Doctoral Thesis in Art, Technology, and Design

KEY NOTES ON THE UNRULY CITY

Social, Material, and Spatial Transgressions

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She entered the book. She entered the pages of the book as a vagrant steals into an empty house, or a deserted garden.

X

AN-BUILDING BERLIN
The Unruly Hinterland of a Fake Façade

I'm sitting on the bus one morning. Passengers jam-packed around me, their heads bowed over handheld screens. I'm living in Berlin and have been here long enough to get into the rhythm of the place—to know the frictions and flows of an everyday life, of cramped commutes where polite phrases are rarely spoken. But I imagine the bus could've been lifted and relocated onto any street, in any European metropolis, and the scene would scarcely change. The commuters are likely to maintain the same pose in any hypermodern city, while experiencing the same uniformity of urban motion.

Traffic is at a standstill.
    Or maybe that's just the sense we're meant to have—that "the city" and our place in it is fixed. The structures of where we live are often made to feel both immutable and oddly interchangeable. Urban landscapes have been built on the belief—brick-by-brick across centuries—that the way we are going is where everything is headed, and the shape of our everyday is how it looks everywhere.

I can believe it, sitting on that bus, stuck in traffic in the city center. Until I just so happen to look out the window. One of the building façades appears to billow in the breeze. Bricks and mortar softly ripple in a barely noticeable movement.
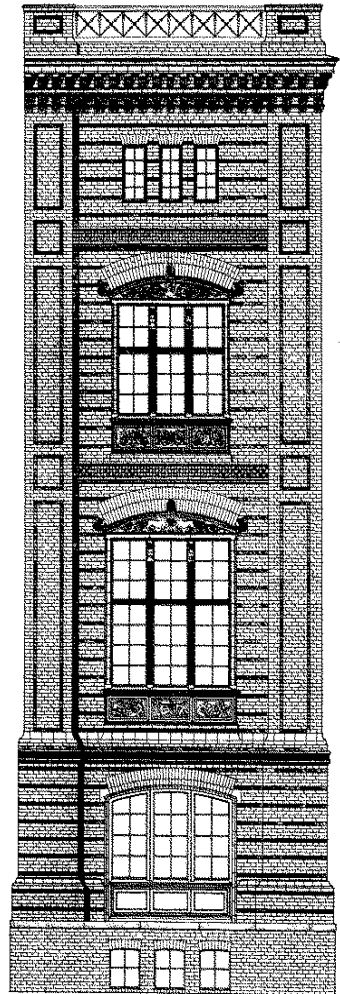
The Bauakademie façade.

Billowing Bricks

From a distance, the building resembles all the others, looking just like the marble-clad ministry opposite, or the hotel next door. But up close, through the window, I can now see that it's a literal façade. A photorealistic image of a building front, printed on sheets of tarpaulin and seamlessly mounted on a free-standing framework that runs along the periphery of an entire city block. An unknown space, its four sides wrapped in an illusion.

The only flaw in the deception—which conversely might make it the only real true thing—is a solid metal door mounted on one side.

Built to be seen

the façade is a lie. What lies behind this show, under this decoration? What are these rigidly straight, perspectival, streets hiding? The interior volumes behind the ornamental surface contain many surprises. Whoever penetrates under this cover, discovers something different: sometimes charming, more often wretched; in short, the things people passing by under the gaze of the windows do not see.

HENRI LEFEBVRE. (2003:2): 176.

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Baumaske (building mask) is the representation of the storey, eaves, and ridge height of a planned building at a scale of 1:1 on its original building site, in order to visualize the building at site during a lobbying and planning phase.

The concept of the *Baumaske* was invented to reestablish the significance and magnificence of landmark buildings destroyed in WWII. After a group started lobbying for the rebuilding of the Berlin Palace, the Berlin Senate commissioned a replica of the proposed building renovation, which was hand-painted in Paris at a scale of 1:1 and shipped to Berlin where it was wrapped around the scaffolding erected on the original building site in 1994. It was the first of three fake façades to be installed in the city.

I am standing in front of the third faux-façade, made to resemble the iconic brick building front of the Bauakademie—the original Academy of Architecture—which had been gradually

destroyed and finally removed during the political turmoil of the past century. The details of the brickwork paint a clear picture of what the lobbying group imagines for the space. The thin plastic sheet is a promise to restore the building to its former glory.

We search for thresholds, tissue like walls--
As public space is enclosed so protest shifts into the realm of the private- it regains potency by interrupting and rerouting channels of commerce and consumption--

we occupy by haunting--.

LAURA GRACE FORD. (2016): 2.

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Cities are not only accumulations and arrangements of the built environment; they are not only cityscapes where houses are aligned along streets and avenues, adorned with monuments and operated by markets. Nor are they areas solely comprised of institutions and administrations such as hospitals, prisons, schools. They could be considered a complex terrain of spatial transformations, orchestrated by the influences of capital accretion, industrialization, commodification—but again, they're not only that.

