficiently dismantle modernist formalism, but its inability to sustain a model of critique that could ultimately transform the social and political structures of modern life. As Huyssen has argues, "[o]ut of negation alone, neither a new art or a new society can be developed."[113]

The dialectical pairing of the baroque and the classical has a natural resonance with the deepening rifts that have emerged in the twentieth century between modernism and postmodernism.[114] Given this, Bürger's writing on montage is instructive for a critique of the forces of fragmentation in architecture generally and in regard to Tschumi

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[113] Andreas Huyssen, "The Cultural Politics of Pop: Reception and Critique of US Pop Art in the Federal Republic of Germany," *New German Critique* **4** (Winter, 1975), p. 92; this essay is also published in: Andreas Huyssen, *After The Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 141-159.

[114] Peter Eisenman, "Autonomy and the Will to the Critical," *Assemblage* **41** (April, 2000), pp. 90-91; Peter Eisenman, "Autonomy and the Avant-Garde: The Necessity of an Avant-Garde in America," in Robert Somol (ed), *Autonomy and Ideology: Positioning an Avant-Garde in America* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 1997), pp. 68-79.

specifically.[115] Tschumi sees Post-Modernism[116] and modernism critically, not as separate, but as the extension of one larger project in classicism that seeks to preserve the organic wholeness of architecture. While there is a correlation between Tschumi's model of deconstruction and the fragmentation of architectural forms that occurred in parallel with Bürger's thesis in the 1970s, the assaults on the "classicist" facades that were projected by both late modernism and Post-Modernism in the same period can also be drawn into the broader sphere of this discourse. Tschumi is critical of these approaches in the closing paragraphs of "Architecture and its Double," where he writes,

> [a]t a time when Modernism or even Post-Modernism has often come to mean one continuing stream of formalist ideas after another, in both art and architectural discourse, it is interesting that a parallel stream has been consistently censored by art and architectural historians alike. That second stream has always been an irritant: a means to reject functionalist ethics, to refuse the rational and to celebrate the unrepressed delights.[117]

This second stream, engaged in the fracturing of the formalism internal to modernism, corresponds to the concerns of the avant-garde, functioning as an "irritant" to modernism and a negation of its autonomous status. As noted, the redemption of the ruined Villa Savoy as a motif in Tschumi's work[118] functions in this way, exposing the limits of the architectural object through their temporal and aesthetic negation. The polarising of creative practice into *organic* and *nonorganic* spheres in Bürger's writing corresponds to the "doubling" conjectured by Tschumi, where an alternative undercurrent works in antagonism to the mainstream.[119] In his theory of the "avant-gardiste" work of art, Bürger

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[115] This connection is also made in: Hill, *Actions of Architecture*, pp. 91-98. Hill, who draws from the writing of Benjamin and Buchloh, argues that early modernism embodied montage as a compositional strategy, rather than a programmatic one.

[116] Capitalised, in this instance, to refer to the Jencksian brand of 1970s historicism, generally described in: Charles Jencks, *The Language of Post-Modern Architecture* (London: Academy Editions, 1978).

[117] Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 116.

[118] Tschumi, "Architecture and Transgression," pp. 55-63.

[119] This corresponds closely to the theorisation of Bürger's work in Huyssen, where modernism is identified as a positivistic strand, characterised by autonomy, and the avant-garde as a sub-stream, concerned inherently with conflating art and life. See: Andreas Huyssen, "The Search for Tradition: Avant-Garde and

turns to two primary forms: the Dada montage and the surrealist novel. The influence of both can be evidenced in the work of Tschumi from the late 1970s and will be treated in more detail now.

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As has already been noted, Peter Bürger's theorisation of montage, as a technique of the avant-garde, rests primarily on the work of John Heartfield, which embodies a unique structure between images and words that has, subsequently, come to be considered as paradigmatic. The structure for these images, as Bürger argues, is fixed: there is an image and two texts. In Bürger's terms, they are compiled from "an (often coded) title (*inscriptio*) and a lengthier explanation (*subscription).*"[120] The primary example that Bürger cites[121] is *Adolph—the Superman—Who Swallows Gold and Spouts Junk* that is illustrative of Bürger's key points. The image contains a manipulated x-raying of Adolph Hitler, where the oesophagus and stomach are a continuous trail of coins.

The political message, divulged between the twin titles and split either side of the stark but ironic graphic are characteristic of the structure of Dada montage and, for Bürger, "antiaesthetic" in nature.[122] The essence of Bürger's argument is that Heartfield's montages, as opposed to those of Picasso or Schwitters, resemble the techniques of early film in that they disguise the process of montage, rather than celebrating it. As has already been shown, Benjamin saw the development of photomontage as one of the most

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Postmodernism in the 1970s," *New German Critique* 22 (Winter 1981), pp. 23-40; also published in: Huyssen, *After the Great Divide*, pp. 160-178; see also: David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (London: Blackwell, 1990), p. 12.

[120] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 74-75.

[121] Bürger cites two examples, both reproduced, which are typical of the genre of political posters, but also representative of the development of photomontage. The examples Bürger uses are: John Heartfield, *Adolph—the Superman—Who Swallows Gold and Spouts Junk (1932)* and *Germany is Still Not Lost!* (1932)*;* For the reproductions see: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 76-77. Biro argues that Heartfield, unlike Hannah Hoch and other Dadaists, adopted a "strongly didactic from" which limited the shock value of his work in this period. See: Matthew Biro, *The Dada Cyborg: Visions of the New Human in the Weimar Berlin* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), p. 202.

[122] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 75. See also: Hill, *Actions of Architecture*, p. 100.

radical innovations of Dada and characteristic of its bridging status between art and life. There is no doubt that Benjamin's writing on this topic not only inspired Bürger's thinking on montage, but indelibly structured his broader theory of avant-gardism. Benjamin's writing on Heartfield's work in "Author as Producer" is less-structured than Bürger's, acknowledging the revolutionary potential embodied in the development of the techniques, but equally, the ineffective nature through which they are eventually mass-produced. For Benjamin, the Dada montage was one of the last "authentic" mediums and, contrary to Benjamin, who gravitated towards the more "seamless" cuts, was evidence of *life* itself, rather than its reinvention or reproduction. In a passage where, once again, montage and murder coincide, Benjamin writes, "the tiniest authentic fragment of daily life says more than painting […] just as the bloody fingerprint of a murderer on the page of a book says more than the text."[123]

Consider this murderous fragment from Benjamin's work in the context of Tschumi's *Advertisements*, which deliberately recreate the structure of Dada montage but privilege architecture, the event and an alteration of its reception. Tschumi's decision to create *Advertisements for Architecture* is an obvious affront to the status of the work of architecture, as well as an acceptance of the role of the culture industry in framing the expanding context through which architecture is reproduced. In this sense, Tschumi's *Advertisements*, like the tactics of Heartfield, operate in a context that transforms the traditional audience of architecture and attempts to offer resistance to the institutions that have contained it. The theme that runs through all nine of Tschumi's advertisements[124] is that a different mode of reception is obligatory in order for architecture to fulfil its cultural and social task. Whether it be recognition of the sensual aspects of architecture or the invitation to violate the conventional rules, each is a coded instruction which necessitates action in the real world.

While stylistically, Tschumi's posters conform to the spatial structure of Heartfield's photomontages, the message and its integration with the image, is specifically skewed

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[123] Walter Benjamin, "The Author as Producer", in *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Schocken Books, 1978), p. 229.

[124] For a catalogue of all nine advertisements, see: Jormakka, "The most architectural thing," pp. 291-292.

towards an architectural schema of reception and aimed aggressively at acts against the built environment. The use of imagery in Heartfield's work is relatively straightforward, concealing the "cuts" in order to preserve the interplay between image and text and constructing a language of political praxis. In Tschumi's *Advertisements*, the concept of fragmentation has become profoundly blurred. The origins of meaning are no longer acknowledged or even referenced, but reconfigured. The fragmentary *inscription/subscriptio* structure is retained but, in Tschumi's work, without authorship, assuming its own fragmentary and decontextualised status.[125] This concept of the fragment is a technique that runs through a number of Tschumi's texts, blurring authorship in a deliberately ambiguous way. As Louis Martin has illustrated, Tschumi cited (without quotation marks) Thomas Kuhn's, *The Structure of Scientific Rationality* deliberately switching "science" with "architecture" in his own appropriation of the passage.[126] This operation of montage, strips passages from their original context and reassembles them with new literary interpretations and without the organic system of meaning that had originally underpinned them. Martin applies a concept of intertextuality[127] to this aspect of Tschumi's writing, directly linking it to the processes of montage already discussed. Martin writes,

> Tschumi conceived his texts as collages, palimpsests [sic] composed through the intentional juxtaposition and superimposition of fragments of other texts that were often reduced to mere *objets trouvés* whose origins and the context of their emergence were blurred. Together with Tschumi's technique of substituting one word

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[125] See: Jormakka, "The most architectural thing," p. 309.

[126] Martin, "Transpositions," p. 29. When republished in 1994, the essay is premised with: "[t]o paraphrase Thomas Kuhn…". See: Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 77. A similar appropriation occurs in Tschumi's, "Questions of Space" where he appropriates the words of Phillippe Sollers in order, in Martin's words, "to transpose into architecture the effects of Bataille in literature. " (p. 29).

[127] For the relationship of "intertextuality" to surrealism, and particularly the relationship between words and images in the surrealist journals, see: Ian Walker, "Phantom Africa: Photography between Surrealism and Ethnography [L'Afrique fantôme: la photographie entre surréalisme et ethnographie]," *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 37 147 (1997), p. 642.

> with another […] this operation was an extreme and provocative use of the concept of intertextuality.[128]

The radical appropriation of text in Tschumi's *Advertisements* is, once again, engaged in the manipulation of *reception* rather than production. The act alters the stable meanings in both contexts and necessitates a fluidity between incompatible or traditionally discreet categories: "architecture" and "science". However, the engagement between text and images is equally eclectic. Cropped, without attribution, Tschumi's images are fed into the fragmentary systems of meaning that are developed in the textual fragment.[129]

The "murder" advertisement is a primary example. The cropped photo depicts a figure who has been pushed from a window by a masked assailant capturing the body in full flight, and preserving the emotional reactions of both danger and escape. The image evokes the famous Yves Klein image, where the artist is captured airborne as he fearlessly jumps from a two-storey building.[130] In both images, the "freezing" of the moving body and the static architectural backdrop are paired dialectically, implicating architecture in a broader history of the body, and the forces of escape. If the implication in Klein's image is one of freedom, in Tschumi's it is clearly one of danger. As the protagonist in Tschumi's advertisement is captured in mid-flight, fleeing the window, architecture is represented as the "witness", separating the important aesthetic poles of *production* and *reception*, as well as implicating architecture in the "real" world and as a passive host to its events.

As Kari Jormakka has illustrated, the image used in Tschumi's poster is not an original image, but taken from the 1947 film *The Brasher Dubloon*, or *The High Window*[131] where

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[128] Martin, "Transpositions", p. 30.

[129] Tschumi's use of textual fragments is explored in: Tschumi, "Disjunctions," *Perspecta* **23** (1987), pp. 108-119.

[130] In setting up the image, Klein had positioned a team of Judo students to hover just outside of the camera's view and break the artist's fall with a tarpaulin before he hit the ground. See: Tony Godfrey, *Conceptual Art* (London: Phaidon, 1998), p. 69.

[131] As Jormakka points out: "The image is taken from the 1947 movie *The Brasher Doubloon* or *The High Window*, as it was distributed in Europe; the censors did not approve of the name "Brasher" because they thought it would be confused with the word "brassiere" so the movie used the title of the book it was based on, Raymond Chandler's hard-boiled novel of 1942." See Jormakka, "The most architectural thing," p. 309.

the photograph is used to blackmail the (masked) protagonist. More specifically, the borrowed image is a photographic image, used in a film that is, once again, torn from its revised context and becomes the backdrop to Tschumi's own architectural sloganeering. Instead of replicating the techniques of film, Tschumi's murder poster is a literal "montage" from film. As Jormakka has also illustrated, the capitalisation of "Murder in the Cathedral" is a concealed reference to Poe's poem of that name.

While Tschumi's poster series can be read as a literal reworking of Dada practice, both visually and structurally, it was extended in his *Manhattan Transcripts* project, undertaken in the same period. In the transcripts, while the motivations of montage remained central, they evolved beyond the two-dimensional formula of Dadaist collage and developed a new medium of representation, where architecture was an active, rather than passive, agent in shaping human experience. In distinction to the textual/visual dyad that operates in the advertisements, the *Manhattan Transcripts* are structured by an architectural/visual relationship which expands the boundaries of montage considerably and especially the relationship between the picture plane and its flattening that was a major preoccupation in the historical avant-garde and Dada and surrealism specifically.

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In both the poster series and the *Manhattan Transcripts* there is an emphasis on the "real" spaces of architecture that had been overlooked when the surrealists attempted to engage architecture in the 1920s. Tschumi's architecture at the time had an obsessive preoccupation with the themes of "reality" and finding a forum through which surrealist concerns of desire and experience could be reframed at the centre of an authentic architectural system of representation (as opposed to a symbolic one). In his essay introducing *Manhattan Transcripts* Tschumi made the emphasis on reality abundantly clear:

> [t]he Manhattan Transcripts differ from most architectural drawings insofar as they are neither real projects nor mere fantasies. They propose to transcribe an architectural interpretation of reality.[132]

Manhattan Transcripts was an episodic project that Tschumi undertook from 1976 through until 1981 that transcribed architectural events into an innovative form of coded architectural representation, originally intended for a gallery and ultimately reproduced in the form of a book[133]. In essence a technique for writing architecture, the project was part of Tschumi's theoretical attempts to privilege the *real* event in architectural space and displace the pre-eminence of the architectural object. As a result, each transcript is based on an event. In the original exhibition there are four events in total that, reinforcing the filmic and televisual connotations, Tschumi refers to as "episodes".

The first "episode" depicts the stalking, the act, the pursuit, the investigation and ultimately, the capture of a murderer. Set in Central Park in New York, this transcript casts architecture as the "witness" to events, which is a theme that is reproduced in the remaining transcripts. The second transcript is a study of the street and, more specifically, 42nd street in New York. Rather than literally reproducing the street, Tschumi's transcript attempts to articulate its edges and the collisions where contradictory programmes meet. The narrative, in this instance, is a simple one: "[h]e gets out of jail; they make love; she kills him; she is free."[134] The third "episode" depicts a "fall" where the protagonist flees and ultimately falls from a Manhattan tower to the ground. Again, architecture becomes the "witness" to the event, conflating the various incompatible programmes of a high-rise on top of one another, as the accelerated vertical journey cuts through the distinctions of architectural form as well as the programmatic similarities that connect project types.[135] In

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[132] Tschumi, *Manhattan Transcripts*, p.7. In the concluding paragraph, Tschumi again returns to the framework of reality as a way of viewing the transcripts: "reality is made infinitely malleable, so that emotive, dramatic or poetic attributes can change and unfold" (p. 12).

[133] Tschumi, *Manhattan Transcripts,* p. 6; a "fifth" transcript is reproduced in: Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture in/of Motion* (Rotterdam: NAi Publishers, 1997).

[134] Tschumi, *Manhattan Transcripts,* p. 8.

[135] There is a strong resonance between this project and Koolhaas's theorisation of Manhattan in *Delirious New York* which, as well as analysing the vertical layering of programme, posited a dialectical splintering of

this case the protagonist may be falling from their "home, office, prison, hotel, asylum"[136] and Tschumi is questioning the inherent disjunction between form and programme. In the final (and most extreme) transcript, conventions are deliberately challenged by the intrusion of oppositional events and programmes—"acrobat, ice skaters, soldiers and football players"[137]. Tschumi is primarily concerned with the motion of bodies through space and the inherent incompatibility this has on architectural form. Tschumi deliberately stratifies programme (function), movement and form (space) to demonstrate the mechanisms of interchangeability that the transcripts are designed to preserve. The various narratives that Tschumi chooses to preoccupy himself with in the *Manhattan Transcripts* are all, in a number of contexts, surrealist in nature. The second transcript for instance, which weaves the themes of love, violence and death corresponds to the surrealist fetishisation of the female praying mantis who, depicted widely in the work of Dali, Ernst, Masson and Giacometti, seduces a lover before devouring him after sex.[138]

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surrealism and modernism, embodied in the contradictory personalities of Le Corbusier and Salvador Dali; both visitors to New York in the mid 1930s. This section of *Delirious New York* was published in Veseley's anthology alongside Tschumi's essay, providing further evidence for this connection. See: Rem Koolhaas, *Delirious New York* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 1994), pp. 235-281 [orig. 1978]; Rem Koolhaas, "Dali and Le Corbusier: The Paranoid Critical Method," in Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 153-163.

[136] Tschumi, *Manhattan Transcripts,* p. 8.

[137] Tschumi, *Manhattan Transcripts,* p. 8.

[138] Roger Caillois had written on the sexual habits of praying mantises in *Minotaur* in the mid 1930s linking this behaviour to his theory and study of mimesis. Breton, and other surrealists, kept praying mantises as pets to observe exactly this phenomenon, before it was discovered that this instinctive practice did not occur in captivity. The praying mantis was of particular significance to the surrealists who took a prolonged interest in their mating habits, where the female, after copulation, was known to decapitate her male partner, linking, for the surrealists, the sexual act with the violence of the death drive. The theme is played out in a number of Dali paintings, most famously, and traumatically in *The Great Masturbator*, which documents his encoded anxieties towards sexual copulation for the first time with Gala. Dali linked the form of Guimard's Paris-metro stations with the female praying mantis and male castration anxiety, evocatively photographed by Brassai. The connection between the praying mantis and the devouring of architectural form is implied in a number of recent architectural projects and, by admission, Neil Spiller's *Velasquez Machine*, featured in his "Everchanging Vista". For more on the topic see: Hollier, "Mimesis and Castration 1937," trans. William Rodarmor, *October* 31 (Winter, 1984), pp. 3-15; Martin Ries, "Andre Masson: Surrealism and its Discontents," *Art Journal* 61 4 (Winter, 2002), pp. 75-85; William L. Pressley, "The Praying Mantis in Surrealist Art," *Art Bulletin* 55 4 (December 1970), pp. 601; Ruth Markus, "Surrealism's Praying Mantis and Castrating Woman," *Woman's Art*

However the ongoing theme of pursuit and escape that structures Tschumi's transcripts ties it closely to the structure of surrealist narrative and, specifically, the three major Surrealist novels: Breton's *Nadja* (1928) and *L'Amour Fou* (1934) and Louis Aragon's *Paris Peasant* (1924). Across the four transcripts Tschumi develops a narrative where the city becomes a "frame" or context for the events, shaping as well as anchoring them in urban space. This has strong correlations with the surrealist obsession with the city as a source of the unconscious, framing events at the same time as it structures them.[139] Where these activities began with the male pursuit of a women, they were equally concerned with the search for objects which, when read against the psychoanalytical impulses of Freud, were seen as avenues through which repressed desire was directed. The surrealist search for fetish objects is most completely described in the "flea market" of *L'Amour Fou*, and the iconic photographs taken by Man Ray to support it.[140]

In *Nadja*, the archetypal novel of the surrealist movement, Breton's text weaves the themes of surrealism seamlessly into a fictional, autobiographical sojourn through Paris where the city frames the poet's pursuit of the mentally unstable Nadja, documenting (from an exclusively male perspective) the psychological transition from initial "curiosity", "anxiety" and "discomfort" towards "lust", "love" and ultimately "boredom" and "indifference". Photographs, commissioned from Jacques-Andre Boiffard of the spaces

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Journal 21 1 (Spring/Summer, 2000), pp. 33-39; See also: Neil Spiler, "Deformography: the poetics of cybridised architecture," *First Papers of Surrealism* 4 (Winter, 2008).

[139] On this, see: Roger Cardinal, "Soluble City: The Surrealist Perception of Paris" in Veseley (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 143-149; Gray Read, "Aragon's armoire," in Mical, *Surrealism and Architecture*, pp. 31-40; Michael Chapman and Michael Ostwald, "Curated Desires: Film, Photography and the visual transformation of Urban Space in Surrealism," in Sarah Chaplin and Alexandra Stara (ed), *Curating Architecture and the City* (London: Routledge, 2009), pp. 39-50.

[140] The first section of *L'Amour Fou* describes a visit to a flea market that Breton and Giacommetti undertook. Both men were struggling with loneliness and ventured into the market in search of objects to displace their libidinal desires. Giacometti found a mask that later "finished" his. The helmet that Man Ray photographed was a product of the same visit and is described in the text. The "Cinderella" slipper-spoon, photographed by Man Ray, was the culmination of a dream by Breton from the same period and was also a by-product of this sojourn. See: André Breton, *Mad Love*, trans. Mary Ann Caws (Nebraska: The University of Nebraska Press, 1987), pp. 25-30.

where the primary activity takes place,[141] interpenetrate the text, disrupting its flow and expanding its visual range. There is an eerie stillness to Boiffard's photographs which, drawing stylistically from the influence of Eugene Atget, are constructed as windows, where objects and experience coalesce.[142] Documentary in nature, the photos are stripped of people, emotion, or the kind of psychological paranoias that permeate Breton's text. At the same time Breton's text furnishes a reading of the photos that, in the context of surrealism, is transformative. Neither the image, the site, the event, or the word can escape the peculiar "binding" that has located them.[143]

If the "libidinal" pursuit framed in *Nadja* is a journey across the city motivated by lust, infatuation, love and desire, then in *Manhattan Transcripts* it has become a violent and murderous one. Tschumi sets up an alternative index in his work, where the modes of representation are drawn out and the connections between them exaggerated. Tschumi's method in the transcripts is to set up a tri-partite mode of representation where the event, space and movement are serialised. The "event" is represented through conventional photography, which, in the sequential recurrence, creates a narrative akin to film. "Space", throughout the transcripts, is represented through the traditions of architectural representation and, specifically, drawing.

Drawn in plan, two-dimensional orthographic projection, occasionally axonometric and, in the final transcript, in perspective, these drawings replicate the historical traditions of architectural representation at the same time as they dismantle them, through the

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[141] In *L'Amour Fou*, the images were commissioned from Boiffard who, upon being given the requirements for the photos, revealed that he already had a number of them in his collection and had no need to go out and take new ones. The image in particular, that correlates very closely to Breton's text, is Boiffard's photo of the Tour Saint Jacques. For more on this see: Rosalind Krauss, "Nightwalkers," *Art Journal* **41** 1 (Spring, 1981), p. 36.

[142] Annette Michelson referred to the mood as an "ecstatic" emptiness, which permeated surrealist incursions in the city generally. For more on this see: Therese Lichtenstein, "The City in Twilight" in Lichtenstein, *Twilight Vision*, pp. 1-70.

[143] As mentioned, for more on this, see: Owens, "Photography En Abyme," p. 73-88; Krauss, "The Photographic Conditions of Surrealism," p. 3-34; Krauss adopts this Bretonian structure to the captions of images in: Rosalind Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1994).

encroaching logic of both "movement" and "event"[144]. Spatialising architectural drawing in the same way that the experiments of the historical avant-garde had, Tschumi's diagrams chart "movement" through the space, in each case mapping the major protagonists and the trajectories which ties them to the narrative. This sets up an architectural "framing" where a horizontal reading episodically narrates the event, while a vertical reading shows that exact moment, unfolded through the three modes of its composition. For Vidler, this "[forms] a visual field that at once zones activities and stories—the horizontal function—and explodes them by juxtaposition—the vertical implied connections."[145]

In this instance the photographs become the "reality fragments" that bind Tschumi's abstractions with the real world. The photographs chosen by Tschumi are heavily stylised but, like the intrusions into *Nadja*, serve to orient the narrative and provide a visual structure to the architectural script that is unfolding around it. In the later transcripts the images become increasingly cropped and torn. Less documentary in nature, the photos start to assume their own identities and the frame that contains them, as with the cropping of surrealist photography, begins to position the bodies and events in more deliberate and curated ways. The format engages the avant-garde blurring of medium that characterised Dada and surrealism and is embedded, in particular, in Breton's *Nadja*. Like the *Manhattan Transcripts*, *Nadja* contains the three primary modes of Tschumi's analysis, separated into distinct categories of representation: movement, space and event. The "movement" is narrated not by a moving camera, but by Breton's own literary wandering through the city in pursuit of Nadja.

Breton interweaves descriptions of the architecture with his own emotional journey and, when read closely, provides a geographic mapping of the city through his own emotional

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[144] Tschumi's thinking on this was advanced further in *Architecture In/Of Motion* where the fifth transcript was also published. See: Tschumi, *Architecture In/Of Motion*, p. 21; Tschumi's emphasis on events was also expanded in the 1994 and 2000 monographs entitled: Bernard Tschumi, *Event Cities* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1994); Bernard Tschumi, *Event Cities 2* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2000).

[145] Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, p. 105.

and psychological responses to its form.[146] The novel is a *by-product* of Breton's investigations, rather than their *source*. The mode of "space" is captured in Breton's novels through the series of images which, distinct from Breton's direct experience, are interleaved between the text. The third aspect that is documented in *Nadja* is the event itself, embodied in the textual "caption" that describes the photo and links it (through a page number), to the point in the text where the image and narrative collide. Through the use of these captions, *Nadja* contains a symbiosis between text, image and event where the independent media of novel and photograph are collided through montage.

Boiffard's documentary works chosen to illustrate *Nadja* manage to preserve the "crime scene" mood that Benjamin first diagnosed in relationship to the work of Atget and this forensic model of image-making.[147] There is a strong relationship to this mode of visual production from surrealism and the *Manhattan Transcripts,* which draw architectural evidence out of the still images. The mood of the images in, for instance, the first transcript is directly equivalent to the "crime scene" investigations of surrealism, but the representational logic is torn apart, no longer contained within the technical medium of photography but effectively and deliberately supplanted by architectural representation and the vectors of spatial diagrams. In the same passage from "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" Benjamin goes on to describe the importance of "captions" which, for Benjamin, act as "signposts"[148] leading the viewer to information and inbuilt interpretations. While this technique is exploited to great effect in *Nadja*, it was not new to the surrealists and had been drawn from the nineteenth century novels. Benjamin had written about the confluence of text, photograph and caption in his essay on surrealism,

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[146] On this, see: Tom McDonough, *"Delirious Paris: Mapping* as a Paranoiac-Critical Activity," *Grey Room* 19 (Spring 2005), pp. 6–21.

[147] See: Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1968), p. 226; this section is quoted in the previous chapter on "Photography".

[148] Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," p. 226.

where he refers to *Nadja* widely.[149] Drawing attention to Breton's passage on the Princess Café, Benjamin argues that

> [p]hotography intervenes in a very strange way. It makes the streets, gates, squares of the city into illustrations of a trashy novel, draws off the banal obviousness of this ancient architecture to inject it with the most pristine intensity toward the events described, to which, as in old chambermaids' books, word-to-word quotations with page numbers refer. And all the parts of Paris that appear here are places where what is between these people turns like a revolving door.[150]

This important passage draws together the significance of the "intervening" photographs in Breton's work which, as well as creating a fragmented visual record for the novel, are equally engaged in the mapping of places through the events of the narrative. Benjamin sees the role of the caption as transformative, transplanting the reproductive mechanisms of the photograph in order to reframe its meaning and consequence. In the example of photography, Benjamin writes "[w]hat we require of the photographer is the ability to give [their] picture the caption that wrenches it from modish commerce and gives it a revolutionary and useful value."[151] Warning against the dangers of supplying "a productive apparatus without changing it," for Benjamin, it was through the use of the caption that the medium of photography was transformed, and potentially politicised.[152] This is quite different to the "trashy" novels that Benjamin compares it to, where the images merely serve to reinforce the embedded meanings raised in the text. In "Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction" Benjamin saw an increasingly invasive mode of representation that minimised the elements of interpretation and *forced* the "viewer" to connect information in a very structured and linear way. Film was the most invasive of these techniques, where the narrative of images provided only a singular mode of interpretation. The same was true in the "signpost" captions that explained photographs. The caption, in this sense, serves to fix meaning, in a manner similar to film, where linear transactions

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[149] Walter Benjamin, "Surrealism: The Last Snapshot of the European Intelligentsia," in Benjamin, *Reflections*, p. 183.

[150] Benjamin, "Surrealism," p. 183.

[151] Benjamin, "Author as Producer," p. 230.

[152] Benjamin, "Author as Producer," p. 230.

replace interpretive ones. For Benjamin the technique had become mainstream through the techniques of reproduction that accompanied the evolution of photography. Benjamin writes

> [f]or the first time, captions have become obligatory. And it is clear that they have an altogether different character than the title of a painting. The directives which the captions give to those looking at pictures in illustrated magazines soon become even more explicit and more imperative in the film where the meaning of each single picture appears to be prescribed by the sequence of all preceding ones.[153]

In this way, in the popular media at least, *reception* was standardised through this conventional relationship between image and caption. However in *Nadja*, and other surrealist works, the relationship between image and caption was radicalised. The captions in Breton's work, rather than adding meaning or explaining content, were fragmentary links to the (already fragmentary) text "intervening" in Benjamin's sense, to disrupt the formation of an organic whole.[154] For Adorno, the fragmentation of meaning through montage is no longer implying a synthesis but a "negation of synthesis" which, in the avant-garde, is deployed as a deliberate compositional principle.[155] For Bürger, building upon this passage, this negation of synthesis is not only a negation of organic unity, but a "withholding of meaning" that, combined with the automatic, fragmentary narratives of the novel, requires the reader to connect the dislocated signs rather than, in the metaphor of Benjamin, follow the "signposts" to an organic whole. Bürger refers to "the influence of the technique of montage" in *Nadja* and argues that "at the surface level, automatic texts are characterised by a destruction of coherence."[156] However, for Bürger, there is a structure to surrealist fiction that, like montage, reconfigures the fragments into a whole, but one where the existence of each of the fragments is no longer essential. This is the antithesis of the organic work of art and a definition of the "avant-gardiste work of art" that Bürger is preoccupied with. Referring to *Nadja*, Bürger writes,

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[153] Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", p. 226.

[154] This technique is adopted in the stylistic layering of images, fragments and text in: Rosalind Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*.

[155] Adorno, *Aesthetic Theory*, p. 203.

[156] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 79.

> [w]here it is true that they lack the kind of narrative coherence where the last incident logically presupposes all preceding ones, there is nonetheless a connection of a different kind between events: they all follow the identical structural pattern. Formulated in the concepts of structuralism, this means that the nexus is paradigmatic not syntagmatic. Whereas the syntagmatic pattern, the phrase, is characterised by the fact that, whatever its length, the end is always reached, the sequence is, in principle, without one. This important difference also entails two differing modes of reception.[157]

Investigating the reception of organic/nonorganic works, Bürger sees a structure for the conception and reception of fragments that is consistent in avant-garde practice across a range of mediums. In fact, taking this further, Bürger argues that each of these "fragments" is independent—the images, the captions and the text—and that none are essential for the status of the work of art. In Bürger's terms the "parts emancipate themselves from a subordinate whole" ensuring that "they are no longer its essential elements"[158]. At the heart of his critique of organic art (where all elements are directed towards a unitary whole) Bürger argues that there is an inbuilt structure that is applied to the organisation of fragments in the avant-gardiste work of art and that this means that extra fragments can be added or subtracted without effecting the overall meaning or implication of the work. Bürger uses *Nadja* as the archetypal form of this.[159] Bürger writes

> [i]n an automatic text that strings images together, some could be missing yet the text would not be significantly affected. The same is true of the events reported in *Nadja*. New events of the same type could be added or some of those present could be omitted and neither additions or omissions would make a significant difference. A change in their order is also conceivable. What is decisive are not the events in their distinctiveness but the construction principle that underlies the sequence of events.[160]

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[157] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 79.

[158] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 79.

[159] Bürger enlarges his theory of surrealist fiction significantly in a subsequent essay entitled "To think Madness: The Postmodern Novel, Surrealism and Hegel." See: Peter Bürger, *The Thinking of the Master: Bataille between Hegel and Surrealism*, trans. Richard Block (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 2002), pp. 8-23. Bürger argues that Nadja is an interpretation and reconfiguration of *reality* through a network of signs conditioned by "expectation" rather than "fulfilment" (pp. 13-14).

[160] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 80.

Bürger's reading of *Nadja* provides a direct comparison with the techniques of *Manhattan Transcripts* that, as well as embodying a number of techniques of the historical avant-garde, takes this fragmentation a step further. Still bound by a "construction principle", the transcripts of Tschumi are instrumental in developing an architecture for the sequencing of fragments, preserving the nonorganic nature of the work of art, but at the same time, creating a visual language through which narrative can be communicated. In this sense, the transcripts can be seen as an evolution of the techniques of automatic writing, developing a system that can embody the fragmentation of medium as well as the infinite interchangeability that Bürger alludes to as a primary strategy of the nonorganic work of art.

The narrative sequence, that is central to the writing of both Benjamin and Bürger, is an important component of this. As the last incident necessarily presupposes all preceding ones, Benjamin criticises film—"the meaning of each single picture appears to be prescribed by the sequence of all preceding ones"[161]— on the same grounds that Bürger praises the *avant-gardiste* automatic text—which lacks the kind of progressive narrative where the last incident exists in relationship to the events either side of it. Consider then, the writing of Vidler, who, in his discussion of the transcripts, asserts that "the sequences of the *Manhattan Transcripts* [become] spatial domains each with repercussions on the next, horizontally and vertically."[162] For Vidler, the transcripts approximate a kind of "static animation", drawn out into an architectural and spatial landscape and "implying the movement of the film, as if emulating the nineteenth-century flicker books"[163].

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[161] Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction", p. 226.

[162] Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, p. 106.

[163] Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, p. 106. This was also a characteristic of Richter's films, which drew inspiration from Japanese scrolls in order to spatialise the act of drawing. This was covered in more detail in the previous chapter on "Collage and Montage."

Again, reinforcing the historical and stylistic precedent for Tschumi's project, Vidler describes the tactics of Tschumi in the context of Eisenstein's use of montage where each image is selected to contradict rather than synthesise with the previous.[164] Vidler writes:

> Tschumi does not leave these codes untouched; in bringing them together and using them to speak of a dismantled architecture, he develops a convention that is plural but not eclectic; one code is always used to put another into play […] and the whole is often […] turned at ninety degrees. These scenes are in turn transformed by their refusal to be framed, in the same way that the "shot" of Eisenstein, carefully prepared in order to montage with the next, is already subverted and intersected with the effects of such montage.[165]

However Vidler's argument, which sees the transcript as a hybrid of the spaces of both architecture and film, can be taken further through Bürger's critique. While Vidler, suggests that the transcripts "do not, in themselves, […] imply an architecture,"[166] they are instrumental in developing the "architecture" for the fragmentary forms of narrative that are distilled from surrealism. While they can equally productively be read as a kind of "spatial text", the transcripts should be read as an architecture of *reception,* creating a structural framework for the competing and discordant fragments of reality that can be reconfigured for conception. In this sense, the transcripts constitute a representational architecture in the same way that Duchamp's *Large Glass* serves to separate narrative across an architectural and spatial field, developing a new framework through which ideas are to be received and acted upon. Tschumi saw in Duchamp's *Large Glass* a breakdown of the purely visual (or retinal) function of art and the integration of the conceptual.[167] Tschumi links his writing on Duchamp to his critique of the surrealist fetishisation of the architectural object, which reduced architectural experience to a visual appreciation of fixed

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[164] Tschumi discusses Eisenstein's use of montage without "semantic intention" in regard to the *Parc de le Villette* project in: Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 185.

[165] Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, pp. 105-6.

[166] Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, p. 106.

[167] Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 112.

symbolism.[168] Describing the *Large Glass* as a "spatial filter", Tschumi places heavy emphasis on the interaction between the screen, the space that encloses it and, equally as important, Duchamp's "box" which contains the fragmentary notes that allow it to be decoded. The integration of these elements allows a kind of architectural "alchemy" ensuring a model of intellectual engagement, rather than purely visual intoxication. While Tschumi doesn't acknowledge the connection, the glass effectively sets up a screen through which the narrative of the bride and the bachelor is organised in space. This diagram preserves the mechanics of space, movement and event that effectively structured Tschumi's *Manhattan Transcripts* and the representational boundaries that they sought to overcome. Similarly the "overlapping" of media—architectural space; two-dimensional screen; fragmentary texts and drawings—that are central to both works, while independent of each other, allow them to be read as a "framework" or "architecture" for *reception*.

That Tschumi was aware of the spatial implications of the *Manhattan Transcripts* is clear. In the "Foreword" he had described the transcripts as part of a spatial volume,[169] tied to an architectural experience. Tschumi describes how:

> [t]he *Manhattan Transcripts* were first conceived in the context of live spaces—successive paper spaces (on a wall) that defined a real space (in a room). But their sequential nature still easily suggested a book. As in those film books in which the illustrations are enlargements of frames from the film, the Transcripts consist of frame-by-frame descriptions of an architectural inquest. By no means do they comprise a definitive statement; they are a tool-in-the-making, a work-in-progress.[170]

Following Bürger, the significance of the transcripts (as with the *Large Glass*) is not in the process of conception or the narratives that they depict, but in the framework that enables

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[168] For Tschumi, Duchamp had asked the simple question "was architecture the junction of two things, the retinal and the conceptual, and, within this argument, was architecture erotic?" Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 115.

[169] Tschumi makes clear the distinction between architecture and the printed work in: Tschumi, *Manhattan Transcripts*, p. 6.

[170] Tschumi, *Manhattan Transcripts*, p. 6.

architecture to be translated into non-architectural realms.[171] This requires not only a broader armoury of reception but opens out onto a broader audience in general, dismantling the boundaries of the work of architecture, but maintaining the inherent heterogeneity of the components. Within this architecture, the fragments of space, movement and event are preserved at the same time as they are conflated. Any individual part can be removed without effecting the meaning or intention of the whole but they are tied in an unusual and highly unstable network of relationships.

While *Nadja* uses text to structure the relationship between images and events, Tschumi develops an architecture that preserves the "reality fragments" that *Nadja* is compiled from. This architecture displaces the origins and destinations of these fragments, tearing them from any organic language of meaning and truncating language in a way that disrupts narrative and the structural principles that are inherent to literature. This allows the characteristics that are specific to the medium of architecture—organisation, space, structure—to supplement those of the text, reconfiguring the tactics of the 1920s in an entirely disfigured contextual environment. There is no "tradition" that the transcripts are constructed from but, rather, objectives and contexts that they operate against.

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If the *Manhattan Transcripts* are successful in challenging the frameworks of architecture's reception, then *Parc de la Villette*, can be read as a failure, narrowly reinforcing the expectations and categories of the "work of architecture". Overly concerned with the practices of conception, the modes of reception, despite Tschumi's own intentions, remain highly conventional and historical.

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[171] Tschumi discussed his use of framing in regard to *Manhattan Transcripts* arguing that "[f]rames are both the *framing device*—conforming, regular, solid—and the *framed material*—questioning, distorting and displacing. Occasionally the framing device can itself become the object of distortions and the framed material be conformist and orderly." Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 167, italics in original.

While drawn from a similar conceptual framework[172], the *Parc de la Villette* proposal, is not representative of a freeing of architecture from the modes of reception, but instead centralises the author/artist in the process and, in a number of ways, reinforces the modes of production that it openly sets out to oppose. Before undertaking a more detailed critique of the *Parc de la Villette* project, it is worth returning, momentarily to Tschumi's critique in "Architecture and its Double". In the essay Tschumi argued consistently that surrealism had failed to recognise the potential of architecture as a result of their fascination with objects that ossified architectural form and prevented access to real architectural experience. This was subverted in *Manhattan Transcripts*, where events and movement were used to give form to spaces, placing architecture in the role of witness rather than visual object. This chapter will conclude with a critique of Tschumi's *Parc de la Villette* project, which finds an overemphasis on the objectification of architecture and a fetishisation of architectural form.

It was in "Architecture and its Double" that Tschumi first demonstrated the important polarities that would structure his architectural theory and, ultimately, architectural practice, pointing to the spatial entities of the labyrinth and the pyramid (the experience and the object).[173] Throughout the essays written from 1975 until 1983 Tschumi argued consistently for two clear models of architectural experience: the intellectual, abstract and geometrical logic of architectural form and system (the pyramid, the object) and the human, sensual experience of the material space of architecture (the labyrinthine, the subject). Seen from the point of view of the architectural object and the experiential subject, these two independent poles framed architecture: their junction becoming, in his words, "the 'erotic' meeting place between concept and experience."[174]

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[172] Tschumi argues outlines the conceptual framework in the essay "Madness and Combinative" in: Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, pp. 172-189.

[173] While there is a thematic rhyming with Tafuri, Tschumi's concerns here are primarily related to Bataille's notion of the *formless*, and his writing on the labyrinth (1936). See: Georges Bataille, "The Labyrinth," in Georges Bataille, *Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939*, trans. Alan Stoekl, (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1985), pp. 171.

[174] Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 114.

Nowhere is this theoretical logic more clearly articulated, in physical terms, than in *Parc de la Villette*, where the abstract system of the architectural grid is used to anchor the "follies": in their nature functionless moments of architectural "pleasure"[175]. Tschumi's understanding of pleasure was heavily derived from Roland Barthes's *The Pleasure of the Text* where, by displacing the written word, Tschumi argued that architectural space could trigger the momentary catharsis (*jouissance*) when the sensual experience of space and the intellectual abstraction embedded in its conceptualisation compliment each other. This is a theme that Vidler picks up on in his analysis, linking Tschumi's work with a concept of the para-architecture, as a rhyming with Krauss's writing on the paraliterary.[176]

For Vidler, Tschumi's architecture is a search for pleasure in the *reading* of architecture, rather than the study of its formalistic properties. Key themes at work in *Parc de la Villette* are the collapse of programme, the dismantling of organic unity as a generator of architecture, the separation of form from programme and the fragmentation and disjunction of architecture generally. Tschumi makes it clear that the nodes mark "anchoring" points where the sensual experience of architecture is "arrested". At the same time they suggest, in a Freudian sense, a fetishisation of the object where a focus on the part (the folly) displaces, or dismantles an understanding of the whole, represented through an abstract and infinite system of repetition. It is this reading, focussing on the implicated "psycho-sexual" dimensions of *Parc de la Villette*, that opens up a broader field of investigation into the darker aspects of surrealism, structuring its interpretation in the last three decades and providing a particular resonance with Tschumi's work.

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[175] Tschumi argues that two other independent systems—the line and the surface—are also operating on the plan of La Villette, but they are lost in the overwhelming power of the infinite grid. The most detailed description of this, equating the project conception with that of film, is: Bernard Tschumi, "Abstract Mediation and Strategy," in Bernard Tschumi, *Cinégramme Folie: Le Parc de la Villette* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1987); published in a different form in: Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, pp. 190-205.

[176] Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, p. 107; Vidler is referencing Krauss's essay: Rosalind Krauss, "Poststructuralism and the Paraliterary," *October* 13 (Summer, 1980), pp. 36-40; This essay is reproduced in; Rosalind Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1986), pp. 291-296; Jameson adopts the term "paraliterature" in: Frederick Jameson, "Postmodernism or the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism," *New Left Review* 146 (1984), pp. 53-92.

In "Architecture and its Double" Tschumi had presciently attributed great influence to Georges Bataille in connecting architecture and surrealism, demonstrating an affiliation with the materialism that is embodied in Bataille's position. Tschumi's discovery of Bataille's ideas had come through the work of Denis Hollier, which he cites as a formative influence.[177] This was to become a defining characteristic of his thinking on architecture, which, like Bataille, challenged the perceived hypocrisy of architectural practice and its moral inoculation from the forces of life.[178] Echoing Bataille, Tschumi argued that,

> [a]lthough society secretly delights in crime, excesses and violated prohibitions of all sorts, there seems to be a certain puritanism among architectural theorists. They easily argue about rules, but rarely debate their transgression.[179]

Tschumi's affiliation with the work of Bataille[180] predates, by nearly two decades, the polemical re-readings of the surrealist movement that had taken place in the 1990s, particularly in the work of Hal Foster. In *Compulsive Beauty*, Foster had argued that Breton's focus on a romanticised model of love had limited the discourse of surrealism to a very narrow "libidinal" reading of Freud.[181] By working with the later texts of Freud (mostly of which align with the creative period of Dada and surrealism) Foster radically

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[177] Hollier had gravitated towards the "incarceral" aspects of architecture in the 1970s, reading Bataille in a skewed architectural context and situating the prison as the primal origin of architectural practice. He contrasts Bataille's "convex, frontal, extrovert" architecture with the "insinuating concavity" of Foucault; See: Denis Hollier, *Against Architecture: The Writings of Georges Bataille,* trans. Betsy Wing (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1989), pp. 3-13. Others have challenged the over-emphasis that Hollier's reading of Bataille places on architecture. See, for instance: Michael Richardson, *Bataille* (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 13.

