

# A RESEARCH INTO INHABITABLE THEORIES

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## Prélude

Maybe it was the memory of the mirror, appearing as a fluid image in one of the books that I once read, which led me to this forgotten place. The unity of one single person was depicted in the mirror as a symphony composed of present and past and thus as well of future personae; a symphony of life, which would never repeat itself and in which every chord would appear as a possibility for the myriad pluralities accruing from it - an almost impossible thought in this millennium, in which humanity is about to achieve its objective of tracking everything that is uncertain.

Paradoxically, it was this unknown image of the plurality of reflections that revealed the path to this place, which is not drawn on any map. The rectangular room is painted in bright white. No window or door disturbs the continuity of the walls. However, there must be openings in the ceiling, since natural light enters the room from above, along the walls, as funnel-shaped rays.

I am one. I walk to be, always  
the last in my sequence.  
My memories are operators to my dreams.

"[...] nothing can begin,  
nothing can be done without a previous orientation -  
and any orientation implies acquiring a fixed point." (Eliade 1987, p.22)

## A Research into Inhabitable Theories

At the beginning of the essay collection entitled "Between Past and Future" Hannah Arendt cites an aphorism by the French poet René Char (Arendt 1994, p.7): "Our heritage is not preceded by a testament". Every generation, Arendt reminds us, must rediscover a specific space of thought. She calls this space "non-time space" - the gap between past and future. In order to better understand this term, it might need to be mentioned that there is only one word for both "presence" and "present" in the German language. Non-time space is thus presence, and presence is where past and future conjoin.

My current research is dedicated to this discovery of the gap between past and future, in an approach to recover the tacit knowledge present in a situative media praxis, and to develop from it a theory of Architecture for the media age as an architectural poetics.

In my opinion, the potential of a situative poetic praxis resides within its reference to a concept of place as it is understood within the field of anthropology. According to Marc Augé an anthropological place is situated within the time and space of a culture. As such, "place" is defined by Augé as being "concerned with identity", as being "relational and historical" (Augé 1992, p.100). Anthropological place is lived through language, and the survival of a place is ensured by the continuation of a tale. Its borders must be constantly affirmed, renewed or moved, during the vital process of the construction of a place's identity. The tale's own control mechanisms are permanently constituted.

It seems to be necessary for that which is present as border to be flexible in order to allow for a presence of place. For this reason Richard Sennett revealed the notion of "border" - contrasting the rigidity of a notion of "boundary" - in its importance for an idea of an open city (Sennett 2004). A place is performed and inhabitable in its openness, presenting as orientation a border without boundary. Giordano Bruno (ca.1548-1600) used the terms: "termino senza termine" (Bruno 2004, p.46) to describe the infinite.

In the text "The Meridian" by the Romanian born poet Paul Celan we find again a notion of "border". "The poem", Celan says, "asserts itself at the border of itself; in order to persist it calls and fetches itself uninterruptedly from its Not-Any more back to its Yet-Always" (Celan 1983, p.197). The poem transfers language into an articulation of language at the border of itself, and as such it is always in transit.

This poster presents several of my media projects that are related to an inquiry of place and the communicative role of spatial articulations. These projects are based on an idea of situative praxis as poetic praxis. They use media technology, yet present an understanding of communication that differs from a contemporary understanding of communication as binary technological.

It is argued that the dominating binary order of technology can be transcended. On the basis of a situative poetic praxis we may arrive at an understanding of the potentiality of the media city as a project of radical communication.

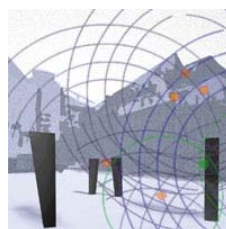
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... perhaps once in time, Blue Room will go traveling around the world, temporarily occupying urban space, and then leaving that space behind again, but with a remembrance of something blue, connected to all the other blue spaces the room will have left behind ...