The cities which my interventions reference were once built from their material underbellies, and in much the same way these environments have, continuously been formed, deformed, and transformed by the movements, moods, and behaviors of their inhabitants: the city dwellers, both human and non-human. Transgressing the built environment, the city becomes a constructive process and a mental space—always in various degrees of constant negotiation, contestation, and flux.

Transformative Flux

Robert Park (1925): 1.
"The City: suggestions for investigation of human behavior in the urban environment."

Steve Pile (2005): 1.
Real Cities: Modernity, Space and the Phantasmagorias of City Life.

Overleaf: the Bauakademie *Baumaske*. Structured by eight window axes, inserted with terracotta relief plates. Wall pillars sprinkled with wide tripartite windows. Four storeys high, contrasted by cornices and bright brick belts, with two portals on the northern side. A plastic-wrapped illusion on all four sides.

The original Bauakademie was designed by Karl-Friedrich Schinkel and built 1832–36.

OPENING UP VIEW TO THE

UNVISIBLE –

Praxis of Access

The fake building façade depicting the proposed rebuilding of the Bauakademi conceals the boards of a very real wooden fence. There's no way to effortlessly slip in behind, so I turn my attention to the locked door. A pin-and-tumbler lock can be manipulated in a variety of (more or less) covert ways: picking (requires more skill than luck), bumping, raking, rocking, jiggling (requires more luck than skill). There are any number of ways to modify the positions of the small pins that, when in the right place, allow the cylinder to turn and the locking bolt to retract.

You could try overlifting the pins if the lock is badly engineered (it wasn't), or maybe try impressioning a key blank if you happen to have the rare combination of the right materials handy and an undisturbed, well-lit setting. But the foreign ministry building is just across the street, in one of the most heavily surveilled areas of the city, with police presence on the lookout for suspicious activities around the clock. You could rely on a bit of social engineering. I think about who would be likely to have the key to this particular door, and how to teleduplicate it.

Instead, I search the area and find it—the spare key on a lanyard, marked BAUAKADEMIE in capital letters, half hidden behind a flap of the façade, on the narrow edge above the metal door.

I turn the key and open the door.
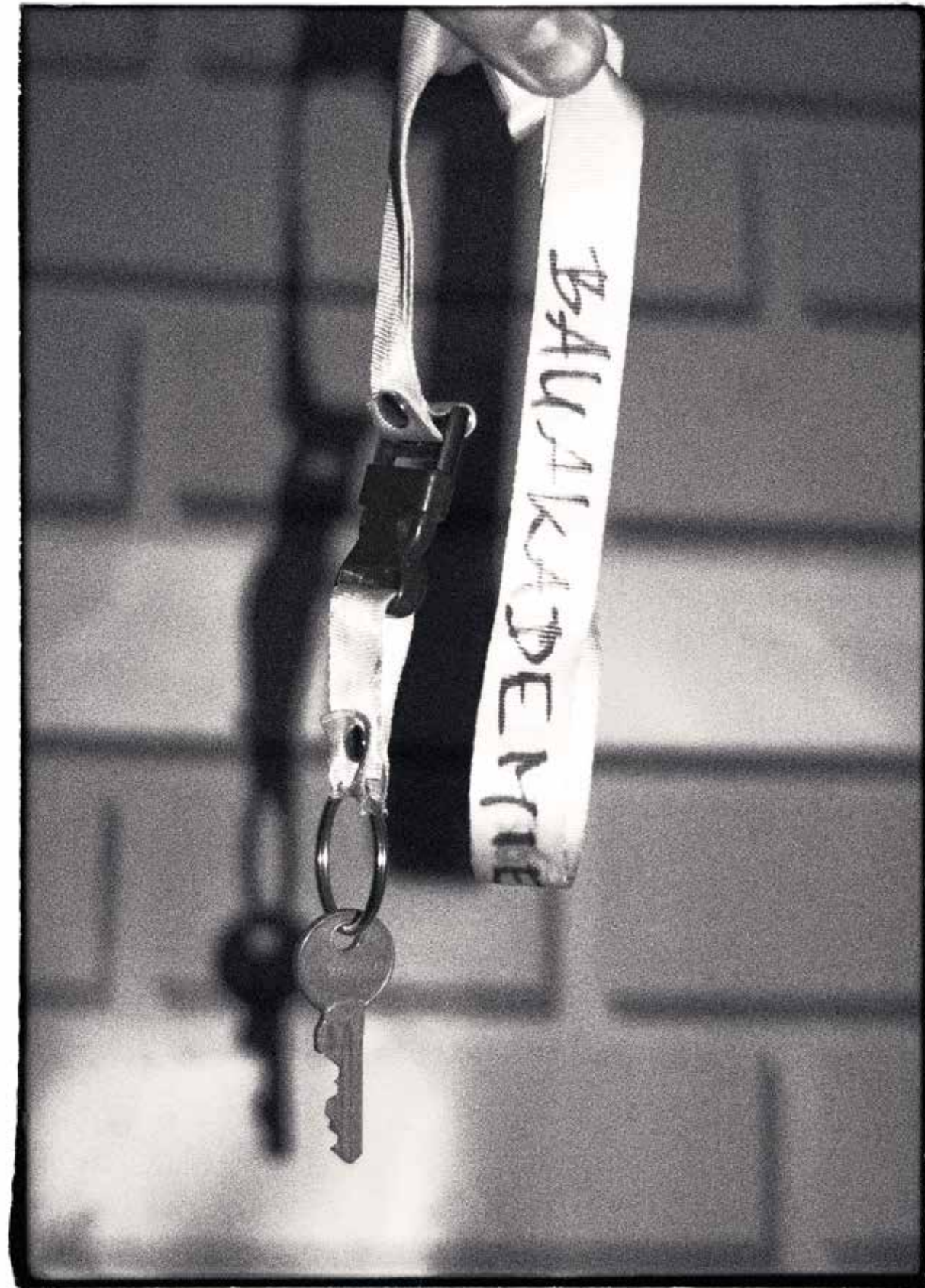
Fugitive Motion: Along the Transversal