[178] Bataille's friend Michael Leiris described his editorial approach to *Documents* as a "war machine against received ideas." See: Michael Leiris, "De Bataille l'impossible," *Critique* 195-196 (1963), p. 689 [originally published in *Documents*]. Translated and quoted in: Dawn Ades and Fiona Bradley, "Introduction," in Ades and Baker, ed., *Undercover Surrealism*, p. 3.

[179] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 66. In his passage on "Architecture and its Double" Tschumi had written "[j]ust as Bataille believed that architecture was a screening device for crime and sensuality, so too contemporary architectural trends have obscured—and continue to obscure—the existence of a body of work that contradicts the accepted dogmas of the period." See: Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 116.

[180] This influence is felt most strongly in: *Bernard Tschumi*, "The Pleasure of Architecture," pp. 214-218; Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction,* pp. 81-98.

[181] Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1995), pp. xxi.

repositioned surrealist imagery within the darker contexts of Bataille's thought. With a focus in particular on Freud's (1920) *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*[182], Foster shows how psychoanalysis in the period established the "death instinct", as an oppositional category to the libidinal drives and used this to explain certain sado-masochistic tendencies that hitherto could not be accommodated in psychoanalytical theory. In Foster's reading, these darker aspects had been suppressed or marginalised in art history, in favour of the more conventional romantic themes. For Foster, it was the problematic darkness and sadism expressed through the work of figures like Hans Bellmer, that was the primary motivating force for surrealism and symptomatic of a previously undiagnosed "masculinity in crisis" that structured avant-garde activity in the period between the wars.

That Tschumi's theory of architecture predates the influential reading of Foster is significant.[183] Tschumi's writing drew from this discursive mode of surrealism and, in particular, the relationship between pleasure and violence. Writing in his 1979 essay "The Pleasure of Architecture" Tschumi argued that, in architecture, "there is no simple bondage technique: the more numerous and sophisticated the restraints, the greater the pleasure."[184] In his writing on Bataille in "Architecture and its Double" Tschumi was drawn to the "dialectic of sex and horror" that underpinned Bataille's thinking. Tschumi writes

> Bataille's eroticism was dark, obsessive and underground, and reeked of evil and perversion. It refused all optimism, and demanded immediacy. It opposed taboos in order to transgress them better.[185]

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[182] See: Sigmund Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, trans. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1950).

[183] Hollier's work was not translated until 1989 (fifteen years after the original) meaning that Tschumi's essay and architectural interpretation of Bataille's work is one of the first critical accounts in English. For Tschumi, the connection with both Hollier and Bataille was later made explicit through the Parc de la Villette scheme, which was located on the site of a former abattoir, a theme in Bataille's writing. See: Denis Hollier, "Bloody Sundays," trans. Betsy Wing, *Representations* 28 (Fall, 1989), p. 79; published as the introduction to the English translation of: Hollier, *Against Architecture*, pp. xi.

[184] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 88.

[185] Bernard Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 115.

Tschumi' architectural theory was engaged with the writing of Bataille, skewing it towards architectural experience and the understanding that the transgression of limits was inherently erotic.[186] Reinforcing the logic of Duchamp's *Large Glass* that was successfully integrated in the *Manhattan Transcripts*, Tschumi argued that "[n]either space nor concepts alone are erotic but the junction between the two is."[187] Following this logic, Tschumi's reading of Bataille concludes that architecture was inherently erotic as "it stood on the border that separates concept and experience?"[188] Central to Tschumi's reading of Bataille is the way that power and architecture are implicated and, by consequence, transgression becomes the solitary means of escape.

Hollier, reading Bataille's work in his groundbreaking 1974 study *Against Architecture*, saw his work in the context of a continual struggle against architecture.[189] Following his early, and personal account of "Notre Dame Cathedral", Bataille's work was increasingly *against* the organising and authoritarian characteristics of architecture, which he saw as linked to overwriting strategies of control. Bataille opposed the certainties of architecture with his "economy" of consumption where waste, sacrifice and transgression counterbalanced the continual machinery of production. Within this, language became an inescapable internalised labyrinth, which humans inherited but were helpless to escape.

Amongst the entries that Bataille personally compiled in the 1930s for the "Critical Dictionary" (later to become the *Encyclopedie Acephale*) were two separate texts for "architecture" and "space". Sexuality is implicit in Bataille's definitions of both terms. The entry on "architecture", often quoted, is directly connected with power and the violation of space, citing the razing of the Bastille and the hidden "power" that monuments exert over a general population. Bataille writes

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[186] The ancestry of these ideas are explained in the concluding paragraph on Bataille in: Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 115.

[187] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 89.

[188] Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," p. 115. This can be compared with his summation of Duchamp's work as "the "erotic" meeting place between concept and experience" (p.114).

[189] For a critique of this reading, see: Richardson, *Bataille*, pp. 12-14.

> [i]t is obvious, actually, that monuments inspire socially acceptable behaviour, and often a very real fear. The storming of the Bastille is symbolic of this state of affairs: it is difficult to explain this impulse of the mob other than by the animosity the people hold against the monuments which are their true masters.[190]

Alternatively, Bataille's entry on "space" is illustrated with a photo, taken from underneath, of the castle where the Marquis de Sade was imprisoned. Bataille urges "lock the professors up in prison to teach them what space is."[191] The writings of the Marquis de Sade, which framed many of the creative ideals of the surrealist movement and in particular Bataille,[192] embodied the uneasy and misunderstood collision that connects architectural space and sexual perversion.[193] De Sade spent the majority of his life in prison[194] and had been incarcerated for a period in the Bastille, writing a portion of *120 Days of Sodom* from there.[195] Architectural space is an undercurrent in Sade's writing and

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[190] Georges Bataille, *Encyclopaedia Acephalica: Critical Dictionary and Related Texts,* trans. Iain White (London: Atlas Press, 1995), p. 77.

[191] Bataille, *Encyclopaedia Acephalica,* p. 77. The counterpoint to this image, was the image of a large fish devouring a small one, that Bataille argued was representative of his notion of the formless. Originally published in: *Documents* **1** (1930), p. 41. See also: Ades and Bradley, *Undercover Surrealism*, pp. 92-93.

[192] The most direct expression of Bataille's affiliation with Sade was in the open letter that he wrote to "his current comrades" in the surrealist movement, written in 1930. See: Georges Bataille, "The Use-Value of D. A. F. d Sade (An Open Letter to Current Comrades)," trans. Alan Stoekl in Bataille, *Visions of Excess*, pp. 91-102; Bataille had also written of "Sade's terrible universe" in the preface to Madame Edwarda; see: Georges Bataille, "Madame Edwarda," in Fred Botting and Scott Wilson (ed), *The Bataille Reader* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), p. 227; see also the chapters on "De Sade's Sovereign Man" and "De Sade and the Normal Man" in: Georges Bataille, *Eroticism*, trans. Mary Dalwood (London: Penguin, 2001), pp. 164-176, pp. 177-196 [1957].

[193] Klossowski argues that Sade's literary style is attuned to the production of a new denaturalised modern subject. This corresponds, to some extent, to the reading of surrealism presented by Hal Foster in *Prosthetic Gods*. See: Pierre Klossowski, "Nature as Destructive Principle," in Marquis de Sade, *120 Days of Sodom* (London: Arrow, 1990), pp. 65-86; Hal Foster, *Prosthetic Gods,* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004), pp. ix-xv.

[194] On this experience, with extended reflections on architecture, see: Marquis de Sade, *Letters from Prison*, trans. Richard Seaver (New York: Arcade, 1997).

[195] For autobiographical details of Sade growing up, where he "was nothing of a revolutionary nor even a rebel" and was "quite prepared to accept society as it is" (p.7) see: Simone de Beauvoir, "Must We Burn Sade?" in Sade, *120 Days of Sodom*, pp. 3-64.

is explicitly described in a number of passages in Sade's work.[196] Vidler has demonstrated Sade's personal interest in prisons, hospitals and asylums as well as the continual interplay between incarceration and liberty.[197] The relationship between "sexual freedom" and the threat of persecution remained explicit, especially in the period of and after the revolution. Linked by Manfredo Tafuri to the internalised spatial experiments of Piranesi as an adjunct and flawed strategy of the avant-garde,[198] Sade became a figure of ineffectual protest, marginalised and minimalised through an internalisation of the political process and, rather than transgressing boundaries, merely reinforced them. Writing in a similar timeframe, Tschumi had detected a Sadean obsessiveness in Piranesi's writing, whereby

> [t]he classical vocabulary of architecture is Piranesi's chosen form of bondage. Treating classical elements as fragmented and decaying symbols, Piranesi's architecture battled against itself, in that the obsessive rationality of building types was "sadistically" carried to the extremes of irrationality.[199]

Tschumi's reading of the work of Sade places an emphasis on the interchangeablility of roles and the fluid relationship between subject and object as well as the importance of the fragment.[200] Reading the literary process of Sade as a juxtaposition of "heterogeneous fragments"[201], Tschumi argues that the freeing of language from the fixed structures of

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[196] For an example, see Sade, *120 Days of Sodom*, p. 237; a more detailed investigation is available in the section on "asylums of libertinage" in: Anthony Vidler, *The Writing of the Walls: Architectural Theory in the Late Enlightenment* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1986), pp.103-124.

[197] See: Vidler, *The Writing of the Walls*, pp.104-105. Vidler makes a connection between Jeremy Bentham's Panopticon (c. 1790) and Sade's proposals for Sainte-Marie-des-Bois (the site of the activities in Justine), the Chateau de Silling (described in 120 Days of Sodom) and the *Institution for Debauchery* (1805). All hinge on structures of power and transgression. See Vidler's diagrams for each (between pp. 120-121).

[198] See: Manfredo Tafuri. "*L'Architecture dans le Boudoir*: The language of Criticism and the Criticism of Language," trans. Victor Caliandro, *Oppositions* **3** (May, 1974), pp. 37-67.

[199] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 89.

[200] As with Tschumi's writing on pleasure, he is indebted in this instance to the work of Roland Barthes, and especially his extended essay on Sade, published in English for the first time in 1976, as Tschumi was beginning the *Manhattan Transcripts*. See: Roland Barthes, *Sade/Fourier/Loyola*, trans. Richard Miller (New York: Farrar Strauss Giroux, 1997). Tschumi acknowledges the debt in: Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 182; see also: Hill, *Actions of Architecture,* p. 69-70.

[201] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 183.

organisation is liberating and transgressive, with implications and lessons for the production of architecture.[202] As Tschumi writes,

> [i]n Sade, all functions are interchangeable; there are only classes of actions as opposed to groups of individuals. The subject of an action can also be turned into its object; it can also be a libertine, a victim, a helper, a spouse. The erotic code takes advantage of the logic of language and its varied permutations.[203]

There is a resonance in Tschumi's theorisation of Sade with the thinking of Bürger, who also employed Sade as a model of fragmentation and shock. Bürger had written an essay in the early 1990s entitled "Morality and Society in Diderot and de Sade" where he argued for a confluence between the organising strategies of these two fundamentally incompatible figures.[204] For Bürger, the "shock" in Sade's work doesn't come from the inherent perversion but from the explicit nature of the description that the characters provide.[205] Bürger's conclusion is that the scene (description) and the argument (the articulation and transgression of sexual taboos) work in a discursive way and it is only through the confluence of the two that Sade's intentions can be understood.[206] This pairing of strategies—architectural context with transgressive event—is directly related to Tschumi's approach and implicates architecture in the systems of power that unfold from

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[202] On this, see: Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 90.

[203] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 182.

[204] Indebted to Habermas's model of the emancipatory power of reason, Bürger acknowledges the probable contradictions in the opening paragraphs of the section on Sade, where he contends that "nothing would seem more confusing" (p.84). See: Peter Bürger, "Morality and Society in Diderot and de Sade," in Peter Bürger, *The Decline of Modernism* (University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), pp. 70-94.

[205] A similar argument is pursued in relationship to the work of Bataille in: Susan Sontag, "The Pornographic Imagination," in Georges Bataille [Lord Auch], *The Story of the Eye,* trans. Joachim Neugroschal (London: Penguin, 1982), pp. 83-118 [1928]. Drawing from surrealism, Sontag argues that pornography is the antithesis of fantasy.

[206] See: Peter Bürger, "Morality and Society in Diderot and de Sade," p. 89.

the discursive and perverted frameworks from which Sade launches his model of literary transgression.[207]

There is no doubt that Benjamin's theory of allegory (central to Bürger's understanding of the avant-garde) identifies a relationship of power, where the artist or architect imbues the selected and torn fragments of reality, with a new, constructed, but highly subjective meaning. For Bürger, the solitary motivation for the development of the radical techniques of Dada was the collapse of the autonomy of art, so that, through the inclusion of "reality" in the two-dimensional picture plane, the art object lost its institutionalised status and was set free.[208] In Heartfield's montages, the political message is clear. The critique that Bürger mounts against the neo-avant-garde is that it fails to reconfigure these fragments in a new language of critique, instead resorting to the existing language of capitalism and, in the process, marginalising art to the status of autonomy once again. Buchloh criticised Bürger for failing to consider the tactics of conceptual art that took, as their point of departure, the institutionalisation of art and its inherent autonomy.[209] Bürger's oversight not withstanding, the assumption that art is actively involved in the destruction of its own autonomous status, as its solitary purpose, is shortsighted and symptomatic of the proselytising gaze with which Bürger viewed the historical avant-garde. The historical avant-garde, and Dada and surrealism in particular, rather than rejecting the art-object, set up an entire language and power structure of objects from the torn fragments of society that, while initially geared towards shock was ultimately equally prone to repetition and commodification. However, if Bürger is hesitant to acknowledge this, Benjamin was certainly not.

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[207] Bürger is heavily indebted, on this front, to the reading of Adorno and Horkheimer, presented in: Adorno and Horkheimer, *Dialectic of the Enlightenment*, trans. John Cumming (New York: Continuum, 1972), pp. 85-93; p. 117-118 [orig. 1947]. In relationship to the literary structure detected by Bürger, see also: Simone de Beauvoir, "Must We Burn Sade?" pp. 33-40.

[208] Evidence for this can be found in Heartfield's work, which was produced for publication and, in cases where it was exhibited in a gallery, the page of the newspaper where it was originally published was used to demonstrate its intention as a non-institutionalised work. See: Hill, *Actions of Architecture*, p. 95

[209] See: Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, *Neo-Avantgarde and Culture Industry: Essays on European and American Art from 1955 to 1975* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2003), p. xxiv.

One section that Bürger doesn't refer to in his appropriation of Benjamin's theory of allegory is the brief passage on the emblematist and, equally as intriguing, the sadist. Both of these figures are central to the broader issues of surrealism and Tschumi's relationship to it. Benjamin is conscious of the relationship that exists between fragment and allegorist and the fetishistic nature through which this selective tearing tends to privilege certain "fragments" and render them suitable for appropriation. For Benjamin, the relationship between the allegorist and the object equates to a kind of sadism, geared towards the economies of desire and consumption which structure it. Benjamin writes

> [i]t may not accord with the authority of nature; but the voluptuousness with which significance rules, like a stern sultan in the harem of objects, is without equal in giving expression to nature. It is indeed characteristic of the sadist that he humiliates his object and then—or thereby—satisfies it. And that is what the allegorist does in this age drunk with both acts of cruelty both lived and imagined.[210]

Benjamin, in this passage, draws attention to the nineteenth century "emblematist" who structured the relationship between images and texts, initiating a critical mode of interpretation and reception. Benjamin's discussion of the "emblemist", coincidently, feeds directly into Dada and surrealism and, more importantly, its application in Tschumi's work. Benjamin's essay on surrealism highlights the way that images act as an intervention, disrupting the flow of narrative and stripping the text of any verifiable coherence. Bataille's photograph of Sade's castle is telling in this sense. Represented as an object devoid of architectural articulation, it is the event of inhabitation and the cruelty of its inhabitant that, not captured in the photograph, conditions the way that this fragment is *received*. Outside of the traditional organic histories that position architecture, Sade's castle is torn from the narrative of history and problematised by the pairing of both experience and event. It operates as an alternative trajectory in the history of architecture, where the actual form is displaced, by the horror that it houses. Benjamin had alluded to the method of sadism as a mechanical dismantling of the organic whole, displaced into the mechanical parts of which none is viewed in relationship to its neighbour. In *Passagenwerk*, Benjamin wrote

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[210] Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, p. 176.

> [e]xposure of the mechanistic aspects of the organism is a persistent tendency of the sadist. One can say that the sadist sets out to substitute for the human organism the image of machinery.[211]

It is easy to find in this description the broader themes of Foster's argument; in the aftermath of the First World War there is a fragmentation of the male body and an "armouring of the ego" where the body merges with the strategies of prosthetics in order to supplement its deficiencies.[212] This fragmentation of the body is explicit in the work of Hans Bellmer, where the themes of bondage and architecture are literally deconstructed.[213] Bellmer, as well as illustrating Bataille's pornographic novel *Story of the Eye*,[214] had also produced a frontispiece for Sade's *Justine*[215]. In his *Course in General Linguistics*, Ferdinand de Saussure had talked of the "bond" that connects the "signifier" and the "signified" and necessitated our subservience to language and our inability to transform it. Saussure writes "the community, as much as the individual, is *bound* to its

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[211] Walter Benjamin, *Passagenwerk* quoted in: Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty*, p. 115.

[212] Foster, *Prosthetic Gods*, p. xi.

[213] Krauss referred to Bellmer's work as the projection of a "dream-space" acting out fantasies of "construction *as* dismemberment". See: Rosalind Krauss, "Corpus Delicti," *October* 33 (Summer, 1985): p. 62, italics in original. For connections between architecture and Bellmer: see: Therese Lichtenstein, *Behind Closed Doors: The Art of Hans Bellmer* (Berkeley: The University of California, 2001), pp. 39-44. Sue Taylor has argued that, in Bellmer's engravings, the attempt to establish an architectural context is "half-hearted" compared with the dolls that he produced. In regard to his etchings to illustrate Sade's works Taylor argues that "Bellmer is nowhere concerned with creating a convincing interior space in which the events unfold" and that "his figures do not inhabit a three-dimensional world but tend to float, almost iconically against minimal backgrounds." The opposite is the case in Bellmer's installations where, as well as featuring architectural space heavily, figures are often entwined or impaled by architectural elements, such as balustrades of stairs. See: Sue Taylor, *Hans Bellmer: Anatomy of Anxiety* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2000), p. 137.

[214] These were completed in 1944. Andre Masson also produced a series of lithographs to illustrate Bataille's novel in 1928 which were originally published in *Documents* in the same year; See: William Jeffett, "Andre Masson," in Ades and Bradley, *Undercover Surrealism*, p. 118-127; For an analysis of Bellmer's illustrations, see: Carolyn J. Dean, "History, Pornography and the Social Body," in Jennifer Mundy (ed), *Surrealism: Desire Unbound* (New York: Princeton University Press, 2002), p. 229 (for reproductions see p. 233); Neil Cox, "Histoire de L'oeil," in Mundy (ed), *Surrealism*, p. 232.

[215] This is reproduced in Mundy (ed), *Surrealism*, p. 267; For an extended discussion of surrealist illustrations of Sade, see: Neil Cox, "Critique of Pure Desire, or when the Surrealists were Right," in Mundy (ed), *Surrealism*, pp. 245-273.

language."[216] Where deconstruction implied a grammatical bondage between language and meaning, its architectural incarnation attempted to either separate or dramatise the relationship between meaning and the architectural object. However, in Bellmer's work, this mechanistic deconstruction is symptomatic of a collapse of all meaning, as the fragments of architecture and the body are used dismantle any possible current or future organic totality.[217] The sadism of Bellmer, while not referenced at all in Tschumi's writing, is possibly the most significant incarnation of his theory of limits and, paraphrasing his writing on Piranesi already cited, implied an "architecture [battling] against itself" and "sadistically carried to the extremes of irrationality."[218] The critical recovery of a language of fragmentation and architecture, while embodied in Bellmer, extends through a range of surrealist practice and has been central to the writing of the Octoberist critics.[219]

It is this model of fragmentation, drawn to the surface in Benjamin and Bürger's writing, that is at the heart of Tschumi's critique of architecture and surrealism. Rather than appreciating the opportunity for architecture to engage with the economies of desire that construct space, Tschumi sees the Bretonian model of architectural form as one of superficial romanticism that is devoid of the underlying drives towards violence and destruction that are at the heart of psychoanalysis and human behaviour.

For Tschumi, the application of montage to architecture is not a romantic sojourn but a mechanistic one, where the "framing of space" is equally tied to a fragmentation of the body and its engagement with architectural space. Tschumi argues that the frame itself,

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[216] Ferdinand de Saussure, *Course in General Linguistics*, trans. Roy Harris (Chicago: Open Court, 1986).

[217] Foster, referencing Benjamin, argues that Bellmer's sadism is a reaction to the robotic totalitarianism of the Nazis; see: Foster, *Compulsive Beauty*, pp.114-122; see also: Hal Foster, "Violation and Veiling in Surrealist Photography: Woman as Fetish, as Shattered Object, as Phallus," in Mundy (ed), *Surrealism*, p.203-226. Hugnet, writing contemporaneously with Bellmer's work in the 1930s, sees the dolls as "steeped in an atmosphere of wonder." See: Georges Hugnet, "In the Light of Surrealism," trans. Margaret Scolari, *The Bulletin of the Museum of Modern Art* **4** 2/3 (Nov/Dec, 1936), p. 29.

[218] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 89.

[219] Both Foster and Krauss connect this with the photography of Tabard, Ubac and Boiffard and it is central to the critical repositioning of surrealism in the 1990s. See: Krauss, "Corpus Delicti," pp. 31-72; Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty*, pp. 101-122.

prefigured in montage, is itself a machine[220] capable of a sadistic "questioning, distorting and displacing."[221] In this sense, the implementation of montage is also the introduction of *shock*, as an unexplored component of architectural experience and its framing within the mechanics of representation. The transcripts preserve the labyrinthine characteristics of architecture, engaging the viewer in an intellectual, rather than retinal pursuit of meaning and freeing the fragments from the frames that structure them.[222] Whereas the photograph of the underside of Sade's castle can be integrated in Tschumi's representational system in *Manhattan Transcripts* as an event rather than an object, the fetishisation of follies at *Parc de la Villette* prevents deeper associations of narrative or interpretation to develop. The project focuses, in its entirety, on the "object" of the folly reconfiguring familiar forms which, while stripped of programme, are still susceptible to the conventional bourgeois (and capitalistic) programming of space that Tschumi radically sets out to destabilise. Nowhere is this more evident than in the series of seductive painted renderings that Tschumi used to describe the project in the final stages of the design process. In various representations the follies are shown figuratively torn and tortured into different contexts and blown apart to reveal their internal properties.[223] While traces of this stylistic "sadism" are abundant in Tschumi's work they remain works of architecture and conform to the model of representation and construction that accompanies this. Where the transcripts had provided an innovative representational architecture that, by necessity, altered the way that architecture was *received* by its audience, Tschumi's work at *Parc de le Villette* reinforced the traditional models of representation and the fascination with the object that Tschumi had previously criticised heavily in relationship to surrealism.

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[220] Tschumi writes that the frame is a way of "examining architecture 'frame-by-frame' as through a film-editing machine." Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 166.

[221] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, p. 166.

[222] Part of this framing was the displacement of architecture from the real world and onto the page, fragmented through the episodic reproduction of pages in a book. Corresponding to Benjamin's reading of baroque tragedy, Tschumi argues that: "[b]ooks of architecture, as opposed to books about architecture, developing their own existence an logic […and] inevitably their content is given rhythm by the turning of pages, by the time and motion this suggests." See: Tschumi, *Manhattan Transcripts*, p. 6

[223] High quality reproductions of these images can be found in: Tschumi, "Disjunctions," pp. 108-119.

Tschumi's follies maintain none of the characteristics of the labyrinthine "inner experience" and present themselves as miniature "pyramids", experienced as objects, from the outside and serving as aesthetic, rather than experiential, markers of experience. Tschumi had argued that the follies at *Parc de la Villette* were the points where experience was anchored to the ground,[224] linking the architectural object with the internal experience of it. While taken to extremes in the writing of both Sade and Bataille, the internalised nature of this dialogue failed to materialise in the *Parc de la Villette* scheme, reducing the experience of the park to a romanticised one, heavily skewed towards love and, for the most part, incompatible with the darker aspects of incarceration and constraint that Tschumi's theory aspires to. Unlike in the transcripts, where the individual was engaged in the construction of a new language of reception, the individual wandering the park was not completing an intellectual transaction by bridging the subjective and objective poles embedded in architectural experience. This wandering receptacle was now living a series of preconceived experiences (rather than transgressive ones), tied to historical projects in eighteenth-century romanticism and twentieth-century avant-gardism. When the red panels began to peel off in the late 1990s to reveal the rain-sodden insulation behind it was not evocative of the sensual architecture of decay that had inspired Tschumi in the 1970s, but of the casual indifference towards the architectural object that, after fifteen years of preserving its fragments, had suddenly found the accidental forum to express them. Embodying the violent fragmentation and collapse of medium that are central to Bürger's theory of avant-gardism, the *Manhattan Transcripts* conform to the allegorical disruptions and linguistic sadism that is an undercurrent in contemporary readings of Dada and surrealism and questions the limits of disciplinary engagement. It is precisely through the disavowal of architecture that the *Manhattan Transcripts* extends the boundaries of architecture and the tactics of its representation.

The park, in this sense, can be read within the broad trajectory of modernism reinforcing, rather than transgressing, the positivistic experience of architecture and is, in Tschumi's

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[224] For a psychoanalytical reading of this process of "anchoring" see: Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, pp. 176-180.

own words, engaged in the production of "autonomous objects"[225]. As Bürger demonstrates, it is only in negating the autonomous nature of artistic production that a sublation between art and life can be achieved. On the other hand, as an extension of avant-garde concerns, the transcripts are a negation of this modernist trajectory, denying any authoritative or organic meaning and recognising the limits of the autonomous object as a forum for advancing the disciplinary limits of architectural production. Writing in regard to these limits and acknowledging architecture as a "production" of them, Tschumi concluded that

> [p]roductions at the limit of literature, at the limit of music, at the limit of any discipline, often inform us about the state of that discipline, its paradoxes and its contradictions. Questioning limits is a means of determining the nature of discipline.[226]

When Breton, in the passage quoted at the beginning of this chapter,[227] described the safety blanket of "love" that lies "beneath all the windows that you may take a notion to jump out of" he was articulating a theme that runs through the history of architecture and surrealism. The perceived emphasis on romantic notions of the city and the splendour of Paris, undoubtedly a backdrop to the vast creative output of surrealism, is not, in its nature, central to the project of the avant-garde that Peter Bürger outlines. The themes that characterise the work of art are not the organic whole and a confluence with the backdrop (ie. the blanket) but a tearing away from this context and a radicalising of its representations.

This is far more in keeping with Breton's description of the "simplest" surrealist act as " dashing down the street, pistol in hand, and firing blindly, as fast as you can pull the trigger, into the crowd."[228] To some extent this was achieved in Breton's *Nadja,* where the fragments no longer constitute a narrative or description but a network of possible

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[225] Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction*, pp. 174.

[226] Tschumi, *Manhattan Transcripts*, p. xx.

[227] André Breton, "Soluble Fish," p. 109.

[228] André Breton, "Second Manifesto of Surrealism," p. 125.

interpretations that trespass across media and through time. In *Parc de la Villette*, the shots are structured, precise and overdetermined.

The novelty in Tschumi's *Manhattan Transcripts* was the preservation of the primary characteristics of architectural experience—space, event, movement—but without the requisite need for building. This, as demonstrated, enabled the development of new modes of architectural experience and, through necessity, a new architecture of *reception*. This non-literal architecture, like the architecture that structures Breton's use of text and narrative, is central to avant-garde practice and, through its migration into the field of architecture, an extension of the avant-gardiste work of art" and the primary motives that Bürger attaches to it. The *Parc de le Villette* project (despite sharing a theoretical ancestry with Russian Constructivism) lacks the necessary fragmentation that would constitute an avant-garde work or, for that matter, a language of avant-garde representation. Rather than creating a new framework for these fragments, the park develops a visual language that suppresses them, giving form, in Breton's sense, to the "blanket" (rather than the "window") that the assailant might choose to jump from. *Parc de la Villette* is not experiential, in the sense that Tschumi imagines it should be, or transgressive and as a result, surrenders its claims to radicality and the avant-garde that are so deliberately preserved in the posters and the transcripts. The follies of Tschumi remain firmly and definitively anchored to the field of objects (and the systems of autonomy) that they are intended to subvert. Remembering the image of Breton "holding in his left hand the key of the fields" it is worth returning to the two competing fields that structured Tschumi's architecture in this period: in *Parc de la Villette*, a field of fetishised objects and in the *Manhattan Transcripts* the visual and spatial labyrinths that dismantled the object and the conventions of reception that were attached to it.

Coop Himmelb(l)au

> It is no accident that both Tzara's instructions for the making of a Dadaist poem and Breton's for the writing of automatic texts have the character of recipes. This represents not only a polemical attack on the individual creativity of the artist; the recipe is to be taken quite literally as suggesting a possible activity on the part of the recipient. The automatic texts also should be read as guides to individual production. But such production is not to be understood as artistic production, but as part of a liberating life praxis. This is meant by Breton's demand that poetry be practiced. Beyond the coincidence of producer and recipient that this demand implies, there is the fact that these concepts lose their meaning: producers and recipients no longer exist. All that remains is the individual who uses poetry as an instrument for living one's life as best one can.
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> —Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (1974)[1]

Central to Peter Bürger's *Theory of the Avant Garde* are the aesthetic categories of production and reception which differentiate the avant-garde from the historical epochs that preceded it[2]. Where these two categories had been polarised (and individualised) in the bourgeois aestheticism of the nineteenth-century, they were married through the tactics of the historical avant-garde, which made available to the public not only the art object but the art process that had produced it and the social context that underpinned it. This necessitated not only a collapse of the independent status of the artist, but a collapse of the independent mediums that had historically differentiated creative production.

The interrelationship between author and object was a central theme in the aesthetic experimentations that took place during the interstitial period in Paris between the fiery collapse of Dada and the official emergence of Breton's surrealism several years later. It was during this period that the major proponents of the defunct Dada movement

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[1] Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 53.

[2] For Bürger's historical analysis of the development of the categories of "production", "reception" and "purpose or function" see: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 47-48.

immersed themselves in a range of notorious experiments all aimed at aligning artistic production with the sensation of psychic automatism and, in the process, attempting to engage the Freudian unconscious. Generating a range of intellectual games, psychoanalytical procedures and drug-induced experimental states, this turbulent and highly creative period laid the theoretical framework for the radical culture of surrealism and was instrumental in the creation of some of its most iconic early artworks and novels. Most famous amongst these was the game of the *exquisite corpse* where authorial control was challenged and even undermined by its blind and random dispersion amongst a number of disconnected bodies in both time and space. It was partially through these experiments that issues regarding agency and authorship in art were first problematised.[3]

Without doubt, the techniques of automatism that were originally developed in Dada (and became central to surrealist practice) are difficult to assimilate with the practice of architecture. Architecture has long aligned itself with the rigorous process-driven rationalisation that is bound to the commercial forces of the construction industry and the various stakeholders that contribute to the design and construction of public architecture. One noticeable exception to this rule is the work of Coop Himmelb(l)au which developed an accelerated and de-rationalised design process in the late 1960s that, over the proceeding decades, manifested itself in the design of a number of unconventional, but highly revered buildings.

The partnership of Wolf Prix and Helmut Swicinscky that forms Coop Himmelb(l)au[4] pioneered a collaborative design process that hinged upon the development of a

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[3] Writing in his 1928 *Surrealism and Painting*, Breton had argued that "[a]utomatism, inherited from the mediums, has remained one of surrealism's two great directions." The other, in Breton's mind, was the stabilisation of dream images through the *objet trouvé* and the "still life deception known as *trompe l'oeil*." (p. 70). See: André Breton, *Surrealism and Painting*, trans. Simon Watson Taylor (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 2002), p. 68 [1928].

[4] Coop Himmelb(l)au were founded in 1968, and over the years have had a number of other partners although Wolf Prix and Helmut Swiczinsky have been the two instrumental partners. From 1968 to 1971 Rainer Michael Holzer was also a partner, although his contribution is rarely acknowledged. Since 2000 Helmut Swiczinsky's role in the practice has diminished due to medical reasons, to the point where Wolf Prix now takes credit for all projects and texts. In the early to mid 1990s they changed their name from "Coop Himmelblau" to "Coop Himmelb(l)au". For consistency, Coop Himmelb(l)au is used in this dissertation.

“psychogram”: an intuitive drawing or model that, hastily produced, captured the emotional and psychological feel of the intended building rather than its rationalisation through structure and programme. The pairing attempted to preserve the initial instinct of this sketch as their buildings passed through the various stages of design and, ultimately, into construction. While reflective of a number of ideas of automatism that had influenced Dada and surrealism, the migration of these practices into architecture brings with it a number of competing and incompatible forces that need to be understood in the broader critical frame of the historical avant-garde.

The emergence of these techniques in architecture can be traced to a determination, (resembling that of Dada and surrealism), to subvert conventional hegemonies of commercial production through the tactics of instantaneity and indeterminacy. The practices of Coop Himmelb(l)au seek to loosen the authorial grip that connects the architect with the created object, while at the same time dismantling the historical notions of “design” as a rational and reasoned evolutionary progression. In the process these practices, variously acknowledging the influence of these early surrealist experiments, set up a radicalised model of architectural production, aimed at testing the established economic conditions which structure the built environment. The subsequent commercial success of this subversive model in architecture and its assimilation at the level of “spectacle” has implied a condition of theoretical and political failure in the work of these architects, which necessitates a revaluation of the nature of the architectural object and its relationship to the author.

This chapter will look at the “psychogram” design process of Coop Himmelb(l)au that was developed in the late 60s and implemented up until the mid 90s. The chapter will test the “automatism” claims that have been attached to this design model, sketching a history of automatism in Dada and surrealism and then exposing the technique to the broader criticisms of art history. The chapter then turns to Peter Bürger’s writing on “shock” and “chance” and the relationship that exists between the “historical” and “neo” avant-gardes in this context. Central to this is the issue of autonomy, and the control that the “author” exerts over the art or architectural object. The chapter finds that, in the case of Coop Himmelb(l)au, it is only the origin of the creative process that attempts to dismantle autonomy. The remainder of the process resembles the conventional processes of

building and, rather than being automatic, is fundamentally overdetermined by the original sketch.[5]

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Writing in the "Manifesto of Surrealism" (1924), Andre Breton had argued that, in the first decades of the twentieth century there had been a devaluing of the role of experience in contemporary life, which had been contained the innate desires and concealed drives that were fundamental to human existence. For Breton, "[e]xperience has found itself increasingly circumscribed; it paces back and forth in a cage from which it is more and more difficult to make it emerge."[6] One of the primary motivations of the surrealist practices in art was this emancipation of experience in order that the homogenising forces of modernism could be reconfigured in line with the basic needs of the human psyche.

There is a resonance between this quote from Breton, and a more recent quote from Coop Himmelb(l)au, which foreshadows an emancipation of architecture from the rationalising forces of the contemporary city. Coop Himmelb(l)au write: "[o]ur architecture is not domesticated. It moves around in urban areas like a panther in the jungle. In a

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[5] Sections and previous versions of this chapter have been previously published or presented in the following contexts: Michael Chapman, "Agency and automatism: Some strategies of irresponsibility in architecture", *Agency: Working with Uncertain Architectures* (Routledge: London, 2010), pp. 141-153; Michael Chapman and Michael J. Ostwald, "Automated architecture: Violence and nihilism as strategies of 'making' in the tactics of Coop Himmelb(l)au," *Architectural Research Quarterly* [ARQ] 10 (2007), pp. 241-248; Michael Chapman, "Strategies Against Architecture: Spatial tensions in Einstürzende Neubauten," Colin Ripley, Marco Polo and Arthur Wrigglesworth (ed), *Architecture/Music/Acoustics* (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), pp. 83-97; Michael Chapman and Michael J. Ostwald, "Strategies Against Architecture: Traces of Deconstruction in the Spatial Interrogations of Einstürzende Neubauten," in Colin Ripley (ed), *Architecture-Music-Acoustics* (Toronto: Ryerson University, Ryerson Embodied Architecture Lab, 2006), p. 48; Michael Ostwald and Michael Chapman, "Psychic Automatism and Nonlinear Dynamics: Surrealism and Science in the Architecture Of Coop Himmelblau," *Radical Designist: A Design Culture Journal* 3 (2009), pp. 1-12; Michael Ostwald and Michael Chapman, "Privileging the Sketch: Coop Himmelblau, Nonlinear Dynamics and the Psychogram," *Proceedings of the Conference: Wonderground Design Research Society International Conference 2006* (IADE: Lisbon, 2006) [up].

[6] Andre Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," in in Andre Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism,* trans. Richard Seaver & Helen Lane (Ann Arbour: The University of Michigan Press, 1969), p. 10; this passage, and the importance of "experience" generally in Breton's work, is discussed in: Jochen Schulte-Sasse, "Theory of Modernism versus Theory of the Avant-Garde" in Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. xxxi.

museum it is like a wild animal in a cage."[7] This connection between architecture and the primal forces of nature recognises the inherently controlling mechanisms that condition (or even cage)[8] the production of architecture and its inhabitation. In both of these avant-gardiste positions, the pressures of domestication and rationalisation threatened, in the post-industrialised march of capitalism, to sap the virility of architecture and surrender to the lifeless mass-production of homogeneity. For Breton and Coop Himmelb(l)au, one of the ways that these systems could be subverted was through the engagement of *automatism* as a critical tactic of resistance.

Automatism, as a process, implies a freeing of the creative act. It is a process of removing the traditional constraints that limit creativity and tapping into "unconscious" modes of thinking and acting where the rationalising impulses of human behaviour can be suspended or displaced. The act of automatism is implied in a widely-used portrait of Wolf Prix and Helmut Swiczinsky, the partnership that comprises Coop Himmelb(l)au.[9] The portrait depicts two truncated hands, each "named" and poised suggestively centimetres above a piece of paper. As well as establishing the emphasis on drawing which was, at one time, the major stimulus of their practice, the portrait also captures the "moment" of drawing and, as a result, the link to a process of automatism: that is, a process of freeing these hands from their respective bodies and, more importantly the rationalising brains that accompany and instruct them. This was a goal that accompanied a large amount of the formative work of Coop Himmelb(l)au and was central to the collaborative nature of their practice.

The use of the hand in the imagery of Coop Himmelb(l)au is conspicuous, whether in the representation of the hands themselves, or in the tactile marks that are traced across the paper. In Coop Himmelb(l)au's architectural process hands become, in a

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[7] Coop Himmelb(l)au [Wolf D. Prix and Helmut Swiczinsky], *Architecture is Now: Projects, (Un)buildings, Actions, Statements, Sketches, Commentaries, 1968-1983* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1984), p. 11.

[8] The cage is a major theme in Kiki Smith's 1996 collaboration with Coop Himmelb(l)au at the MOCA entitled Paradise Cage (November 24 1996—February 2 1997). See: Kiki Smith, *Paradise Cage: Kiki Smith and Coop Himmelb(l)au* (Los Angeles: Museum of Contemporary Art, 1996).

[9] The portrait can be found, among other places, in: Coop Himmelb(l)au [Wolf D. Prix and Helmut Swiczinsky], *From Cloud to Cloud: Biennale di Venezia 1996* (Klagenfurt: Ritter Verlag, 1996), pp. 11-12.

phenomenological sense, truncated from the body, serving as an extension of the drawing and, more importantly, the building that it describes. For Himmelb(l)au, the hand is the point of contact in architecture which, through drawing on paper, provides "the first emotional contact with the psychic spaces of the project."[10] The use of the hand replaces the rationalising mind as the primary mode through which architecture is conceived in the same way that, according to Coop Himmelb(l)au, "[the drawing] is often forced to replace the building."[11] As well as providing the link between architect and architecture, hands also serve as the primary mode of collaboration, becoming the medium through which communication between the partnership takes place. As Frank Werner observes "they both start drawing the same sketch spontaneously and simultaneously, working next to each other with two or four hands, moving towards each other, or drawing one on top of the other."[12] By 1991, the firm revealed that they had "begun to emphasize verbal descriptions of our designs by the means of the gestures of our hands."[13] From the early experiments with "sign language" and the body through to the gestural anarchy of their more mature projects there is a primacy given over to the hand in Coop Himmelb(l)au's approach, recognising its instrumental nature in shaping architectural form.

While Coop Himmelb(l)au's experiments with automatism privileged the role of the hand, this has a much longer history leading backwards to the early experiments of surrealism. In relationship to automatism in Masson's work, Breton had written

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[10] Coop Himmelb(l)au [Wolf D. Prix and Helmut Swiczinsky], "The Drawing is Important to Us," in Wolf Prix, *Get Off My Cloud: Coop Himmelb(l)au Texts 1968-2005,* (ed) Martina Kandeler-Fritsch and Thomas Kramer (Ostfildern: Hatje Kantz, 2005), p.48. Elsewhere they describe the drawing as "the first capturing of the feeling on paper." See: Coop Himmelb(l)au [Wolf D. Prix and Helmut Swiczinsky], "On The Edge," in Peter Noever (ed), *Deconstruction In Transition: Between Deconstruction And New Modernism* (Munich: Prestel, 1991), p. 23.

[11] Prix, *Get Off my Cloud*, p.48 [The Drawing is Important to Us].

[12] Frank Werner, *Covering + Exposing: The Architecture of Coop Himmelb(l)au* (Bäsel: Birkhäuser, 2000), p. 310.

[13] Coop Himmelb(l)au [Wolf D. Prix and Helmut Swiczinsky], "The End of Architecture" in Peter Noever (ed), *The End of Architecture? Documents and manifestoes* (Munich: Prestel, 1993), p. 19; this can also be found in: Prix, *Get Off my Cloud*, p. 56 [The Dissipation of Our Bodies in the City].

> [the discovery of automatism] almost literally gave wings to the artist's hand. Not content to simply trace the shape of objects, this hand enamoured of its own movement and of that alone, described the involuntary figures within which, as experience has shown, these shapes were destined to become re-embodied. Indeed the essential discovery of surrealism is that, without preconceived intention, the pen that flows in order to write and the pen that runs in order to draw spin an infinitely precious substance which […] appears charged with all of the emotional intensity stored up within the poet or painter at a given moment.[14]

While this passage clearly echoes the aspirations of the psychogram process, there is a darker reading of the automatic hand that not only preserves its creative relationship to the work but, at the same time, acknowledges its incriminating traces. The hand is implicated; distanced from the body and assuming the role of the brain in controlling activities in the real world. This was a theme in the phenomenology of Maurice-Merleau Ponty, where the hand becomes a source of information for the body, which experiences the world through the learnt touch of its extremities.[15]

Consider in this context, a fragment from the writing of Walter Benjamin that, already cited, deals with the Dada process of collage. Referring to the collection of artefacts from the real world in the expanded frame of avant-garde process, Benjamin concludes that "the tiniest authentic fragment of daily life says more than painting […] just as the bloody fingerprint of a murderer on the page of a book says more than the text."[16] It is within this more violent context, that the hand is implicated in the design processes of Coop Himmelb(l)au, reminiscent of the "bloody fingerprint" but, equally implicated in the act of violence that the architectural-authors are perpetrating against the object that they are producing.