Inside entirely blue, light entering only between the ceiling and the walls. Four speakers transmitted a sine wave sound, which by means of superimposition extinguished itself in regular sequences. For one day the blue room coexisted in suspended animation with the church behind it, taking possession of the plaza, much as the sound of a church bell creates a sphere of influence.

blue room - installation in public space - Karlsruhe, Germany - 1999  
<http://www.ezaic.de/arc/>



The sound installation zone\_01 is designed for realization in public space. In the course of progressing technification, public space is losing its significance as space for communication. Instead it is primarily used as space for movement. Public squares are experienced as interruptions within paths of travel. zone\_01 simulates communicative processes and translates them into sound. The movement oriented use of the location is transformed into a sonorous simulation of the communicative function of such a public square and leads to changes within the system of sound.

The installation zone\_01 consists of eight differently grouped sound emitting objects which can be positioned in accordance with the characteristics of the specific location. Through the interaction of individuals or several users the sound structure experiences change. The sounds and rhythms generated by the installation in real time are synonymous for speech and verbal communication. The basis sound is generated from white noise, which contains all frequencies and thus refers to the potential for communication. The rhythms and volume envelopes of the basis sound are not differentiated; they contain neither patterns nor periodicity. In contrast to this is actual communication, which is represented by pitched sound of few frequencies.

"I am my own sacrifice, designed to be sacred", says the girl who is the product of scientific vision, and she continues: "I am the synthesis of holiness and pleasure. Innocence is immanent in me."

Loneliness comes with the promise of efficiency. Holiness is a pleasureless escape. The work "waiting", is a reflection upon the technologically enhanced, the mediated body, and its relation to the world of matter. For decades medical devices have found their ways into our bodies, and current discussions, be they in cognitive science or in genetics, make apparent that we have entered into the post-human era of a technological body whose limits are unknown.

Part for part, the human is replacing himself. Aging belongs to matter only.

"Waiting" depicts a female performer standing almost still in an obvious loop of 30 seconds duration, projected on a wall that displays the traces of its age. The performer's small movements appear in relationship to the structure of the wall, as if she wanted to synchronize herself with that world that knows the truly ephemeral - history - and with it, memory and dream. There is a place. The image is fleeing.

waiting - video installation - project x - Dallas, Texas, USA - 2005  
<http://www.ezaic.de/update/waiting.html>

This pitched sound is generated from the basis sound. Its characteristics of rhythm and dynamics, however, resemble the periodicity and phrase oriented structure of speech and thus make reference to verbal communication. The spectrum of possibilities between potential and actual communication are made audible through the interaction of passers-by on the square. The distance of an individual or of several people to the sound sources determines the degree of sonority and the differentiation of rhythmic and dynamic structures. The closer a person stands to the sound sources, the less noisy, and thus the more sonorous, differentiated and periodic the sound becomes. This transformation is audibly experienced as a seamless, gradual metamorphosis. In this regard, communication is experienced as segment of the possible, as well as the individual in contrast to the general.

In comparison to other installations, in which the spatial and sonorous characteristics of a given location are implemented into the work, for example through the composition of sound spaces in order to draw out the specific essence of the location, or through the trans-formation of the sound characteristics of the given location as an ordering principle, or by utilizing these means with the intention of offer in the viewer and listener a new perception of these spaces, the objects and sound events spatially integrated into the given location in zone\_01 are to serve the transformation of the transitory function of this location into a simulation of a communicative function of the same location and thus of a current potential for communication.

If one does not consider the concept of composition in the self-evident context of music but instead betakes oneself to another realm of thought, the principle upon which zone\_01 rests becomes clearer. When one observes architectonic approaches in cyberspace, such as in the work of Marcos Novak and Stephen Perrella, who formulate concepts such as liquid architecture or hypersurface architecture, a significantly different approach can be seen to that of the interventions into real space commonly considered architecture. The structures are bound to time. The laws of static are lifted, and form, subjected to a continuous flux, presents itself as a temporally limited condition. The composition is determined by the various parameters which constitute the flexibility of the form.

zone\_01 - in collaboration with the composer Sean Reed - 2001/2006  
[http://www.ezaic.de/zone\\_01/](http://www.ezaic.de/zone_01/)