It's a very peculiar sensation stepping through that door, slipping in behind the façade. The sky is open overhead. I feel like I've stepped into the kind of nature we tend to imagine existing outside the perimeters of the city, but here it is, hidden in the historical center, in the very seat of grand culture and government, surrounded by ministry buildings and museums.

From the other side of the façade, you can see the intense structure holding up the illusion. The silhouette of the immense scaffolding tower four stories up, supporting the tarpaulin that encloses the space as well as the curling vines of climbing weeds. From the dark expanse of the ground sprouts mushrooms, bushy ferns, ghetto palms, fig trees, bamboos—vegetation of all kinds grows wild in this hidden city block.

A biotope regenerating itself.

In the undergrowth of the empty lots, cuckoos and warblers sang shrill and jubilant.   the balconies   billowed slowly. The building site was muddy; the corrugated iron paling surrounding it was askew and disjointed; rain water had collected in deep potholes. There were pockets of rubbish and piles of rusting tools. Sparrows hopped around; the earth disgorged rosy worms gobbled up by little birds between melodious warblings. The sky was darkening fitfully, now it was a voilet purple. The soaked earth gave out a smell of must, roots and rust.

SYLVIE GERMAIN. (1993): 103.

The Unruly City

The sun sets and hundreds of crows descend through the open ceiling. Raucous and rowdy. Seeds tumbling from their beaks, showering this weedy Eden with droppings and husks. The inadvertent gardeners settle their flapping wings as they find their night perches on the scaffolding, and a fox slinks out from the shadows to enjoy the fruit. As the night stretches on, I'm joined by other inhabitants of the unruly city—beavers, bats, rats ... I've found this place *with* them.

I come back the next morning—the light of the rising sun through the gaping roof catching the wings of the early bees—and begin poking around the place. The northern corner of the construction has been built with bricks and mortar, providing a real physical reference. Next to it, a locked space, also in real bricks, simulates the Red Hall (Roter Saal) of Schinkel's original academy. It's overgrown with Climbing Nightshade.

I can't get over the improbability of this place. It is almost impossible, but the fact that it's there and I'm wading through its weeds proves that it's possible. It makes little sense. This could possibly be the most fertile, brimming-with-life city block in all of Berlin. With the multitude of species of plant life, the presence of animals. All the bugs. It doesn't only make me imagine what the city could be, it reminds me of what the city already is: a wild place at its core, growing on broken ground. Despite the continual efforts to pave over and push this wildness to the edges, it's already everywhere. Sprouting in the center.

The unruly city.

*

The artificiality and "man-madeness" of urban environments make it easy to dismiss any connection with the natural world, and that assumption—the almost casual denial of association with any world beyond the edges of an urban artifice—definitely affects the attitudes and conduct of "citizens" (the human ones, at least).

Citizen and city-dweller have been dissociated; what has historically been a core ideal, a core unity, of modern political life has, Lefebvre says, perhaps for the first time, perhaps forever, been wrenched apart, prized open. City-dwellers now live with a

ANDY MERRIFIELD. (2011): 469.

Bitterſüß.

Climbing Nightshade.

Climbing at night.

terrible intimacy, a tragic intimacy of proximity without sociability, of presence without representation, of encounter without real meeting. The tragedy of the urban-dweller is a tragedy of having hoped excessively, and of having these hopes serially dashed.