As well as being conspicuous in architecture, hands are a recurring theme in images of automatism and, rather than being original, the Coop Himmelb(l)au portrait evokes a long

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[14] Breton, *Surrealism and Painting*, p. 68.

[15] For Merleau Ponty's discussion of the role of the hand, see, for instance: Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception* (London: Routledge, 1962), p. 122.

[16] Walter Benjamin, "The Author as Producer", in *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Schocken Books, 1978), p. 229.

and diverse ancestry in the visual arts, embodied in photos like a 1937 self-portrait by the German artist Herbert Bayer.[17] The portrait, implying the moment connecting the sketch with the body, is cited in an essay by Rosalind Krauss, entitled "When Words Fail"[18] where she uses the image of the cropped hand to unravel a discursive history of art—a history where action, in the work of certain artists, replaces content and language as the primary means of communication. While the hand was a recurring them in Bayer's work in the 1930s,[19] it came to prominence as a motif a decade earlier in El Lissitzky's 1924 *Self-Portrait* (also known as *The Constructor*) which had woven together the themes of drawing, the body and the hand in an iconic way, becoming a transformative image of the avant-garde. The hand in isolation holding a pair of compasses[20] was published separately with a sprawling line unfolding across the page, distinguishing it from the rigid curve that the hand draws in the self portrait. Amongst the fragments that compose this image, the separation of the hand from the image is critical, implying a freeing of the hand from the controlling elements of the eye and the mind.[21] Significant too, is the line, establishing the hand as a producing element and gateway to creative practice.[22] In the same essay,

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[17] Hands are a common theme in the surrealist photography of both Lee Miller and Paul Nougé. Nougé's work uses the hand to reveal aspects of the narrative of a photograph, such as in *Femme effrayee par une ficelle* [Woman Frightened by a String] (1929-1930) and *Les Vendages du sommeil* [The Harvests of Sleep] (1929-1930). For reproductions of both images, see: Rosalind Krauss and Jane Livingston (ed), *L'Amour Fou: Photography and Surrealism* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1985), pp. 224-225.

[18] Rosalind Krauss, "When Words Fail," *October* 22 (1982), pp. 91-103.

[19] Ockman discusses Bayer's work and the recurring role of the hand in his representational techniques in: Joan Ockman, "The Road Not Taken: Alexander Dorner's Way Beyond Art," in Robert Somol, *Autonomy and Ideology: Positioning an Avant-Garde in America* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 1997), pp. 102-113.

[20] Several decades later, Merleau Ponty evoked the hand in relationship to the "two points of a compass". See: Merleau Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, p. 123.

[21] Rosalind Krauss reproduces these three images, and demonstrates the connections that exist between them. See: Krauss, "When Words Fail," pp. 91-93. Krauss also discusses Maholy-Nagy's *Title Page for Foto-Qualität* (1931) and *Photogram* (1925-1927) where the hand is used in a truncated way to reflect the creative process (p. 98). This argument is also developed in: Rosalind Krauss, "The Photographic Conditions of Surrealism," *October* 19 (Winter, 1984), pp. 3-34.

[22] The "automatic" curve is a theme in Breton's writing, understood, in the context of Masson's work as a liberating discovery, Breton describes the "secret of the magnificent curve which […] has continued to sweep on as though it were a single stroke, becoming ever more sensitive and skilful as time goes by, capturing

Krauss discusses the relationship between the hand and automatism, making reference to Andre Breton[23] and the photography of Maurice Tabard[24] as primary examples. In both cases the hand operates as an instrument through which automatic processes where channelled and recorded. As well as the role of the hand in the occult,[25] Krauss also acknowledges the surrealist interest in palmistry arguing that the hand in this period was connected, not just with creativity, but fate and the mysterious world beyond.[26] Automatism, integral to this history, can be read as a paradigm where the impulsive act replaces the rational and evolutionary process of design. It is also, at least as it was formulated in Dada and surrealism, a strategy of bridging perception and representation.[27]

Mary Ann Caws refers to the avant-garde tactic of truncating the body frequently in her extensive writing on surrealism. As well as articulating the "masculinist" overtones that are

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obliquely all the most beautiful colours and lights from our previous experience." See Breton, *Surrealism and Painting*, p. 68.

[23] Krauss argues that the "photograph as a paradoxically visual stage for the hand and its relationship to writing" informs the visual practices of surrealism, referring to the self-portrait that Breton produced in 1938, and gave the title *Automatic Writing*. See Krauss, "When Words Fail," p. 98; For automatism in Breton's work, see also: Michael Sheringham, "Breton and the Language of Automatism: Alterity, Allegory, Desire," *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 18 2 (1982), pp 142-158.

[24] On the hand in Tabard, see also: Paul Linwood Gittings, "Focus Your Brain First: The Story of Maurice Tabard," *PSA Journal* 14 (November, 1948), p. 584.

[25] An alternative reading of the symbolism of the hand in surrealism, and in relationship to the Druidic hand signal alphabet, as appropriated in the works of Yves Tanguy, see: Karin Von Maur, "Yves Tanguy or 'The Certainty of the Never Seen'," in Karin Von Maur (ed), *Yves Tanguy and Surrealism* (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 2001), pp. 42-44.

[26] For more on this topic see: Celia Rabinovitch's discussion of Giacometti's *Caught Hand* (1932): Celia Rabinovitch, *Surrealism and the Sacred: Power, Eros and the Occult in Modern Art* (Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, 2004), pp. 180-185; For the use of the hand and palmistry in Max Ernst, see: M. E. Warlick, *Max Ernst and Alchemy: A Magician in Search of a Myth* (Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 2001), pp. 117-121.

[27] For the hand used in surreal contexts, the most distinctive photograph Is Dora Maar's *Untitled* (1933-4) where the hand is shown emerging from a sea-shell. Hands appear in a number of Maar's images, and often in very spatial contexts. Mary Ann Caws writes that "[t]he very slowdown or delay felt in the touch is monstrously erotic." See: Mary Ann Caws, *Dora Maar: With and Without Picasso* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2000), p. 51. For the use of hands in her work, see pp. 60-65.

central to the paradigmatic decapitation of women in surrealist photography,[28] Caws also points to the fragmentary "cropping" of body parts that tends towards aesthetic isolation and, as discussed in the previously, the theory of allegory in the baroque that is framed by Benjamin. Referring to a history of cropped hands as fragments in Dorothea Tanning's work, Caws argues that, in a lot of surrealist imagery, the hand

> is never attached to an arm or anything else. These [images] are studies of detachment, of isolation—if you like of the creative act as it knows itself to be detached, even as it is most significant.[29]

One of the most famous hands, on this front, is the anonymous photograph of a lady's glove that Breton reproduced in *Nadja* that, when sitting on the table, he "can never resist picking up."[30] This passage in *Nadja* is often cited in the context of fetishism, where an emphasis on the part displaces an appreciation of the whole.[31] This cropping of the body and its separation from any notion of continuity or totality within the world, as well as resonating with the photo of Coop Himmelb(l)au's cropped hands, overlaps with the most pervasive themes of avant-garde process and the broader psychoanalytical themes that have been used to understand it.[32] Coop Himmelb(l)au's development of the psychogram

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[28] This was a major point of contention in: Mary Ann Caws, "Seeing the Surrealist Woman: We are a Problem" in Mary Ann Caws, Rudolf Kuenzli and Gwen Raaberg (ed), *Surrealism and Women* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1991), pp. 11-16. See also: Mary Ann Caws, "Ladies Shot and Painted", in Susan Sulieman (ed), *The Female Body in Western Culture* (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1986), pp. 262-287; See also: Rudolf Kuenzli, "Surrealism and Mysogyny," in Caws, Kuenzli and Raaberg (ed), *Surrealism and Women*, pp. 17-27.

[29] Mary Ann Caws, *The Surrealist Look: An Erotics of Encounter* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1997), p. 93.

[30] Andre Breton, *Nadja*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Grove Press, 1960), p. 56. As well as the photo reproduced in *Nadja*, Breton commissioned the casting of an original bronze glove that was photographed as part of his personal collection. Exhibited in 2002, the best photograph of the original glove (as opposed to the grainy image in *Nadja*) is in: Jennifer Mundy, *Surrealism: Desire Unbound* (New York: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 203-226. For the original, see: Breton, *Nadja*, p. 141.

[31] See also: Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1995), pp. 33-35; it can equally be read in the context of Bürger's writing about fragmentation in *Nadja*. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 79-80.

[32] This is a major theme in Hal Foster's work. See, for instance: Hal Foster, *Prosthetic Gods* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004), pp. 225-254; Hal Foster, "Violating and Veiling in Surrealist

is of central interest here allowing them, as early as 1968, to speculate about an architecture with "no physical ground plan, but a psychic one."[33] That Coop Himmelb(l)au see the hand as central to a freeing of the design process and a departure from rationality is clear. They continually refer to this process as a tactic to destabilise the hegemony of commercial architectural practice and minimalise the forces of rationality that preside over it. As Prix states: "[w]e try to define the feeling, the emotion that the space is later to radiate […and] then suddenly we have a drawing, sometimes on a sheet of paper, sometimes on the table."[34] Himmelb(l)au argue that the greater the degree of compression of time between the starting and finishing of a psychogram the greater the validity of the process, to the point where it resembles, in their later work, being at "the centre of an explosion"[35]. The forces of time and sequence, essential to the structure of the construction industry, are dismantled and given over to the literal speed of both hands and thoughts. Leading back to the image of the truncated hands poised above a blank sheet, they reveal in one of their typically Dadaist manifestoes that: "our architecture can be found where thoughts move faster than hands to grasp it"[36].

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While deeply intuitive, the production of the psychogram is frequently an aggressive gesture, and many of the drawings demonstrate not only the speed with which the hand moves but the emotion and even anger that pulses through it as it draws. While emphasising speed, the gesture of the psychogram is, like the projects themselves, an act

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Photography: Woman as Fetish, As shattered Object, As Phallus," in Jennifer Mundy (ed), *Surrealism: Desire Unbound* (New York: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 203-226.

[33] Prix, *Get Off My Cloud,* p. 25 [Our Architecture has no Physical Ground Plan]. The firm describe this method in a number of their texts. See for instance: Prix, *Get Off My Cloud,* p. 45 [And This Is How It Works]; Coop Himmelb(l)au [Wolf D. Prix and Helmut Swiczinsky], "The Dissipation of Our Bodies in the City," in Coop Himmelb(l)au [Wolf D. Prix and Helmut Swiczinsky], *Die Faszination der Stadt/The Power of the City* (Darmstadt: Verlag Jürgen Häusser, 1992), pp. 12-19.

[34] See: Prix, *Get Off My Cloud,* p. 45 [This is How it Works].

[35] Coop Himmelb(l)au, "On The Edge," p. 21.

[36] Coop Himmelb(l)au (1991) quoted in: Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, pp. 92-93.

of violence. Referring to their attempts to prevent rationalising "drafting" lines from emerging in their drawings in the 1970s, Frank Werner writes

> Coop Himmelb(l)au had tried in vain to stop [the] emergence of a more peaceful draughtsman's line […] by attacking their sketches, first by tearing them, then even by burning them. Traces of soot, singeing, burns and charred edges were sometimes added later, sometimes built into the creative project.[37]

This violence towards architectural production is a characteristic of the formative projects of Coop Himmelb(l)au and illustrative of their posture towards the profession at large. The idiosyncratic nature of these working processes has meant that the nihilistic approach of Coop Himmelb(l)au has been subjected to a vast array of critical attention in the decades since they came to international prominence, primarily through the widespread publication of their *Rooftop Remodelling* project in Vienna (1983) and their inclusion in the high-profile *Deconstructivist Architects* exhibition in New York in 1988.[38] As well as drawing on their work in his theorising of a contemporary "uncanny" in architecture, Anthony Vidler has authoritatively established Coop Himmelb(l)au as one of a number of recent practices which, in unison, constitute a "third" paradigm in the historical relationship between the body and architecture: the first two paradigms being Vitruvian classicism and, following that, physiognomy which dominates the theorising of the French Enlightenment.[39]

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[37] Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, p. 180. While not mentioned explicitly, Werner is probably referring here to the drawing "Blazing Architecture, Corner Solution" (1980) which appears in: Coop Himmelb(l)au, *Architecture is Now*, p. 96.

[38] See: Philip Johnson and Mark Wigley, *Deconstructivist Architecture: The Museum of Modern Art, New York* (Boston: Little Brown, 1988); a lot has been written about the controversial inclusion of Coop Himmelb(l)au who seemed to defy the linguistic trends and theoretical thrust of the exhibition but benefitted widely from the publicity that the exhibition attracted for their work; see Frank Werner, "Constructive, not deconstructive, work on the city of the 21st century: Remarks on the recent work of Coop Himmelb(l)au," in Coop Himmelb(l)au, *Die Faszination der Stadt*, pp. 6-11; Frank Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, pp. 188-196.

[39] This case was originally made in Vidler's essay "The Building in Pain", later being revised as the chapter "Architecture Dismembered" in Vidler's work *The Architectural Uncanny*. See: Anthony Vidler, "The Building in Pain: The Body and Architecture in Post-Modern Culture," *AA Files* 19 (Spring 1990), pp. 3-10; Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1992), pp. 69-82.

The relationship between the process of Coop Himmelb(l)au and the historical avant-garde is already well established, particularly in relationship to the Russian Constructivists[40] and the German Expressionists.[41] However, despite the strength of these connections, the firm's fascination with violence, their widespread use of collage, their hastily constructed models and their short and vitriolic manifestoes demonstrate a stronger resonance—in both style and substance—with the earlier nihilistic avant-garde tactics of Dada and surrealism. On this front, connections have been drawn with surrealist automatism by a number of authors. In 1990 Wolf Prix himself admitted that "one could compare [Coop Himmelb(l)au's] process of design with 'transautomatism' in art".[42] From roughly the same period, Michael Sorkin's essay "Post-Rock Propter Rock" is one of the most formidable texts in linking the work of Coop Himmelb(l)au with the processes of automatism. Sorkin's essay is replete with surrealist imagery,[43] linking their work with recognised members of Dada and surrealism such as Frederick Kiesler[44] and Kurt Schwitters[45] and drawing direct

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[40] "Deconstructivist Architects", as the title of the 1988 exhibition which featured Himmelb(l)au's work, links the literary project of Jacques Derrida with the Russian Constructivism embodied in the work of Chernikov. This assertion is problematic, particularly in relation to the divergent artistic practices embodied in the various architects presented in the exhibition. As Mary McLeod has demonstrated, links can be traced to a broader and more dynamic historical avant-garde than that contained in "constructivism". Tschumi and Eisenman can be linked to the Russian Constructivists, Rem Koolhaas and Zaha Hadid to Suprematism, and Coop Himmelb(l)au to the German Expressionists. See: Mary McLeod, "Architecture and Politics in the Reagan Era: From Post Modernism to Deconstructivism," *Assemblage* 8 (February 1989), p. 44.

[41] The connection between the work of Coop Himmelb(l)au and the utopian glass crystalline structures of the German Expressionists, and particularly Bruno Taut has been drawn by a number of authors. Himmelb(l)au completed the exhibition architecture for "Expressionist Utopias", Los Angeles County Museum of Art (1993) which has further fuelled this connection. See for instance: Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, p. 56, p. 164; McLeod, "Architecture and Politics in the Reagan Era," p. 44; Anthony Vidler, "Space, Time and Movement," in Russell Ferguson and Stephanie Emerson (ed), *At the End of the Century: One Hundred Years of Architecture* (New York: Abrams, 1998), p. 119.

[42] See: Prix, *Get Off My Cloud,* p. 63 [Our Architecture has Four Cities and Seven Lives].

[43] Sorkin paraphrases Breton—"[t]heir architecture will be convulsive or not at all" (p. 339)—and evokes Dali's famous installation as a metaphor for the firms work as a process of "[t]he Rainy Taxi learns to fly" (p. 342). See: Michael Sorkin, *Exquisite Corpse: Writing on Buildings* (London: Verso, 1991), pp 339-352.

[44] Sorkin draws a connection between Himmelb(l)au's *Ronacher Theatre* and Keisler's *Raumbühne*, or "Space Stage." See: Sorkin, *Exquisite Corpse*, p.349.

[45] The work of Himmelb(l)au contains numerous resonances, both stylistically and theoretically, with the Schwitter's *Merzbau* project. This is a connection they make explicit in their 1981 project for the Merz School

connections with the automatism of Breton. Drawing upon the game of the *exquisite corpse* in his writing on the psychogram, Sorkin writes

> the hoary surrealist aim of the "dictation of thought without the control of the mind," an abiding youth culture trope, an angelic pursuit, the beginning of innocence. But the privileging of the sketch is more than just a strategy for clearing the decks: it's a brave signal of intent, a vow of no compromise, a pledge of truth and consequences. Breton (the ur-rocker) analogizes automatism to a melody, a structure imposer, "the only structure that responds to the non-distinction… between sentient and formal qualities, and to the non-distinction…between sentient and intellectual functions.[46]

More recently Coop Himmelb(l)au's unbuilt *Open House* has been tied to surrealist automation as a rare and exemplary form of its practice in architecture. Featured in the exhibition on *The Surrealist House* at the Barbican Art Gallery in London (10 June—12 September 2010)[47] the introduction to the catalogue describes the *Open House* as "created by means of surreal automatism."[48] More cautiously, in an essay in the same volume, Dalibor Veseley describes Himmelb(l)au's process as "*very close* to the nature of surrealist automatism."[49] Elaborating on this, Veseley concludes that the work of Coop Himmelb(l)au "cannot be described as true surrealist architecture but only as architecture that came to existence under the influence or in the shadow of surrealism."[50]

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in Stuttgart, where Sorkin draws a direct connection between the two buildings. Werner, as well as acknowledging the connection stresses the need not to overstress this lineage. See: Sorkin, *Exquisite Corpse*, p.345; Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, p. 35.

[46] See: Sorkin, *Exquisite Corpse*, p. 346.

[47] The model of the house was featured in this exhibition, as was the original psychogram. Photographs and reproductions appear in the catalogue. See: Jane Allison (ed), *The Surreal House* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, Barbarican Art Gallery, 2010), pp. 284-285.

[48] Jane Allison, "The Surreal House" in Allison (ed), *The Surreal House*, p. 33; the claim is repeated in the "Checklist of Works Exhibited" which claims that the house was "created using the surrealist process of automatic drawing" (p. 330).

[49] Dalibor Veseley, "The Surreal House as a Labyrinth and Metaphor of Creativity" in Allison, *The Surreal House*, p. 40.

[50] Veseley, "The Surreal House", p. 41.

As well as the connections that can be drawn to surrealism, the emergence of these critical practices in Coop Himmelb(l)au's work in the late 1960s and 70s, while not confined to their work alone, do align the work of the practice with the processes and critical debates happening in art theory at the time. These were embodied in the collective impetus intended by Bürger's categorisation of the "neo-avant-garde". While contemporaneous with a number of experimentations in art,[51] the creative processes of Coop Himmelb(l)au have the most pervasive resonances with the violent strategies in art-making first explored in the interstitial period between Dada and surrealism where the connection between art objects and social values was first articulated and attacked. Dada grew out of the pessimism associated with the First World War and, blaming the violence of the War on bourgeoisie values, attacked the aesthetic art object as the most obvious and tangible extension of bourgeoisie taste.[52]

As Bürger has argued the primary strategy of avant-garde practice in this period was the complete destruction of the institution of art and so art practice became engaged in an internal war aimed at its own destruction.[53] As a response to this devaluing of the conventions of art and the systems of ideology and normalisation that had been erected to preserve its institutionalised status, these processes were inherently violent and based on barely concealed nihilistic tendencies emerging from the brutality of the First World War. Dada, as the antithesis of art, was inherently destructive in its objectives as well as its processes. Tristan Tzara, for instance, wrote that "[a]s Dada marches it continuously destroys, not in extension but in itself."[54] In his "Dada Manifesto" from 1918 he had

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[51] Werner finds a number of connections on this front, and particularly with the work of Cy Twombly. See for instance: Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, p. 181.

[52] One of the classic texts from the period (1916) weaving Dada nonsense with nihilistic pessimism, is: Richard Huelsenbeck, "The End of the World," in Richard Huelsenbeck (ed), *Blago bung blago bung bosso fatakal: first texts of German Dada*, trans. Malcolm Green (London: Atlas Press, 1995), pp. 82-83; also from 1916 is Hugo Ball's equally nihilistic "Dance of Death". See: Hugo Ball, "Dance of Death," in Michael Howard and Debbie Lewer, *A New Order: An Evening at the Cabaret Voltaire* (Manchester: Manchester Metropolitan University Press, 1996), p. 53.

[53] See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 56-57.

[54] Tristan Tzara, "Lecture on Dada" (1922), quoted in: Robert Motherwell (ed), *The Dada Painters and Poets: An Anthology* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press, 1979), p. 251.

proclaimed that Dada was "a protest with the fists of its being engaged in destructive action."[55] Some of these processes were literally destructive, with strong affiliations with the stabbing, ripping and tearing tendencies that occur in Coop Himmelb(l)au's projects several decades later. As these processes emerged in Dada they also became, like the psychogram, increasingly violent as instantaneity became the datum against which the avant-gardiste work was measured. Often involving the dropping of sharp objects from a height, throwing darts at a wall, tearing, ripping and slicing, the bodily act of violence *became* the art object, as the artist violently attempted to dismantle the institution of art in its entirety. As Bürger makes clear, the Dadaist "manifestations" are the most extreme form of avant-garde activity and carry the objective of the total annihilation of the work of art, both as an object, and as an ideological category.[56]

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The primary origins of automatism as a creative strategy lie at the dawn of the surrealist movement, or, perhaps more specifically, with the fiery but inevitable collapse of Dada.[57] Many ideas relating to automatism had been explored during the Dada period, particularly in its incendiary manifestations in Zurich, Berlin, Hannover and Cologne. Methods such as collage, photomontage and Max Ernst's process of "frottage"[58] all emerged in a very brief period as part of a broader artistic strategy to strip the art object of the accumulated social values embedded in it.[59] As part of this push towards instantaneous composition, the

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[55] Tristan Tzara, "Dada Manifesto" (1918), quoted in Motherwell (ed), *The Dada Painters and Poets*, p. 81

[56] See Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 56.

[57] Andre Breton wrote his eulogy to Dada in 1923, but its major impetus, even in Paris, had already subsided. Huelsenbeck wrote his history of the movement in 1920, tacitly declaring its closure as well. See: Andre Breton, "After Dada," in André Breton, *The Lost Steps*, trans. Mark Polizzotti (Nebraska: The University of Nebraska Press, 1993), pp. 74-76; Richard Huelsenbeck, "En Avant Dada: A History of Dadaism (1920)," in Motherwell, *Dada Painters and Poets*, pp. 23-41.

[58] Ernst describes his process of frottage in: Max Ernst, *Beyond Painting* (New York: Wittenborn and Schulz, 1948).

[59] Amongst the numerous histories of the emergence of these techniques in Ernst's work, Werner Spies writing on the evolution of the "autonomous image" in Ernst is worthy of attention, as well as the emphasis he places on "the production of enigma" (p.21); See: Werner Spies, "An Open-Ended Oeuvre" in William A. Camfield, *Max Ernst: Dada and the Dawn of Surrealism* (Munich: Prestel Verlag, 1993), pp. 17-30. The

Dada movement (as has been already noted) invented the use of photomontage, attracted to it for its political appeal as well as its ability to capture the dynamic and random energy of the city. They also used this technique in their iconographic experiments with typography where texts were reduced to individual letters and arranged according to visual and spatial principles. Foremost in this process were the collages of Hans Arp, who tore up pieces of coloured paper and scattered them on the ground, later gluing them in place to make abstract compositions of colour. According to Arp

> often I shut my eyes and chose words and sentences in newspapers by underlining them with a pencil […]. We thought to penetrate through things to the essence of life, and so a sentence from a newspaper gripped us as much as one from a prince of poets.[60]

Chance, for Arp, was an opportunity to dismantle syntax, grammar and the semantic meaning of words, tearing apart the structure of the language into "atoms" which could be reassembled for creative ends. Reflecting on his activities between 1915 and 1920, Arp revealed that "chance opened up perceptions to me, immediate spiritual insights […which] led me to revere the law of chance as the highest and deepest law, the law that rises from the fundaments."[61] The definitive text on the subject of automatism (to which Arp alludes) came from Tristan Tzara whose instructions under the title "To Make a Dadaist Poem" described the indeterminate processes implicit in composing Dada poetry. Taken from his manifesto "On Feeble Love and Bitter Love" Tzara's recipe reads:

> Take a newspaper:
> Take some scissors.
> Choose from this paper an article of the length you want to make your poem.
> Cut out the article.

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definitive account on the emergence of collage is: Werner Spies, *Max Ernst: Collages: The Invention of the Surrealist Universe*, trans. John William Gabriel (London: Thames and Hudson, 1988).

[60] Hans Arp, quoted in Matthew Gale, *Dada and Surrealism*, (London: Phaidon, 1997), p. 87. The creative impetus of chance was made clear in Arp's text on "Concrete Art" where he pronounces: "we do not want to recreate we want to create. We want to create as the plant creates its fruit, and not recreate. We want to create, not indirectly, but directly." Hans Arp, "Concrete Art," in R.W Last (ed), *Hans Arp: The Poet of Dadaism* (London: Wollff, 1969), p. 74.

[61] Hans Arp, "Dada was not a Farce," in Motherwell, *Dada Painters and Poets*, p. 294.

> Next carefully cut out each of the words that makes up this article and put them all in a bag.
> Shake gently.
> Next take out each cutting one after the other.
> Copy conscientiously in the order in which they left the bag.
> The poem will resemble you.
> And there you are—an infinitely original author of charming sensibility, even though unappreciated by the vulgar herd[62]

Tzara's poem, which for Benjamin was a recipe for "word salad"[63], is cited by Bürger, who draws particular attention to the "instructional" model that allows any individual to enter into the creation of art.[64] Effectively sublating art and life, Bürger argued that the Dadaist manifestation provided an avenue, through automatism, for the autonomous barriers between the institution of art and its social context to be eroded.[65] This also negated the individualistic production of art and its inherent complicity with commercial systems. Such a negation of this individualism was at the heart of a number of the surrealist games, including the *exquisite corpse*, which shifted the emphasis from the notion of genius, to a reformed notion of the everyday and collective.[66]

However it was through the influence of André Breton, and his literary circle in Paris in the early 1920s, that "automatism" was first formulated as a clear theoretical agenda with concrete psychological objectives and strategic artistic outcomes.[67] Many of the major

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[62] Tristan Tzara, "Manifesto on Feeble Love and Bitter Love" in Motherwell ed., *The Dada Painters and Poets*, p. 92.

[63] For Benjamin, the poems of Dada are "'a word salad' containing obscenities and every imaginable waste product of language". There is a correlation between this process and Dada collage. See: Benjamin, "The Author as Producer", pp. 228-229.

[64] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant Garde*, p. 56.

[65] Bürger uses the term "liquidated". See Bürger, *Theory of the Avant Garde*, p. 56.

[66] The importance of the collective, as well as a central theme in Bürger's understanding of surrealism, is made explicit in regards to automatism in the *Second Manifesto*, where Breton argues that "the surrealist texts obtained simultaneity by several people writing from such a such a time in the same room". See: Andre Breton, "Second Manifesto of Surrealism," in Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism,* p. 178-179 [note].

[67] For Breton's theorising of automatism, see: Sheringham, "Breton and the Language of Automatism", pp 142-158; see also: Roger Cardinal, "André Breton and the Automatic Message," in Ramona Jotiade (ed), *Andre Breton: The Power of Language* (Exeter: Elm Bank Publications, 2000), pp. 23-36.

exponents of Dada had gravitated towards this circle by the early 1920s and were reformulating the basis of their artistic practice under Breton's influential stewardship. Breton's fascination with automatism came from his reading of psychology[68] and signalled a deeper current that ran contemporaneously through the intellectual circles of Paris. While the fascination with the writings of Freud was at that time already well-established, it was the writing of his French psychiatric rival, Pierre Janet, that had originally attracted Breton to the ideas of automatism. Janet had published an essay in 1898 entitled "The Psychology of Automatism: A test of experimental psychology on the lower forms of human activity."[69] While maintaining techniques of "free association" Freud had distanced himself from automatism and hypnosis in his formulation of psychoanalysis arguing against the reliability of its findings and the distortion it necessitated in the psychological data collected. The fact that automatic processes enabled conversations to emerge with the unconscious was not contested. It was the nature of the "unconscious" that was being accessed that was problematic and had caused Freud and others to seek out alternative modes of analysis. Even Janet had conceded that a psyche subjected to automatist techniques risked the "disintegration of personality"[70]. It also goes without saying that both Freud and Janet were extremely sceptical of artists (or architects) appropriating any

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[68] Hal Foster has argued that Breton's role as a psychiatric nurse during the war has been an undervalued influence in the study of surrealism, enabling an alternative historical account of the movement which is characterised by "traumatic shock, deadly desire [and] compulsive repetition." See: Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty*, p. xi.

[69] This would form part of Janet's untranslated doctoral dissertation on the subject of *L'Automatisme psychologique* [the psychology of automatism)]. See: Pierre Janet, *L'Automatisme psychologique* (Paris: Felix Alcan, 1890); for the earliest publication of Janet's work on automatism in English, see: Pierre Janet, *The Mental State of Hystericals: a study of mental stigmata and mental accidents* (New York: G P Putnam, 1901), pp. 242-304; There was a dearth of scholarship in this period into automatism. See for instance: William Romaine Newbold, "The Interpretations of Automatism," *Popular Science Monthly* 50 33 (1898), pp. 507-517; William Romaine Newbold, "Suggestibility, Automatism and Kindred Phenomena," *Popular Science Monthly* 48 10 (1898), pp. 193-198. For a more detailed examination of this phenomenon see: Alan Ramon Clinton, *Mechanical Occult: Automatism, Modernism and the Spectre of Politics* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), pp. 1-42; Elisabeth Roudinesco, *Jacques Lacan and Co: A History of Psychoanalysis in France, 1925-1985*, trans. Jeffrey Mehlman (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 21-34.

[70] Pierre Janet, quoted in: Jean Michel Oughourlian, *The Puppet of Desire: The Psychology of Hysteria, Possession and Hypnosis*, trans. Eugene Webb (Palo Alto, California: Stanford University Press, 1991), p. 160.

psychological techniques, arguing in unison that these were used to unravel mental disorders and were in no way a gateway to creativity or intellectual escapism.[71] More recent research has demonstrated that automatism has the effect of privileging certain aspects of the unconscious which were, scientifically at least, not inherent in the original subject under normal conditions.[72] Two characteristics which do, undeniably, emerge through automatism are, firstly, the almost obsessive focus on repetition and, secondly, the prevalence of violence.[73] As will be shown, these are both characteristics of the architectural practices that have experimented with these techniques.

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The most famous and well-documented experiments with automatism in art occurred through a number of organised meetings at Breton's house in the early 1920s over a period of several months.[74] Coincidentally, the first definition and theorisation of the term surrealism[75] was developed in connection with the description of these meetings. Breton

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[71] On the relationship between psychoanalysis and surrealism, see: David Lomas, *The Haunted Self: Surrealism, Psychoanalysis, Subjectivity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000).

[72] The vast majority of research that has been done into automatism in the last few decades is concerned with the legal implications of automatism and its emergence as a legal defence. One of the most comprehensive accounts of automatism in this context is: for a summary, see the section on "Automatism" in: Robert F. Schopp, *Automatism, Insanity and the Psychology of Criminal Responsibility: A Philosophical Enquiry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 27-70; see also "Automatism and Secondary Centres of Consciousness" in: Edwards F. Kelly and Emily Williams Kelly, *Irreducible Mind: Toward a Psychology for the 21st Century* (Rowman and Littlefield, 2009) pp. 301-365; Adam Crabtree, "Automatism and the Emergence of Dynamic Psychiatry," *Journal of the History of Behavioural Sciences* 39 1 (Winter, 2003), pp. 51-70.

[73] On this, see: Foster, Compulsive Beauty, p. 4.

[74] The first of these "sleeping fit" sessions involved Rene Crevel, Robert Desnos, Benjamin Peret, Paul Eluard, Max Ernst, Max Morise, Francis Picabia and, of course, André Breton. They had been inspired by the hallucinations that can occur in the moment between sleep and consciousness that Breton had become interested in by 1919. See: André Breton, "The Mediums Enter," in Breton, *The Lost Steps*, pp. 89-95.

[75] The consensus is that the term surrealism was originally used by Apollinaire in his play 1917 play *Les Mamelles de Tiresias* [The breasts of Tiresias]. The play deals with the hermaphroditic myth of Thérésé/Tiresias. Breton uses the hermaphroditic reference in relationship to surrealism in the *Second Manifesto*, writing: "a certain point of mind at which life and death, the real and the imagined, past and future, the communicable and the incommunicable, high and low, cease to be perceived as contradictions." See: Andre Breton, "Second Manifesto of Surrealism," p. 123. See also: Fiona Bradley, *Surrealism* (Cambridge:

published a preliminary account of the "sleeping fits" under the title "The Mediums Enter"[76] where he also framed the use of the term surrealism. Breton writes

> [i]t is generally known what my friends and I mean by Surrealism. We use this word, which we did not coin and which we might easily have left to the most ill-defined critical vocabulary, in a precise sense. This is how we have agreed to designate a certain psychic automatism that corresponds rather well to the dream state, a state that is currently very hard to delimit.[77]

Experiments with automatism, for the surrealists at least, had begun several years earlier with the writing of *Magnetic Fields*, the first automatic text to be published in *Litterature*, (the collective post-Dada publication of Breton, Phillippe Soupault and Louis Aragon). *Magnetic Fields* was written by Breton and Soupault in tandem, with sentences being recorded by the two authors as they occurred to them.[78] Rather than designating some pivotal moment in the narrative, each chapter end marked the end of a day of writing. As a result, life and writing were literally indecipherable.[79]

When Breton penned the first *Manifesto of Surrealism* in 1924, he defined surrealism famously as "pure psychic automatism"[80] characterised by the "absence of any control exercised by reason."[81] The manifesto established not only the importance of automatism to surrealist practice but, more specifically, the critical emphasis that would dominate later discussions of the movement's legacy. However the most intense experiments with automatism were undeniably the "sleeping fits" where the boundaries between the

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Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 26; Michael Chapman, "Architecture and Hermaphroditism: Gender Ambiguity and the Forbidden Antecedents of Architectural Form," in Naomi Stead (ed), *Queer Spaces: Centres and Peripheries* (Sydney 20-21 February, 2007) p. 1-7 [online refereed proceedings available].

[76] The original citation is: André Breton, "Entrée des mediums," *Littérature* 6 (November, 1922).

[77] See, Breton, "The Mediums Enter," p. 91.

[78] For a translation of this text, see: André Breton and Phillipe Soupault, *Magnetic Fields*, trans. David Gascoyne (London: Serpent's Tail, 1994) [1920].

[79] This reinforced a number of the themes of Bürger's argument, and especially in regard to his use of the work of Brecht. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant Garde*, p. 91.

[80] Andre Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," in Breton, *Manifestoes of Surrealism*, p. 26.

[81] Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," p. 26.

conscious and the unconscious became strangely blurred. Employing techniques of séances learnt from a medium, these evenings involved one or more of the participants falling into deep trances.[82] The most notorious was Robert Desnos who assumed an entirely different persona during these trances and was afterwards completely unable to recall anything that had occurred. These trance events were a revelation for the surrealists, simulating the unpredictable states that they gravitated towards in, for instance, the mentally insane.[83] The relationship between mental instability and automatism is embodied in the photograph of a clearly troubled Artaud, upon release from eight years of psychiatric treatment, thrusting his hands forward as if to receive a message from beyond.[84] Attempting to free the mind from the rationalising instincts of the intellect, the surrealists saw the body as capable of receiving information from the world in a way that the rational mind could not.[85]

A similar communication, through the hands, occurred during the trances. Recalling the role of hands in Coop Himmelb(l)au's work, Desnos would often sit at the table, scratching violently against it, or searching for something with which to draw, as his hands became the agitated agent for his self-expression. In Durozoi's account, at one point Desnos had pressed with such force on the table that he "broke the lead of the pencil he used to write

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[82] Rabinovitch has argued that the initial concern of the surrealists in the techniques of automatism was empirical and the events were undertaken with science as a priority. Over time, science gave way to polemic. See: Rabinovitch, *Surrealism and the Sacred*, pp. 120-124.

[83] Breton's *Nadja* is the most distinctive exposition of madness in surrealism but equally important is the fascination with the research of Hans Prinzhorn who had introduced artistry in his treatment of Mentally ill patients and the exhibitions he held of patient's work had been a source of inspiration for the surrealists and especially Max Ernst. See: Hans Prinzhorn, *Artistry and the Mentally Ill*, trans. Eric von Brockdorff (New York: Springer-Verlag, 1972); Hal Foster, *Prosthetic Gods*, pp. 211-214.

[84] This photograph was reproduced in accompaniment to: Bernard Tschumi, "Architecture and its Double," in Dalibor Veseley (ed.), *Architectural Design Profile: Surrealism and Architecture* **11** 2-3 (1978), pp. 111-116.

[85] Breton's pursuit of Nadja embodied this fascination. Bürger touched on this relationship in his essay about the surrealist novel entitled "To Think Madness". See: Peter Bürger, *The Thinking of the Master: Bataille between Hegel and Surrealism*, trans. Richard Block (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2002), pp. 8-23.

with."[86] In another instance, Desnos became the mouth piece of Rrose Salevy (Duchamp's feminine alter-ego) and began reciting poetry which, to the witnesses in the room, bore an eerie resemblance to the idiosyncratic literary style of Duchamp living, at the time, in America and having never met or corresponded with Desnos.[87] After a few meetings, Breton invited Man Ray to photograph the sessions, recording the nervous and highly unstable moods of the major proponents and the profound unpredictability that accompanied their immersion in trance. The meetings were halted after several months when Desnos, under a trance, attacked his friend Max Eluard violently with a kitchen knife and had to be subdued.[88] Months later the sessions were ended, out of fear of the more extreme consequences.[89] While alarmed by some of the outcomes, and momentarily shaken, the surrealists (and Breton in particular) went on to establish a concrete theory of automatism. Breton's 1933 essay on "The Automatic Message"[90] went on to categorise the various modes of automatism, deciphering its effects and arguing for a distinction between drawing and writing. In Breton's text, even ten years on, there is an obvious nostalgia for the early experiments with mediums and trance. Clearly in reference to the trances of Desnos, and drawing the discussion back to hands, Breton writes

> [t]hose of them, at least, who have truly remarkable abilities—set down letters or lines in strictly mechanical fashion: they are completely unaware of what they are writing or drawing, and its as if their anaesthetized hand were being guided by another hand.

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[86] Gerard Durozoi, *History of the Surrealist Movement*, trans. Alison Anderson (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), p. 41.

[87] The text is published in: Robert Desnos, "Rrose Sélavy [1920]," in Marcel Jean (ed), *The Autobiography of Surrealism*, trans. Marcel Jean and Haskell M. Block (New York: Viking, 1980), pp. 106-7; this was originally published in *Litterature* **7** (1923). That the haunted dreams that accompanied the "sleeping fit" sessions stayed with Desnos, is evidenced in his poetry. See, for instance: Robert Desnos, "Sleep Spaces [1926]," in Mary Ann Caws (ed), *Surrealist Love Poems,* trans. Mary Ann Caws (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), pp. 56-57.

[88] Desnos was trying to convince the group to take part in collective suicide. Eluard suffered deep (and ongoing) emotional scarring. For more on the incident, see: Katharine Conley, *Robert Desnos, Surrealism and the Marvellous in Everyday Life* (Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), pp. 22-25.

[89] Durozoi, *History of the Surrealist Movement*, p. 41. The last meetings took place towards the end of 1922.

[90] Andre Breton, "The Automatic Message," in André Breton, *Break of Day,* trans. Mark Polizzotti and Mary Ann Caws (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1999), pp. 125-143.

> […] There are others who reproduce, as if they were tracing them, inscriptions or figures that appear to them on a given object.[91]

That Desnos continued to experiment with trance states and the impulsive automatic scribbling that he was briefly famous for, is clear in his later investigations, a number of which are highly architectural. Just four months after the official sessions had been halted, he published *Mourning for Mourning*, a text where numerous passages are continually returning to a quest for a forgotten ruin. Desnos writes,

> [t]hese ruins are situated on the banks of a winding river. The climate is nondescript. To the southwest there rises a tall metallic construction with openings, whose use we have not been able to determine…[92]

The most resounding artefacts from Desnos's experiments with surrealist automatism are, however, not from his texts but from his drawings. His book of poetry entitled *The Night of the Loveless Nights* was accompanied by six angry drawings, where all of the force of the hand, pencil, table and paper is preserved. The sprawling lines tearing violently at the surface correspond closely with the descriptions provided by the surrealists of the kind of unpredictable violence that accompanied Desnos when he entered trance states. While Breton was the predominant theorist of surrealist automation, its activities were wide-ranging.[93] Breton had seen automatism as a gateway to the unconscious, where forces outside of rationalism and tradition could initiate both creative activity and artistic production.

Despite this, there was still an element of structure to the surrealist experiments with automatism and, to some extent a degree of rational choice that always underpinned the

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[91] Andre Breton, "The Automatic Message," p. 132; there are similarities between this passage and: Breton, *Surrealism and Painting*, p. 68.

[92] Robert Desnos, "Mourning for Mourning (April, 1924)," in Mary Ann Caws, *Surrealist Painters and Poets* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2002), p. 188.

[93] In the same year as Breton had written "The Automatic Message" Tzara wrote "Concerning a Certain Automatism of Taste" which was less interested in the creative sphere of automatism and concentrated on how it engages with everyday aesthetic choices (such as the hats that women wear). This text was originally published in *Minotaur* 2-4 (1933); see: Tristan Tzara, "Concerning a Certain Automatism of Taste," trans. Mary Ann Caws in Mary Ann Caws (ed), *Surrealism* (London: Phaidon, 2004), pp. 243-244.

principles of chance.[94] Nowhere was this structuring of automatism more clearly articulated than in the surrealist game of the *exquisite corpse*, where speed, blindness and indeterminacy were formulated within a controlled system of artistic production.[95] The game, as described by Breton, consists of a folded paper exercise whereby participants blindly add their own words to the sentence before passing it on to the next participant.[96] As the game developed over time, the words became drawings, hastily scribbled on folded segments of paper so that the lines of each image were connected, but the content was not. The outcome of this exercise, as well as delighting the surrealists, was thought to provide an exemplar for liberating the mind from its traditionally rational thought processes. It is also the model of automatism that most directly corresponds to the architectural process, where layers of information can be added to drawings and the process of collaboration can be controlled.

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Michael Sorkin (who elsewhere discussed Coop Himmelb(l)au's psychogram in relationship to the game of the exquisite corpse) describes the architectural potential that it carries in the introduction to his book in adulatory terms: "[n]ever mind that it's the greatest portmanteau metaphor for modern culture ever, demanding that its maddening, slippery concatenation somehow be read, it's also a perfect image of the city: our

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[94] Marcel Jean discusses this duality of "chance" and "choice" retrospectively in his 1959 text: See: Marcel Jean, "Chance and Choice" in Marcel Jean, *The History of Surrealist Painting*, trans. Simon Watson Taylor (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1960), pp. 126-127.

[95] One of the best eyewitness accounts of the development of the exquisite corpse game is: Simone Kahn, "Exquisite Corpses," in Penelope Rosemount (ed), *Surrealist Women*, trans. Franklin Rosemont (Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1998), pp. 18-19.

[96] While the exquisite corpse is mentioned in a footnote to the *Second Manifesto* (pp. 178-179) the most extended meditation on the subject by Breton is in the 1948 essay "The Exquisite Corpse: its exaltation" published in: André Breton, *Surrealism and Painting*, pp. 288-290. See also: Alastair Brotchie and Mel Gooding, *Surrealist Games* (London: Redstone Press, 1991), pp. 143-144; Jonathon Paul Eburn, *Surrealism and the Art of Crime* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2008), pp. 121-128.

greatest, most out-of-control collective artefact."[97] Despite its potential for contemporary practices of architecture, the value of automatism to the surrealists was that it partly resolved the problems of expression allowing an immediate bridge between perception and representation. Hal Foster argues, on the contrary, that the surrealist experiments with automatism were not liberating at all, and were merely "compulsive" gestures, continually and obsessively reworking the same basic principles within the same stylistic framework.[98] Foster also associates this repetition with a mechanisation of process whereby responsibility for the creative act is deferred away from the author and ultimately, begins to resemble a machine. It is the "automaton": the robotic mannequin of early modernism that is prefigured in this reading of automatism; an arbitrary and infinitely transferable "model", incapable of individuality, independence or emotion. Referring to the *exquisite corpse*, Foster writes:

> [s]uch collaborations evaded the conscious control of the individual artist, but do they not also mock the rationalised order of mass production? Are these witty grotesques not also critical perversions of the assembly line—a form of automatism that parodies the world of automization?"[99]

There is little doubt that the primary thrust of Foster's argument is directly applicable to the application of automatism to the design process that, in its nature, is structured around rational principles of prefabrication and labour. While the automatic strategies of Coop Himmelb(l)au seek to loosen the authorial grip that connects the architect with the created object, they can also be read as a collapsing of the systems of responsibility and accountability that govern the built environment, dismantling the historical notions of "design" and the linear way that it is frequently taught.[100]

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[97] See: Sorkin, *Exquisite Corpse*, p. 5. For a more detailed analysis of Sorkin's writing on automatism and its relationship to chaos theory, see: Ostwald and Chapman, "Psychic Automatism and Nonlinear Dynamics," pp. 1-12.

[98] Foster, *Compulsive Beauty*, p. 3.

[99] Foster, *Compulsive Beauty*, p. 152.

[100] For an investigation of this aspect, see: Fiona McLachlan and Richard Coyne, "The Accidental Move: accident and authority in design discourse," *Design Studies* 22 1 (January 2001), pp. 87-99.

Automatism experiences a dramatic shift in emphasis when it moves from the production of drawings and novels, (the focus of surrealism), to the production of buildings and urban spaces.[101] Vidler describes the production of the psychogram as a "kind of automatic writing" which, echoing Foster, he argues is deliberately embodied within a process of automated production. The "obsessive" repetition that emerges through this bodily design process is most apparent when four separate psychograms are placed beside each other. Consider, in parallel, the psychograms for the *Humanic Extension*, the *Open House*, the *Hamburg Skyline* project and the masterplan of *Melun Sénart*. As well as being organised chronologically, the ordering also acknowledges the evolution in scale from the smallest to the largest, and covers a range of representational forms: axonometric, section, elevation and then plan. In the *Humanic Extension* (1981)[102] the psychogram shows faintly drawn traces of the existing building, which provide the contours along which the architectural insertion takes root. This is, in principle, very different to the psychogram for the *Open House* (1983) that (lacking any context) is a literal mapping of emotion and intuition where lines are drawn and then redrawn in order to construct a framework. In the *Open House*, the lines are used to create a shell, independent of function that, if necessary, is added later and after construction. [103] As Coop Himmelb(l)au themselves have noted, this drawing was not only applicable to the plan and section of the open house but also was reused as the starting point for two subsequent buildings. The *Hamburg Skyline* psychogram (1985) acknowledges the building as an object in the skyline, drawing out contours in relationship to the surrounding context and with a particular emphasis on the elevational characteristics of the incision.[104] The pyschogram for the *Melun Sénart* (1987) masterplan (a competition in which Coop Himmelb(l)au were awarded first place) is one of the most ambitious psychograms, attempting to solve the planning complexities of a city of twenty-

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[101] Breton develops a preliminary "ethics" of automatism when he begins to develop a framework for media, dictating the cycles of production and reception and how they relate to writing and drawing. See: Andre Breton, "The Automatic Message," p. 132.

[102] For more on this project, see: Coop Himmelb(l)au, *Architecture is Now,* pp. 66-71.

[103] See: Coop Himmelb(l)au, *Architecture is Now: Projects*, p. 32.

[104] The description of the project and process is given in: Coop Himmelb(l)au [Wolf D. Prix and Helmut Swiczinsky], "Skyline: Silhouette for a City like Hamburg" in Coop Himmelb(l)au, *Die Faszination der Stadt*, pp. 46-65.

thousand people sandwiched between three small but growing towns on the edge of Paris.[105] Acknowledging this complexity, the drawing shows a gradation of lines, where the strong vectorial incisions emerge angrily from the tracery of the background.[106] What is apparent when these psychograms are placed in a series is the stylistic similarity: the gravitation towards diagonals, the emphasis on triangles, the angry looping strokes, the torn, slicing gestures which tear open the "ground", the searching for emotion as the pencil scrutinises the paper. Reminiscent of the trance-induced scratchings of Desnos that are drawn directly onto the table, the compulsive quality that Foster diagnoses in experiments with automatism is evident across the range of Coop Himmelb(l)au psychograms, which, rather than discovering an architecture buried in the psyche, can be seen to produce an architecture from stylistic fragments[107]. There is—whether in plan, section, axonometric or elevation—an architecture to the lines of the psychogram; darkening the edges of forms and axes and languishing towards the contours of built space. Rather than residing, the hand in these images is angrily provocative. It doesn't passively receive information from the unconscious but aggressively manufactures it and impatiently records it. It is important also to consider the use of models in this process. Himmelb(l)au maintain that the psychogram, rather than being exclusively a drawing, quite often occurs as a model, or a drawing and model conducted simultaneously.

However it appears clearly that the models, rather than generating new information, are usually employed to project two-dimensional drawings into three-dimensional space, embodying the same emotion as the violent sketches but skewed towards the resolution of spatial and structural dilemmas as well as contextual restrictions.[108] This is apparent

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[105] The most detailed description of this project is: Coop Himmelb(l)au [Wolf D. Prix and Helmut Swiczinsky], "The Heart of a City" in Coop Himmelb(l)au, *Die Faszination der Stadt*, pp. 19-45.

[106] Similar deployment of the psychogram on an urban scale can be seen in: Coop Himmelb(l)au [Wolf D. Prix and Helmut Swiczinsky], *6 projects for 4 cities* (Cologne: Verlag Jurgen Hauser, 1990).

[107] Again evoking Desnos, Coop Himmelb(l)au describe the way that a drawing mysteriously emerges: "[a]nd then suddenly, the drawing is there. On the wall, on a table, on a piece of paper, somewhere." Coop Himmelb(l)au, "The Dissipation of Our Bodies in the City," pp. 12-16.

[108] Werner makes this point in regard to the *Open House*, where he argues that the model is effectively made to fit the psychogram, and then architectural drawings are constructed from this. See: Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, p. 176.

when the four models of the *Humanic Extension*, the *Open House*, the *Hamburg Skyline* and *Melun Sénart* are placed in sequence. They resemble moments in the production of architecture, showing an evolution from the drawing and its gradual resolution. The sheer speed of drawing, as opposed to the meticulous craft of the models, necessitates this to some extent. However it is clear that the models, rather than working simultaneously with the drawing, are an inevitable and inflexible consequence of it.[109] Again, when compared to the psychograms, a very different quality permeates the final drawings of these buildings as well, where the bones of the psychogram are rationalised into the systems of architecture and urbanism with technical and spatial precision. One example is the section through the *Hamburg Skyline* tower which, when overlayed with the psychogram, reveals the original emotional and gestural lines, now buried in the rationalising grid of floor-plates, structure, lift cores and podiums. In this instance, the psychogram is a gestural sketch of the skyline, tracing the intervention that the tower will make (resembling an explosion) as well as the angry diagonal vectors that will eventually structure the form. The extent to which the original emotion is preserved in the final section is debatable. While there is no shortage of finesse in the resolution of these buildings, it is clear that the technical stage is one of preservation of the existing sketch, rather than the automatic generation of new opportunities.[110]

In a similar vein, the realisation of *works* follows as a preservation of the psychogram, rather than its creative improvisation in three-dimensional space. Nowhere is the frozen nature of the psychogram shown more clearly than in its use in the *Groninger Museum* in Groningen, Netherlands (1993-1994) where Coop Himmelb(l)au employed the psychogram as a starting point, before dismantling it into fragments that became the screened façades of the final building. Designed to house a collection of art ranging from the sixteenth to the twentieth the masterplan for the project was developed by Studio

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[109] See: Rabinovitch, *Surrealism and the Sacred*, p. 124.

[110] Surrealist painting, and especially the painstaking realism of Dali, experienced the same dilemma. Automatism necessitated speed, and painting, in its nature, was slow and tedious. As Rabonovitch explains "Breton escaped this conceptual trap by arguing for these paintings as dream photographs or sustained memories." This effectively allowed a "fast" experience and its slow representation to work in harmony and without contradiction. See: Rabinovitch, *Surrealism and the Sacred*, p. 124.

Mendini and Coop Himmelb(l)au were invited to complete the East Pavilion, working in close proximity to a number of other well-known architects.[111] The project was designed and built in the space of less than nine-months requiring enormous speed and dexterity on the part of the architects. However this speed in construction didn't manifest itself as an open-ended creativity in the design process. On the contrary, programmatically the project heavily conforms to the expectations of a traditional museum wing. Rather than generating innovative spatial models, the psychogram is employed on the façade, where an enlarged version of the initial sketch[112] is physically etched onto the side of the building so that, as the steel rusts away, the only element left of the building is the sketch (protected from rust by the etching process). Here it is as though the condensation of the project into a single sketch was not enough and, to ram home the automatism message, the sketch itself *becomes* the building through its exaggeration as a formal element. In the context of Dada, it can be read as a reversing of Max Ernst's process of *frottage* and *grattage*.[113] Instead of using a found object from the real world to create a drawing, in the Coop Himmelb(l)au inversion, the "found" drawing is used to physically alter and disassemble an autonomous object.

The tension between the "speed" of the sketch, and its eternal mummification in architecture is one that is left unresolved by the architects themselves or the numerous theorists on the matter.[114] The application of the psychogram to the façade in the *Groninger Musuem* allows a falsified "materiality" to enter into this process, where the slowness of rusting is contrasted with this obsessive speed of design. Materiality and weathering, outside of this one example, rarely feature positively in the work of this

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[111] The other invited architects were Phillippe Starck (Paris) and Michele De Luchi (Milano). For more on the process, see: Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, pp. 177-183.

[112] Ironically, the digitisation of the image enabled it to be reproduced via computer in the production of panels, taking a human fragment and effectively mechanising it. See: Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, p. 183.

[113] Coop Himmelb(l)au acknowledge the connections with Cubist painting, and see the psychogram as a simultaneous expression of plan, section and façade. See: Coop Himmelb(l)au, quoted in: Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, p. 183.

[114] See, for instance: Yeoryia Manolopoulou, "Unformed Drawing: Notes, Sketches and Diagrams," *Journal of Architecture* 10 5 (2005), pp. 517-525.

practice. The buildings exist frozen in time, faithfully recording the isolated and truncated image at their origin and obeying a momentary, rather than evolutionary, temporal landscape. The emphasis on speed, evident in the scrawled sketches that seem to explode across the page, was also a characteristic of automatism in surrealism. Caws, for instance, describes it as a fundamental aspiration of surrealism, maintaining that

> for a while, surrealism seemed to me to be all about speed. […] Such an obsessive speed, desperate to get things down, verged at times upon hysteria in its wish to close the gap between perception and the subsequent representation.[115]

For Caws this is not just speed in production but, equally, speed in *reception* where the eye that receives the information is accelerated to an equal point of agitation. The speed with which works are produced and disseminated in the avant-garde, is translated into the psychic realm where the forces of rationalisation and reason are cheated through sheer acceleration. As much as the ideographic sketch shaped and recorded the insistent speed of surrealist creativity, it was the camera, rather than the pencil, that became the vehicle that the surrealists used most consistently to document the violent impulse of the creative act.[116] Man Ray's "rayographs" are only one of a number of iconic examples of this, where objects are placed, thrown or dropped onto photographic paper, documenting the creative act in the finished exposure.[117] Experiments with solarisation, multiple exposures and decalcomania were all techniques developed by the leading surrealists to document this obsession with speed. They, like the evolution of x-ray, attempted to unearth an immediacy to the visual image that could penetrate the *moment* and flatten it, preserving it instantly through a documentation of the objects and context that compiled it.[118] They

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[115] Caws, *The Surrealist Look,* p. 93.

[116] See: Breton, "The Automatic Message," p. 132; Krauss, "When Words Fail," pp. 98; Krauss, "The Photographic Conditions of Surrealism," pp. 3-34.

[117] Man Ray published his first book of *Rayographs* in 1922, after having accidently discovered the technique in his darkroom. For more on this, see: Barbara Beth Zabel, *Assembling Art: The Machine and the American Avant-Garde* (Jackson: The University of Mississippi Press, 2004), pp. 21-28.

[118] For the influence of x-rays on Man Ray and avant-garde production generally see: Linda Dalrymple Henderson, "X rays and the Quest for Invisible Reality in the Art of Kupka, Duchamp and the Cubists," *Art Journal* **47** 4 (Winter 1988), pp. 323-340. This will be covered in more detail in the subsequent chapter on "Diller + Scofidio".

overlap, both stylistically and methodologically with the broader project of Coop Himmelb(l)au's pyschogram which was described, in 1984 as a simultaneous layering of "elevations and sections on top of each other as if it were possible to see the building with x-ray eyes"[119]. However, as has already been noted, there is an inherent violence that accompanies this "speeding up" of thought. As well as being a primary symptom of the avant-garde assault on visual convention, it is equally tied to the effects of *shock* that characterise its artistic reception.

If speed was a central characteristic of automatism, it was matched in equal measure by the privation of vision: blindness. The automatic process, in all of its various guises, was a non-visual one and the hands of the participant were to be guided directly along the contours of emotion when producing works, operating independently of the constraints of reason or, more importantly, the corruption of vision. This was true as well in the *reception* of works. The validation of automatist works was not beauty but *authenticity* and, for Breton at least, the departure from the visual was the most significant and emancipatory characteristic of automatic procedures and was, in itself, enough justification for their prolonged interest in the topic.[120] The surrealists associated the act of closing the eyes with automatism, somehow enabling a direct stream to the unconscious.[121] A famous image by Rene Magritte entitled "*Je ne vois pas la … cachée dans la foret*" [I do not see the … hidden in the forest] shows the leading members of the movement photographed with their eyes closed further reinforcing this connection with a non-visual model of artistic production.[122] Arp, as we have already seen, composed his collages with "eyes closed" and there is evidence that Andre Masson often did the same.[123] That Coop Himmelb(l)au

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[119] Coop Himmelb(l)au, quoted in: Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, p. 183.

[120] This is most clearly expressed in Breton's belated essay on the subject, originally published in *Minotaur* (May, 1934). See: Laurent Jenny, "From Breton to Dali: The Adventures of Automatism," *October* 51 (Winter, 1989), pp. 105-14.

[121] For more on surrealism and the deprivation of vision, see: Michael Chapman, "Spatial entrails: Themes from surrealism and psychoanalysis in the interiors of Sugar Suite," *IDEA* (2009), pp. 96-109.

[122] See: Caws (ed), *Surrealism*, p. 76.

[123] Masson's life was haunted by his experiences of the First World War, triggering recurring nightmares and deep-seated trauma that is a characteristic of his work. The way that these nightmares were represented was, in a manner similar to the psychogram, through a blind engagement with the unconscious. Masson is

undertake the psychogram with "eyes closed" is further evidence of the closeness of their objectives to the surrealist model and the extent to which their process is aligned with these broader avant-gardist concerns. The bodily cropping of Himmelb(l)au, captured in the "truncated hands", is a thinly disguised mistrust of the architectural object and a privileging of the process or production of architecture.

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In his theorisation of the "avant-gardiste" work of art, Bürger contributes a section on the importance of "chance" in the avant-garde, with a particular emphasis on surrealism and its tactics. Bürger refers to the German literary critic Erich Köhler's writing on "chance in literature", contemporaneous with *Theory of the Avant-Garde*. Köhler writes

> [f]rom Tristan Tzara's newspaper clipping poems down to the most modern happening, the enthusiastic submission to the material was not the cause but the consequence of a state of society where only what chance reveals is immune against false consciousness, free of ideology, not stigmatised by the total reification of the conditions of human life.[124]

Drawing heavily from Adorno, Köhler argued that the fascination with chance was "not the cause but the consequence" of a mistrust of the all-encompassing culture industry which over-determined all aspects of creative life. As Bürger acknowledges, Köhler sees this as a characteristic of chance in both avant-garde and neo-avant-garde processes which both set out to challenge the conditions of modernism. For Bürger, a more historically specific critique is required that, drawn specifically from surrealist automatism, establishes the historical conditions of the 1920s and the ideological "hope" that was placed on chance as a political tactic. For Bürger this was fundamentally different to the conditions in which the neo-avant-garde deployed chance.

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underrepresented in American art theory and especially in regard to the relationship between automatism and the unconscious. For a discussion of this relationship, see: Martin Ries, "Andre Masson: Surrealism and his Discontents," *Art Journal* 61 4 (Winter 2002), pp. 75-85.

[124] Erich Köhler, trans. Michael Shaw, quoted in Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 64; the quotation is from Erich Köhler, *Der literarische Zufall, das Mögliche und die Notwendigkeit* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1996) p. 81 [1973]. To date, none of Kohler's works have been translated into English.

Bürger sees chance as the phenomenon where two or more unrelated occurrences "are brought into relation with one another."[125] While Bürger argues that the surrealists never manufactured chance,[126] they were deliberately more sensitive to its operations and, as a result, more conscious of its effects. Summarising this position, Bürger writes

> [s]tarting from the experience that a society organised on the basis of a means-end relationship rationality increasingly restricts the individual's scope, the surrealists attempt to discover elements of the unpredictable in daily life. Their attention is therefore directed towards those phenomena that have no place in a society that is organised according to the means-end rationality […]. They attempt to bring the extraordinary about. The fixation of specific places and the effort to create a *mythologie moderne* indicate their intent to master chance, to make the extraordinary repeatable.[127]

However for Bürger, the critical differentiation that characterises the surrealist engagement with chance is the deliberate attempt to see chance as "objective meaning" as opposed to subjective opportunity. In this sense, chance is elevated to an agent in the production of meaning, but a meaning that is not rational or fixed in place. For Bürger, this faith in the productive capacity of chance and its objective, rather than subjective, status is aligned to a critique of the means-end rationality of modernity and a refusal to reduce meaning to these terms. Given this, the production of meaning through chance, is also equivalent to the production of a new modern *subject*[128] that is opposed to the rationalisation of individual behaviour through logic. For Bürger, the surrealist use of chance was integral to an approach to life and, well beyond aesthetic effects, understood chance as part of a broader ideological position that challenged the foundations of bourgeois capitalism.

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[125] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 65.

[126] Bürger refers to Valéry's observation that, to manufacture chance, "[o]ne need only close one's eyes as one picks an object from a number of similar ones to make the result a chance result." This is reminiscent of a number of the experiments undertaken by Marcel Duchamp, such as the *Three Standard Stoppages* (1913-1914) or *With Hidden Noise* (1916). See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 65.

[127] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 65.

[128] This became a major theme in the writing of Hal Foster, and especially in Prosthetic Gods, where he argues that the avant-garde of the 1920s respond to the First World War with the creation of an "armoured" modern subject that is both mechanised and dehumanised. See: Foster, *Prosthetic Gods*, p. x, pp. 55-57.

The critical nexus that needs to be understood in relationship to the use of chance in Dada and surrealism, therefore, is not its deployment in the production of meaning through life but in the use that is made of chance in the production of art.[129] In this context, Bürger is more critical. While following the position of Köhler (and Adorno) up to this point, Bürger's argument diverges in relationship to this aspect of avant-garde practice. Unlike Adorno and Köhler, who see the use of chance as a generic response to modernism, Bürger is anxious to position these strategies as a characteristic of the historical avant-garde, reinforcing his position that the 1920s avant-garde saw the practice of life as the fundamental basis for the annihilation of art as an institution. Bürger's argument is that the application of chance in the neo-avant-garde was geared towards the production of art, rather than the production of an alternative meaning.[130] As a result, Bürger contrasts the surrealist use of chance with the "arbitrariness" that characterises its use in the neo-avant-garde.[131] For Bürger, these tactics are distinguished by the "production" of chance itself, as opposed to the production of objective meaning through chance.

That Adorno's theory is drawn primarily from an understanding of music, and Bürger's defence is drawn primarily from the fields of literature and poetry is significant.[132] Neither of them consider, in any detail, the contextual implications that chance has on the built environment. What is important is that the creative practices employed transcend the disciplines that contain them and engage with the praxis of life. In this sense, Bürger finds it pertinent to distinguish between the *perception* of chance (its direct production) and the *manufacture* of chance (its mediated production), claiming the former category for the historical avant-garde and the latter for the neo-avant-garde. Consider Bürger's critique of the evolution of chance in painting in the 1950s. Bürger writes

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[129] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 67.

[130] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 67.

[131] "…at best the arbitrariness can afterward be interpreted as individual expression." Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 67.

[132] Rosalind Krauss also notes the distinction between disciplines in regard to automatism, as well as the bias attributed to the visual in Bürger's work. See: Rosalind Krauss, "The Master's Bedroom," *Representations* 28 (Fall, 1989), p. 55.

> [p]aint is dripped and splashed on the canvas. Reality is no longer copied and interpreted. The intentional creation of a totality is largely renounced and makes way for a spontaneity that, to a considerable extent allows chance to produce the painting. The subject that has freed itself of all the constraints and rules of creation finally finds itself thrown back into an empty subjectivity. Because it can no longer work itself out […] the result remains accidental in the bad sense of the word, ie. arbitrary. The total protest against any and every sense of constraint does not take the subject to the freedom of creation but into arbitrariness. At best, this arbitrariness can afterward be interpreted as individual expression.[133]

The severity of Bürger's critique of these processes should not be overlooked, distinguished, as it is, from the romanticisation of chance he observes in surrealism. For Bürger, the collapse of any sense of reality as a conditioning principle in production means that these tactics have degenerated into "individual expression" effectively operating outside of any social, political or cultural critique.[134] Where the surrealists cultivated chance as a way of enhancing the experience of life and disrupting the hegemony of means-end rationalism that had limited it, the later practices were merely "accidental" and indicative of "an empty subjectivity": isolated moments of protest which operate outside of the demands of ideology or any attempt to want to engage with it. There is little doubt that Bürger overstates the potential of chance in surrealism to the same extent that he undervalues its importance to the neo-avant-garde. A number of the practices of early Dada, for instance, are directly geared towards the production of chance without a sustained critique of the structures of life and, equivalently, a number of the experiments with chance, such as those of John Cage, far surpassed the original experiments of Dada and surrealism and continued this project in a radical sense well into the 1970s.[135] Despite this, the central elements of Bürger's critique are instructive and particularly in regard to the work of Coop Himmelb(l)au.

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[133] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 67.

[134] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 67.

[135] For the distinction between Cage's understanding of chance as a "philosophy" in comparison to the Dadaist and surrealist adoption of it as technique, see: Branden Joseph, "A Therapeutic Value for City Dwellers: The development of John Cage's early avant-garde aesthetic position" in David Wayne Patterson, *John Cage: Music, Philosophy and Intention, 1930-1950* (London: Taylor and Francis, 2002), pp. 135-176.

At this point it is worth returning to the model of the psychogram and the extent to which it is prone to the criticisms that Bürger levels against the integration of chance in the neo-avant-garde. There is a large amount of evidence to support the premise that Himmelb(l)au deploy chance as a means of dismantling the "means-end" relationship that structures the built environment. Describing their process, Wolf Prix describes the psychogram as

> [a]n explosive moment of design, which excludes everything that impedes an opening of architecture. Material constraints, clichés, codes, rules and regulations do not exist at the moment of design. The necessary rationalisation and structuring of the architecture thus designed, followed later.[136]

However it is important to separate the architects' intention, with the actual effects that these processes achieve. Himmelb(l)au's claim that the process dismantles rationalism is highly contentious and particularly in contrast to the more extreme tactics of Dada and surrealism where drawings are no longer produced at all, but chosen from scattered fragments or generated through discursive spatial acts. In this context, the psychogram is relatively conservative, preserving the role of the architect and resembling, to some extent, the traditional architectural process. The "hands" of the author, so central to the identity of Coop Himmelb(l)au, are effectively disguised in the historical avant-garde as the role of the artist is replaced with the practice of life.

The psychogram, as an agent of automatic thought, tends to objectify chance as opposed to deriving meaning from it. In this regard it operates as a barrier to the experiential *praxis* of life, as Bürger described it, and tends to reinforce the autonomous nature of architectural production. Rather than preserving the opportunities for chance intrinsic to their design process, the pyschogram acts to *produce* chance and then indoctrinate it. In the same way, the reception of the psychogram is equally exclusive, disengaged from the production of objective (or social) meaning and narrowly concerned with the deciphering of subjective clues that, only to the trained eye, can be developed into a building. Any meaning embedded in the psychogram is not translated into objective meaning but

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[136] Wolf Prix, "Our Architecture has Four Cities and Seven Lives" in Prix, *Get Off My Cloud*, p. 62.

remains in the domain of subjective coincidence. This tactic, like those of the neo-avant-garde painters, is susceptible to the criticisms that Bürger wages against the *production* of chance, as opposed to its *discovery*.

In contrast, the psychogram does not embody the central motives that Bürger sees in the Dada and surrealist use of chance which is essentially discovered, or witnessed, rather than produced. Chance is available to anyone and is not the exclusive domain of the artistically gifted. It was the development of modes of reception to chance that characterised the Dada and surrealists experiments in this field. Automatism had the characteristic of a "recipe", intended not at the creation of *objects* but the production of *meaning*, anchoring, in Bürger's terms, "a liberating life praxis."[137] Bürger makes this point frequently, arguing that the emphasis on chance enables a conflation of production and consumption such that the newly-defined modern subject, receptive to the productive capacities of chance, is at once a producer and consumer of meaning through the creative act. This is the collapse of art, as it is separated from the institutions of art and the exclusive domain of the artist and orchestrated through the accumulation of life experience. Bürger concludes that "[a]ll that remains is the individual who uses poetry as an instrument for living one's life as best one can."[138]

While serving as the means of communication between the two primary figures, the psychogram is an exclusive language, available only to the highly trained hands that are conditioned to producing it and the technical expertise that is deployed to transform it into a constructed reality. It is not a process, like the newspaper poems of Arp, that is available to anyone. It involves highly specific criteria and an overly structured dependence on the already existing conditions of architecture. Far from dismantling the institution of architecture, the psychogram, as a primal drawing intended for construction, re-establishes the architect as the sole author in the production of architecture as well as its future reception. It does little to engage the practice of architecture with "a liberating life praxis" as Bürger would require of an avant-garde tactic. However the psychogram is not

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[137] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 53.

[138] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 53.

illustrative of the entire oeuvre of Coop Himmelb(l)au, but a relatively minor band, and there is considerable evidence that automatism encroached on their practice in more subtle ways and, with a considerably greater impact on the experiential praxis of life.

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As has already been noted, the primary characteristic of the avant-gardiste work in Bürger's theory is the dissolution of an organic whole and the reassembly of meaning through fragments. For Bürger, the reception of the avant-gardiste work is characterised by the refusal to provide an organic meaning that, in the response of the viewer unable to assemble all of the competing fragments, is experienced as shock. As Bürger writes

> [t]his refusal to provide meaning is experienced as shock by the recipient. And this is the intention of the avant-gardiste artist, who hopes that such withdrawal of meaning will direct the reader's attention to the fact that the conduct of one's life is questionable and that it is necessary to change it. Shock is aimed for as a stimulus to change one's conduct of life; it is the means to break through aesthetic immanence and to usher in (initiate) change in the recipient's life praxis.[139]

Shock was one of the most important tactics in the armoury of the historic avant-garde. In fact, one of the primary criticisms that Bürger uses against the neo-avant-garde is that the primary "shocks" had already been absorbed by the audiences of the historical avant-garde, manifesting themselves in the neo-avant-garde as variations of past practices, repetitions or even the experience of no shock at all.[140] It is clear that the simplistic automatism of the psychogram in the design process fails to dismantle the holistic nature of the work of architecture and, as a result, resides in an earlier tradition of architectural production. Rather than offering the refusal of meaning, or the discovery of objective meaning through chance, the psychogram provides an excess of subjective meaning, but no shock or resulting change "in the recipient's life praxis". Related to this, and a critical aspect of Bürger's argument, is the importance he places on the development of a

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[139] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 80.

[140] Aspects of this argument are retraced in the context of Robert Rauschenberg's work in: Branden W. Joseph, *Random Order: Robert Rauschenberg and the Neo-Avant-Garde* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2003), pp. 11-18.

modern subject in the historical avant-garde which is receptive to chance. For Bürger, the avant-gardiste work of art dismantled the institutional context of art and realigned it with everyday life, allowing universal events to be decoded as artistic practice rather than requiring a privileged aesthete to decode them. The development of a rejuvenated *subject* was central to this tactic, enabling the social and cultural transformations upon which the historical avant-garde was constructed. Parts of this argument correspond to Foster's writing, which sees the avant-garde project in the 1920s as the creation of a new subject, inherently contextualised by the effects of war and industrialisation.[141]

Coop Himmelb(l)au allude to the need for a new subject in their manifestoes on a number of occasions. Suggesting the development of a new architectural subject in their 1970 manifesto "It is Not That We Should Change" they, echoing Rudi Dutschke, write "[i]t is not that we should change in order to live with architecture, but architecture has to react to our movements, feelings, moods, emotions so that we want to live within it."[142] Referring to the centrality of life to their approach they describe four gradations of living in "Beautiful Living Makes Frozen Lives": the apartment, the building that houses it, the street, and then the city, each evoking different "scales" of life that architecture can accommodate. Suggesting a new "hot" subject that might embrace the opportunities of this expansion of life into the modes of *hot* living, Coop Himmelb(l)au write

> [i]t is the vitality of the person living there that will ultimately determine whether the apartment is hot or cold. In a hot flat, one can use and identify with all the chances and opportunities our urban environment offers. The language of the hot flat is the language of our urban civilisation. This demands courage from all the participants-courage to correlate the outer and inner worlds (home and city) and to seek the identity of society in the entire realm of experience.[143]

In a similar vein, their 1983 manifesto promises that "Architecture is not Accomodating" and seeks a proactive role for architecture that dismantles the complacencies of the modern subject. Coop Himmelb(l)au observe that "[a]ccommodation and classification

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[141] This argument is developed in: Foster*, Prosthetic Gods*, p. 55-61.

[142] Prix, *Get off My Cloud*, p.27 [It is Not that We Should Change (1970)].

[143] Prix, *Get off My Cloud*, p.35 [Beautiful Living Makes Frozen Lives (1978)]

are—in architecture as well as in social life—expressions of a rigid, reactionary and entrenched attitude […] that turns life to ice."[144] This emphasis on creating a new subject is disguised, to a large extent, in the experiments with the psychogram but becomes evident in the more discursive practices of the firm, such as their experiments with the body and architecture in the first years of the practice. In these cases, rather than employing automatic processes to generate architectural form, they allow the use of automatism to disrupt the conventions of found architecture, engendering new subjects and modes through which these violated buildings need to be inhabited. These processes align much more strongly with the anarchy of Dada experiments with automatism, as well as transcending the focus on architectural form that renders a number of their architectural effects impotent in the context of avant-garde practice. Virtually acknowledging that architectural form and avant-garde shock are incompatible, Wolf Prix concedes that "[y]ou cannot scare people more than when you are going to dissolve form. That is almost an attempted murder on formalistic architecture."[145]

There is sufficient evidence to suggest that, while over-determined in the psychogram, the concerns of automatism and the development of a new subject for architecture were central to the practice of Coop Himmelb(l)au and surface, to some extent, at the moments when the psychogram itself is enabled to reside. While there is an obvious correspondence between the psychogram and surrealist automatism, the psychogram generates the model of "formalistic architecture" that Coop Himmelb(l)au set out to criticise and the attempts to position the psychogram as an avant-garde tactic akin to Dada and surrealism need to be deeply cautious of the intended outcomes and disciplinary contexts in which these tactics were developed.[146] Too much emphasis has been placed on this aspect of Coop Himmelb(l)au's work and its simplistic connections with Dada and surrealism, without a proper consideration of the more radical aspects of their architectural design process, such as their experiments with fire or the body. Coop

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[144] Prix, *Get off My Cloud*, p.50 [Architecture is Not Accommodating (1983)]

[145] Coop Himmelb(l)au (1996) quoted in: Frank Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, pp. 116-117.

[146] This is something that Veseley is conscious of in his analysis of Coop Himmelb(l)au's process and its surrealist credentials. See: Veseley, "The Surreal House," p. 40.

Himmelb(l)au's work is extremely eclectic and tends to correspond more closely to Bürger's theory when it abandons drawing and concerns itself with practices that are foreign to conventional architecture and the disciplinary boundaries that define it. It is through these practices that architecture is discovered, rather than produced, and functions as an *objet-trouvé* at odds with the autonomous architectural object.

The remainder of this chapter will consider two related automatic practices in Coop Himmelb(l)au's work that transcend the simplistic modes of the psychogram and can help to position their work in the broader context of Dada and surrealism and the emphasis on chance that foreshadows Bürger's interpretation. Both of these are characterised as "acts" rather than objects and can be described through recipes, as opposed to artefacts.[147] The first act is the puncturing, stabbing and tearing tactics, embodied in the *Haus Vektor II* project, where a dagger is plunged through a traditional domestic house. The second act takes place when the pairing "transplant" their faces literally onto the model of the city. Both of these projects engage automatism in novel ways and are more attuned to the production of objective meaning, as opposed to architectural objects as such. In this sense, they will serve to further the exploration of Coop Himmelb(l)au's work and establish its avant-garde credentials within the context of Bürger's writing.

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The surviving legacy of Coop Himmelb(l)au's 1978 project *Haus Vektor II* (also known as House Meier-Hahn) is a photograph of a model, depicting a conventional domestic house that has been plunged through from above with a shiny metal dagger.[148] Documentary in nature the photograph is matter-of-fact, lacking the atmospheric chiaroscuro that is characteristic of the majority of the photographs that emerge from the practice.[149] Rather

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[147] On this, see: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 53.

[148] For a more detailed reading of this house in relationship to automatism, see: Chapman and Ostwald, "Automated architecture," pp. 241-248.

[149] This photo is usually credited to the firm Coop Himmelb(l)au, as opposed to Gerald Zugmann, who has taken the iconic photographs of Himmelb(l)au's models, as well as their self-portraits. See: Gerald Zugmann, *Blue Universe: Modelle zu Bildern machen/Transforming Models into Pictures: Architectural projects by Coop Himmelb(l)au* (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Kantz, 2002).

than recording an architectural object, the photograph in this instance records an event. Reminiscent of the moment that Desnos attacked Max Eluard with a kitchen knife in the living room of Breton's house in the 1920s, the act resembles an automatic act of madness where unconscious drives give form to adolescent violence through a suspension of reason or rationality. Where Desnos emerged from the trance with no recollection at all of the incident, Coop Himmelb(l)au's madness is recorded in both model and photograph so that its effects can be analysed and assimilated into architectural practice.

The dagger articulates a radical new relationship between the architect and the architectural object where the cultural values of domesticity and shelter that are manifest in the building's shell are violently attacked from the outside. The dagger pierces the delicate outer skin with surgical precision, slicing violently through its central chambers, dismantling its interior and the humanistic associations of dwelling, before emerging triumphantly from the other side. Coop Himmelb(l)au's proposed alterations, existing first as a model and then as a photograph, not only attack the values of domesticity inscribed in the buildings shell but the architectural object itself and the processes of making which implicate it.

Haus Vektor II establishes a relationship where the architectural object and its production are no longer connected but in a state of mutual friction and internal collapse. The act symbolically establishes the architectural object as a residual home for conventional and conservative political values that are inevitably accumulated in traditional architectural processes. This corresponds closely to the tactics of the historical avant-garde, who used architecture as a conservative "ground" for the destabilising tactics that they inflicted on the picture plane. In Coop Himmelb(l)au, the creative act and the architectural context are placed in deliberate opposition to each other, freeing the gesture from the associated values of conventional building. As the architectural object is increasingly distanced from its author, a critical process emerges where the object, rather than being the outcome of architectural making, becomes its immediate and legitimate target. Replicating the themes of conceptual art[150], Himmelblau's violent modifications in the Vektor projects delineate a

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[150] This distancing of the object from its making was also a theme in post-structuralist theorising on art, as well as Conceptual Art of the late 60s and 1970s. As has already been noted, authors such as Lucy Lippard

model of architectural investigation *as* critical practice, whereby the "method" becomes the work itself, re-establishing a framework through which it, and the object itself, are to be reinterpreted.

The operation of chance in the *Haus Vektor II* project is diametrically opposed to the psychogram process. Rather than intuiting an architecture out of a violent, psychological sketch by the architect, the *Haus Vektor II* proposes a recipe through which the moment of architecture can be reproduced by anyone. Aligning the process with the forces of chance that Bürger describes, the significant point of departure for the *Haus Vektor II* is that it is a *readymade* gesture, physically altering the values that are attached to the house and refusing the organic whole that might make sense of them.

While not widely celebrated, the violent alteration embodied in the *Haus Vektor II* is representative of the themes that had preoccupied Coop Himmelb(l)au up until that point. The act of piercing a building is replicated in a similar project from the following year where a glistening aluminium shard is stabbed through the centre of an historic nineteenth-century building. Exhibited as part of their 1979 exhibition *Tough Corner* for the Viennese Biennale, the building was Joseph Olbrich's *Vienna Succession Exhibition* building that, at the turn of the century, embodied the values of progressive Austrian architecture in a single edifying monument. Two characteristics of the *Tough Corner* exhibition are of particular significance. Firstly, it is worth noting the way in which the interior has become an object, filling the architectural volume and disrupting the conventional characteristics of internal space. In this sense, the installation has conceptual allegiances with Marcel Duchamp's *Sixteen Miles of String* which disrupted the space of the gallery to such an extent that it was no longer able to house the function that was intended for it and in the process, offered a negation of architecture and its values.[151] Secondly, the act of

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observed the dematerialisation of the art object, embodied in a creative framework where "method" becomes critical practice, devoid of any associations of value or subjective assertions of quality. See, for example, the anthology: Lucy R. Lippard, Lucy R. *Six Years: The Dematerialisation of the Art Object from 1966 to 1972* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997); For a post-structuralist reading of the changing role of critical practice see Rosalind Krauss's introductory essay in: Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1986), pp. 1-6.

[151] As already mentioned, Demos argues for an "indifference" on the part of Duchamp towards the mediums

puncturing physically pierces the skin of the building, as the sharpened tips of the metal insertion protrude ominously above the doorway and out onto the street announcing, to the façade, the spatial gymnastics of the interior. The nature of this protrusion disrupts the psychological space of the street and, as with the *Haus Vektor II* act, turns the architectural context into a frozen object that can be acted against. More importantly the gesture articulates an inherit violence that forces itself upon the building and, rather than accommodating the various contextual and spatial constraints, is more profoundly concerned with their annihilation. The 1979 manifesto which accompanies the *Haus Vektor II* project makes clear the connection between making architecture and physical, often bodily and even murderous violence. Entitled the "Poetry of Desolation" the text is significant. It reads

> [i]f there is a poetry of desolation, then it is the aesthetics of the architecture of death in white sheets. Death in tiled hospital rooms. The architecture of sudden death on the pavement. Death from a rib-cage pierced by a steering shaft. The path of a bullet through a dealer's head on 42nd Street. The aesthetics of the architecture of the surgeon's razor-sharp scalpel. The aesthetics of peep show-sex in washable plastic boxes, of the broken tongues and the dried up eyes. And that is how the buildings have to be. Unpleasant, rough, pierced. Blazing. Like an erected angel of death.[152]

Replacing the positivistic values of architectural space with the "unpleasant, rough [and] pierced" entrails of this poetry of desolation enables Coop Himmelb(l)au's practice to develop an automated model of violence which is central to their work and the processes used to create it. As well as being anti-humanist, the process is in its nature avant-garde, distancing itself from the forces of normalisation and conformity that are embodied in the traditional processes of architectural design and the inevitably sanitised products of this process. The unglamorous realities of this anti-architectural method are embodied in the model where the dagger not only tears open the skin of the building but its internal

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of painting exhibited in the two respective exhibitions. See: T. J. Demos, "Duchamp's Labyrinth: First Papers on Surrealism, 1942," *October* 97 (2001), pp. 91-119; see also: Krzysztof Fijalkowski, "Marcel Duchamp, Surrealist Exhibitions and the Restless Place," in Jane Allison (ed), *The Surreal House* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

[152] See: Prix, *Get Off My Cloud,* p. 63 [Our Architecture has Four Cities and Seven Lives].

spaces, its programme, its history, its memories and its values. As the object of accumulated values the building is attacked as a means of attacking these values. The uneasy tension between the processes of art and architecture is captured in the emotion of the act itself, the thinly veiled animosity towards the architectural object, as well as the medium through which the act is orchestrated—the architectural model which bridges the gap between the work of art and architecture.

At the same time as the firm were developing these destructive tactics in models and gestures, they were formulating the blueprint for an architectural design process that, drawing heavily from artistic process, became the framework for their work throughout the 1980s. Accompanying their increasingly violent manifestoes, the notions of "stabbing", "ripping", "plunging", "tearing" and "piercing" are a continual theme that runs through the work of Coop Himmelb(l)au from this time and marks, historically, the transition from the conceptually driven art projects of the 1960s to their spectacular built works of the early 1980s. Strong connections exist between these acts of masculine insecurity and Freud's writing on castration anxiety. Gunther Feuerstein finds in these acts "a violent symbol of deflowering and penetration"[153] and for Frank Werner they constitute "in the Freudian sense […] violent erotic displacement activities."[154] However the exact relationship between the primal fantasy of castration and the early architecture of Coop Himmelb(l)au is yet to be fully explored.

The inherent violence and thinly veiled aggression that runs through Himmelb(l)au's writing from this period invoke a reading of their work in the expanded context of psychoanalysis, and, especially given the emphasis on automatism that has sought to engage it. The connections with psychology, and more specifically, psychoanalysis have been widely suggested, including by Himmelb(l)au themselves.[155] The location of their office in Vienna, synonymous with Freudian psychoanalysis, has fuelled this to some extent. In a recent

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[153] Feuerstein quoted in: Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, p. 43.

[154] See: Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, p. 43.

[155] See: Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, p. 43.

essay, Jeffrey Kipnis used this as a starting point in unravelling the themes that have preoccupied the practice, writing,

> [w]hat really matters about the architecture of Coop Himmelb(l)au is not what it means or even how it looks, but how it behaves. […] Two of Vienna's greats, Sigmund Freud and Otto Rank (né Rosenfeld), suggest that birth trauma might be a good place to start, especially if the behaviour in question is anxious or unruly.[156]

The implications of stabbing, puncturing and piercing which are manifest in Himmelb(l)au's *Haus Vektor II* provide a clear correlation with this tendency to destabilise the body as the logocentric origin of architectural form in Coop Himmelb(l)au's often quoted pursuit of an "[a]rchitecture that bleeds, that exhausts, that whirls, and even breaks […] that lights up, stings, rips and tears under stress."[157] Given the centrality of castration to Freud's short text on *The Uncanny* and the subsequent influence that this text (primarily through the writing of Hal Foster and Anthony Vidler) has had on recent discussions in architecture, it is surprising that castration anxiety hasn't been more central to the theorising of contemporary architecture and specifically in regard to the architecture of deconstruction. Vidler writes that "Himmelb(l)au's projects attempt to recuperate an immediate connection between body language and space, the unconscious and its habitat."[158] In his essay on *The Uncanny*[159] Freud had argued for three "primal scenes" which, buried in the infant psyche, manifest as neuroses in adult life (both subject to repression and, as a result, unexpected return). While the intra-uterine fantasy has already been justifiably connected with architecture and surrealism (well before the writing of Vidler in the important texts of Tristan Tzara[160] and Matta[161]) the role of castration or, for that matter, oedipal fantasy have been much less adequately accommodated in a concentrated theory of architecture.[162]

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[156] Jeffrey Kipnis, "Trouble on Ringstrasse, Ruminations on Main Street," in Peter Noever (ed), *Coop Himmelb(l)au: Beyond the Blue* (Vienna: Prestal Verlag and MAK, 2008), p. 39.

[157] Prix, *Get Off My Cloud,* p. 46 [Architecture Must Blaze (1980)]

[158] Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, xii.

[159] See: Sigmund Freud, *The Uncanny*, trans. David McLintock (London: Penguin, 2003), pp. 121-161.

[160] Tzara, "Concerning a Certain Automatism of Taste," p. 244.

Placing to one side the psychoanalytical readings, the *Haus Vektor II* is clearly intended as a reformulation of the relationship between architecture and shock, enabling architectural form and the strategies of violence to be united by simultaneously dismantling the protective notions traditionally attached to the inhabitation of architecture. It is through this spatialisation of the emotions of fear and shock, that the strategies of Coop Himmelb(l)au from this period begin to extend the discourse of automatism in architecture. The *Haus Vektor II* project engages "shock" as a strategy on a level deeper than the formalistic psychogram and engages with the notion of reception, as well as conception: forcing, upon the viewer an interpretation of the act. Literally fulfilling Bürger's definition of chance as "two [phenomenon] brought into relation with one another"[163] the model evokes the primal scene of surrealist automatism embodied in the revered quote of Lautréamont: "[a]s beautiful as the chance encounter of a sewing machine and an umbrella on an operating table."[164] Himmelb(l)au's act forces the reconciliation of these two incompatible objects without offering any assumed meaning or framework of interpretation through which this could occur. As a negation of the architectural notion of a house, the act aligns strongly to

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[161] Roberto Matta, "Sensitive Mathematics-Architecture of Time," in Caws (ed), *Surrealist Painters and Poets*, pp. 299-300.

[162] For a preliminary sketch of the relationship between architecture and castration, through a study of the myth of Medusa, see: Chapman, "Spatial entrails," pp. 96-109.

[163] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 65.

[164] Lautréamont, *Les Chants de Maldoror*, trans. Guy Wernham (New York: New Directions, 1965), p. 263 [orig. c. 1869]. The work of Lautréamont, (the pseudonym of Isidore Ducasse) has been an important and widely theorised aspect of surrealist practice. Benjamin's essay on "Surrealism" even finds, in Lautréamont, "a justification of evil in which certain motifs of surrealism are more powerfully expressed than by any of its present spokesmen." Walter Benjamin, "Surrealism: the last snapshot of the European intelligentsia" in *Reflections,* p. 187. This prophecy was reinforced in 1938, when Breton wrote a revised introduction to the *Songs of Maldoror* which was illustrated by surrealist paintings, including Magritte's famous *The Rape* (1934). A decade later Magritte completed 77 illustrations for a new edition of the work in Brussells. That the most prominent members of the Surrealism movement (including Breton, Magritte, Dali and Man Ray) continually returned to the writings of Lautréamont for inspiration and reference has been further established in recent scholarship on surrealism. See for instance: Robert E. Zeigler, "The Environment of Aggression in Le Chants de Maldoror," *Rocky Mountain Review of Language and Literature* 37 4 (1983), pp. 173-180; Shane McCorristone, "Lautréamont, and the Haunting of Surrealism," in Tina Arppe, Timo Kaitaro and Kai Mikkonen (ed), *Collegium: Studies Across Disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences* 5 *Writing in Context: French Literature, Theory and the Avant Gardes* (2009), pp. 31-49.

Bürger's romanticisation of chance, where automatic acts are interpreted as objective meaning: a literal alternative to rationality that is available to anyone with sufficient sensitivity to notice it.

Another key aspect of the *Haus Vektor II* model is that, rather than objectifying chance through a preservation of the original sketch, the gesture objectifies the real world of architecture, offering it as an institutionalised model (through the house) that the architect can willingly and deliberately violate. This enables a distancing of the "work of architecture" and an immersion in its nihilistic destruction. In this context, architecture is *found*, rather than *produced*.

Nowhere is this nihilistic contempt for the object of architecture more violently articulated that in the psychogram for the *Tough Corner* exhibition, which, as well as having the usual violent tearing gestures that characterise all of Coop Himmelb(l)au's psychograms, the drawing has a hole burnt through its centre: pierced by a cigarette butt pressed against the surface of the drawing.[165] Again a readymade gesture, the act of burning the sketch while retaining its automatic capacities, establishes the psychogram as an act against itself and an unravelling of its authoritarian overtones. While amongst the first examples of its implementation, the *Tough Corner* psychogram is only one of a number of experiments with fire that the duo undertook in the late 1970s and early 1980s as they explored the dangerous and consumptive qualities of fire and their complete discordance with the stable principles of architectural form. From the same period, the *Hot Flat* project (1978) proposed a flaming shaft that pierced horizontally through the centre of a refurbished Cartesian office block providing accommodation in a small number of double-height residential apartments that, through minimalist design, were devoid of ornamentation or furniture. When unpacked, the insertion in this instance was not actually a violation (as in the *Haus Vektor II* project or the *Tough Corner*) but a constructed addition, conceived around the refurbished structure of an original carpark building in the historical centre of Vienna. Described by Werner as a "pier-like structure of communal group space"[166], the

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[165] See: Coop Himmelb(l)au, *Architecture is Now*, pp. 96-97. Reproductions of this drawing are rare.

[166] Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, p. 12.

element supported an array of flame-throwers, fed by jets that would continuously manufacture flames for the inherent symbolism that they carry. As well as the symbolic impact of the fire, the wing was a programmatic affront, providing opportunities for the kind of urban activities that the contemporary city, in its current form, prevented. For Coop Himmelb(l)au, the insertion was a rejection of the "cold" forms of living and an invitation to embrace "hot" ones. For Frank Werner, the intention was obvious:

> defeating "cold" urban architecture by emphasising "coldness" and "roughness" and at the same time reinterpreting them as a poetically desolate time-signal, free of any contextuality but deliberately intended to include ice and fire, the symbols of life. [167]

This dialectic between hot and cold was a recurring theme in Coop Himmelb(l)au's texts from this period.[168] In this instance the flame is no longer a charred void in the picture plane as in the *Tough Corner* psychogram but an aggressive architectural and spatial assault on the conventions of architecture and the symbolic rules of its inhabitation. Documented up to the point of construction, the project was intended as a less than subtle critique of the emotional detachment of the Viennese and an invitation to engage with life in a radical and proactive way, albeit, symbolic. This invitation was made even more forcefully two years later with the *Blazing Wing* project (1980), where the practice literally set fire to a constructed steel wing hung fifteen metres above the courtyard of the Technical University in Graz. The one (and only) ignition took place on 9th December, 1980. The sound of the burning wing was recorded and amplified as part of the event, with the soundtrack of the Rolling Stones "Sympathy With the Devil" played as an accompaniment[169]. While measures had been taken to ensure that walls of water

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[167] Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, p. 12.

[168] The dialectical relationship between "hot" and "cold" living was a common theme in Coop Himmelb(l)au's texts from this period. Himmelb(l)au saw fire and ice of the essence of living, and "cold" living was a derogatory term applied to the emotional detachment that was a precondition for modern life and which Coop Himmelb(l)au set out to implode. For an example, see: Prix, *Get off My Cloud*, p.35 [Beautiful Living Makes Frozen Lives].

[169] The track chosen for the accompaniment reinforces Coop Himmelb(l)au's longstanding interest in the music of the Rolling Stones. Coop Himmelb(l)au had used the music of the Rolling Stones for a 1971 television documentary that they made and also drew the title for their anthology of writings *Get Off My Cloud* from one of the Rolling Stones' most well known songs. Despite Coop Himmelb(l)au's caveat that "[a]rchitecture has

cascaded down the edges of the existing building to prevent any damage, this was, in the end, insufficiently designed, resulting in, as Werner records, almost all of the glass in these façades breaking and needing to be replaced.[170]

It was only in this accidental desecration of the existing that the project went beyond an exercise in staging, and allowed the uncontrollable nature of fire to challenge the structures of architecture and the hegemonies that are attached to them. All of these acts implied both violence and danger to existing architectural structures but they were largely symbolic gestures, executed with relative safety in the controlled environments of the art institution, museum or the school of architecture. The same was largely true of Dada which used staging widely in its armoury of shock tactics. What all of Coop Himmelb(l)au's provocations of this period have in common is that, instead of relying on the over-determination of a singular sketch, they were *readymade* gestures that could be created and enacted by anyone, whether an architect or not. In this sense, they align very closely with Peter Bürger's theory,[171] where the role of the avant-garde is to provide a recipe through which the praxis of life can be transformed. Inviting individuals to reject the "cold" structures of modern life, Coop Himmelb(l)au's experiments on this front, rival those of Dada in inviting the dissolution of the institutional (and disciplinary) boundaries of art and aligning architecture with the fabrication and production of conditions of life.

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absolutely nothing to do with music," there is a correlation between the *Blazing Wing* installation and the Industrial Punk music of Einstürzende Neubauten which is famous for frequently setting fire to the stage and recording the sounds of fire and flamethrowers as part of their performances. This connection with Neubauten's music has been made often enough for Himmelb(l)au to offer their own unambiguous rebuttal. Prix argued, in regard to the accompaniment of the *Blazing Wing* that, while the work of the Rolling Stones was "built" and "conceptual," the music of Einstürzende Neubauten, was "pure staging." (p. 402). See: Prix, *Get Off My Cloud*, pp. 399-402 [Rolling the Sky]; See also: Chapman, "Strategies Against Architecture," pp. 83-97.

[170] Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, p. 12.

[171] The practices can be read the alignment of architecture with the "attempt to discover elements of the unpredictable in daily life." Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 65

In this sense, this period of Coop Himmelb(l)au's experimentation aligns closely with the collages of Hans Arp,[172] and the tactics of Dada generally which turned the destruction of the art object into a spectacle in order, in Bürger's theory, to challenge the bourgeois normalisation of taste and convention. A famous Dada example of this form of institutionalised violence occurred in the 1920 exhibition held, hurriedly, in the back room of the Winter Brewery in Cologne.[173] Showcasing the work of Max Ernst and Johannes Baargeld (the pseudonym of Alfred Grünwald) the exhibition entitled "Dada Early Spring" contained a wooden sculpture by Ernst accompanied with a hatchet mounted on the wall inviting viewers to destroy the parts of the sculpture they didn't like. In the process Baargeld's nearby "Fluidoskeptrik", containing a fishbowl full of blood and human limbs, was also destroyed.[174] Bürger has discussed these strategies in Dada at some length and especially in relationship to his conception of "shock". Where Bürger sees the intention of these Dadaist provocations as "a stimulus to change one's conduct of life"[175], Bürger concedes that ultimately the outcome was an ill-focussed outrage that, rather than provoking change, was ultimately a forum for the angry expression of existing conservative views. As Bürger writes,

> [t]he public's reactions to Dada manifestations are typical of the nonspecificity of the reaction. It responds to the provocation of the Dadaists with blind fury. And changes in the life praxis of the public probably did not result. On the contrary one has to ask

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[172] On Arp's process, and its significance as a shock tactic, see: Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 1968), p. 238.

[173] Having been expelled from the *Arts and Crafts Museum* in Cologne, Ernst and Baargeld quickly assembled an alternative exhibition in a found space. One of the best accounts of this seminal Dada moment is the chapter on "The First Dada Season in Cologne" in: Camfield, *Max Ernst*, pp. 69-72.

[174] See: Georges Hugnet, "The Dada Spirit in Painting" in Motherwell ed., *The Dada Painters and Poets*, p. 161; in one of his texts, Baargeld wrote that "art grows on society's abdomen" and that "the artist is part of life which he destroys." Both fragments are evocative of Bürger. See: Johannes Baargeld, "…knocks the warm egg out of the hand," trans. Henry Marx, in Mel Gordon (ed), *Dada Performance* (New York: PAJ Publications, 1987), pp. 94-95.

[175] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 80.

> oneself whether the provocation does not strengthen existing attitudes because it provides them with an occasion to manifest themselves.[176]

Coincidentally this was the reaction of the Viennese to the provocations of Coop Himmelb(l)au, expressed most boisterously in opposition to the winning competition entry for the Ronacher Theater refurbishment.[177] Rather than adopting or assimilating with these tactics, it became a platform for conservative opposition to be reinforced.[178] Accepting fear as a natural response to their architecture, Coop Himmelb(l)au quote the Mayor of Vienna (their client for the project) who had conceded that "nothing terrifies Vienna's citizens more than the sight of modern buildings."[179]

For Bürger, one of the dangers of institutionalising an aesthetics of shock, is that the effects are always only a one off, and can never be repeated. Once experienced, the same encounter is always understood though the lens of previous experience. This is at the heart of Bürger's criticism of the neo-avant-garde. In Himmelb(l)au's context though, the shocks embodied in the *Haus Vektor II* project are not a continuation of the Dadaist contempt for the art object, but the evolution of a practice that enables this energy to be discharged into architecture and the built environment. Iain Boyd Whyte points to a more pressing concern that accompanies the Dadaist addiction to shock: once the public has assimilated the intended shocks it responds, not with outrage, but with indifference.[180] In this sense, the shocks have become predictable and, rather than challenging the status quo, are inevitably a reproduction of it. For Boyd Whyte, once the public expresses ambivalence in the face of these intended provocations the avant-garde project is over

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[176] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 80.

[177] The conservative reaction to Coop Himmelb(l)au's architecture is discussed in more detail in: Michael J. Ostwald, "Architecture and the Evil Eye: Coop Himmelb(l)au and the Apotropaic Oculus Invidious," *Interstices* 5 (2000), pp. 56–67.

[178] Wolf Prix has written about the negative reaction to their project, arguing polemically that it constitutes the end of architecture as fear and conservatism are allowed to deaden the proactive forces of change and innovation. See: Wolf D. Prix, "The Tower of Babel Revisited," *ANY* 0 (May/June, 1993), pp. 26-29.

[179] Prix, "The Tower of Babel Revisited," p. 29.

[180] Iain Boyd White, "The End of an Avant-Garde: The Example of Expressionist Architecture," *Art History* 3 1 (March 1980), p. 109.

and its ability to transform society has been lost. As Whyte writes "[t]he success of an avant-garde movement plays on the margin of intolerance which exists within a liberal society. The avant-garde is finished when intolerance is replaced by acceptance." [181]

The conservative reaction to the Ronacher Theater is recognition of its vitality in provoking a response, endowing it with the qualities of an avant-garde strategy. In his "Toward a Critique of Architectural Ideology" originally published in *Contropiano*, Tafuri describes the relationship between automatism and shock, with an emphasis on its implications for the praxis of life. Tafuri argues that

> [t]o remove the experience of shock from all automatism, to use that experience as the foundation for visual codes and codes of action borrowed from already established characteristics of the capitalist metropolis, [and…] to reduce the structure of artistic experience to the status of pure object, to involve the public, as a united whole, in a declaredly interclass and therefore antibourgeois ideology: such are the tasks taken on, as a whole, by the avant-gardes of the twentieth century. […The] problem now became that of teaching not how one should "suffer" that shock, but how one should absorb it and internalize it as an inevitable condition of existence.[182]

It is within this context of the modernist metropolis—inherited as a found (and unstable) architectural artefact—that the architecture of Coop Himmelb(l)au can be repositioned in regard to autonomy and the avant-garde. The stabbing, puncturing and burning are all tactics for dissolving the autonomous architectural object and elevating the experience of shock, not in a visual sense, but as destructive and violent reality. By *discovering* architecture in its institutionalised and historicised form, these violations of Coop Himmelb(l)au challenge the conservatism of the found architectural object and introduce a new, and irreconcilable, trajectory for its interpretation and inhabitation. In this aspect of their work, which articulates the dysfunctional and disturbing experience of modern life, architecture becomes a prosthetic of the modern city, marrying the condition of shock

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[181] Boyd White, "The End of an Avant-Garde," p. 109.

[182] Manfredo Tafuri, "Toward a Critique of Architectural Ideology," trans. Stephen Sartarelli in K. Michael Hays, *Architecture Theory Since 1968* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998), p. 17.

with the destructive capacities that negate architectural form and the values that it adheres to.

This marrying of human experience and the modern metropolis reaches its limits in the originary visual experiments that Coop Himmelb(l)au experimented with as a precursor to the *Melun-Senart* project (and published with the accompanying text "The Dissolution of Our Bodies in the City"[183]). In this series, the pair used a photograph of their own faces as the ground upon which the architectural elements were overlayed.[184] Corresponding with the Dada development of photomontage, the visual experiment is undertaken in three main states: firstly, as a sketch, where the lines themselves tear at the faces of the duo and become dissections (or mutilations) of the facial features; in the second state, the photo becomes the "ground" for a model, which is constructed over the top of the smiling faces in a literal disfiguring of the figures and the assimilation of their fragments into architecture. The final phase of this experiment is the removal of the faces altogether and their manifestation as a void or hole in the surface of the picture plane, upon which the pyschogrammatic strategies are projected and then distilled into architectural forms. In each of these iterations, the architecture and the body, as found objects (or reality fragments) are used as a process of collaging which refutes a holistic (or organic) narrative from emerging from their reconciliation. The integration of collage (despite the anthropomorphic context), is a medium frequently appropriated by Coop Himmelb(l)au for polemic effect where images are violently torn, ripped and shredded and then reassembled as footprints for architectural form. Having been reclaimed as fragments in a composition, the pair's faces are slashed open, dematerialised and penetrated with shards and nails, demonstrating this tendency to arbitrarily decode the fragment, strip it of its inherent meaning and context and then reassemble it as an anarchic justification for indeterminate and violent acts of architecture. The use of their own faces as a starting block for an architectural proposal provides evidence of a larger agenda that is aimed at

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[183] See: Coop Himmelb(l)au, "The Dissolution of Our Bodies in the City," p. 12-16; see also: Prix, *Get Off my Cloud*, p.56 [The Dissipation of Our Bodies in the City]. The later translation replaces *dissolution* with *dissipation*.

[184] According to the pair "[o]ur eyes became towers, our foreheads bridges, our faces landscapes, and our bodies the plan." See: Coop Himmelb(l)au, *Die Faszination der Stadt*, p. 16.

inscribing themselves into the work of architecture and literally embodying its experiences. In this regard, Anthony Vidler has argued that

> [p]hotographic collages of [Coop] Himmelb(l)au's portraits, merged by reproductive processes into the texture of city plans, diagrammatically illustrate the urge to dissolve the authoritarian body of the architect into the world that receives its designs. [… Coop] Himmelb(l)au hovers between narcissism and it opposite in a strangely powerful celebration of the will to lose power.[185]

This can be read, in Bürger's sense, as the literal sublation of architecture and life, where the experiential human body is flattened against the archaeology of the city, marrying form and experience and negotiating the shock embedded in this collapse. In this context, both the architectural object and the experiential subject are reconfigured as fragmented reminders of the conditions of modern life, accommodated, in the same way, as the roaming heroines of surrealist fiction who are stitched into the fabric of the historic city. Pressed against the picture plane, the figures resemble the ossified figures of surrealist photography or the buried traces of the feminine woman, emerging from the fabric of the city, or the surfaces of architecture that press against it. In each case, there is a flattening of the architectural ground as it collides with the archaeologies of the body, articulating the limits of architectural form and the extent to which they intersect with the visual practices of desire and gratification.

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That there are competing trajectories in the work of Coop Himmelb(l)au is a characteristic of the size and scope of their body of work and its evolution across several decades. However, peculiar to this practice is the emphasis that they have placed on shaping their interpretation and focussing interest into certain aspects of their work. The duo went to lengths to explain and defend their psychogrammatic design process in the 1980s as well as aligning their work strategically with the stylistic fascination with deconstructivism. One characteristic that is central to this self-management of theoretical interpretation is the appearance (in most publications) of a sequential evolution or timeline to their work,

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[185] Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny*, p. 76.

historicising their projects and texts into a linear succession from one to the next and pre-packaging their work in a retrospective (monographic) form[186]. This linear progression often disguises the competing and discordant intellectual themes that, from their inception, have pulled in alternative directions.

In his introduction to the work *Picasso: Architecture and Vertigo*, Christopher Green writes that "[n]ot only did Picasso leave us with an oeuvre of excessive size and scope, he also did much to determine how we would respond to it."[187] Green argues that from 1928 Picasso's work begins to resemble a diary, as the artist obsessively signs and dates (to the day) all of his works and provides a running commentary on the importance of individual works to Christian Zevros. The date, coincidently, aligned with the chronological and episodic publication of Picasso's work in the *Cahiers d'Art,* which, under the influence and editorship of Zevros, provided an extensive anthology of the artist's work and allowed the themes of his painting to be measured, often erroneously, against the tumultuous events of his personal life.[188] As well as adding to the value to his works in the art market, this voluntary cataloguing set up a monopoly of *reception* and was also the starting point of the historicisation of Picasso's work. From this moment, art historians began positioning trends and paradigms in the historical development of his work, tracing the ancestry with each previous work and, ultimately, presenting his oeuvre in a biographical sense: the methodical movement from one epoch to the next and the well-defined historical evolution that saw each work, however trivial, positioned with authority in the "archive" of his creative life.

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[186] The process resembles the fanatical project of Duchamp to self-curate his own "suitcase" museum by commissioning reproductions of his entire life's work. For more on this see: T. J. Demos, "Duchamp's Boite-en-Valise: Between Institutional Acculturation and Geographical Displacement," *Grey Room* 8 (Summer, 2002), pp. 6-37. This project will be covered in more detail in the subsequent chapter on "Diller + Scofidio".

[187] Christopher Green, *Picasso: Architecture and Vertigo* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), p. 3; a complimentary argument is developed in: Yve Alain Bois, "Kahnweiler's Lesson," Representations (Spring, 1987), pp. 33-68; also published in Yve-Alain Bois, Painting as Model (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press. 1990), pp. 65-97.

[188] For a critique of the "art as autobiography" mode of art history in Picasso's work, see: Rosalind Krauss, "In the name of Picasso," in Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde,* pp. 23-40; Rosalind Krauss, *The Picasso Papers* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1999).

There is little doubt that Coop Himmelb(l)au are proud of the historical progression of ideas that has structured their practice and reproduce this history at every opportunity. The major tomes on their work include extensive and illustrated chronologies of their practice,[189] organised as a timeline, where projects literally evolve one after the other as linear progressions in time. The recent publication of texts by Wolf Prix preserves the chronology of these texts and, while fragmentary in form, is clearly intended to suggest an evolution or strand that connects one text with the next and implies an organic totality.[190] A similar fascination with archiving is a characteristic of the drawings. Every drawn fragment, as early as 1967, contains the signature of the firm and a date, often, but not always, reproduced as part of the drawing.[191] If the avant-garde were concerned with a tearing of fragments from the whole in order to dismantle an organic, holistic interpretation, then Coop Himmelb(l)au's oeuvre is the opposite: an immaculate composition and curatorship of fragments, intended to give form to the whole.

The mythology of Coop Himmelb(l)au is wide-ranging, from their repositioning of the birth-date of the practice,[192] through to the highly stylised portraits which are used to market themselves. As has been argued, the pyschogram process, rather than being indeterminate, is in many ways over determined and, in the obsessive focus on form, is aligned with the systems of repetition and manufacturing which the process aims to subvert. It is in part way the success of these practices, and their absorption within an economy of consumption and image, that renders them impotent and ineffectual as automatic procedures. Where the fragmentary automatic sketches of surrealism are now valued and preserved artefacts in international collections, these buildings, enacted

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[189] Primary examples are: Coop Himmelb(l)au, *Architecture is Now*; Coop Himmelb(l)au, *Die Faszination der Stadt*; Zugmann, *Blue Universe;* Prix, *Get Off My Cloud*; Coop Himmelb(l)au, *From Cloud to Cloud: Biennale di Venezia 1996*; Prix, *Get Off My Cloud*.

[190] Prix, *Get Off My Cloud*.

[191] See, for example: Coop Himmelb(l)au, *Architecture is Now,* p. 15, p. 75, p. 165.

[192] While the actual starting date of the practice was 1967, the practice routinely claims its origins as 1968, drawn to the romanticisation of "68" as a period of opposition revolt and claiming an affiliation with the Paris Riots and the explorations in Rock n Roll from that year. Despite, this, there is evidence in a number of their monographs of earlier projects within the practice, including the "City with Pulsating Space Frame" (dated 1966) and "Urban Fiction" (dated 1967). See: Coop Himmelb(l)au, *Architecture is Now,* p. 196-197.

originally as a challenge to commercialisation, have become the model of the forces that they set out to undermine.

Coop Himmelb(l)au's arrival on the architectural scene in the late 1960s coincided with a resurgence of avant-garde practices in architecture (through the work in Europe of Archigram, Superstudio and Archizoom) and, simultaneously the moment when established critical notions of the avant-garde were being revisited and scrutinised. Manfredo Tafuri had radically repositioned the critical limitations of an avant-garde in architecture in the late 1960s and throughout the 70s arguing, perhaps gloomily, that the project of modernism was complicit with a bourgeoisie capitalist agenda that eventually either absorbed individual practitioners or drove them into isolated experimentation.[193]

As a critical practice which sets out violently from its inception to dismantle the forms of capitalist hegemony in architectural production, the anti-avant-garde positions of Tafuri and Bürger are of direct relevance to the work of Coop Himmelb(l)au and its relationship to the processes of Dada. In this respect, the relationship between the object and its author in Dada and in Coop Himmelb(l)au becomes critical, representing divergent tactics and outcomes despite similar artistic processes. As Bürger has illustrated, Dada used the object to celebrate bourgeoisie values, introducing the undesigned object into art primarily due to its radical and violent historical disconnection from it.[194] Through this displacement, enacted in the readymades of Duchamp, the frottage of Ernst, the contorted collages of Arp and even the dissected newspaper poetry of Tzara, the object is representative of the critique, constituting an assault on the institution of art. While Coop Himmelb(l)au introduce identical processes to Dada—frottage in Groningen, collage and indeterminacy through

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[193] Frank Werner links Coop Himmelb(l)au's working method with the criticisms of Tafuri, and in particular Tafuri's writing on experimental methods which informs his theory of "operative criticism" published in his 1980 work *Theories and History of Architecture*. However Tafuri is quick to distinguish between these experimental methods and a truly avant-garde approach to architectural production which, rather than building on existing models of architectural making, seeks to dismantle them. Werner, *Covering + Exposing*, pp. 22-24; Manfredo Tafuri, *Theories and History of Architecture*, trans. Giorgio Verrecchia (London: Granada, 1980).

[194] Bürger argues that while Dada manifestations were a negation of the work of art, it is only as works of art (ie. through the signature on a readymade) that this negation can be understood. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 56.

the psychogram, photomontage through the urban proposals of the early 1970s—the relationships are inverted, dismantling the undesigned object, rather than edifying it in the model of Dada. The "object" in Himmelb(l)au's work is not the antithesis of bourgeoisie values, as found in Dada, but instead the accumulation of capitalistic values. The fluid nature of the values assigned to these objects is also implicated in the mechanisms through which violence is mediated through the work constituting, in Dada, a bracketed assault on art-making and, in Coop Himmelb(l)au, a full-frontal assault on the accumulated objects of economic rationalisation. In this context the acts of making architecture that were embodied in the early practices of Coop Himmelb(l)au are not the impotent historical recurrence of the themes of Dada against established bourgeoisie values but instead, in the model of Foster's analysis, the appropriation of these practices against new forces, enacting in the process, this model of critique for the first time.[195]

Breton had argued that psychic automatism made visible "the real functioning of thought".[196] Where Coop Himmelb(l)au's drawings are meticulously recorded, dated and filed, the violent attack on the architectural object in the *Melun Senart* and *Haus Vektor* examples is evidence of a *moment*, inevitably linked to the present. The psychogram is turned, upon completion, into evidence of the creative act becoming archival traces of irrationality as the instinct moves from the present, to its preservation, becoming fingerprints for buildings that are yet to be built. The dagger, plunging through the shell of the house, reveals the functioning of thought in the present, embodied perennially in architectural space and experience and encroaching upon the *moment* rather than frozen and preserved in the archive or file. In the *Haus Vektor II* model, the forensic evidence is no longer traces of fingerprints that have been preserved but a bloodied murder weapon emerging from the centre of the deceased.

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[195] For Hal Foster, the neo-avant-garde experiments were not the repetition of historical avant-garde acts, but their continuation in different contexts "enact[ing] its project for the first time." Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996), p. 20.

[196] This is from the definition of surrealism that Breton offers in: Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," p. 26. For Breton, surrealism is "dictated by thought, in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern" (p. 26). See also: J. H. Matthews, The Surrealist Mind (London: Associated University Press, 1990), pp. 45-56.

By critiquing the historical processes of making architecture and their inherent complicity with economic systems (rather than the institution of art itself), the image of the *Haus Vektor II* project can be repositioned as the crystallisation of this moment in the firm's work, before it became inevitably entwined with the forces it set out to undermine. The assault on the object launched in the *Haus Vektor II* project represents an emancipatory act, freeing the designer from the burdens of conventional design and, at the same time, bridging the processes of making art with the prospect of a critical practice in architecture. This is despite the fact that, in the recent work of the practice (conducted on vast scales with lavish architectural budgets), this critique of the act of making is no longer present and in fact has, like Tafuri and Bürger predict, become inevitably consumed by capitalist modes of production. Processes of making in these works are not critiqued but rather *embodied* in the making which becomes, rather than the "eyes-shut" instantaneous sketch, a process of increasingly visual strategies of seduction, reducing the violence implicit in their original manifestoes to an aestheticised model of visual representation. As the process of making becomes embodied in the object, the role of making as a critical practice dissolves. Devoid of the anti-architectural critique which accompanied their avant-garde projects of the 1970s, it is easy to see, as Werner has illustrated, how the labyrinthine interiors of Coop Himmelb(l)au's most recent work are connected with Piranesi's own vision and can be seen (with respect to Tafuri) to constitute a nihilistic, internalised and self-perpetuating system of architectural production where the objects that were attacked in their earlier projects are perpetuated in reality, with the help of rapid prototyping machines and computer visualisation. It is within this context that the single image of *Haus Vektor II* becomes pertinent, not only linking the early work of the firm with avant-garde strategies of art-making but also celebrating the internalised frictions that exist between the work and its earliest theoretical aspirations. As the lasting symbol of violence, nihilism and emotion in Coop Himmelb(l)au's work, and re-enacting in built space the murderous tactics of Dada, the *Haus Vektor II* is representative of an isolated and historical moment of *found* architecture in a complicated and evolving architectural process where making became not the object or its representation but the act itself.

Diller + Scofidio

> The apparatus has two constituent parts, a concealing panel and a revealing panel. The concealing panel, a taut plane of surgical rubber, is suspended above the centreline from a beam that rotates in and out of position between vertical supports. A pivot hinge allows the panel to rotate 360 degrees; a rotation of 180 degrees alternates the locations of the bride and the bachelor domains relative to the audience, always obscuring one.
>
> —Diller + Scofidio, *The Delay in Glass* (1987)[1]

It has already been established that the *Large Glass* was one of the seminal moments in avant-garde production and engaged architectural space as an extended concern of avant-garde activity. Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* draws heavily from Marcel Duchamp's work and influence, arguing that his tactics in the first decades of the twentieth century, were the origins of avant-garde activity and his influence, in the neo-avant-garde, was central to its institutionalisation. Of the architects who engaged with the work of Duchamp in the second half of the twentieth century, Diller + Scofidio have been amongst the most rigorous and influential. Their merging of themes from art and architecture, as well as their questioning of the institutionalised status of the art object, is of critical importance for framing a neo-avant-garde practice in the visual arts, and with particular attention to the discipline of architecture.

Both Bernard Tschumi and Coop Himmelb(l)au are examples of practices that, having borrowed heavily from the historical avant-garde in their formative radical projects, have ultimately ended up in the traditional production of architectural buildings.[2] In this sense, while there is an ancestry that aligns with the political motivations of the avant-garde and

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[1] Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio [Diller + Scofidio], "A Delay in Glass," *Assemblage* 6 (June 1988), p. 65.

[2] The movement away from theoretical works and towards mainstream commercial projects is evident in recent monographs of the firms' work. See, for instance: Gilles Bure, *Bernard Tschumi* (Bäsel: Birkhauser, 2008); K. Michael Hays, *Bernard Tschumi* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2003); Michael Monninger, *Coop Himmelb(l)au: Complete Works, 1968-2010* (London: Taschen. 2010); Stanford Kwinter, *Dynamic Forces: Coop Himmelb(l)au, BMW Welt* (Munich: Prestel, 2007).

strong examples of projects or techniques that are avant-garde in nature, the trajectory of their practices has, over time, been away from the creative experiments that preoccupied their early work and is towards the resolution of conventional architectural problems in predominantly conventional (though dynamic) architectural ways. Despite the undeniable finesse embodied in their recent work, both practices remain firmly anchored to the discipline of architecture, with the work of architecture as their ultimate goal and aspiration.

An opposing trajectory can be found in the work of Diller + Scofidio[3], which has traversed art and architecture and, throughout the 1980s and 1990s, drew into question the nature of the institution and the role that architecture and art play in disrupting it. In this way they have challenged the status of the work of architecture through a reappropriation of the techniques of institutionalisation. Where Tschumi and Coop Himmelb(l)au have focussed on fragmentation and automatism respectively, Diller + Scofidio's approach focuses on some divergent avant-garde strategies—the ready-made, the installation, the machine, performance—and, as a result, brings into play a number of the critical aspects of Bürger's theory and, most importantly, the critique of the institutionalisation of the creative process and its distancing from the praxis of life.

The work of Diller + Scofidio is characterised by its radical departure from the conventional means of architectural practice and the blurring of the boundaries between art and architectural space. Their work from the late 1980s remains the most detailed reworking of the ideas of Marcel Duchamp in architecture and engages, in an original way, the spatial themes that have been central to its reception in art theory in the decades since Bürger's

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[3] In the middle of 2004 Diller + Scofidio changed the name of their practice to Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro) acknowledging that Charles Renfro had been made a partner. Shortly after the name became Diller, Scofidio + Renfro and the two are sometimes used interchangeably. As this dissertation focuses on the projects undertaken before 2004, the historical form of Diller + Scofidio has been adopted throughout, except where cited in the titles of more recent monographs. For the chronology of the practice, see: Guido Incerti, Daria Ricchi and Deane Simpson (ed), *Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro): The Ciliary Function, Works and Projects 1979-2007* (Milan: Skira, 2007), pp. 210-211.

publication.[4] That the work of Diller + Scofidio references the historic avant-garde is already well known. Milfred Friedman described their work as "surreal site-specific installations"[5] and as a kind of "neo-Dadaism"[6]. Hal Foster has also drawn attention to their "Duchampian gestures of disturbed vision"[7] and has argued for the work of Diller + Scofidio to be included in the broader context of a neo-avant-garde practice which, while drawing from clear historical precedents, translates them in a profoundly postmodern context.[8] Diller + Scofidio's work is characterised by the advance of technological media, the emergence of spectacle and the growing spectre of globalisation which have, in their own ways, threatened the traditional frameworks of architecture, confusing the avenues through which it may be practiced.[9]

As with Tschumi and Coop Himmelb(l)au, the recent mainstream success of Diller + Scofidio, built upon the widely published *Blur* project (2002)[10] and recent commissions for large and prestigious gallery and performance spaces[11], has seen the nature of their

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[4] For an examination of the Duchampian themes at work in Diller + Scofidio's projects from this period, see: Roselee Goldberg, "Dancing About Architecture," in Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio [Diller + Scofidio], *Scanning: The Aberrant Architectures of Diller + Scofidio* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 2003), pp. 44-60; see also: Deane Simpson, "Some Notes on the Disciplinary Practices of Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)" in Incerti, Ricchi and Simpson (ed), *Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)*, pp. 21-29.

[5] Milfred Friedman, "Tourisms: suitCase Studies," *Design Quarterly* 152 *Architecture Tomorrow* (1991), p. 39.

[6] Friedman, "Tourisms," p. 39.

[7] Hal Foster, "Architecture-Eye," *Artforum* 45 6 (February, 2007), pp. 246-254.

[8] Foster, "Architecture-Eye," p. 254 [note 13].

[9] These aspects of Diller + Scofidio's practice, as well as their relationship to capitalism, are discussed in: Felicity Scott, "Involuntary Prisoners of Architecture," *October* 106 (Autumn, 2003), pp. 98-99; see also: Aaron Betsky, "Display Engineers," in Diller and Scofidio, *Scanning,* pp. 23-36.

[10] The most exhaustive account of this building is in: Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio [Diller + Scofidio], *Blur: The Making of Nothing* (New York: Harry N Abrams, 2002); see also: Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio [Diller + Scofidio], "Blur: Swiss Expo 2002," *Assemblage* 41 (April, 2000), p. 25; Diller and Scofidio, *Scanning*, pp. 81-92.

[11] The most high profile projects are the Boston Institute of the Contemporary Arts (2006) and the Juilliard School of Ballet in New York (ongoing), however the unbuilt Eyebeam institute is one of the most widely published projects and attracted a lot of attention in the popular and architectural media. See: Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio [Diller + Scofidio], *The Eyebeam Institute* (Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 2003).

practice change as the themes embedded in their early work have shifted to the margins of their productive output. This has coincided with the growth of interest in their architectural projects from the perspective of architectural theory and their increasing alignment with architecture as their predominant medium. In a number of ways, this process has seen "traditional" architecture replace their earlier concerns with experimentation and the dematerialisation of architecture. With this in mind, this chapter will focus on projects by Diller + Scofidio from the late 1980s through until the early 1990s. These projects were executed in the untraditional sites of the "theatre", the "gallery", the "suitcase" and the "drawing board". In each instance they challenged the direct repetition of historical avant-garde ideas and reinvented them in original forms often at the margins of the architectural discipline.[12]

This chapter will interweave three primary concerns in the practice of Diller + Scofidio in order to establish an ancestry with the historical avant-garde and the broader themes of medium and spatialisation that this dissertation is concerned with. The first broad theme is travel and its relationship to homogeneity (and globalisation). This will be explored through an investigation of their *Tourisms* and *Travelogues* installations and in the context of the migrations of the historical avant-garde. The second theme will be performance and spatiality and the reworking of Duchampian themes in the representation of spatial practices. Diller + Scofidio's meditations on Duchamp for the theatre will provide a backdrop to this discussion. The final theme that is of significance is institutionalisation which, as a central component of Bürger's critique of the neo-avant-garde, enables a broader theoretical platform for Diller + Scofidio's work and an investigation of its relevance to contemporary practices.[13]

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[12] For more on the disciplinary status of their work: See: K. Michael Hays, "Scanners," in Diller and Scofidio, *Scanning*, pp. 128-136.

[13] Sections and earlier versions of this chapter have been presented or published in the following forums: Michael Chapman, "Entrails: Drawing and architectural space in the transgressive experiments of Dada," *Interstices Under Construction Symposium: The Traction of Drawing* (Auckland: November 2009) [published abstract]; Michael Chapman, "Love is a battlefield: Architecture and desire in the spatial fields of Marcel Duchamp," *Field/work: 6th International Conference of the Architectural Humanities Research Association* (Edinburgh: November 2009) [published abstract]; Michael Chapman, "Suitcase Utopias: problems of

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In one of their early texts, Diller + Scofidio observe that a "deviant" is, by definition, a crossing of lines.[14] This fragment, while interesting, marks a more substantial departure point demonstrating a concern that would become an obsession in the projects and theory of the practice. Writing in the preface to a 2007 monograph on the work of Diller + Scofidio Martin Reinhold discovers that

> [t]here is a small marker that recurs with astonishing regularity in the work of Diller + Scofidio […] sometimes explicitly, sometimes implicitly. Call it a crosshairs, an "x"—or really, a "+"—marking any number of spots, whether they are occupied by buildings and/or parts of buildings, or by viewers and/or users. To the extent that this sign also marks the collaborative space between partners and thus the space of the architectural firm itself [… To] put it more grandly, this "+" could be understood as something like a meta-sign, a self-effacing signature that nevertheless marks a particular aesthetic, or even a style.[15]

Elaborating on this in the conclusion to the piece, Martin argues that the "+" takes on a form in Diller + Scofidio's work that is "*iconological*, in that it effects a non-literal translation between architecture and the world."[16] Martin concludes that the "+" constitutes "something like a world view […] in the sense of a view of the world seen from *within* architecture."[17] Martin's starting point in positioning the work of Diller + Scofidio is

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miniaturization and regulation in the prosthetics of transit," *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review: Journal of the International Association for the Study of Traditional Environments* 22 1 (Fall, 2010), pp. 42 [originally presented at: *The Utopia of Tradition: IASTE Biennale Conference,* Beirut (December 2010)]; Michael Chapman, "Excessive Baggage: the architecture of the suitcase in Surrealism and its aftermath," *Interstices Under Construction Symposium: Unsettled Containers* (Auckland: October, 2010) [published abstract].

[14] Appearing in their 1992 introduction to *Flesh*, the first line of their introductory essay is: "Deviants, by definition, cross lines." See: Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio [Diller + Scofidio], *Flesh: Architectural Probes* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1994), p. 36.

[15] Reinhold Martin, "Preface: Moving Targets (Benchmark)," in Incerti, Ricchi and Simpson (ed), *Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)*, p. 7.

[16] Martin, "Moving Targets," p. 9. Italics in original. The term iconological comes from Panofsky. See: Erwin Panofsky*, Studies in Iconology: Humanistic themes in the art of the Renaissance* (New York: Harper and Rowe, 1962).

[17] Martin, "Moving Targets," p. 9. Italics in original.

instructive, and enables a reading of the additive nature of their practice as well as its connection with issues of the avant-garde. The "+" symbol in the work of Diller + Scofidio could equally be positioned between "art" + "architecture" or, in the context of Peter Bürger, "architecture" + "life".

That Diller + Scofidio's work is esoteric is already well established in the disciplinary studies of their practice in architecture.[18] It is no doubt a result of this esoteric characteristic that K. Michael Hays and Lauren Kogod locate the work of Diller + Scofidio in their list of "Twenty Projects at the Boundaries of the Architectural Discipline"[19]. Operating within a broader discussion of "autonomy" they argue that they selected practices on the basis of *effect*, rather than *form*.[20] This characteristic is central to the conceptualisation of avant-garde practice in Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* and it is a longstanding preoccupation in the creative practice of Diller + Scofidio.

The "self-effacing signature" of the "+" that Martin traces in the work of Diller + Scofidio can be located in a number of visual practices from the historical avant-garde. Consider, for instance, the photograph by Man Ray, already discussed, where the buttocks (apparently those of Lee Miller) are demarcated by the geometric outline of a cross, suggestive of both the rigid contours of architecture and the marking and framing of the body. Given the title *Monument to Sade*, the photograph also became the cover to Man Ray's copy of *120 days of Sodom* where a similar crucifix incision was made in the cover to reveal the framed contours of a female figure. It is also, deliberately, a reference to the deconstruction of morality, where the religious symbol becomes, in the reconfiguring of Man Ray, a literal gateway prescribing an invitation to transgression and sin.

There is a possible connection between the cropping that takes place in the *Monument to Sade* and Diller + Scofidio's fetishisation of the "+". Evidence of this can be found in the

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[18] See, for instance: Georges Teyssot, "The Mutant Body of Architecture," in Diller + Scofidio, *Flesh*, pp. 8-9.

[19] K. Michael Hays and Lauren Kogod, "Twenty Projects at the Boundaries of the Architectural Discipline Examined in Relation to the Historical and Contemporary Debates over Autonomy," *Perspecta*, **33** (2002), pp. 54-71.

[20] In a later essay, K. Michael Hays contextualises Diller + Scofidio's work in a broader context of discussions on autonomy. See: Hays, "Scanners," pp. 129-136.

cover of their 1994 book *Flesh*,[21] where the spine of the work is occupied by the crack between two buttocks becoming, in the process, the front and back covers of their first major monograph. The particular framing of the buttocks has also been a fascination in other aspects of their work,[22] which has devoted critical attention to the politicisation of the human body and the encroachment of technology upon it.[23] In the essay entitled "Bad Press", Elizabeth Diller quotes the anti-nudity legislation of the state of Florida regarding indecent public exposure which states

> [t]he area at the rear of the human body which lies between two imaginary lines running parallel to the ground when a person is standing—the first or top of such line drawn at the top of the cleavage of the nates (i.e. the prominence formed by the muscles running from the back of the hip to the back of the leg) and the second or bottom line drawn at the lowest visible point of this cleavage or the lowest point of the curvature of the fleshy protuberance, whichever is lower, and — between two imaginary lines on each side of the body, which run perpendicular to the ground and to the horizontal lines described above, and which perpendicular lines are drawn through the point at which each nate meets the outer side of each leg.[24]

Where the lines in Man Ray's selective cropping are a demarcation of desire, in the case of Diller + Scofidio, it is legal boundary of prohibition. This geometrical framing of the body generally, and the buttocks in particular, has been a fascination in the work of Diller + Scofidio and the body is continually "framed" in their work as a junction between desire

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[21] As well as the cover, see also the discussion in: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh,* pp. 36-37.

[22] See for instance, their concern with "buttock-enhancing implants" and plastic surgery techniques. In their Para-site installation (1989), they produced a chair with a text embossed onto its surface, so that the user would have the text imprinted on their buttocks. See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh,* p. 38, p. 165.

[23] Of particular note in this regard is the dissection of the "bachelor" male body into nine parts and the sexual armour that is locked to the "bride" in *The Rotary Notary and his Hotplate*. See: Diller + Scofidio, *Flesh,* pp. 124-127. Similar themes are engaged in: Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio [Diller + Scofidio], "Desecrated Flags," *Assemblage* 20 (April 1993), pp. 34-35.

[24] Quoted in Elizabeth Diller, "Bad Press," in Francesca Hughes (ed), *The Architect: Restructuring Her Practice* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996), p. 75.

and its gratification.[25] What occurs in the legislation of the state of Florida is a shifting of the roles of geometry into a sphere where it, rather than dictating the forms and spaces pertaining to architecture, begins to directly condition the body and its policing.[26] Diller + Scofidio's practice has actively sought out these cultural displacements where architecture is used at the margins of its traditional roles. The territorialisation of the body in this instance, is just one example of a range of contemporary tactics which require architecture to operate in a role that is historically foreign to it. The body, as Elizabeth Diller explains, is fundamental to this disciplinary shift:

> [u]nlike land law, where property lines protect the space of the private from transgressions of the public, the property lines that define the socially "decent" body defend public space from transgressions of the private(s). The play between property and propriety is particularly intricate in considering the body as a legal site.[27]

The cross, as well as connecting with the creative practices of Man Ray, articulates a bigger project to reinscribe the body with the technologies of architecture. The cross marks the hinge, or the collision of horizontal and vertical. In an architectural sense, this becomes plan and section. The transition between horizontal and vertical is central to Diller + Scofidio's reading of the work of Marcel Duchamp and is a major theme in a number of their installations, particularly those relating to theatre and performance.[28] Diller + Scofidio use mirrors tilted at forty-five degrees as a recurring theme which effectively translates plan into section, allowing actions in plan to be read as events in elevation by an audience beyond. This is a structuring principle in projects as diverse as *The Rotary Notary and his Hot Plate* (1987), *WithDrawing Room* (1987), *Parasite* (1989) and *Moving Target* (1996).[29] In each of these projects, as Milfred Friedman has observed, "the

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[25] This also creates an important connection with the work of Duchamp, and is spatialised in the demarcation of visual/hidden and male/female relationship in the *Delay in Glass*. For a deeper exploration of these relationships, see: Diller and Scofidio, "A Delay in Glass," pp. 62-71.

[26] Diller refers to a range of other disciplinary mechanisms in the essay, including the work of Foucault, where the uniform itself pertains to a disciplining of the body and its behaviour. See: Diller, "Bad Press," p. 75.

[27] Diller, "Bad Press," p. 75.

[28] For an extended analysis of this connection, see: Goldberg, "Dancing about Architecture," pp. 44-60.

[29] For more on these projects, see: Diller + Scofidio, *Flesh*.

benevolent ghost of Marcel Duchamp hovers over them."[30] However the "+" can also be read as an additive element, implying the addition of both techniques and critical knowledge that are traditionally extraneous to architectural production. This is a constant theme in Diller + Scofidio's transdisciplinary investigations, which drew inspiration from the integrated management schema pioneered in the revolutionary engineering practice *Skunkworks* (the research and development arm of the innovative firm Lockheed Martin). In this organisation model there was a horizontal and vertical (another "+") integration of studio culture deployed in order to enforce a cross-disciplinary transferral of knowledge in both directions.[31] Based on this influence, Deane Simpson develops an argument relating to "vertical" and "horizontal" management structures and organisational models that have enabled Diller + Scofidio to operate independently of the mainstream pressures on architectural practice and explore creative and often artistic avenues for architectural production.[32] This results in a problematisation of the status of "work" and specifically as it applies to the "work of art" or the ""work of architecture".

In Anthony Vidler's 2003 summation of the practice of Diller + Scofidio, he argues that the work of the practice is paradigmatic in shifting the concerns of architecture away from the autonomous status of the architectural object and towards a re-engagement with the functional requirements of programme. Vidler argues that this approach "points to the way in which critical theory, new media and the inventive reconstruction of space and time can imply programmatic invention that is neither functionally determinist nor formally autonomous."[33] Read in this way, the work of Diller + Scofidio addresses two of the primary concerns of Peter Bürger in his *Theory of the Avant-Garde*: firstly, the role of function in framing the praxis of life and, secondly, the nature of autonomy as a disciplinary condition of the visual arts. By traversing the boundaries between disciplines, Diller +

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[30] Milfred Friedman, "suitCase Studies," *Design Quarterly* 152 (1991), pp. 39.

[31] For a discussion of this influence, see: Simpson, "Some Notes on the Disciplinary Practices of Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)," pp. 26-27.

[32] Simpson, "Some Notes on the Disciplinary Practices of Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)," pp. 25-29.

[33] See: Anthony Vidler, "Toward a Theory of the Architectural Program," *October* 106 (Autumn, 2003), p. 60. Vidler is speaking in regard to Diller + Scofidio's 2003 retrospective at the Whitney museum.

Scofidio are able to problematise both aspects in their productive capacity as architects and question the institutional and functional preconditions of modernism.[34]

Embodied in the "+" that Reinhold observes in the naming of their practice, the "+" is also representative, in this context, of the adding of disciplinary knowledge, configured through a studio process that enables: architecture + art + theatre + performance. The determination to blur these disciplinary boundaries is fundamental to the practices of Diller + Scofidio, as well as providing the framework through which their work can be read in the context of the avant-garde. Simpson's analysis of their work focuses on the "disciplinary status of architecture"[35], referring to the "common perception of the architects as outsiders to the discipline"[36], describing "their indifference to disciplinary structures"[37], their project to "create an alternate organisational model of disciplinary production"[38] and their "declared disinterest in the disciplinary regulated boundaries of architecture."[39] Positioning their work outside of the dominant "strains of criticality" in architecture (the *textual*, epitomised in Manfredo Tafuri and the *architectural*, epitomised in Peter Eisenman)[40] Simpson argues that Diller + Scofidio's work is "extra-disciplinary" in that, rather than engaging in the formalist exercises aimed at preserving the autonomy of architecture, they provide a "spatial" critique that "addresses aspects of the contemporary everyday"[41]. These assaults on the institution of architecture and the disciplinary boundaries that

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[34] In an interview from 2004, Ricardo Scofidio acknowledged that "[a]lthough critics often write about the formal aspects of the work, we would prefer the discourse to focus on the content." Ricardo Scofidio, quoted in: Patricia C. Philips, "A Parallax Practice: A Conversation with Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio," *Art Journal* **63** 3 (Autumn, 2004), p. 65.

[35] Simpson, "Some Notes on the Disciplinary Practices of Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)," p. 21.

[36] Simpson, "Some Notes on the Disciplinary Practices of Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)," p. 21.

[37] Simpson, "Some Notes on the Disciplinary Practices of Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)," p. 21.

[38] Simpson, "Some Notes on the Disciplinary Practices of Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)," p. 21.

[39] Simpson, "Some Notes on the Disciplinary Practices of Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)," p. 21.

[40] Simpson, "Some Notes on the Disciplinary Practices of Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)," p. 21.

[41] Simpson, "Some Notes on the Disciplinary Practices of Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)," pp. 21-32. The essay is a general account, and doesn't enter into detail about the exact nature of these connections.

protect it are openly violated in Diller + Scofidio's work, demonstrating a broad concern with the primary thrust of Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde*.

One of the most problematic areas in the theorisation of Diller + Scofidio is the categorical enclosures pertaining to the term "work of architecture" and what it constitutes. Diller + Scofidio's "work" as such, falls outside of the disciplinary boundaries of both art and architecture although a number of their projects conform to the conventional expectations of both.[42] In this area, Bürger's theorisation of the "work of art" is instructive, and particularly its emphasis on the three fundamental categories: purpose (or function), production and reception. Bürger argues that in the bourgeois artwork, production and reception are no longer collective, but individualised. Equally, where the purpose of art was once tied to collective needs of representation and religion, by the nineteenth century it had become the forum for an articulation of bourgeois self-image.[43] The separation of the art object from the praxis of life, for Bürger, "becomes the decisive characteristic of the autonomy of bourgeois art."[44] The avant-gardiste work of art, in contrast, represented a negation of each of the categories of reception, production and purpose. This occurred to the extent that Bürger initially rejects the category of the "work of art" altogether, preferring to label the experiments of Dada as "manifestations"[45]. While acknowledging that the avant-gardes did, in fact, produce works,[46] for Bürger the focus on events and tactics outweighed this in significance. Bürger argues that "whereas they did not destroy it, the avant-gardistes profoundly modified the category of the work of art."[47] Similar can be said of the "works" of Diller + Scofidio which, while pertaining to architecture, are inherently

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[42] For an investigation of this, see: Edward Dimendberg, "Blurring Genres," in Diller and Scofidio, *Scanning*, pp. 67-80. Elizabeth Diller has argued that the distinction between art and architecture in their work was insignificant and "it doesn't make a […] difference what it is called." See Elizabeth Diller, quoted in Nancy Princenthal, "Diller + Scofidio: Architecture's Iconoclasts," *Sculpture* 8 6 (November/December, 1989), p. 23.

[43] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 48.

[44] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 49.

[45] See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 56.

[46] A key example in this area is the readymade urinal of Duchamp. By signing and naming the piece, Duchamp rendered the object a "work of art" at the same time negating the category of the work of art through this gesture. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 52.

[47] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 51.

bound up in its *negation*. They frequently dissolve the formal properties of architecture in order to articulate its spatial and experiential aspects. As well as promoting new frameworks for *receiving* architecture, they are inherently associated with the drama of its dissolution (through the disavowal of architectural production).

Given this, the "crosshairs" that Martin theorises in the context of Diller + Scofidio's work provide an important avenue of enquiry that connects with both the historical avant-garde and Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde*. The "+" is a recognition of the collapse of the dialectical oppositions that structured artistic production in the nineteenth century and, in the name of autonomy, marginalised the social and everyday from creative production.[48] The formula of art "+" life", as the primary definition of Bürger's avant-gardiste work of art, is the critical nexus for ongoing investigations into the avant-garde and its influence.[49] While all of these themes will be developed in more detail, there is one particular crosshairs that focuses in on issues that are central to the themes of this chapter and particularly the conflation of architecture and the praxis of life. Demonstrating the pivotal themes that underpin Diller + Scofidio's 1991 *Tourisms: suitcase Studies* installation, the crosshairs, in this instance focus on the collision between the interior (the suitcase), the object (an artefact of contemporary tourism) and the text (reflected in the mirror from the underside of the suitcase). The collision of these three elements, as well as foreshadowing the work of Duchamp, provide important insights into the nature of Diller + Scofidio's practice and the extent to which it engages with broader themes of the avant-garde.

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In 1991 Diller + Scofidio completed an installation entitled *Tourisms: suitCase Studies* that was an amalgamation of a diverse range of media, travelling sequentially through a

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[48] K. Michael Hays argues, in this regard, that Diller + Scofidio's work from the 1980s attempted to transform creative production into theory itself, in order to engage with the historical project of the avant-garde. Hays argues that "by the 1980s, theory seemed to be all that was left of the avant-garde or, indeed, of progressive thought at all." See: Hays, "Scanners," p. 130.

[49] See: Matei Calinescu, *Faces of Modernity: Avant-Garde, Decadence, Kitsch* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977), p. 140; Andreas Huyssen, "The Hidden Dialectic: Avantgarde-Technology-Mass Culture," in Kathleen Woodward (ed), *The Myths of Information: Technology and Postindustrial Culture* (Madison, Wisconsin: Coda Press, 1980), pp. 151-164.

succession of institutional contexts across North America.[50] The project looked at the homogenisation of travel by collecting stylised artefacts (quotations, souvenirs and postcards) from each of the fifty states of the United States of America. Focussing on "Battlefields" and "Bedrooms" as stereotypical tourist sites, the installation explored ideas of authenticity and serialisation and the systems of globalisation that standardise them.[51] The project was characteristic of the idiosyncratic work of Diller + Scofidio, filling the margins between art and architecture and drawing into focus the significance of the unnoticed "traditions" of contemporary life.

In the *Tourisms* installation, fifty identical "samsonite" suitcases hang from thin metal rods positioned along a geometrical Cartesian grid. The suitcases hang in ten rows of five creating a regimented (and alphabetical) "archipelago" of suitcases suspended above the polished floor. Filling a gallery volume of 3 x 18 x 9 metres, this gridded network of suitcases is supported by a dropped plywood ceiling that carries an elongated map of the United States.[52] Each of the suitcases is linked umbilically to a state of the United States and, more specifically, a tourist site within that state that has been marked by either love or war. As Diller + Scofidio explain,

> [e]ach of fifty suitcases contains a postcard (picture on one side, message on the reverse seen in mirror image) and related materials about a specific tourist attraction in each of the fifty states. The tourist sites are either bedrooms or battlefields. Hanging from the lower half of each suitcase is a rubberoid sheet with printed statements about travel taken from a variety of literary sources. The number of tourist dollars spent in each state appears below the quotations.[53]

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[50] The exhibition opened at the Walker Gallery in New York (6 Jan—17 March, 1991) before travelling to the List Visual Centre at MIT (Massachusetts) and the Wexner Centre for the Arts at Ohio State University in 1992. See: Diller + Scofidio, "Tourisms," p. 34.

[51] The full list of sites (in order of tourist income) is published in: Diller + Scofidio, *Flesh,* p. 213.

[52] According to the authors, the image is "urethaned" onto the surface of the plywood: Diller + Scofidio, *Flesh,* p. 219.

[53] Diller + Scofidio, "Tourisms," p. 36; see also: Diller + Scofidio, *Flesh,* p. 213.

Hung at eye level and tilted at forty-five degrees, the top half of the suitcase contains a mirror that allows the viewer to see (or witness) the contents of the lower half.[54] The effect is to use the "hinge" of the suitcase to effectively translate plan into section. However, in *Tourisms* the effect is repeated in the serial recurrence of the grid and its distribution through this economy of display. This structural principle in Diller + Scofidio's work is evoked through the symbolic folding of the suitcase. Evocative of the domestic rituals of packing, the moment is frozen in time to create the illusion of suspension (or what Duchamp would refer to as *delay*).[55] Confusing the distinction between open and closed,[56] the tactic successfully translates the *act/event* into *image/spectacle*. However what is also occurring through this ritualised "hinging" of the suitcase is a revealing of the contents of this otherwise personal spatial interior. The suitcases lie open, disrespecting the privacy that is traditionally intrinsic to this intimate interior and eroding the space (both psychological and physical) between inside and outside. As well as providing an invitation to voyeurism,[57] the suitcase, in this context, is an extremely important artefact, anchoring the project in the historical turbulence of the twentieth century and the broader cultural displacement that defined it.

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[54] This tactic is borrowed directly from Duchamp's readymade *Why Not Sneeze Rrose Salevy?* (1921) where the concealed title is reflected in a mirror below. For more on the use of mirrors in Duchamp, see: Michael Chapman, "Spatial entrails: Themes from surrealism and psychoanalysis in the interiors of Sugar Suite," *IDEA* (2009), pp. 96-109.

[55] Diller and Scofidio, "A Delay in Glass," pp. 62-71. Slowness is a major theme in Diller + Scofidio's work from this period. For a more detailed investigation, see: Goldberg, "Dancing about Architecture," p. 58.

[56] This interstitial state is reminiscent of Duchamp's doorway at *Rue 11 Larrey* that, through screening two openings with one door, was perpetually both open and closed. See: See Anne d'Harnancourt (ed), *Marcel Duchamp* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974), p. 300.

[57] A favourite theme in Duchamp's work (and *Etant Donnes* in particular) the connection between voyeurism and desire was explored more explicitly in a Diller + Scofidio project from (1993) entitled *Soft Sell*. Here a video close-up of a woman's lips seductively whispered to passers-by and invited them into one of four doorways: "shameless", "sinful", "savage" and "scandalous". Evoking Duchamp's tactic in *Etant Donnes* and paraphrasing Diller + Scofidio, Dimendberg argues that this project interrogated the "linguistic structure of desire" and suggested that "the sustenance of its objects depends on their 'indefinite deferral'". See: Dimdendberg, "Blurring Genres," p. 76; Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 252-253; for an investigation of the voyeuristic aspects of Duchamp's work, see also: Jean Francois Lyotard, *Duchamp's Transformers*, trans. Ian McLeod (California: Lapis, 1990); Hal Foster, *Prosthetic Gods* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2004), pp. 275-276.

While the centrality of travel foreshadows most of Diller + Scofidio's work, there is a specific restructuring of space taking place in *Tourisms* that is worthy of more detailed investigation. The installation repositions ideas of travel and utopia demonstrating the continual streams of identical sites, commemorated with predictable, depoliticised markers and stereotypical souvenirs.[58] It also engages the virtuality of tourist space where the moments of significance, marked by historical landmarks, replace the more relentless continuum of real time and challenge the synchronicity of history.[59]

These aspects of the installation suggest a more detailed framework for viewing the work positioning it in response to recent arguments about the avant-garde. The suitcases, in this instance, are not just geographic containers, but temporal ones, articulating complex and interwoven themes from the historical avant-garde and its influence. With a nod to the Freudian case studies of the early twentieth century,[60] the installation title promises a methodical scrutiny of the deeper psychological spaces of tourism, marking the suitcase as a potential site of both memory and trauma. However the project is not only framed within a culture of psychoanalysis, but within a broader history of artistic production and, more specifically, the creative traditions of the historical avant-garde. Centring on issues of the home and authenticity, the work of Diller + Scofidio has developed the themes of travel in close reference to the work of both Marcel Duchamp and Walter Benjamin. For both of these figures, the suitcase represented an escape from the political and cultural pressures of Europe and the emerging spectre of fascism. In this way the suitcase came to represent autobiographically both the boundaries of their lives (that which could be carried) and a form of spatial disruption.

In the period that separated the two wars in Europe, the values attached to the traditional suitcase were dramatically reshaped by a radicalized avant-garde culture of transit that

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[58] Diller + Scofidio refer to the phenomenon as "hyper-prosaic". See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 218.

[59] See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 218.

[60] The psychoanalytical connotations of the suitcase are clear, parodying the opening up of the psyche of some of Freud's most famous patients such as the Wolfman, the Ratman and Dora. There are a number of references to Freud in the work of Diller + Scofidio and the emphasis on bedrooms, tied to both the "vacation of aura" and "presence" evokes Freud's writing on the uncanny. See: Diller + Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 218. See also their "Desecrated Flags" project in; Diller and Scofidio, "Desecrated Flags," pp. 34-35.

emerged in the creative European centres of Zurich, Paris and Berlin. This collective migration was driven by the political upheavals that lead to a number of intellectuals fleeing their homes and, in the process, relocating their creative practices, identities and ideologies into suitcases that accompanied their global wanderings. Reflected paradigmatically in the art of Duchamp and the critical theory of Benjamin, these practices channelled "homelessness" into creativity where the suitcase became not only a receptacle for domestic and bodily necessities, but creative practice in general.[61] In this context the suitcase became a kind of utopia; a critique of the contemporary political landscape at the same time as it was inevitably entwined within it. In the work of Benjamin and Duchamp the suitcase (like the utopia) defined the limits of possession, identity and, most importantly, the autonomy of creative work.

By the late twentieth century, the suitcase had taken on a different persona. Highly scrutinized and interrogated through a network of invasive security mechanisms, the suitcase had become politicized and marginalized as a site of creative and political freedom. Like utopia itself, the suitcase became increasingly regulated, governed by abstract rules, labelled, weighed and categorized as it continually passed through systems of visual surveillance and interrogation. The once intimate interior of the suitcase was constantly externalized as it moved from one secure environment to another. The traditions of travel, embodied in the creative utopias that flourished in suitcases in the 1930s had, by the end of the twentieth century, been replaced with a network of voyeuristic security that dismantled the utopian shell and displaced its contents into the real world. Separated from the body and the intimate traditions of prosthetics,[62] the suitcase had been transformed from the creative and utopian refuge of Duchamp and Benjamin, into a depersonalized and mechanical system of transit and recognition.

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[61] See: T. J. Demos, *The Exiles of Marcel Duchamp* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2009).

[62] For a more detailed investigation of prosthetics, see: Michael Chapman and Michael J. Ostwald, "Prosthesis, Technology And Trauma In The Machinist Fetishes Of OMA's Villa at Bordeaux," in Kirsten Orr and Sandra Kaji-O'Grady (eds), *Techniques and Technologies, Transfer and Transformation: AASA 2007 Conference* (Sydney: University of Technology and AASA), p. 25 [Available CD ROM].

In his 2009 work *The Exiles of Marcel Duchamp*, the art theorist T. J. Demos argues that a culture of exile shaped certain creative practices in the Second World War and was central to the development of the oeuvre of Duchamp.[63] With reference to Benjamin's writing, Demos shows how forced travel inspired Duchamp's interest in portability and installation art. Duchamp's *Object for Travelling* made to fill his Buenos Aires apartment in 1917 out of torn rubber swimming caps, provides evidence of this. Equally the readymade of the bicycle wheel inverted on a domestic stool was designed as a device for thinking, without aesthetic content and intended as an adornment to the particular space of Duchamp's apartment.[64] Photos of his apartments over the various stages of his life reinforce the role of the readymade as an adornment to the studio. More specifically spatial were Duchamp's commissions to curate the *Exposition International du Surréalism* in 1938 and the 1947 *First Papers of Surrealism* exhibition in New York. As has been demonstrated, both of these spaces functioned as the archetypal interior; existing without an exterior and premised on the spatial juxtaposition with the outside world. In each instance Duchamp privileged three-dimensional space over two-dimensional art and adopted strategies to internalise the experience of art through dislocation and intervention.[65] Duchamp's suspension of coal sacks in the Paris event has correlations with the *Tourisms* project that suspends suitcases in a similar way although to very different effect.

However it is Duchamp's project for the *Boîte-en-Valise* (1942-1954), or portable museum,[66] that most directly connects to the projects of Diller + Scofidio. Duchamp spent the majority of his life continually wandering from one spatial setting to the next across Paris, Argentina, New York and Philadelphia. Like Walter Benjamin and other exiles from the encroaching battlefields of Europe, the war had displaced notions of domesticity and

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[63] See: Demos, *The Exiles of Marcel Duchamp*.

[64] On the contextualisation of Duchamp's readymades, see: Helen Molesworth, "Work Avoidance: The Everyday Life of Marcel Duchamp's Readymades," *Art Journal* 57 4 (Winter, 1998), p. 52.

[65] For more on these installations see: T.J Demos, "Duchamp's Labyrinth: First Papers of Surrealism, 1942", *October* 97 (Summer 2001), pp. 91-119.

[66] For Schwartz's catalogue of its contents see: Arturo Schwartz, *The Complete works of Marcel Duchamp* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1969), pp. 511-13. For a detailed history, see: Ecke Bonk, *Marcel Duchamp: The Portable Museum* (London: Thames and Hudson 1989).

"homeliness" and the suitcase became the nomadic site of nostalgia, creatively embodied in Duchamp's *Boîte-en-Valise*. Duchamp spent the years between the wars, collecting and reproducing his work and developing a portable museum that assumed the form of a suitcase, unfolding out to create a retrospective of his work to date.[67] Duchamp's personal need to package his creative output and condense it into a transportable form was prescient in relationship to the extraordinary popularity of travelling exhibitions in the period after the Second World War, which retrospectively institutionalised (and canonised) the museum in a transient, and heavily curated, form.[68]

Clear correlations exist between the Duchamp project and the *Tourisms* installation. One critical evolution in Diller + Scofidio's work is the simultaneous repetition of the suitcase[69] and, more importantly, its location as a spatial and geographic "site". For Duchamp, the suitcase was a symbol of the collapse of geography and, in the process, the dematerialisation of the gallery space. Diller + Scofidio reinvented the suitcase as an index, collecting artefacts from a large field (all of America) and displaying them in a small one (a travelling gallery space). Still embodying the important themes of travel, the *Tourisms* project is structured around repetition; demonstrating the homogeneity of the contemporary tourist landscape, rather than the heterogeneity of an entire oeuvre of work. As Diller + Scofidio have argued, "[r]eplication, like re-enactment, allows tourism to perfect the very object after which it is modelled."[70]

That Diller + Scofidio's work is anxious to address issues of surveillance and the loss of privacy that travel necessitates is clear. One of the first images they use to introduce their *Tourisms* project is an airport x-ray showing the contents of one of the suitcases. The

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[67] The first publication of the work was in: Sidney Janis, *Abstract & Surrealist Art in America* (New York: Reynal and Hitchcock, 1944), p. 131. The caption reads "'Boîte-en-Valise' 1941-42".

[68] For a more detailed exploration of the role of "packaging" in Duchamp's work, see: Dalia Judovitz, *Unpacking Duchamp: Art in Transit* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1998).

[69] While Duchamp made numerous versions of the Boite-en-Valise they were all slightly different, often characterised by individual traits and never exhibited concurrently in the same spatial context. For two of the more distinctive "editions" see: Demos, *Exiles of Marcel Duchamp*, p. 58.

[70] The passage is referring to the battle where the three co-stars "vied furiously for top billing." Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 202.

blue-black x-ray reveals the way that the suitcase incorporates the hanging mechanism, interior contents (including souvenirs)[71] and support apparatus within the protective shell that encloses it. This invasive mode of vision, customary in the technology of travel, not only dematerialises the space of the suitcase but the nature of the object in general. Another photo that Diller + Scofidio use is of the fifty suitcases stacked together, as though about to "board" a vessel.[72] Describing the pressures of transit imposed upon a travelling exhibition, Diller + Scofidio describe the twin role of the suitcases which "[i]n addition to transporting the contents of the exhibition […] double as display cases for the exhibition of their contents."[73] The suitcases that Diller + Scofidio present are not just static shells, filled with objects, but psychological *places*, enclosed in the continual flux of global tourism and the pulsating currencies of movement and display. In this sense, the suitcase, functions as a miniaturisation of space, constituting what Diller + Scofidio refer to as a "micro-site" and, more specifically "the irreducible, portable unit of the home."[74]

The role of the "home" in the *Tourisms* installation is explicit, and particularly in relationship to Benjamin's concept of aura[75]. For Diller + Scofidio, the "bedrooms" exploited in contemporary tourism are effectively manufactured readymades that substitute authenticity with representation, by imbuing historical spaces with autobiographical artefacts and applied narratives in order to alter the perceptions of both home and inhabitant.[76] In their introductory essay to the project, Diller + Scofidio argue that "[t]he home is one of tourism's most 'auratic' attractions and one which best underlines the play

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[71] The x-ray usually reproduced is entitled "Typical Battlefield" and the souvenirs, in this case, are miniatures of horses and "lead artillery". See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 207.

[72] See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 206.

[73] Diller and Scofidio, "Tourisms," p. 38.

[74] Diller and Scofidio, "Tourisms," p. 38.

[75] Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations: Essays and Reflections*, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken, 1968), pp. 217-252.

[76] Amongst the examples the author's use is the boyhood home of Lyndon Johnson, who effectively fictionalised his childhood. The fictionalised version was recreated (at the expense of the real one) after a legal battle that was one by his wife after his death. See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 203.

of authenticity and authentification."[77] Questioning the relationship between the authentic (or auratic) and the processes through which the reality of history is manufactured through tourism, Diller + Scofidio argue that the appropriation of the autobiographical home satisfies the "voyeuristic gaze" of the tourist, reinforcing the emphasis on "real life" artefacts that concretise history through evidence. Echoing Bürger, they argue that it is the appropriation of life and its manifestation in the autobiographical object that renders the domestic as particularly susceptible to the fascination of tourism. For Diller + Scofidio, the dissolution of the home is the by-product of this authentification. In this sense,

> [t]he tourist, attracted by the "real-life" of the luminary—typically by his or her humble beginning and flamboyant end—leaves home only to enter the home of another. "Home" is one of tourism's most potent themes—one which is played out endlessly in a string of domesticating practices. Home stands for homeland for example. […] The actual home of the traveller, however, is the only certainty in touristic geography, a fixed point of reference—the site at which the trip itself must be authenticated.[78]

Alongside this searching for the authentic, transit is a central theme in the creative work of Diller + Scofidio, and foreshadows most of their thinking about place and architecture. The serialised array of suitcases, floating weightlessly above a polished and reflective concrete floor, is evocative of the "no place" landscapes of global travel, replicating the sterile surfaces of the modern airport, the repetitive screens of information and the rigid and geometric spatial regiments that are appended to it.[79] Engaged in the production of these ephemeral utopias, Diller maintains that while their projects in the period were always "processed through an architectural filter," they consistently "dwelled on seemingly extra-architectural themes such as tourism, globalisation, conventions of domesticity, and visuality."[80] This visualisation is apparent, for instance, in their project entitled *Jet Lag* (1998) which, picking up on a passage from Paul Virilio's interview entitled "The Third

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[77] See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 203.

[78] See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 203.

[79] On this connection, see also: Dimendberg, "Blurring Genres," p. 76.

[80] Elizabeth Diller, quoted in an interview with Patricia Phillips. See: Phillips, "A Parallax Practice," p. 65.

Window"[81] focussed on the story of American grandmother Sarah Krasnoff.[82] As Diller + Scofidio reveal,

> in a period of six months [Krasnoff] flew across the Atlantic 167 times with her young grandson in an attempt to allude the pursuit of the child's father and psychiatrist. They travelled New York/Amsterdam, Amsterdam/New York never leaving the plane or airport lounge except for the brief stop at the airport lounge. Krasnoff finally died of jet lag.[83]

The jet lag project splices CCTV video of the grandmother and grandson travelling endlessly along a travelator in the bland interior of a generic airport. This melancholy sequence engages the architecture of both utopia and homelessness, fraught with repetition and homogeneity and the constant passage of bodies along linear and never-ending trajectories.

This aspect of Diller + Scofidio's work has been central to recent critical projects that set out to position their tactics in an expanded creative context. Anthony Vidler, for instance, focuses on the prosthetic use of technology that repositions the body within the historical framework of the cyborg.[84] Rather than the violent tearing open embodied in Coop Himmelb(l)au's *Haus Vektor II* project, the process of Diller + Scofidio acts as a supplementary to the domestic, empowering the shell with new modes of representational and spatial logic and enhancing, rather than dismantling, its archetypal form. Equally significant has been the emphasis on film that has structured a number of Diller + Scofidio's projects, engaging new-media in creative highly architectural ways.[85]

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[81] For Virilio, the first and second windows are the door and window respectively. The third is the computer screen. See: Paul Virilio, "The Third Window," trans. Yvonne Shafir, in Cynthia Schneider and Brian Wallis (ed), *Global Television* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1989), pp. 185-197.

[82] The project also evokes the Freudian "case-study" through a focus on three distinct "cases", all traumatised by the temporal disjunction of jet lag. See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 219.

[83] Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio [Diller + Scofidio] quoted in Incerti, Ricchi and Simpson (ed), *Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)*, p. 104.

[84] Anthony Vidler, *The Architectural Uncanny* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1992), pp. 147-166.

[85] For references to the importance of Diller + Scofidio in redefining the relationship between architecture and film, see: Anthony Vidler, *Warped Space: Art, Architecture and Anxiety in Modern Culture* (Cambridge,

Diller + Scofidio comprise one of the few architectural practices that embody a sustained critique of the institutionalisation of art and provide a framework for the spatial strategies of the avant-garde to engage with the "work of architecture" in original ways. Equally important, the centrality of *life* in their work aligns it with the primary criticism of Bürger and is embodied in the numerous curious artefacts that, rather than conforming to the expectations of architectural production, appropriate the Dada and surrealist strategy of the readymade in an architectural form. Of significance here is not only the argument of Bürger, which sees a deadening of these tactics in the neo-avant-garde but also the counter argument of Benjamin Buchloh, which positions conceptual art as a continuation of historical avant-garde procedures.[86] The practice of Diller + Scofidio can be reinterpreted through the maelstrom of conceptual art, reflective of the methodical reworking of Dadaist and surrealist practices that was meticulously undertaken in the 1970s. As has been demonstrated, Bürger fails to take into account the phenomenon of conceptual art in *Theory of the Avant-Garde* and, as a result, it remains one of the primary criticisms, as well as shortcomings, of his work.[87] The relationship between architecture and the de-institutionalisation of art in Diller + Scofidio's work provides a platform for revisiting Bürger's writing on autonomy and the inherent complications of its historical frame. It also opens onto bigger questions regarding the gentrification of architecture and its inefficacy in transforming the systems of production that govern the culture industry.

In Diller + Scofidio's work the house, as the container of daily life, is superimposed with the artefacts of tourism preserving the distinction of Bürger but, at the same time, challenging the categories of the work of art. Like the Duchampian readymade, the Diller + Scofidio suitcases are a negation of the architectural characteristics familiar to the home and a junction between the authentic (life) and its fabrication. Acknowledging that travelling

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Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2000), p. 100; Giuliana Bruno*, Atlas of Emotion: Journeys in Art, Architecture and Film* (New York: Verso, 2002), p. 69, p. 78.

[86] See: Benjamin H. D. Buchloh, *Neo-Avantgarde and Culture Industry: Essays on European and American Art from 1955 to 1975* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2003), pp. xxiv-xxv.

[87] See, for instance: Hal Foster, "What's Neo about the Neo-Avant-Garde?" *October* 70 (Autumn, 1994), pp. 5-32; Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real: The Avant-Garde at the End of the Century* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1996), p. 20.

itself embodies the paradox of a "vacation" of the home,[88] the work of Diller + Scofidio represents the home in its touristic incarnation: a negation not only the mass-produced shell of an unhomely architecture but a "vacation" of the institutional conventions for the display of art and its reception.

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When Walter Benjamin committed suicide in Portbou on September 26th 1940 with a deliberate overdose of morphine, amongst the random collection of objects that he left behind in his suitcase was an x-ray of his own chest.[89] Having had his citizenship revoked in Germany two years prior[90] and with the imminent occupation of Paris by the Nazis, Benjamin had hurriedly left a number of unfinished documents (including his famous *Passagenwerk*) with Georges Bataille[91] before collecting the remainder of his belongings in a battered suitcase and boarding a train to the south of France.

Benjamin's capture at the Spanish border was a tragedy in every sense. Despite being in the possession of an emergency visa for the US (supplied by Max Horkheimer), Benjamin was unable to secure the required French exit visa, allowing him permission to leave France. Having spent close to three months waiting in the south of France, homeless and frustrated Benjamin opted to make the treacherous journey across the Pyrenees illegally, with a small group of refugees also desperately fleeing the Nazis.[92] Nursing extremely poor health and carrying all of his belongings in a single suitcase, Benjamin spent a night alone, sleeping in the mountains before successfully arriving at Portbou. A ramshackle city that was still in tatters after the Spanish civil war (a war that had only finished less that two

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[88] The authors argue that "one cannot properly vacation at home." See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 221.

[89] Demos, *The Exiles of Marcel Duchamp*, p. 15.

[90] Benjamin's citizenship was revoked when the Gestapo discovered an essay from 1936 published in the Moscow journal *Das Wort*. See Demos, *The Exiles of Marcel Duchamp*, p. 14.

[91] Bataille was at that time employed at the *Biblioteque Nationale*. Benjamin had met Bataille in 1937 and had joined the College of Sociology that Bataille was affiliated with shortly thereafter.

[92] This journey was later documented by one of his travel companions, providing one of the most important sources on the topic. See: Lisa Fittko, *Escape Through the Pyranees*, trans. David Koblick (Evanston: Northwestern University Publishing, 1991).

years prior), Portbou had become one of the many gateways out of Nazi occupied territory for the thousands of Europeans who were hurrying south. Upon arrival at Portbou Benjamin was shocked to learn that the immigration laws had been very recently changed and he would not be allowed to enter Spain without the necessary exit visa. Historians have dutifully noted that if Benjamin had arrived either a day earlier or a day later he would almost certainly have been granted entry.[93] Upon receiving the news that he would be sent back to France in the morning, Benjamin took his own life.[94]

Benjamin's entire existence, for the last frenzied months of his life had been buried in a single suitcase, which he had faithfully carried across several stretches in his flight from Paris and had singlehandedly hauled across the mountains despite his ailing and worsening condition.[95] The contents of the suitcase were reported at the time[96], and are listed by T. J. Demos: "a leather briefcase like businessmen use, a man's watch, a pipe, six photographs, an x-ray picture, a pair of glasses, various letters, magazines, a few other papers whose content is unknown, and some money."[97] Other accounts have also reported the possession of an American passport issued by the Marseille Consulate that would of guaranteed Benjamin's future in the United States. The money that Benjamin left behind was converted into *pesetas* to cover the cost of his funeral, which took place two

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[93] See, for instance: Momme Broderson, *Walter Benjamin: A Biography*, trans. Malcolm Green and Ingrida Ligers (New York: Verso, 1996), p. 258-262; Esther Leslie, *Walter Benjamin* (London: Reaktion Books, 2007).

[94] The death certificate listed "cerebral haemorrhage" as the likely cause of death. See: Fittko, *Escape Through the Pyranees*, p. 190.

[95] The speculation is that the suitcase contained a transcript of either *Passagenwerk* or Benjamin's *Treatise on the Philosophy of History*. For more on this speculation, see the account of one of his companions through the Pyranees, who reported that Benjamin valued the suitcase over his own existence. See: Fittko, *Escape Through the Pyranees*, p. 12; see also: Isenberg, "The Work of Walter Benjamin," pp. 120-121.

[96] These contents were given over to a court in Figueras, the northern Spanish town made famous within surrealism by Salvador Dali who lived there for a large portion of his life and established his own museum there. Benjamin's belongings are cited in: Broderson, *Walter Benjamin*, p. 260.

[97] Demos, *The Exiles of Marcel Duchamp*, p.15.

days later. When Benjamin's friend Hannah Arendt travelled to Portbou a year later to pay her respects, she found no gravestone or evidence whatsoever of his tragic death there.[98]

The x-ray film that Benjamin had carried with him was documenting his diminishing health as he placed his body through the physical and psychological stress of forced migration. Benjamin had spent the majority of his life in exile and the x-ray provided evidence of his medical condition, required for transit between states in the turbulent migratory era between the wars. His collected works, like the contents of his suitcase, are a series of fragments, montaging his life as a witness and agent in the radical transformation of this period.[99] Struggling financially[100] and marginalised by academia, Benjamin's written legacy exists in unfinished manuscripts, fragments, reviews and short essays.[101] He managed, despite his prolific output, only one completed book: The *Origin of German Tragic Drama,* published in 1928 (written between May 1924 and April 1925). In the same year he published a compendium of essays under the title *One-Way Street*.[102] They are also, in Benjamin's own sense, a literary x-ray of his life's work: the blurring of art and life and the evidence of the spatial and temporal revolutions that distinctly characterised this

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[98] A monument commemorating Benjamin was inaugurated in May 1994, by the Israeli sculptor Dani Karavan. See: Isenberg, "The Work of Walter Benjamin," pp. 121.

[99] The nature of Benjamin's life has meant that it is compiled in three separate and now amalgamated archives. Benjamin spent the majority of his productive life recording his thoughts in an a notebook, arguing that, when he was without a notebook, his thoughts were "homeless." Benjamin was a meticulous self-organiser, filing all of his papers, fragments, notes and scribbles with machine-like proficiency in box after box of material. Benjamin left these various instalments of his creative life with friends, which ended up in various cities, from Berlin to Las Angeles to Jerusalem. The archives that now compile his life work, came from three distinct sources: firstly, the collected and confiscated material of the Gestapo which, finding its way to Moscow in 1945, was returned to Berlin in the 1970s; secondly was the material that Benjamin was himself carrying, which, passed to Theodor Adorno, was collected in Frankfurt and then later donated to the archive in Berlin; thirdly was the material that Benjamin, on fleeing Paris, had left with Georges Bataille as an employee of the Paris Biblioteque. See: Leslie, *Walter Benjamin*, p. 10.

[100] For details of this see: Benjamin Brewster, "Walter Benjamin and the Arcades Project," *Perspecta* 12 (1969), pp. 161-162; see also Broderson, *Walter Benjamin*.

[101] On Benjamin's struggle to be accepted within academia, see: George Steiner, "Introduction," in Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (London: Verso, 1998), p. 11.

[102] Walter Benjamin, *One-Way Street and Other Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott and Kingsley Shorter (London: NLB, 1979) [orig. 1928].

tumultuous period. In this sense, his travelling is inseparable from his writings wandering through the architecture of Berlin,[103] Paris,[104] Moscow,[105] Marseilles[106] and Naples.[107] As Adorno put it, "[f]or a man who no longer has a homeland, writing becomes a place to live."[108]

That Benjamin was carrying an x-ray on his flight from Paris is significant. It was, in a sense, the "bloody fingerprint", that connects his writing with his life and, to some extent, his death.[109] For Benjamin, the availability of inexpensive reproduction techniques meant that art was obliged to move beyond mere representation and became aligned with documenting the forces of life literally, through the development of alternative means of expression. Fundamental to this was the collapse of the picture plane as a "window" into reality. Figure and ground became frozen together; no longer warring parties or gentle gradations, the inherent flatness of the two-dimensional image became its defining characteristic. Paradoxically, in avant-garde experimentation, it also became a surface for the documentation of the three-dimensional world, transforming, in the process, into a transcript of the third, and often fourth dimensions that were outside of its control.

As a result, the "x-ray" is somewhat of a theme in Benjamin's writing. Writing about Poe's "The Man of the Crowd", Benjamin had earlier described the work as "something like an X-ray of a detective story […doing] away with all the drapery that a crime represents" until

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[103] Walter Benjamin, "A Berlin Chronicle," in *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Schocken Books, 1978), pp. 3-60.

[104] Walter Benjamin, "Paris, Capital of the Nineteenth Century," in *Reflections*, pp. 146-162.

[105] On Benjamin's time in Moscow, see: Walter Benjamin, "Moscow Diary," trans. Richard Sieburth, *October* 35 (Winter 1985), pp. 9-135; See: Walter Benjamin, "Moscow," in *Reflections*, pp. 97-130.

[106] See: Walter Benjamin, "Marseilles," in *Reflections*, pp. 131-136; Walter Benjamin, "Hashish in Marseilles," in *Reflections*, pp. 137-145.

[107] Walter Benjamin, "Naples", in *Reflections*, pp. 163-176.

[108] Adorno, *Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (London: Verso, 2005), p. 87 [1951].

[109] See: Benjamin, "The Author as Producer," p. 229.

only the "armature remains".[110] Even more significantly, describing a project for an impassioned history of esoteric poetry, Benjamin wrote that "the last page would have to show an x-ray picture of surrealism."[111] As already mentioned, Benjamin's description of Jean Atget described how his photos resemble crime scenes, conflating the subject and context in a manner that was instrumental in inspiring the surrealist experiments with the flattening of the picture plane through technical experimentation, and resembling over time the frozen surface of an x-ray. For Benjamin, the necessary political function of photography was to "renew from within […] the world as it is"[112] again channelling the important insight of x-ray technology in the formulation of Twentieth Century art.

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Where Benjamin carried an x-ray of his body inside his suitcase, Diller + Scofidio provide an x-ray of the suitcase itself as a starting point in the *Tourisms* installation. Devoid of the body, the x-ray of the *Tourisms* suitcase reveals the deconstructed hanging mechanism that travels with the suitcase in order to suspend it within the various temporary gallery spaces that it finds a home in. The folded telescoping fragments of the hanging mechanism are a prosthetics of display, representative of the folded and disassembled frame that, rather than supporting the work, is momentarily entombed in it. Drawing from the technology of airports, the luggage x-ray became a trope in Diller + Scofidio's work, reconfigured in a sequential array of new-media installations in the 1990s.

In their project *Travelogues* (2001) Diller + Scofidio hung lenticular screens evenly spaced along the length of the arrival hall at John F. Kennedy International airport.[113] In the first

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[110] Walter Benjamin, "Paris of the Second Empire in Baudelaire," in Marcus Paul Bullock and Michael William Jennings (ed), *Walter Benjamin: Selected Writings: 1938-1940* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 2003), p. 27. Benjamin returned to this story in his well-known essay on Baudelaire. See: Walter Benjamin, "On Some Motifs in Baudelaire," *Reflections,* pp. 155-200; For more on Benjamin's writing on detective novels, see: Carlo Salzani, "The City as Crime Scene: Walter Benjamin and the traces of the Detective," *New German Critique*, 100 34 1 (Winter, 2007), pp. 165-187.

[111] Walter Benjamin, "Surrealism: the last snapshot of the European intelligentsia" in *Reflections*, p. 184.

[112] Benjamin, "The Author as Producer", p. 230.

[113] See: Incerti, Ricchi and Simpson (ed), *Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)*, pp. 142-143.

instance, the screens revealed an x-ray of the inside of a featureless suitcase but, rather than containing a mechanical hanging system, the x-ray now reveals the fragments of a disassembled body. Prosthetic limbs, diving goggles and breathing equipment are all clearly housed within the suitcase, exposed to view through the invasive gaze of the x-ray and uncomfortably resembling the sadistic contortionism of Hans Bellmer. The short film that accompanies the installation[114] unpacks the life of the anonymous owner of the suitcase, revealing her struggle with identity and emancipation as she tears off a wig and throws it from the top of the Eiffel Tower. Stills, revealing the life of the owner, are deliberately montaged with the interior of the suitcase, creating a palimpsest of object and experience which, when decoded, reveals the spatial implications of both the event and its artefacts. Given the title the "Prosthetic Traveller", the x-ray becomes the visual fragment that collects the events of the previous 24 hours and reveals them in a highly abstract form back to the viewer as they, clinging to their own suitcase, glide past on their own trajectories of travel.

Another of these frozen narratives is titled "the Collector" and is exposed through the x-ray of a wooden trunk, revealing a network of inner compartments that appear to house architectural miniatures, presumably intended to be sold as souvenirs.[115] The Leaning Tower of Pisa, the Eiffel Tower and the Statue of Liberty are all revealed in x-ray and miniature, projected onto the serialised screens of JFK. If the "Prosthetic Traveller" is evocative of Bellmer, then the "Collector" is reminiscent of Man Ray's *rayographs* where random objects are collected arbitrarily and placed directly onto the photographic paper providing a residual trace of evidence that connects the object with its representation. Packaging the themes of travel and architecture, the life of the collector, like that of the "Prosthetic Traveller" is revealed through the objects with which they engage with the

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[114] The footage of this installation in operation is available on the CD that accompanies the book: Incerti, Ricchi and Simpson (ed), *Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)*.

[115] See: Incerti, Ricchi and Simpson (ed), *Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)*, pp. 143-144.

world. Souvenirs, a fascination of Diller + Scofidio, are reminiscent of the placelessness of the global traveller, blurring the boundaries between authenticity and its repetition.[116]

One characteristic of the *Tourisms* and *Travelogues* projects is their dependence on the *objet trouvé* [found object]. In the *Tourisms* installation this is manifested not just in the readymade samsonite containers but, at a deeper level, in the use of souvenirs, collected from tourist sites that are displayed as part of the exhibit. In *Travelogues*, these found objects become gateways to knowledge, linking the incompatible fragments that are revealed through x-ray into a hypothetical narrative where the objects are given life. What is significant, in the context of artistic production, is that these objects are torn from their everyday reality and recontextualised within the institution of art or, in this case, architecture. As has been demonstrates, the *objet trouvé* [found object] is a significant theme in Peter Bürger's *Theory of the Avant-Garde* and one of the most important innovations of avant-garde practice.[117] Bürger also, rightly, detects its proliferation in neo-avant-garde practice, where it becomes problematic as the contextual critique is no longer sustained and the category of the work of art is expanded to include it.[118]

The passage of the *objet trouvé* from critique of the institution of art (and the category of the "work") to its acceptance within the institution of art in the 1960s is central to Bürger's criticisms of the neo-avant-garde. The proliferation of ready-mades that occurred in post-war art, as well as their ready acceptance within the institution of the museum meant that

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[116] Diller + Scofidio argue that tourism is essentially a mobilisation of representations, whereby the historical site is experienced simultaneously with "the postcard, the plaque, the marker, the brochure, the guided tour, the souvenir, the snapshot, the replica, the reenactment". For Diller + Scofidio this results in the erosion of authenticity as the various representations compete for legitimacy and aura. See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 205.

[117] The primary passage, in this regard is: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 51-57.

[118] See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 57. For Bürger, Duchamp's urinal is the original manifestation of the *objet trouvé* and representative of all of its critical capacity. Of primary concern for Bürger is the status of the "work of art" which, as an artefact of bourgeois society, is defined by the categories (pp. 47-49) of purpose (in the service of bourgeois self-image), reception (individual) and production (individual). For Bürger, the "manifestation" of the historical avant-garde negated each of these categories and, in the process, disrupted the autonomous status of art. For Bürger, without the necessary "abolition of autonomous art" the practices of the historical avant-garde are vulnerable to what he terms a "false sublation." (p. 54).

the initial thrust of the negation that Duchamp aspired to had been not only weathered but thoroughly indoctrinated.[119] Rather than challenging what could be included within the category of the "work of art", the *objet-trouvé* in post-war art was a legitimate and fundamentally mainstream expression which no longer had, as its aim, the sublation of art and life and carried with it a tacit acceptance of the disciplinary and aesthetic boundaries that the institution of art maintains. Bürger describes this practice as "inauthentic"[120] and a *false sublation*.[121]

Probing this concept of the "inauthentic", Diller + Scofidio's work is idiosyncratic in the domains of architecture as a result of its dependence on the disciplinary structures of art, and its dissemination through the disciplinary forums of architectural theory. The use of the readymade *objet-trouvé* in their work is not intended as an original act of ingenuity but is significant for its ability to spatialise the readymade gestures of Duchamp and create architectural frames through which the readymade can be redeployed.[122]

For Diller + Scofidio, this freezing of objects in space and their subsequent packaging and redispersal to alternative institutionalised contexts (where it itself becomes a tourist spectacle for the three month duration of its display) has the effect of "implicating the museum as a complicitous agent in the tourist trade."[123] In this case, the readymade is

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[119] See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 52, p. 57.

[120] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 53.

[121] Bürger uses as an example here pulp fiction and commodity aesthetics, which are evidence of this "false sublation". In the case of pulp fiction, Bürger argues that "[a] literature whose primary aim is to impose a particular kind of consumer behaviour on the reader is in fact practical, although not in the sense the avant-gardistes intended. Here literature ceases to be an instrument of emancipation and becomes one of subjection." Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 54; see also: Peter Bürger, "The Significance of the Avant-Garde for Contemporary Aesthetics: A Reply to Jürgen Habermas," trans. Andreas Huyssen and Jack Zipes, *New German Critique* 22 (Winter, 1981), pp. 21-22.

[122] Roselee Goldberg argues that the architecture of Diller + Scofidio is inseparably linked to vision, providing opportunities to see in new ways. She writes "from inside their buildings, each view appears to be on hold, framed by an approach—corridor, window or door—in such a way as to focus the image as precisely as a lens." The same is true for their display of objects, and especially in the *Tourisms* example. See: Goldberg, "Dancing about Architecture," p. 58.

[123] Diller and Scofidio, "Tourisms," p. 37.

used not in isolation, as a gallery piece, but in an enlarged critique of the institution of the museum which, while in no way as radical as the formative processes of Duchamp, warrants further investigation into the relevance of these tactics for architecture.

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Where Duchamp's urinal functioned as a negation of the work of art through a radical transformation of its context, Diller + Scofidio's investigations of tourism represent tourism as the nihilistic destruction of context embodying the chasm between the authentic truth of history and its spatial fictionalisation through a readymade (and commoditised) architecture. In this transformation, architecture itself functioned as a readymade, stripped from its functional and pragmatic origins, and displaced in a visually saturated landscape of mass-tourism. Replicating the fetishisation of the object in the modern museum, the Diller + Scofidio investigations into tourism documented the collapse of site, as the authentic architectural characteristics were replaced with artificial and consumable ones. That the displaced "site" still masquerades as authentic is a characteristic of this "false sublation." Diller + Scofidio argue that

> [i]n the conversion of "site" into "sight," the "sight- seer" must pay for his optical pleasure. His desire for authenticity, for example, in the case of the historic site, to stand on the very spot where the general fell, to occupy the actual room in which the celebrity slept, to see the original manuscript later drafted into law, is fulfilled through a construction of site/sight representations in which historic time may be petrified, reenacted, or completely fictionalized.[124]

There is an imposed placelessness that tourism necessitates. The continual passage from room to room and city to city is condensed by the collection of "souvenirs" and images that organise spatial experience. The camera is one of the major contributors, transplanting genuine spatial experience with a depersonalised imagery that only partially resembles the (auratic) original. This tyranny of the photographic image is described well by Diller + Scofidio, who write

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[124] Diller and Scofidio, "Tourisms," p. 37.

> [a]s the ultimate authenticating agent, the camera collapses physical distance into the space between predescribed photo opportunities. Within that shallow space, tourism displaces the unsightly into a visual blind zone while freely transplanting attractions from "donor" sites into the reconstructed visual field. Onto this altered geography, tourism disperses the location of origin, the home. The "ubiquitous home" is reaffirmed by the enforcement of standards of comfort and familiarity. "You'll feel right at home" is the reassuring advertising slogan of Caravan Tours.[125]

The *Tourism* installation is an important extension of this mobilisation of ideas of home, travel and place and especially the broader concerns of "authenticity" which structure a number of the debates around the avant-garde. Geography, in this installation, is not reproduced but repackaged, being reduced to the horizontal abstraction of a map which, rather than constituting the "ground", has become the reflected "index" for the floating sites, now tied mythically to the sky and embodied in the readymade souvenir that ties it to its origin. The map has no spatial characteristics at all, other than to decode the location of events into the rigid grid that supports the suitcases. It is, like travel itself, a geometry (and architecture) that physically dismantles space. It is also archival, linking the found tourist object with the spatially homogenous geographic location.[126]

The technique results in an erosion of the "plan" or map and the production of a continually changing graphic kaleidoscope that reflects the nature of contemporary tourism. While each of the "bedrooms or battlefields" is tied to a *place*, it is registered, for the viewer at least, as a maze of fifty identical screens through which they must navigate a labyrinth of objects in order to progress.

If the *objet trouvé* is embodied in the souvenirs that are collected from each of the sites, or the photographs that record them, then it is equally a characteristic of the sites themselves: bedrooms and battlefields. Diller + Scofidio effectively package these spaces which, famous for historical events rather than architectural distinction, begin to critique the nature of space and of authorship. While Duchamp chose a number of readymades that were architectural in nature he never chose an architectural space as a deliberate

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[125] Diller + Scofidio, "Tourisms," p. 38.

[126] Diller + Scofidio, "Tourisms," p. 38.

readymade in the way that Diller + Scofidio propose.[127] By choosing the bedroom and battlefield as effective readymades in this way, Diller + Scofidio's project links the domestic (and sexualised) space of the interior with the horizontal landscapes of battle, working with both libidinal and military battlefields.[128] Diller + Scofidio's project dramatises the process of exile, marrying it with the contemporary culture of tourism which turns sites of trauma into spaces of spectacle and historical commodification. One of the most extreme examples of an architectural readymade is the Alamo village, that Diller + Scofidio document in the *Tourisms* project. The site gained notoriety on two fronts, as both the site of an epic battle, and the intended site of its cinematic recreation in the machinations of popular culture. As Diller + Scofidio observe

> [t]he exchange between replica and original is particularly resonant in Alamo Village, the family recreation centre built around a set for the 1959 movie The Alamo. The copy is just one hundred miles from the site of the heroic battle in which a hopelessly outnumbered group of Texans fighting the repression of Mexico's dictator Santa Anna were annihilated. "Like the battle", reads the travel advertisement, "the movie set had as much blood as any Texan could wish, particularly behind the scenes between the leading men, John Wayne, Richard Widmark and Lawrence Harvey." In the context of America's compact history, the auratic place of bloodshed of American heroes in battle and the auratic place of bad blood between their Hollywood counterparts share the status of the commemorative.[129]

The project redirects thinking about the nature of these spaces, reinforcing the homogenising characteristics of tourism as well as the transformation of event into spectacle. There are a number of resonances with Bürger's work and particularly in regard

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[127] In 1916 Duchamp had thought of proposing a building as a readymade, scribbling, in his notes: "[find inscription for Woolworth Building as readymade." See: Arturo Schwarz, *Notes and Projects for the Large Glass* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1969), [note. 59]; Michel Sanouillet and Elmer Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller: The Writings of Marcel Duchamp* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 76.

[128] There is a marrying of the sensual and the mathematical in Justine Clark's reading which focuses on the smudges of the drawings in dialectical opposition to the mechanical drafting geometries that are merged with them. See: Justine Clark, "Smudges, Smears and Adventitious Marks," *Interstices* **4** (1995), pp. 1-8.

[129] The passage is referring to the battle where the three co-stars "vied furiously for top billing." Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 202.

to the *objet-trouvé*, which is no longer "found" but actively (and commercially) *produced*.[130] The concept of a readymade space is extended in Diller + Scofidio's project entitled *Interclone Hotel* (1997), which is a fictional advertising campaign for a homogenous chain of hotels. The project superimposed real landscapes of generic Cartesian urbanism into the windows of six "themed" hotel rooms that are spatially identical. Starting with a generic model, the architects apply a range of stereotypical surfaces and finishes to the interior, while collaging generic landscapes of modernism that are glimpsed through the window. Domesticity and travel are not just reduced to the container in Diller + Scofidio's work, but also a number of travel accessories, such as the his and hers towels[131] that, for Foster, become "dis/agreeable objects of private desire and disgust" with a distinctly "surrealist twist."[132] In each case the themes of the readymade resonate in an architectural context, blurring the distinction between art and architecture and expanding the institutional contexts that typically define them.[133] The legacy of this reworking of historical avant-garde concepts is not the abandonment of architectural place but its reconfiguring in the space of the installation, which, controlled and regulated, is a comprehensive model of interiority. In this sense, the installation resembles a form of nomadic utopia, crystallising the artefact and repackaging it for display.

The witty repetition of objects and their geometric rationalisation in space should be read in the *Tourisms* installation not as an extension of the ideas of contemporary art in the 1980s but as the migration of key spatial concepts from the historical avant-garde into

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[130] See Bürger's critique of the neo-avant-garde use of the *objet-trouvé*. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 57.

[131] See: "Desecrated Flags" project; See Diller and Scofidio, "Desecrated Flags," pp. 34-35. Duchamp had completed a number of "travel-oriented" readymades, including his range of perfume marketed by Rrose Salevy and his bottling of the air of Paris in *Paris Air* (1919). See: James Housefield, "Duchamp's Art and the Geography of Modern Paris," *Geographical Review* 92 4 (October, 2002), p. 488.

[132] Foster, "Architecture-Eye," p. 251.

[133] Equally significant as a "readymade" architecture is the *Withdrawing Room,* translating the Duchampian command "do not touch" into architecture, imprinting the instruction onto balustrades, doorways and staircases. It is also no longer a visual prohibition, but a phenomenological one, reading "do not caress" amongst other sensory directions. See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, pp. 160-162.

architecture.[134] This is also a migration into the broader spatial environment of the museum, from where the tactics of Dada and surrealism were originally exiled. The museum, in this sense, replicates the conditions of utopia, dislocating itself from temporal and cultural contexts and objectively repackaging the homogenous landscape of the travelling exhibition. The museum becomes the platform for a utopia of the present: a literal x-raying of space and the greater geographic conditions of the world and their flattening and dematerialisation into the microscopic interior of the suitcase.[135] This process of x-raying is one of the most significant evolutions of Diller + Scofidio's practice, and central to their reception as agents of the neo-avant-garde in architecture.

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Diller + Scofidio's *Travelogues*, as well as their *Tourisms* installation, is conspicuous in the conflation of art and life through the stylistic use of x-ray. Cutting through the façades that the body assembles in its engagement with the world, the *Travelogues* are an involuntary nakedness, where the objects of life become the source of aesthetic and circumstantial judgement. It is easy to see within these practices an affiliation with early avant-garde concerns and particularly the collages of Dada that, as in the example of Heartfield, constitute an x-raying of the tensions of everyday life, as well as a politicisation of the primary motives of artistic production. Benjamin's writing is, again, particularly poignant here.

As seen, Benjamin considers the Dada tactics as an aesthetic framing of the authentic fragments of daily life, where bus tickets, cigarette butts and other detritus fished from the pockets of the contemporary flaneur are assembled as by-products of the work of art.[136]

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[134] Betsky alludes to this process in: Betsky, "Display Engineers," p. 28. See also: Rosalind Krauss, "The Cultural Logic of the Late Capitalist Museum," *October* 54 (Autumn, 1990), pp. 3-17.

[135] This is embodied in Georges Bataille's analogy of the museum with a colossal mirror, made not by the objects or building, but the spectacle of visitors who appreciate it. See: Georges Bataille, "Musée," Documents 2 4 (1930), p. 330; Georges Bataille, "Museum," trans. Annette Michelson, in Georges Bataille, *Encyclopaedia Acephalica: Critical Dictionary and Related Texts* (London: Atlas Press, 1995), p. 64.

[136] The critical passage is from: Benjamin, "The Author as Producer," p. 229; this is quoted in the chapter on "Collage and Montage."

While there is a natural resonance in Diller + Scofidio's approach with the work of Benjamin and the assorted fragments of his suitcase that constituted his tragic last months, there is an equally pervasive connection that can be drawn with the spatial practices of Duchamp. Returning to the observation made by Frederick Kiesler of Marcel Duchamp's *Large Glass*, where he described the work as the first ever "x-ray of architectural space"[137], it is clear on a number of fronts that x-ray technology was a cultural fascination in the first decades of the twentieth century and was of particular insight to the radical decentring of creative production that was a central aim of the historical avant-garde.[138] However the other characteristic of the x-ray is that it provides a literal spatial record of the object flattened horizontally, thus documenting the three-dimensional world in the context of two-dimensional representation. Accompanying the diagnostic advancements that resulted from x-raying technology was a tying of the body and the machine, literally recorded in two-dimensional film. In this sense it is, like the creative experiments of Duchamp, inherently spatial.

While implicit in projects such as the *Travelogues* or *Tourisms*, the spatial nature of x-ray is explicit in a number of other Diller + Scofidio experiments. One of the most pertinent is the 2003 project entitled *Facsimile* which is a permanent installation affixed to the façade of the *Moscone Convention Centre West* in San Francisco.[139] Along the parapet of the glass curtain-wall building is a sliding track, from which a five metre by nine metre video monitor is suspended. The monitor tracks horizontally across the façade continuously displaying video footage that deliberately merges with the façade. On the screen is a combination of streamed live footage of the interior, filmed by a camera that tracks across the façade looking inwards towards the internal space in parallel with the screen as it roams across

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[137] Frederick Kiesler, "Kiesler on Duchamp," *Architectural Record* 81 (May 1937), p. 54.

[138] For the influence of x-rays on contemporary art see: Linda Dalrymple Henderson, "X Rays and the Quest for Invisible Reality in the Art of Kupka, Duchamp, and the Cubists," *Art Journal* 47 (Winter, 1988), pp. 323-340; for their popular reception see: N. Knight, "The New Light: X Rays and Medical Futurism," in Joseph J. Corn (ed), *Imagining Tomorrow: History, Technology and the American Future* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1986), pp. 10-34.

[139] For a description of the piece, see: Incerti, Ricchi and Simpson (ed), *Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)*, p. 103-106; A video animation of the work is available on the accompanying CD-ROM.

the external façade. Into this live footage are spliced fictional narratives of the interior, oscillating between close-ups of individuals (portrayed by actors) and more generic group shots.[140] The screen that Diller + Scofidio use in the *Facsimile* project is not just an x-raying of the body, but a literal x-ray of space, revealing the interior of architecture flattened on the exterior skin of the façade.[141] In his essay on the work of Diller + Scofidio, K. Michael Hays equates their spatial practices with the process of "scanning" where they probe the flattened screens of technological culture in order to "discern its contours, to feel its textures, to scan its surface."[142]

The blurring of fiction and reality and the conflation of inside and outside is reminiscent of the systematic exploration of vision and camouflage that was intrinsic to the theoretical texts and literary sojourns of Roger Caillois and the dissident surrealist group centred around Georges Bataille. Caillois devoted numerous papers to the study of mimesis and was especially concerned with the blending of a body with its surroundings. Through his research at the College of Sociology,[143] Caillois explored the behaviour of insects and produced two significant publications for the quasi-surrealist journal *Minotaur.*[144] In these

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[140] As Edward Dimendberg reveals, Diller + Scofidio shot over 20 hours of video footage to accompany the live feed. See: Dimendberg, "Blurring Genres," p. 76. Diller + Scofidio explored the fiction of video in their project *Jetlag* (1998), where they recreated the story of Donald Crowhurst, a sailor in the round-the-world solo yacht race who, having lost track of the race in heavy seas, faked his position and co-ordinates for several months, produced a counterfeit log and produced fake video instalments of a successful voyage in order to preserve the illusion. The fear of humiliation on his return caused him to commit suicide. See: Incerti, Ricchi and Simpson (ed), *Diller + Scofidio (+ Renfro)*, p. 104.

[141] Dimendberg describes the screen as "[n]either a window nor an entertainment screen, though sharing traits of both". See: Dimendberg, "Blurring Genres," p. 76.

[142] Hays, "Scanners," p. 133.

[143] For Caillois's involvement with the College see: Roger Caillois, "The Collége de Sociologie: Paradox of an Active Sociology," trans. Susan Lanser, *SubStance* 4 11/12 (1975), pp. 61-64; See also, Roger Caillois, "Introduction: Note on the Foundation of a College of Sociology," in Denis Hollier (ed), *The College of Sociology (1937-1939)*, trans. Betsy Wing (Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press, 1988), pp. 9-11.

[144] These seminal essays were "La Manta religieuse," [The Praying Mantis] originally published in *Minotaur* 5 (1934) and "Mimetisme et psychasthénie légendaire" in *Minotaur* 7 (1935). See: Roger Callois, "The Praying Mantis," Claudine Frank (ed), *A Roger Caillois Reader*, trans. Frank and Camille Naish (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), pp. 76-81; Roger Caillois, "Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia," trans. John Shepley, *October* 31 (Winter, 1984), pp. 17-32.

essays Caillois argued for the importance of mimesis and its psychological and biological necessity. A number of these tactics are profoundly and irreversibly spatial.[145]

The live video screen of *Facsimile* articulates a number of the spatial themes of camouflage articulated in the writing of Caillois, not only camouflaging the body but the architectural edge and surface as well. As the projected footage glides across the vertical surface of the building, it reveals the inner-life of the architecture at the same time as it conceals it within the visual reflections and vectors that mask the exterior of the building. The screen, itself mirroring the proportions of the glass curtain-wall and steel structure, blurs with its architectural surroundings in the same way as its fictions blur with the live footage from within. Similar tactics of camouflage were embedded in Diller + Scofidio's early experimentations with staging dance, inspired by the experimental motion photography of Eadweard Muybridge and Etienne-Jules Marey, surveying the body and reducing it to its component parts.[146] In the hands of Diller + Scofidio, the x-raying camera becomes a part of the performance, serving as a doppelganger which reflects and dismantles the movements of the body. [147] The body is camouflaged by its architecturalisation in the projected screen.

The blurring of body, space and movement in this form is reminiscent of the experiments of Duchamp with movement most famously embodied in *Nude Descending a Staircase*.[148] The notion of camouflage, and especially Caillois's writing on it, is central to Mark Linder's essay on the work of Frederick Kiesler, linked to Kiesler's theory of *correalism* and

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[145] For an important discussion of these themes, see: Denis Hollier, "Mimesis and Castration, 1937," trans. William Rodarmor, *October* 31 (Winter, 1984), pp. 3-15.

[146] Diller + Scofidio reveal this connection in: Diller and Scofidio, *Scanning*, p. 55.

[147] Among the more critical examples of this are "EJM 1 Man Walking at Ordinary Speed" (1998) or "EJM 2 Inertia" (1998) which both use the camera as an investigative and performative tool in the spatialisation of dance and its display. See: Diller and Scofidio, *Scanning*, pp. 54-55; For the performative aspects of Diller + Scofidio's practice, see: Goldberg, "Dancing about Architecture," pp. 50-52.

[148] For a reading of the architectural and spatial characteristics at play in this, and associated paintings from this period, as well as the influence of Muybridge and Marey, see: David Joselit, *Infinite Regress: Marcel Duchamp, 1910-1941* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1998), pp. 50-55; Teyssot, "The Mutant Body of Architecture," pp. 27-29.

integration.[149] Linder focuses heavily on the aspects of display that run through Kiesler's projects, and, in Linder's argument, connect his work with the primary concerns of the historical avant-garde. While drawing on its resonances with Kiesler's work, the aspects of Caillois's theory of mimesis, have an equal resonance with the screening processes of Diller + Scofidio. Consider the passage from Caillois's "Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia" which Linder cites, in connection with the work of Kiesler:

> [m]orphological mimicry could then be, after the fashion of chromatic mimicry, an actual photography, but of the form and the relief, a photography on the level of the object and not on that of the image, a reproduction in three-dimensional space with solids and voids: sculpture-photography or better teleplasty, if one strips the word of any metaphysical content.[150]

The connections with this passage and Diller + Scofidio's *Facsimile* are clear, where a reproduction of the interior space becomes the façade of the exterior. Described as "the tendency of an organism to surrender its own distinction by blurring the visual boundary between itself and its context"[151] the process of camouflage that Caillois interrogates finds an actual form in the *Facsimile* façade, reigniting a number of issues in regard to the operations and tactics of the avant-garde tactic of display.[152]

Discussing the material properties of glass in relationship to Duchamp's *Large Glass*, Kiesler had argued that it was "the only material in the building industry that expresses

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[149] Mark Linder, "Wild Kingdom: Frederick Kiesler's Display of the Avant-Garde," in Robert Somol (ed), *Autonomy and Ideology: Positioning and Avant-Garde in America* (New York: The Monacelli Press, 1997), pp. 122-153; On *correalism*, see: Frederick Kiesler, "On Correalism and Biotechnique: a definition and the new approach to building design," *Architectural Record* (September, 1939), p. 61.

[150] Caillois, quoted in Linder, "Wild Kingdom", p. 144. The passage is from: Roger Caillois, "Mimicry and Legendary Psychasthenia," p. 23.

[151] Caillois, quoted in Linder, "Wild Kingdom", p.144.

[152] Kiesler was given the opportunity to extend his theories of display in the commission to design Peggy Guggenheim's newly established gallery in the 1940s. The design is documented in: Susan Davidson and Philip Rylans (ed), *Peggy Guggenheim and Frederick Kiesler: The Story of Art of this Century* (New York: Guggenheim Museum Publications, 2004); see also: Cynthia Goodman, "The Art of Revolutionary Display Techniques" in Lisa Philips (ed), *Frederick Kiesler* (New York: Whitney Museum of Modern Art, 1989), pp. 62-71.

surface and space at the same time."[153] As a result of this blurring of two-dimensional and three-dimensional properties, it was capable of producing "an enclosure that is space in itself, an enclosure that divides at the same time links."[154] Kiesler's professional role doing commercial window-shop fitouts undoubtedly skewed his understanding of the spatial properties of glass, in a way that resembles the use of glass in the surrealist photography of shop-windows: preserving the reflective capacities in order to capture context and subject in a transparent meshing of figure and ground.[155] However it is this aspect of Kiesler's work that Linder uses to connect it to neo-avant-garde practice, aligning it to the attempts to sublate art and life and in the context of Bürger's writing on the "social effect" of a work of art.[156] Referencing the work of both Bürger and Foster, Linder writes

> [t]he notion of Kiesler as a precursor of the neo-avant-garde can be traced in his concerted exploration of display. Not simply the presentation or promotion of avant-garde strategies, Kiesler's approach to display persistently mediates and configures the relationship between artefacts and their situations as a condition of mimicry—a showing of subjective consummation.[157]

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[153] Frederick Kiesler, "*Design Correlation: From Brush-Painted Glass Pictures of the Middle Ages to 1920s*," *Architectural Record* (May, 1937), pp. 55.

[154] Kiesler, "*Design Correlation,"* pp. 55. Kiesler's most detailed exploration of the creative aspects of glass was in his ongoing Endless House project that extended the technical and architectural aspects of his theory considerably. The project was a personal manifesto of Keisler's dissatisfaction with the direction of functionalism, as evident in texts such as: Frederick Kiesler, "Pseudo Functionalism in Modern Architecture," in Peter Noever (ed), *Frederick Kiesler, Endless House 1947-1961* (Ostfildern-Ruit: Hatje Cantz, 2003), pp. 29-34; the ephemeral intention of the project is described in: Frederick Kiesler, "Hazard and the Endless House (1959)," in Noever (ed), *Frederick Kiesler,* p. 63; see also: Harald Krejci, "Endless House—Endless Story," in Noever (ed), *Frederick Kiesler,* pp. 11-16.

[155] For a similar argument, see: Stephen Phillips, "Introjection and Projection: Frederick Kiesler and his dream machine", in Thomas Mical (ed), *Surrealism and Architecture* (London: Routledge, 2005), pp. 140-155.

[156] Mark Linder, "Wild Kingdom," p. 130. Lindner also makes reference to Huyssen's argument that where modernism is concerned with the project of autonomy, the avant-garde is characterised by the conflation of art and life [see note 11, p. 337].

[157] Mark Linder, "Wild Kingdom," p. 130. The placement of Kiesler's work in the context of the neo-avant-garde, is slightly problematic in regards to both the historical and cultural contexts within which it was produced. His could equally be read as an extension of the historical avant-garde, especially given his early allegiances with Constructivism and de Stijl in the 1920s. His European roots also make him an idiosyncratic figure, managing friendships with Breton and Duchamp but at the same time maintaining a critical

While there is a connection to be found between the writing of Bürger and the work of Kiesler, Linder fails to reconcile Kiesler's activities in the historical avant-garde with their "neo" repetition to any large extent, and it is difficult to imagine Kiesler as a solitary agent of the "neo-avant-garde" in America when he was such a central figure, both creatively and socially, in a number of historical avant-garde circles in Europe. While Kiesler's work is of interest to a broader discussion of the avant-garde, these themes are redirected in the work of Diller + Scofidio, which deal with the notions of display in an advanced technological context.[158] The unpacking of Duchampian themes that Lindner detects in the work of Duchamp is, in the same manner, intrinsic to the work of Diller + Scofidio and frames its role as a neo-avant-garde practice. Aaron Betsky has referred to Diller + Scofidio as "Display Engineers" connoting the work of Duchamp as well as Kiesler.[159] In Betsky's reading of Diller + Scofidio, there is a critical rethinking of Duchamp, and an extension of his ideas into architectural space. This manifests itself as a utopian collapse of *place* that projects the work into the homogenous spatial vacuums of the institution: a space that Duchamp was profoundly opposed to.

In a recent essay, Foster has directly addressed the work of Diller + Scofidio and, specifically, its status as neo avant-garde, writing that "[w]ith allusions to Duchamp and surrealism, some [Diller + Scofidio] works also disclose a neo-avant-garde aspect, but again it is in the register of art."[160] For Foster, the tactics of Diller + Scofidio, while demonstrating a literacy with early modernism, are distilled through the historical avant-garde in art. Foster acknowledges the debt to Duchamp as well as drawing connections to the writing of Walter Benjamin[161] and surrealism more generally. The central concern of

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independence that is characteristic of his approach. As with the troubled positioning of Kiesler within the circle of surrealism, the idiosyncratic nature of his work and practice tends to render these categorisations capricious. For more on this, see: Michael Chapman, "Alien doubles: Magic, myth and taboo in the spatial experiments of Frederick Kiesler," *Cultural Crossroads: Proceedings of the 26th International SAHANZ Conference* (Auckland: SAHANZ, 2009), p. 16 [CD ROM available].

[158] The evolution of these practices in Diller + Scofidio's work is covered in: Betsky, "Display Engineers," pp. 23-36.

[159] Betsky, "Display Engineers," pp. 23-36.

[160] Foster, "Architecture-Eye," p. 254 [note 13].

[161] Foster, "Architecture-Eye", p. 254 [note 18].

Foster however is the hybrid status of Diller + Scofidio and particularly their migration from art to architecture and back again which blurs the traditional conduits of influence and problematises the work of their practice.

It is worth returning to Bürger's categorisation of the neo-avant-garde, as well as his primary critiques of the phenomenon. One critical factor is that, where the historical avant-garde sought to transcend the status of the "work", the neo-avant-garde institutionalises it and the *effects*, for the most part, have the character of *works*.[162] They are no longer involved in the negation of the three primary characteristics of a bourgeois "work of art": production, reception and purpose, but have institutionalised these models of critique.[163] There is little doubt that Diller + Scofidio's work from this period lacks the staunchly politicised anarchy towards art that was embodied in the violent critiques of Dada—what Bürger refers to as "manifestations" of avant-garde practice.[164] Of more significance, is the way that the themes of the historical avant-garde are reframed in an architectural context and, to a large extent, reinvigorated through a critique, rather than a revival of the institution of architecture.[165] In this sense, the work of Diller + Scofidio can be read as a historical extension of the processes of integration that were first articulated in the historical avant-garde. That Diller + Scofidio are operating in an era where the historical path of avant-garde art has subsided is significant. Bürger's writing provides a clearer historical framework for this, arguing that

> [a] contemporary aesthetic can no more neglect the incisive changes that the historical avant-garde movements effected in the realm of art, than it can ignore that art has long since entered a post avant-gardiste phase. We characterise that phase by saying that it revived the category of work and that the procedures invented by the

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[162] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 52-53.

[163] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 57.

[164] See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 57.

[165] K. Michael Hays argues for the work of Diller + Scofidio to be read as a critique of institutionalisation as well as an extension of avant-gardism through theory (as opposed to practice). Hays sees this as a historical phenomenon that challenged the autonomy of the object that characterised the 1970s and, in Diller + Scofidio "use the specific and irreducible techniques and cognitive potentials of architecture to articulate the crucial connections between everyday encounters and experiences." See: Hays, "Scanners," p. 130.

> avant-garde with antiartistic intent are being used for artistic ends. This must not be judged a "betrayal" of the aims of the avant-garde movements (sublation of art as a social institution, uniting life and art) but as the result of a historical process"[166]

The historical process that is articulated in the work of Diller + Scofidio is not the narrowing of avant-garde intentions towards institutional outcomes but the expansion of these intentions into architecture. Their "works" are not an attack on the institutionalisation of art, as in the case of Duchamp, but a questioning of the relationship between architecture and the institution of art, particularly in regard to spatiality. As with the approaches of Bernard Tschumi and Coop Himmelb(l)au, their work is characterised by a "found" architecture which is tested against the historical and institutional norms of architectural practice. In this sense, it is through discovery, rather than production, that their projects have problematised the relationship between architecture and the avant-garde.[167]

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Easily the most significant of these "found" architectures in the work of Diller + Scofidio is in the work of Duchamp, and especially the articulation of space that structures the *Large Glass*. If the *Tourisms* installation is a "representation" of three-dimensional space through the utopia of a suitcase then it is also a tactic of reconceptualising space through a Duchampian model of display. In this sense, the project finds a precedent in Duchamp's *Large Glass*, which is a screen that collects space at the same time as it divides it. That Duchamp's work demonstrates a fascination with space has already been established, but what is critical is that these aspects of his work are extended and critically reconstructed in the work of Diller + Scofidio. In their 1987 project entitled *Delay in Glass, or the Rotary Notary and His Hot Plate*,[168] they adopt not only the play of desire and machine that

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[166] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 57.

[167] Hays uses the term "social cartography" to explain the sublation of ideology and autonomy in their work, implying a seeking or mapping of the existing, rather than its reinvention or alteration. See: Hays, "Scanners," p. 130.

[168] This project was undertaken in collaboration with Susan Mosakowski (as director) and the *Creation Production Company* in New York and who had undertaken two previous productions that translated Duchamp's Large Glass into theatre. The collaborative work was first performed in the Philadelphia Art Museum (the home of the Large Glass) to celebrate the centenary of the death of Duchamp in 1987. The

structures Duchamp's *Large Glass* but also expand the spatial field that had originally been dismantled in it. The project is an unpacking of its frozen and ossified form in the historical avant-garde original, literally projecting the two-dimensional field of the glass into a four-dimensional game of spatial ambiguity. The glass that constitutes the field in Duchamp's work, is replaced by a tilted mirror so that, while the action takes place horizontally in plan, it is projected as elevation to the audience.[169] Blurring the distinctions between plan and section, the "horizon" has become a vertical dividing wall which is projected as a horizontal transition between the real world and the projected world. The bed and its intersection with the wall become the zone where the narrative of the play (as well as its spatial composition) are anchored. The horizon, as well as reinforcing notions of the window (and the guillotine), serves as the visual hinge in the work where the two/three dimensional activities of the lower half are projected into the spatial structure of the three/four dimensional bride. In Diller + Scofidio's composition, the elements of Duchamp's work all feature but in a recontextualised framework. Where architecture is passive in Duchamp's original work, it is domineering (and even sadistic) in the Diller + Scofidio reconstruction. The work contains, in the words of Diller + Scofidio "seven animate components, four human elements—the bachelor, the bride, the witness and the juggler—and three constructed elements—the field, the apparatus and the mechanical bed."[170] Where Duchamp's bachelor is a mechanised hybrid of the modern male, for Diller + Scofidio it is a generic and dehumanised "archetype" characterised only by the prosthetic clothing of modern fashion.[171]

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production ran for 60 minutes. Diller + Scofidio acknowledge that there was an each-way collaboration between themselves and Mosakoski in regard to both architecture and choreography. See: Diller and Scofidio, *Scanning*, p. 54. The text for this project is published in: Diller and Scofidio, "A Delay in Glass," pp. 62-71. See also the text and lecture transcript in: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, pp. 103-133

[169] The authors acknowledge that "[e]tymologically, hinge is derived from hang" recognising the darker undercurrents that are detectable in Duchamp's original. See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 122.

[170] Diller and Scofidio, "A Delay in Glass," pp. 62-71.

[171] The nine bachelors are reduced to a single bachelor subdivided into nine equal parts and representing the homogeneity of the male species. For Diller + Scofidio: "[h]e is an archetype; [h]e comes from a mold; [h]e wears a generic suit that he assembles around his body from patterns." The suit, which is unstitched as a pattern creating a language reminiscent of Duchamp's cascading forms, is a phenomenological device which

The bachelor lays horizontally on the bed, with his head truncated by the dividing wall so that his body and mind are literally separated distinguishing, in a dramatic form, his words from his movements. While the top of his head is visible to the audience, his body is reflected (at ninety degrees) to the audience through the mirror. Evoking the association between the *Large Glass* and the guillotine, Diller + Scofidio's reading establishes the spatiality of the bachelor, chained to desire and the machinery of love and constraint. In their words

> [h]is disembodied head recites a chain of commands to his beheaded body. His body responds. This arrangement allows for the separate cerebral and corporeal actions of the Bachelor. A microphone is suspended above his head. It swings like a pendulum. The Bachelor's voice is amplified only when the microphone passes the tangent point of his mouth. […] The intervals get shorter.[172]

In this setting Diller + Scofidio have literally torn open the visual "field" of the *Large Glass* and it explodes outwards into space. The bachelor, no longer constrained in the glass cage, is now physically imprisoned by its surface. The trajectories of the painted matchsticks, fired from a cannon at the original work, are replaced by the frozen and ossified figure of the bachelor who grapples with the picture plane that he is both part of, and angrily resisting. The construction of the scene, while not acknowledged in the writings of Diller + Scofidio, has resonances with the image of Duchamp grappling with a glider, photographed by Man Ray in the early 1920s.[173] Duchamp's posture, trapped inside the arch, begins to evoke the idea of a cage, which is a persitent theme in the analysis of the *Large Glass*. As Hellmut Wohl has shown in regard to the *Large Glass*, "[c]ages […] can be rendered not only by 'cages' but also by frameworks, as in frame constructions—architectural cages sheathed in wood—or glass."[174] The relationship

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"is a container for gas; [b]lue light leaks from his collar, his sleeves and his pant cuffs." See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 128.

[172] Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 129.

[173] A photograph of the arch, without Duchamp inside, is entitled *Glider Containing a Water Mill in Neighbouring Metals* (1913-1915). It is reproduced in: Sanouillet and Peterson (ed), *Salt Seller,* p. 132.

[174] See: Hellmut Wohl, "Beyond the Large Glass: Notes on a Landscape Drawing by Marcel Duchamp," *The Burlington Magazine* 119 896 (November, 1977), p. 771..

between space and the surface is central, as Duchamp represents and escapes the prison of architecture. Man Ray's photograph of Duchamp is a nod to the Neoclassical architect Jean Jacques Lequeu who, with the words *He is Free*, escapes the picture plane and its incarceral nature. [175] Lequeu, who had inscribed on the back of one of his works: "drawing to save me from the guillotine" was, like Diller + Scofidio, aware of this connection between representation and autobiography.[176]

Where the body of the bachelor is chained and divided in both space and time, the bride is a mechanised prosthetic which refutes desire through a "chastity armor with a modesty mechanism."[177] Referencing the thematic obsession with brides and widows in Duchamp's work, the bride has a rotating veil which, when turned, switches in meaning between the former and latter. The bride is leashed to the architectural enclosure (in plan) and, when reflected in elevation through the mirror, this is translated into a noose.[178]

In Diller + Scofidio's construction the "ground" of the *Large Glass*, like the original, is non existence and has become pure representation through the tilted mirror. In this

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[175] This connection has been suggested in the writing of Duboy, who implies that Duchamp faked certain aspects of Lequeu's work in order to bury his own biography in Lequeu's mysterious oeuvre. There is insufficient evidence to either prove or disprove Duboy's thesis, and he establishes that Duchamp had both access and opportunity to alter Lequeu's archives on at least three occasions (p. 352 note 1976]. See: Philippe Duboy*, Lequeu: An Architectural Enigma* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986) pp. 349-352. For the relationship between Duboy's image and the escape from the picture plane, see: Michael Chapman, "Architecture and Hermaphroditism: Gender Ambiguity and the Forbidden Antecedents of Architectural Form," in Naomi Stead (ed), *Queer Spaces: Centres and Peripheries* (Sydney: UTS, 2007) pp. 1-7 [online proceedings available]; Michael Chapman and Michael Ostwald, "The Underbelly of an Architect: Discursive Practices in the Architecture of Douglas Darden," Harriet Edquist and Helene Frichot (ed), *Limits: Proceedings from the 21st Annual Conference of the Society of Architectural Historians, Australia and New Zealand* (Melbourne: Society of Architectural Historians Australia and New Zealand, SAHANZ, 2004), pp. 93-98.

[176] Betsky argues (without citing much evidence) that there is an autobiographical aspect to *The Rotary Notary and His Hot Plate* that is related to Elizabeth Diller's battle to be recognised in a profession dominated by men. See: Betsky, "Display Engineers," p. 32; The Lequeu drawing is "Porte de Parisis which may be called Arch of the People" from the early 1790s. See: Duboy, *Lequeu*, p. 364 [plate 74].

[177] Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 129.

[178] In the authors' words "[t]he bride, now appearing suspended, swings like a pendulum [as] she hangs herself on her leash." The authors are playing on the etymological relationship between hinge and hang. See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 122-123.

contextualisation the bed and the architectural enclosure replace the representational image and are translated from horizontal planes to vertical fields of performance, mediated by the hinged screen that switches between enabling vision and preventing it. One of the most powerful sequences dramatises the "bed" as the site of the ultimate union between the mechanical bride and the bachelor and part of the extended machinery of the set. As Diller + Scofidio write

> [t]he bed […] is where the body surrenders to gravity. The bachelor lies prone on the mechanical bed, his head penetrating through the headboard toward the audience, his body reflected vertically in the mirror. His disembodied head recites commands to his beheaded body which performs motions of distress; left hand pulsates, right hand follows; legs randomly respond in quick jerks.[179]

However, if the themes of the *Large Glass* are replicated and, to some extent, expanded in the *Delay in Glass*, it is the work from around the same period into "battlefields" that enables a discursive reading of Duchamp's work and its relationship to fields to resurface.

The importance of the battlefield is a generator in the *Tourisms* project where the sites chosen are either "bedrooms" or "battlefields"[180]. The militant nature of this dimension of Diller + Scofidio's work was also central to the project "Back to the Front" which is the subject of Sarah Whiting's essay "Tactical Histories" developing this dimension of their work considerably. For Whiting, the military references are not linked to avant-garde strategies but, more specifically, to the dimensions of travel and tourism that have turned war into a global spectacle. The emphasis on "beds" and "battles" in both *Tourisms* and the *Delay in Glass*, is recognition of the intersection of spatial and psychological themes that underpin their work. This reading emerges powerfully in (in fact is enabled by) the

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[179] Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 129.

[180] One example from this period, which blends the libidinal with the militaristic, is "Desecrated Flags". The work horizontally replicates the oppositional structure of the *Large Glass* but evokes the military and territorial associations of the "flag" with clearly defined gender demarcations that exist in the domestic structures of living. The exact location of the "field" here is transitory, drifting between the military, spatial and gendered associations that implicate it. See: Diller and Scofidio, "Desecrated Flags," pp. 34-35.

architecture of Diller + Scofidio, where the surface is not only the site of encroaching enemies but lines of sight as well.[181] Whiting has argued that

> [t]he disruption of the horizon line or, rather, the recognition of an existing disrupted horizon line, opens up the possibility of multiple, simultaneous perspectives rather than a singular, one point perception […] the subject, released from the one-point perspective of the horizon line's construct, is mobile, no longer pinned to the centre like Leonardo's Universal man. [..] The mobile subject joins the front lines each constructing its own narrative or tactical history.[182]

The *Large Glass*, while often read through the sexual and erotic mechanics of the bride and bachelor, can equally be repositioned as a figural battlefield, akin to a game of chess. As Diller + Scofidio illustrated, "when the enemy breaks the horizon, he enters the perceptual field, and in this battle, which was largely based on the observable, the perceptual field was, in fact, the battlefield."[183] In their project *Back to the Front* Diller + Scofidio had literally mapped the horizon of battlefields in France, encoding the geographical and architectural landscapes with the visual markers of tourism. Given this, the horizon line, dividing bachelor and bride can be understood as the "front" or dividing line between warring parties and across which enemies transgress. Viewers, through the transparency of the work, are placed against each other as opposites, reflected but displaced on either side of the glass.

Originally packaged in the suitcases of the *Tourisms* project, the bedroom and the battefield provide a spatial readymade that, when mass-produced through global travel constitutes a self-replicating system of architectural banality. It was the turbulence of war as Europe descended into a battlefield that drove both Benjamin and Duchamp into exile, forcing their creative life into suitcases that, in the absence of a home, provided a spatial

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[181] Clark argues that the "sanitised field of vision" is effaced in Diller + Scofidio's drawing which resemble smudges and scars disrupting "the mathematical description of reality." See: Clark, "Smudges, Smears and Adventitious Marks," p. 1.

[182] Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio [Diller + Scofidio], "Hostility into Hospitality," in Elizabeth Diller and Ricardo Scofidio [Diller + Scofidio] (ed), *Back to the Front: Tourisms of War* (France: F. R. A. C. Basse-Normandie, 1994), p. 292.

[183] Diller and Scofidio, "Hostility into Hospitality," p. 292.

environment that was simultaneously personal, psychological and intimate. Where Diller + Scofidio's projects in this period were concerned with the issues of representation and the screen, it was the programmatic turbulence (the event) behind the screen (the battlefield) that their work gives form to. These themes, narrated in the work of Diller + Scofidio, and distilled through the spatial fields of Duchamp, provide a framework for rethinking the *Large Glass* and its architectural and spatial context. As has been demonstrated, the "nine shots" that were launched from Duchamp's toy cannon were not just holes recorded at the surface of the glass but a dramatisation of architectural space,[184] embodying the recognition of potential enemies lurking anywhere within the space and an acknowledgement, in the register of the "mobile" subject, that the space and the work are equivalent and implicated in the broader creative battlefield through which it is created and dissected. The most literal battlefield In Diller + Scofidio's work is, however, the body of the bride herself, who wears a "chastity" armour that, like Man Ray's *Monument to Sade*, literally imprisons her. Where Man Ray's portraits of Lee Miller from the 1930s were gently washed with the shadows of the curtains and edges of architectural space, the feminine in Diller + Scofidio is unambiguously within the control of the architectural space and bound to it. Both "headless and footless" the two torsos maintain a similar frontal pose that invites a comparison: passively controlled by architecture in the first instance but shackled by it in the second.

The projects of Diller + Scofidio, that directly reference Duchamp's work are, as Foster illustrates, characteristic of a number of mainstream strategies in contemporary art in the same period. In this sense, while it has been positioned as innovative and influential in

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[184] This process of random "drilling", analogous with both the sexual machinery of the bachelors and the impending backdrop of war, is most poignantly articulated in Diller + Scofidio's project entitled Mural (2001), undertaken to accompany a major retrospective of their work at the Whitney Museum. The project, drawing from the "firing" of the nine shots in the large glass, mounts a drill that randomly scours a wall and drills into it at unpredictable and robotic intervals. The work, like the toy cannon, places machinery against the assembled "field" of architecture and maps the junction between them. This robotic drilling turns the architectural wall into a metaphoric battlefield where the architectural surface and the militaristic or libidinal machine are at war with each other. For images of the work (as well as a cataloguing of the holes) see: Diller and Scofidio, *Scanning*, [inside cover and frontispiece]; for a computer rendering, see: Philips, "A Parallax Practice," p, 62.

architectural theory,[185] it is often labelled derivative in the context of art.[186] In part, at least, the reception of their work parodies the criticisms levelled at the neo-avant-garde in general. While their work was seen as original and unique in the discipline of architecture, in art it was often seen as overly familiar and formulaic.[187] This is in part a result of the already well-trammelled network of references to Duchamp's work that have been laden in contemporary art since the 1960s and, equally, the widely disseminated use of media techniques in installation art in this period in North America.

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By replacing the plan with elevation, Diller + Scofidio's work of this period creates a dialectic between programme and display. While the latter aspect of this dialectic has already been widely theorised, it is through an interrogation of the former category that their work can be recontextualised in the context of the avant-garde. While the readymade functions as a recurring, and critical, aspect of Diller + Scofidio's work it is through the reconceptualisation of the "found" architecture of the museum and theatre, that their work has advanced the concerns of the historical avant-garde in architecture and aligned them with the broader themes of Bürger's argument.

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[185] For examples see: Sarah Whiting, "Tactical Histories: Diller + Scofidio's 'Back to the Front: Tourisms of War," *Assemblage* 28 (December 1995), pp. 70-85; Hays and Kogod, "Twenty Projects at the Boundaries of the Architectural Discipline," pp. 54-71.

[186] Illustrative, in this context, is the critique of Scott Rothkopf, who writes:

> [t]oday the architects Diller Scofidio are our most fashionable fence-sitters, known less for buildings than for their work in performance and video […]. Yet the team's recent retrospective […] unwittingly demonstrated the gulf between the art of installation and installation art. […] This sense of belatedness extends in more troubling ways to Diller Scofidio's relationship to recent art history, since their practice often seems to involve dressing the once threatening wolf of Conceptual art in chic clothing.

Scott Rothkopf, "Diller + Scofidio: Whitney Museum of American Art Review," *Artforum* 41 (June, 2003), p. 180; see also: Philips, "A Parallax Practice," p. 65.

[187] Rothkopf concludes, in relationship to their 2003 retrospective, that "ultimately it was Diller Scofidio's art that paled in comparison to their architecture." Rothkopf, "Diller + Scofidio," p. 180. Compare this with Vidler, who saw the same show as illustrative of "the way in which critical theory, new media and the inventive reconstruction of space and time can imply programmatic invention that is neither functionally determinist nor formally autonomous." Vidler, "Toward a Theory of the Architectural Program," p. 60.

While *The Rotary Notary and his Hot Plate* is illustrative of the migration of Duchamp's ideas into theatre, it also presents itself as a negation of the traditional expectations of theatre through the emphasis on a found architecture that disrupts these. The architecture discovered in Duchamp's *Large Glass* provides a spatial battlefield that constructs the drama, effectively organising both space and time and collapsing the distinctions of media through an ingenious spatial representation. The same is also true of the *Tourisms* installation, which effectively gathers the objects of a national battlefield and presents them as museum objects, displayed in the miniature museum of the suspended suitcase. While both of these strategies have strong connections with Bürger's theory, there is a final found architecture that requires attention in Diller + Scofidio's work and provides a conclusion to the broader themes already discussed. If Diller + Scofidio's work is representative of a migration of artistic practices into the space of architecture then it is the found architecture of the museum that most heavily structures this. As already noted, Diller + Scofidio's work frequently places programme and representation in opposition and it is within the museum that these traditionally harmonious poles are most violently unhinged.

When Duchamp submitted his urinal to the 1917 *Independents* exhibition, he was exhibiting the spatial environment of the museum as much as he was displaying his urinal within it.[188] It is this aspect of Duchamp's gesture that is critical to the found architectures of Diller + Scofidio, inheriting institutional environments and then representing them as architecture. For Bürger, once the "museum" had accepted the readymade object as a piece, the values of the two alternate trajectories were united and the neo-avant-garde had become effectively institutionalised.[189] However, as Buchloh and Foster have indicated, there was a robust critique of the institution that took place in the art of the 70s and which Bürger devotes little attention to. These practices not only negated the work of art as the by-product of artistic production but also rejected the museum as the forum for its display. However in Diller + Scofidio's work, the museum space is not only institutional,

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[188] This argument is passively suggested in: Calum Storrie, *The Delirious Museum: A journey from the Louvre to Las Vegas* (London: I.B. Taurus, 2006), pp. 51-63.

[189] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 58.

but it is also *rediscovered* and the process and values of its behaviour as architecture are scrutinised for their own programmatic and representational value. This is not a resurgence of the category of "work" that the historical avant-garde had negated but a conflation of the work of art with the institutional context that contained it. Where, in the *Delay in Glass*, the institution of the theatre is represented as an element of the spectacle of theatre itself,[190] in Diller + Scofidio's gallery work the institution is represented *as* art, rather than because of it. There is a debt, in both cases to the historical avant-garde who, as Bürger demonstrates, were the first to demonstrate the existence of these institutional structures at the same time as they negated them through radical acts.

The best example of this discovered architecture of the museum and its subsequent representation is in Diller + Scofidio's installation at the Museum of Modern Art entitled *Para-Site.* Introduced as a "site specific […] reading of the host organism,"[191] the installation discovers the museum as an *objet-trouvé* and negates it as a programmatic inevitability, dismantling its traditional role and juxtaposing its historical programme with its technological opposite (or antithesis). The artefact is replaced with the televised screen, which represents the movement of viewers and the narrative of the museum *as* institution. The artefact becomes, in the process, both the museum viewer (as readymade) and the museum itself (as found object). What is being represented is the institution and spectacle of art and the conservative and historical structures that underpin it. Diller + Scofidio's analysis draws from both Adorno[192] and Bataille,[193] who had argued for the museum's

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[190] Bürger saw the theatrical manifestations of Dada as amongst the most radical tactics of the historical avant-garde and their repetition, in the "happenings" of the neo-avant-garde as a miscarriage of their intentions. The work of Diller + Scofidio is not a repetition of the historical avant-garde theatrics, but the architectural representation of the institution of theatre, where the "theatrics" are negated through architectural programme. See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 57.

[191] Diller + Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 164.

[192] Diller + Scofidio draw attention to the passage (uncited) in Adorno's *Prisms* connecting the *museum* with the *mausoleum* through the German etymological root "museal" [museum-like]. Adorno writes "Museal has unpleasant overtones. It describes objects […] which are in the process of dying." See: Theodor Adorno, *Prisms*, trans. Shierry Weber Nicholsen and Samuel Weber (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1983), p. 175.

ancestry to both the mausoleum and guillotine respectively. The relationship between vision and object is specific to both readings and, in Diller + Scofidio's analysis of the MoMA, they preserve both its programmatic and scomatising tactics. However the reading of the museum also establishes its role as an "institutionalising" spatial construct and, in alignment with Bürger, sees its autonomy and its spatiality as thoroughly intertwined. In Diller + Scofidio's argument

> [t]he Museum of Modern Art is a museum of an era defined by the supremacy of sight. To achieve plastic autonomy in the height of Modernism, the eye had to be purified, removed from the domains of the social and historical and sequestered in the continuous present. The museum itself, however, could never be other than a richly encoded optical construct, thoroughly menaced by the social—by the stained eye of the educated viewer, by gendered vision, by carnal vision, by the productive subjectivity of the viewer, by the controlling eye of authority. Within this broad range of "visuality" Para-site situates itself between the institutionalised eye of the museum visitor *looking*, and the institutional eye of the museum, *looking back*.[194]

Effectively an unfolding of space, the distinctions between plan (programme), elevation (display) are radically blurred so that the space itself is datum-less and the viewer (as the *object* rather than *subject*) gives the space its direction and context.[195] This negation of the conventional relationship between *subject/object* or *viewer/gallery* is a critique of the institutionalising instincts of art as well as the passive role of the viewer empowering the architectural space at the same time as it constrains the viewer. Their installation collects live footage at three critical points in the museum programme—the main entrance ("the legitimising frame of the institution")[196]; the grand stair, replaced by escalators for their commercial and dehumanising characteristics ("the exhibitionistic display of moving

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[193] Bataille's often cited passage on the museum argues that, due to its synchronicity with the Terror, "the origin of the modern museum is thus linked to the development of the guillotine." See: Bataille, *Encyclopaedia Acephalica*, p. 64.

[194] Diller + Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 164.

[195] Diller + Scofidio describe this as a "loss of perceptual coordinates." Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 198.

[196] All entrants to the museum enter through this entry. The doorway is replaced with four revolving dors with a camera above each looking directly down (plan view). See: Diller + Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 165.

bodies")[197]; the north doors leading to the sculpture garden ("a domesticated exterior")[198]—and then feeds it into the exhibition space. Inside the exhibition space a chair is mounted on the ceiling representing, for Diller + Scofidio the "fictive viewer"[199]. A second chair is positioned in order to watch the first. While this process is indebted to the "occulist witnesses" of Duchamp's *Large Glass*, a subtle transformation has taken place. The witnesses are no longer subjects but visual objects and it is the museum, rather than the viewer, who is in possession of the all-seeing gaze.[200] Diller + Scofidio write

> [p]redicated on the notion […] that the machine can best be understood by observing its modes of dysfunction, Para-site slips into the museological apparatus to get a better look, viewing its glitches from the inside. While there, the project both lubricates the apparatus of the museum and blocks some of its motor functions. It complicates the visitor's gaze by adding extra relays in the chain of scopic circuits already at work in the space of the exhibition: closed circuits, interrupted circuits, overlapping circuits, open circuits. The self-consciousness of looking at looking produces a feedback in which the museum itself becomes a museological object of contemplation.[201]

By framing the museum as a found object in this way, and representing the economy of vision that structures the institution of art and its aestheticisation, Diller + Scofidio establish a spatial context for institutional critique in a manner similar to, but more advanced than, Duchamp's readymade. Where the urinal deliberately exposed the hypocritical institutional context of art, the work of Diller + Scofidio empowers it, revealing its operations as the

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[197] The camera is focussed on the movement of the stairs, which is represented as a continuous stream of bodies moving upwards and downwards (filmed both forwards and backwards). See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 166.

[198] A camera hidden behind a mirrored glass wall films the courtyard through a window. The mirror means that the lens is reflected back to the viewer. See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 166.

[199] The chair is embossed with texts from Jeremy Bentham, designed to be imprinted into the buttocks. See: Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 165.

[200] This was also a tactic in Duchamp's *Étant Donnés* and a major theme in its influence. The grainy photographs that Duchamp left as instructions for its disassembly and relocation after his death have a stylistic similarity with the CCTV stills that Diller + Scofidio reproduce with their project. See: Marcel Duchamp, *Étant Donnés: Manual of Instructions*, trans. Anne d'Harnoncourt (Philadelphia: Philadelphia Museum of Modern Art, 1987).

[201] Diller and Scofidio, *Flesh*, p. 198.

work itself. The installation literally represents the sublation of art and life, representing the social as a readymade reproduced through the technological schema of vision.

If the "+" crosshairs represent the "meta-sign" of Diller + Scofidio's practice,[202] engaging its multidisciplinary and collaborative contexts, then the "live" crosshairs focussed downwards on the museum entrance in the *Para-site* installation effectively captures its avant-garde aspirations. By empowering the institution with the visual privileges usually associated with the viewer, Diller + Scofidio draw the visual focus towards the nomadic individual, torn from the collective and displaced as a consumer of visual information and its dissemination. The crosshairs effectively (and succinctly) summarise the sublation of art and life by visually recording the praxis of life and representing in real time and real space. In doing so, Diller + Scofidio enable a kind of tourism of architecture, whereby spatial environments are both discovered and displayed. At the same time that these environments are represented, they are also observing and recording. Where the practices of both Duchamp and Benjamin where forced outside of the traditions of the "home" and into the spatial confines of the suitcase, the practices of the neo-avant-garde in architecture operate outside of its disciplinary constraints and with an awareness of its hegemonies.

If the historical avant-garde had discovered the institution of bourgeois art and then combated it through negation, then it is reasonable to conclude that the neo-avant-garde tactics in architecture in the 1970s, 80s and 90s have discovered various architectures and given form to them, by developing new representational tactics through which they can be articulated. This migration of tactics from the historical avant-garde is no longer just a multi-disciplinary interchange of ideas but the recognition of architecture as a power structure that the avant-garde not only recognises but reacts against. As Diller + Scofidio train the crosshairs of the institution against itself, they establish a network of spatial strategies that discover architecture and combat its effects. It is through this discovery and representation of architecture that Diller + Scofidio have advanced the claims of the avant-garde, rather than slavishly repeating its effects.

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[202] Martin, "Moving Targets," p. 7.

Conclusion: expanding fields

Conclusion: expanding fields

> [i]t is probably more consequential that the sublation of art that the avant-gardistes intended, its return to the praxis of life, did not in fact occur. In a changed context, the resumption of avant-gardiste intentions with the means of avant-gardism can no longer even have the limited effectiveness the historical avant-gardes achieved. To the extent that the means by which the avant-gardistes hoped to bring about the sublation of art have attained the status of works of art, the claim that the praxis of life is to be renewed can no longer be legitimately connected with their employment. To formulate more pointedly: the neo-avant-garde institutionalises the avant-garde as art and thus negates genuinely avant-gardiste intentions. This is true independently of the consciousness artists have of their activity, a consciousness that may perfectly well be avant-gardiste. It is the status of their products, not the consciousness artists have of their activity, that defines the social effects of works. Neo-avant-garde art is autonomous art in the full sense of the term, which means that it negates the avant-gardiste intention of returning art to the praxis of life. And the efforts to sublate art become artistic manifestations that, despite their producer's intentions, take on the character of works.
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> —Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde* (1974)[1]

When Rosalind Krauss argued in the 1970s that architecture should be considered as part of a broader network of creative strategies that characterised an "expanded field" of creative production, she was articulating an attitude towards medium that was intrinsic to the concerns of the historical avant-garde.[2] As the Octoberist critics established in the subsequent decades, it is primarily through a reading of architectural space that the ongoing legacy of Dada and surrealism should be re-evaluated. One of the primary barriers to this project occurring in architecture has been the critical focus on the production of architecture and the creation of architectural works at the expense of a

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[1] Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde,* trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), p. 58.

[2] Rosalind Krauss, "Sculpture in the Expanded Field," *October* 8 (Spring, 1979), pp. 30-44; also published in: Rosalind Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1986), pp. 276-290.

systematic reappraisal of the social and cultural values attached to architecture in the historic avant-garde and the influence that this had on the negation of production as an architectural strategy in the 1970s.

Despite the wide-ranging and inevitably open-ended possibilities for positioning an avant-garde in architecture, one characteristic is apparent. The "works" of architecture that have been produced in the period since the Second World War resemble architecture considerably less than the works of the 1920s. Framed by confidence, technology and the cultural elevation of functionalism, the 1920s produced a machinery for the production of works in architecture that could be mass-produced, easily assembled and spatially adaptable to any context. Even the most adventurous practices, such as those of Kiesler and Schwitters, still ultimately resembled works of architecture, rather than the negation that Bürger proselytised.[3] Compare this to the practices of Bernard Tschumi, Coop Himmelb(l)au and Diller + Scofidio who present independent trajectories away from the architectural work and its autonomous status. In Bernard Tschumi, it is through a systemised fragmentation of architecture that the object is replaced by a visual collision between text, photography, film and drawing. The result resembles a disorganised book or musical script more than it resembles a work of architecture. In the case of Coop Himmelb(l)au, there is a nihilistic assault on the work of architecture, as it is punctured, incinerated, stabbed and embodied in order to dismantle its hegemonic status. Similarly, in Diller + Scofidio, there is an inversion of the work of architecture, where the institutional (and autonomous) characteristics that define the "work" become the subject of the work itself. Each three cases refute the work of architecture, dismantling its conventions and preparing it for a future that may reside outside of its traditional and disciplinary sanctuaries.

That the nature of a "work" played such a central concern for Bürger has already been illustrated. For Bürger the primary legacy of the avant-garde was that it negated the work of art, illustrating its roots in the bourgeois production of art (and aestheticism) and establishing it as an ideological category that was connected to the institutionalisation of

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[3] The relationship between the work of art and its negation in the avant-gardiste work is covered in: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, pp. 56-59.

the art market. The avant-garde countered the production of works with the *discovery* of objects and ideas assembled not as aesthetic statements but as a drawing together of art with the praxis of modern life. Bürger's argument was that this process was derailed in the neo-avant-garde as the institution of art was able not only to incorporate these negations but also to provide a market where they could be desired and sold. The resilience of the institution of art was evidence of the failure of the avant-garde, transforming the historical *negations* into neo *products*. The museum became the primary storehouse for both the production and consumption of this rebranded "work".

Two aspects of Bürger's conclusion are particularly important. As Buchloh has demonstrated, the nihilistic assumption that the commodification of art in the 1960s is chained to the absolute failure of the avant-garde, while dialectical in its basis, is flawed.[4] The avant-garde, constituting a disorganised and anachronistic array of widely disparate tactics, never intended (or was capable of) a permanent destruction of the institution of art. It was, as Bürger acknowledged, a phenomenon that merely *recognised* this "institution" for the first time and then radically attacked it.[5] However the argument that the failure to *destroy* the "institution" in the 1920s meant the futility of opposition forever after is tenuous and, as Buchloh demonstrates, neglects the important skirmishes between art and its endemic institutional hegemony that have taken place since.[6] As Foster argues, these assaults can only be seen as an extension of avant-garde activities, even on the basis of Bürger's own strictly defined terms and categories.[7] The historical avant-garde is not a start and endpoint of opposition but merely a transformation of the contexts where this opposition is directed.

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[4] Benjamin Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde," *Art in America* (November, 1984), p. 21.

[5] Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 19.

[6] Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde," p. 21; see also: Hal Foster, "What's Neo about the Neo-Avant-Garde?" *October* 70 (Autumn, 1994), p. 16.

[7] Foster, "What's Neo about the Neo-Avant-Garde?" p. 20. Foster offers an extension of Bürger's dialectic by conceptualising the neo-avant-garde as an *extension* of the institution of art against which it operates in a "deconstructive" capacity.

The other important aspect in regard to Bürger's theory is that, in architecture, the process of institutionalisation has been reversed and architecture is more hybrid and oppositional in the "neo" period than it ever was in the historical period. Given this example, there is considerable evidence to suggest that what has taken place in the wake of the Second World War is the migration of strategies away from the visual arts and into fresh fields where their oppositional effects are being felt for the first time. This thesis has demonstrated that the legacy of the historical avant-garde in architecture has not been in the production of works but in an expansion of the category of "work", inspiring a shifting of emphasis in a number of practices towards the *discovery*, rather than *production* of architecture. The readymade and the *objet-trouvé*, so central to artistic production in the 1920s only find their way into architecture for the first time in the 1970s, providing a whole new array of targets against which these institutional critiques can be mounted.

This dissertation began with an exploration of theories of avant-garde production, demonstrating that the "avant-gardiste" work was essentially a hybridisation of artistic techniques, implying that avant-garde activity in architecture could be sought outside of the traditional disciplinary boundaries of architectural design or history. Challenging the formalist hegemony of Clement Greenberg, the first section demonstrated the role of Bürger's theory in defining an alternative mode of avant-garde practice and enabling architecture to be considered in the broader field of creative production. Of particular importance in this regard was the avant-garde *readymade*, which established a critical framework for the discovery of architecture and its representation, as opposed to its construction (or production) from first principles. The second section of this dissertation explored this "readymade" representation of architecture through a range of avant-garde mediums, demonstrating the centrality of "space" and "the city" to avant-garde creative strategies in the period. Bürger's unhinging of the avant-garde from the category of the "new"—a prerequisite in Adorno's writing—enables a more concentrated focus on the historical and "outmoded" forms of architecture which were central to the nihilistic strategies of Dada and surrealism. This avenue, as well as being a fascination in Benjamin's work, has been a dominant trajectory in readings of surrealism in the period

since the publication of Bürger's work.[8] The final section reviewed three important architectural practices that have emerged in the period since the publication of Bürger's theory and established their credentials as avant-gardiste works. Demonstrating that each of the practices drew inspiration from Dada and surrealism, the section demonstrated an emphasis on the discovery and representation of architecture at the expense of architectural form and, with respect to Bürger's writing, positioned each as a negation of the traditional work of architecture.

While the dissertation has focussed on architecture in an "expanded field", it is still only with regard to the migration of creative strategies from the visual arts into architecture that the historical structure is developed. While architecture has been shown to be distinct from art and especially in regard to the nature of autonomy, this does not suggest that the criticisms of Bürger in regard to the commodification of artistic production are not adaptable or valid.[9] As has been illustrated, this dissertation has focussed on the formative strategies of these architectural practices and evidence of these strategies is often obscured or even non-existent in the subsequent work of all three approaches. The fragility of the industry of architecture and its dependence upon economic clients means that the initial anti-institutional rhetoric gives way to the need to *produce* architecture in order to survive. Equally important, and more sinister, the theoretical (and curatorial) attention paid to these formative strategies (as well as the seductive nature of their aesthetic objects) means that they independently achieve recognition and notoriety *through* opposition which inevitably leads to institutionalisation and commodification.

This aspect of the practices of Bernard Tschumi, Coop Himmelb(l)au and Diller + Scofidio should not be overlooked. Where aspects of their early work can be connected strongly to Bürger's theorisation of the historical avant-garde, their subsequent success aligns

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[8] Of particular importance in this regard is the chapter "Outmoded Spaces" in: Hal Foster, *Compulsive Beauty* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 1995), pp. 157-191; see also: Foster, "The ABC of Contemporary Design," *October* 100 (Spring, 2002), pp. 195-196; Hal Foster, *Design and Crime and Other Diatribes* (London: Verso, 2002), pp. 138-139.

[9] See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 52.

strongly to the criticisms Bürger directed at the neo-avant-garde.[10] The recent projects of all three practices resemble architectural objects (or works) in their simplest sense, reinforcing the institutional contexts of architectural production and replacing critique and opposition with aestheticism and functionality. All three practices are now firmly entrenched in the self-referential cycles of publication and education, commandeering a vast architectural machinery in the service of important (and often institutional) clients. Through this process, the prophecy of Poggioli is confirmed: "[t]he avant-garde is condemned to conquer, through the influence of fashion, that very popularity it once disdained—and this is the beginning of its end."[11]

For Iain Boyd Whyte, once the provocations of the avant-garde are met with ambivalence rather than shock, the end of its influence is near.[12] Nowhere is this more evident than in the transformation of Coop Himmelb(l)au's practice from radical avant-gardiste co-operative to global architectural spectacle in the space of three decades. Where their projects originally had the character of discursive interventions—both on paper and in the city—they now occupy entire blocks and are financed by, amongst others, banks, luxury car-manufacturers, global museums and governments. The most recent photograph used by Wolf Prix to promote the practice is indicative of this transformation from an avant-gardiste preoccupation to a corporate one. Where in the early work of Coop Himmelb(l)au the lit cigarette was used to burn holes in the drawings they were constructing, the self-assurance of this later portrait demonstrates the comfort and compliance with the systems of production, as the protagonist holds a cigar in one hand and confidently returns the camera's gaze.

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[10] See: Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, p. 58.

[11] Renato Poggioli, *The Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Gerald Fitzgerald (Harvard: The Belknap Press, 1968), pp. 82. David Harvey refers to this passage in: David Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1990), p. 20.

[12] Iain Boyd White, "The End of an Avant-Garde: The Example of Expressionist Architecture," *Art History* 3 1 (March 1980), p. 109. George Baker makes a similar argument in regard to Dadaism. See: George Baker, *Artwork Caught by the Tail: Francis Picabia and Dada in Paris* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2007), pp. 55-58.

Compare this, for instance, with the portrait of Marcel Duchamp taken in the 1960s. While his oeuvre was undergoing a similar commercialisation in this period, his glance has the oppositional trepidation that accompanied Duchamp on his many migrations throughout the century.[13] Breton's words are fitting in this regard, taken from his poem "The Sun on a Leash." Breton writes:

> The smoker puts the finishing touches on his work
> He's looking for the union of himself and the landscape[14]

While the neo avant-garde and historical avant-garde sought to connect with radically different landscapes, there was a comfort with which the practices of the neo-avant-garde accommodated commercial success. The way that these "two smokers" inhabit their respective landscapes leaves the question remaining of the ongoing role and status of the avant-garde in relationship to the expanding fields of architecture and its criticism. If, given the systems of architectural production already in place, oppositional strategies will inevitably be either dismissed or eventually commercialised then the bleak prognosis of both Tafuri and Bürger seems particularly poignant. While rejecting this pessimism, both Benjamin Buchloh and Hal Foster have argued for the need for a theoretical and critical understanding of the avant-garde and, in particular, the aesthetic leadership that such a direction can impart.[15] Lamenting the post-war diagnosis of trends into either "post" or "neo" categorisations, Foster argues that currently "neither suffices as a strong paradigm for practice, and no other model stands in their stead."[16] While vulnerable to nostalgia, the

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[13] While the re-editioning of Duchamp's works in the 1960s guaranteed his future influence and the growth of his estate, he remained poor throughout his life, and was dependent upon handouts and free rent in order to survive well into his 70s. In fact Molesworth argues that Duchamp had a philosophical opposition to both work and success. See: Helen Molesworth, "Work Avoidance: The Everyday Life of Marcel Duchamp's Readymades," *Art Journal* **57** 4 (Winter, 1998), p. 52.

[14] André Breton, "Le Soleil en laisse" (1966) translated as: André Breton, "The Sun on a Leash," trans. Bill Zavatsky and Zack Rogow in *American Poetry Review* **14** 1 (January/February, 1981) [up]. The poem was dedicated to Pablo Picasso but has a contemporaneous resonance with Duchamp, who died in the following year.

[15] Buchloh, "Theorizing the Avant-Garde," p. 19; Foster, "What's Neo about the Neo-Avant-Garde?" pp. 18-20.

[16] Foster, "The ABCs of Contemporary Design," p. 198.

study of the avant-garde has an important ongoing role in the creative and critical fields of cultural production providing not only direction in critical thinking but a framework for interrogating the modes upon which modernisation is grafted. Despite its inevitable failures and contradictions, the conceptualisation of a "neo" avant-garde defines a cultural problem that is of ongoing importance in that it provides a theoretical trajectory that (in the wake of the cultural diversification of all practice) focuses attention on modes of practice and their inevitable effects. As Foster concludes

> our paradigm-of-no-paradigm can also abet a stagnant incommensurability or a flat indifference, and this posthistorical default of contemporary art and architecture is no improvement on the old teleological projections of modernist practices. All of us (artists, critics, curators, amateurs) need some narrative to focus our practices—situated stories, not *grands recits*. Without this guide we are likely to remain swamped in the double wake of post/modernism and the neo/avant-garde.[17]

For Foster, the radicality of the avant-garde, directed against the institution of art, has been swamped by the expansion and consolidation of capitalism that has transformed the production of art and its reception in fundamental ways. These are well beyond the concerns of the avant-gardiste work of art or its institutional context. Arguing for the radical nature of capital that both dismantles historical structures while at the same time recodes new ones, Foster concludes in an earlier essay that "[m]ore than any avant-garde, capital is the agent of transgression and shock—which is one reason why such strategies in art now seem redundant."[18] The immersion of architecture and art as economic strategies, regardless of their oppositional intentions, has radically transformed the critical theory of art and suggests that the potential of avant-gardism as a creative strategy has entered a new historical epoch. As Jameson has observed, "it is easier to imagine the end of the world than to imagine the end of capitalism"[19]. The radical transformations of the twentieth century are so substantial in nature (and irrevocable in influence) that they have

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[17] Foster, "The ABCs of Contemporary Design," pp. 198-199.

[18] Hal Foster, *Recodings: Art, Spectacle, Cultural Politics* (New York: The New Press, 1985), p. 147.

[19] Jameson is writing in an explicitly architectural context. See: Frederic Jameson, "Future City," *New Left Review* 21 (May June 2003), p. 76.

consumed and appropriated the historical forces of opposition. This has had the effect that new modes of engagement need to be established in both criticism and practice.

The reality is, as Tafuri illustrated, that architectural practice, regardless of its aspirations, is so immersed in the forces of production and the systems of capitalism that it is only capable of subversive reform rather than meaningful (or revolutionary) change. Of equal significance is that architects have no control, whatsoever, over the forces of production that shape cities and control economies. The only avant-garde tactics available to architecture are through the independent forums of publication and, as a result, representation. Clearly certain practices are capable of greater subversion than others and *representation*, for architecture, enables the greatest possible field of influence in the contemporary context. The positions of both Tafuri and Bürger represent the failures of the neo-avant-garde in absolutist terms and neglect the important media transformations that the formative practices of the neo-avant-garde in architecture have initiated as well as the role they may play in establishing models for future opposition or subterfuge. In the case of Tschumi, Coop Himmelb(l)au and Diller + Scofidio, the practices they undertook in the 1970s through to the early 1990s empowered architecture by negating the "work" as such, readying architectural production for a future outside of its specific discipline. This provided a model of the work of architecture that was infinitely more adaptable to the concerns of advertisement, television and new media.[20]

To position a role for the avant-garde in the 21st century is not a trivial task and one that, for many scholars, is purely historical in its scope. The objectives and strategies of avant-garde practice, bound up with the political utopianism and social naïveté of the interwar period as well as the rapid expansion (in the second half of the twentieth century) of the consumerist systems that the avant-garde sought to dismantle, means that the apparent need or even possibility of an avant-garde is exceedingly narrow, at least in the context that it has been defined thus far. It is also easy to empathise with the pessimism with

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[20] For a more detailed investigation of these forces, see: Andreas Huyssen, "The Cultural Politics of Pop: Reception and Critique of US Pop Art in the Federal Republic of Germany," *New German Critique* **4** (Winter, 1975), pp. 77-98; this essay is also published in: Andreas Huyssen, *After The Great Divide: Modernism, Mass Culture, Postmodernism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 141-159.

which both Tafuri and Bürger approached the study of the avant-garde: as an exploration in representation, rather than a tangible alteration to the structure of society or its institutions. However, this is to neglect the changing context within which both the avant-garde and its scholarship are now forced to operate. Rather than being reduced to *mere* representation, the avant-garde should be considered, in the current media-saturated social context, as vital in that it is only through representation that any viable or tangible change to this social reality can be conceived or imagined. Representation has become so central to contemporary life that Burger's predicted sublation of art and life has reached a point where the two are effectively indecipherable, not only in the institutions of art, but the praxis of life in general. The encroachment of the social context has served to evacuate the disciplinary boundaries of the fine arts generally, and architecture specifically, meaning that art and architecture are experienced predominantly *through* representation and as a virtual extension of everyday life. What is absent in this sublation is an understanding or recognition of the politics of representation, its ancestry and, more importantly, the ability it has as a *transgressive* medium capable of disrupting the forces of production that homogenise it.

Where, in the 1920s, innovations in representation were contained largely within the domain of art, by the 1960s, these innovations had well and truly subverted these disciplinary categorisations. Developments in visual exploration had a role in the formulation of advertising, the marketing of music, the conceptualisation of fashion and the technological repackaging of information and communications. Architecture no longer resides in a narrow field of formal strategies and programmatic innovation but in a vast and accelerating field of media strategies that condition not only its production and inhabitation but its conceptualisation and dissemination. The boundaries between architecture and its context have never been more blurred and it sits equally comfortably in the hybrid field of visual culture or cultural theory as it does within the pages of *Vanity Fair* or as the backdrop to a Hollywood blockbuster. While untraditional platforms from which revolutionary strategies are projected, these expanded popular forms are a reflection of the changing contexts of architecture and the contrary expectations of an avant-garde,

where the traditional tactics of shock are no longer sufficient or, indeed, shocking.[21] This does not mean that they are depoliticised modes of architectural production. The primary legacy of avant-garde architectural exploration in the 1970s and 1980s has been the readying of architecture for its reception in the media and a shifting of its definition from the inherently structural, to the loosely spatial.[22]

The inability of the historical avant-garde to radically penetrate this aspect of popular culture was a major criticism of Bürger, sentencing art practice to a future bound by the institutional categorisation that the avant-garde had discovered and exploited. Walter Benjamin had argued that the avant-gardes remained primarily as intellectual movements concerned with a hermetic and isolated language that alienated rather than empowered the proletariat.[23] For Benjamin, the radical avant-gardes merely paved the way for a more inclusive wave of social change to occur but, in their current form, had been marginalised by their exclusivity in the face of the popular.[24] The architectural explorations discussed in this dissertation are not prone to the same criticisms. Where Benjamin lamented that

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[21] Adorno argued that "[a]fter the European catastrophe the surrealist shocks lost their force. It is as though they had saved Paris by preparing it for fear: the destruction of the city was their centre." The impact of both the war and the holocaust on aesthetic notions of shock is an important consideration in this context. See: Theodor Adorno, "Looking Back on Surrealism," trans. Rolf Tiedemann and Shierry Weber Nicholsen, in Theodor Adorno, *Notes to Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), p. 87 [1956]; A similar argument was made by Raoul Hausman who, as a central figure of Berlin Dada, argued that the various resurgences of Dada activity in the 1960s were superficial and that the force of the movement was a response to the tragedy of its historical context. Hausman wrote: "[a]fter war and revolution, Dada had to be unheroic, unpathetic and inclined to relativity and phenomenology. […] Thus it is not to be compared to any other art-period. The intellectual climate of the world demanded it." See: Raoul Hausman, "Dadaism and Today's Avant-Garde," *Times Literary Supplement* 3262 (3 September, 1964), pp. 800-801.

[22] These aspects of architecture in relationship to postmodernism are a theme in the writing of Jameson, who argues that architecture assumes an "enveloping" role in framing programme rather than defining form. For Jameson, the work of OMA is paradigmatic in this regard. The most detailed exploration in Jameson's work is available in: Frederic Jameson, *Postmodernism or, the Cultural Logic of Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1991), pp. 60-63; See also: Frederic Jameson and Michael Speaks, "Envelopes and Enclaves: the Space of Post-civil Society," *Assemblage* 17 (April, 1992), pp. 97-130; Jameson, "Future City," p. 65-79.

[23] The argument is made in: Walter Benjamin, "Author as Producer," in *Reflections: Essays, Aphorisms, Autobiographical Writings*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (New York: Schocken Books, 1978), pp. 220-238.

[24] Benjamin, "Author as Producer," p. 228.

artists had failed to find an appropriate mode of communication in order to transcend the current means of production, in architecture, the avant-garde strategies, at least as they have been described in this thesis, were primarily concerned with the reduction of architecture to exactly that model: in book and poster, in the case of Tschumi, in the irrational sketch and random façade in the work of Himmelb(l)au, and in the travelling exhibition or media event, in the case of Diller + Scofidio. In each case architecture, while discursive in nature, is rendered immediately digestible and seductively photogenic as it is distributed *en masse* to ever increasing audiences that transcend the myopic lenses of architectural theorists and radiate outwards in all directions to an expanded field of cultural reception. While these practices do not maintain social, cultural or political revolution as an aim, they are evidence of the adaption of architecture to meet the forces of production in a combative sense.

The strategies of Tschumi, Coop Himmelb(l)au and Diller + Scofidio, while not revolutionary in a political or economic sense, have played a transgressive role in extending the boundaries of architectural practice and, specifically, preparing architecture for an expanded social role in cultural and social reform. This is the primary legacy of Bürger's theory, which shifts the emphasis away from the work itself and outwards towards the study of its reception. While there is evidence that architecture was a major preoccupation (and polemical tool) of the historical avant-garde it is only in the practices of the neo-avant-garde in architecture that architecture was transformed. It was through a negation of the traditional characteristics of architecture that the neo-avant-garde used the tactics of the historical avant-garde to transform architecture into a language of representation. Working with the fragmented language of the historical avant-garde, these strategies dismantled the concrete and formalistic properties of architecture and dematerialised the spatial characteristics to the extent that architecture and representation became a "language" of opposition employed not only in response to trends in architecture but the significant acceleration of economics as a pre-requisite for architectural production. While these strategies employed the *objet-trouvé* and readymade in architecture with the same force that the historical avant-garde had adopted it to the critique of art, it was in an entirely transformed historical and social context where their aims and influence were drastically altered.

Foster's assertion that the neo-avant-garde extends the project of the historical avant-garde in an original way and against new targets has a natural resonance with this phenomenon in architecture.[25] Bürger's legacy, as such, is not in the diagnosis of a failed neo-avant-garde but in the formation of the category of the neo-avant-garde in the first place: as a historical structure that has advanced the study and criticism of art and provided a new model for its interpretation. Bürger's argument that the historical avant-garde established the "institution of art" by first drawing attention to its effects, is directly applicable to the *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, which itself established the category of the neo-avant-garde as an inevitable extension of this process of institutionalisation. As Foster has argued, while the criticisms of the neo-avant-garde that Bürger highlights should be approached with caution, the influence and importance of this historical structure is now inevitably embedded in the history of both art and architecture.[26]

In regard to the history of architecture, Bürger's legacy provides the opportunity to broaden the study of architecture by tracing its radical roots to avant-gardism and in opposition to modernism. Dispelling a number of the historical preconceptions regarding modernism in the process, this enables a study of architecture on the basis of discovery, rather than production, and with respect to the "old" (or outmoded) rather than the new. In this way the practices discussed can be viewed as a continual reinvention of architecture in new and unconventional contexts. Rather than transforming the mode of production, these tactics negate production entirely, shifting the creative emphasis to discovery and reception and establishing architecture as a recurring trope in the dialectical opposition between art and life. In this way, the technological trajectory of modernism is subverted as the work of architecture is torn and ruptured and then ultimately scattered amongst the expanded fields of the historical avant-garde and its legacy in architectural representation.

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[25] Foster, *The Return of the Real,* p. 20.

[26] Foster, "What's Neo about the Neo-Avant-Garde?" p. 20.

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