Denizens

Throughout this publication, I will refer to the dissociated inhabitants—those who have been deprived and denied their right to the city, those more-than-human co-makers and caretakers of the unruly city—as denizens.

The census numbers in the unruly city show the powerful few to be the minority, even though they often claim the right to define the borders of "what matters" and render everything outside that circle of influence invisible.

*

I have found the key and keep coming back on a daily basis to spend time in the space behind the façade—much like the fortified Berlin Isle of high medieval times, only this time turned outside-in, with a 46 x 46 m square of enclosed wilderness on the inside and a rigid architecture of domination on the outside, stretching to beyond the horizon. A reversed reality where a gigantic web of scaffolding supports the innards of its printed tarpaulin façade, in the same geographic location as the muddy banks from which the city once arose. I find out that the scaffolding had been completed in 2004, so this enclosed area has been relatively undisturbed for over a decade. You could tell by how tightly the trees and ferns are tangled with the metal poles of the scaffolding. Integrated, intertwined. The constructed and the natural have been sharing this patch of land for a long time.

500 M

Fortified Berlin, 1710.
Red dot indicates the location of the Bauakademie (built between 1832–36).

Like the vines clutching the supports, I start climbing around. I've noticed a buff-colored shack suspended 16 meters above the ground, at the very top of the scaffolding. *See [B] on p. 63.* Its position seems just as improbable as everything growing from the ground. This shack looks like it has been dropped from the sky. It probably has been: lifted with a crane by and for the workers who had the project of erecting the scaffolding many years ago. And when that job was done, they'd just left it there, precariously perched all the way up top.

It wasn't locked. Once the workers had abandoned it, I guess no one expected anyone else would come snooping. Because who in their right mind would be interested in a weather-beaten shack, with crumbling walls and a leaking roof?

Inside, it's crammed full of construction junk and defunct electronic devices. Once I've figured out how to empty all the construction debris, the 6 x 2.5 m space, with another 2.5 m from floor to ceiling, has a lot of room for possibilities.

I fill garbage bags full of stuff and lower them down to the ground level with a bricolaged pulley system.

*

In a location not more than 2 km from the Bauakademie, down along the river, I had built my first small shack in Berlin together with my friend Klara. We were probably working over there at the same time that the workers were putting up this scaffolding.

In the autumn of 2002, Klara had noticed a concrete ledge on the bank of the river Spree behind the last remaining stretch of the Berlin wall, in what used to be called "the death strip"—the military exclusion zone that for

Climbing in …

cleaning up …

and clearing away.

Hus AB (January, 2003).

almost three decades separated the two opposing systems of domination. We couldn't figure out what that drop-off had ever been used for, but saw that it was presently not used for anything, so we extended the ledge with about 9 m², which then became the camouflaged roof of a concealed enclosed space.

We constructed a hatch door into that ceiling and built a ladder to climb down inside this make-shift room, which we furnished to fit two people—a cot and a chair each, with a shared collapsible table, folding up to cover a long panorama window overlooking the river. We found this at a close-by construction site, and in the neighboring streets all the other materials needed: scaffolding pipes, wooden boards, beat-up bike parts. We repurposed the stuff, making something that others in turn might find and repurpose themselves, one day.

Indeed it was found: and thereafter removed.

We called our little hideout "Hus AB." Its construction incorporated many of the tools and techniques that I was now using to refurbish the abandoned worker's shack, right down to the hatch door I cut open to lower junk to the green ground below. In Hus AB, the trapdoor in the roof was the way to get in; up here, the trapdoor was a way to get stuff out. Hus AB, like every shelter and refuge I'd made before it and every shelter and refuge I made after it, incorporated principles of re-use and re-making. This praxis is a process of scavenging—even from my own previous experiences. Growing up with graffiti writing throughout the 1990s has a lot to do with how I intervene in the built environment.

*

I return to the hinterland plot regularly in the years that follow, squatting its hidden structures and documenting what grows in the cracks.

The construction stuff I've collected in the neighborhood—square aluminum road sign posts, sheets of construction plywood, discarded windows, 50 mm x 160 mm timber beams, and scaffolding pipes—is carried inside the billowing façade and hoisted up with the pulley (that was made from the same material stock). Electricity is acquired through unofficial means.

I make a locking mechanism to secure the door: a scaffolding pipe attached with a string traversing the wall to the outside. A bench is built to fit around the newly-cut hole in the floor.

I also design a chair, assembled using the same square tubes, cut to length, placed in three overlaying formations, and bolted together. Wood scraps for the seat and a backrest are attached with zip-ties that I've found laying around in the greenery below (likely from the time when the façade was installed).

*

An unruly hinterland like this is today a rare find in Berlin. But it wasn't always that uncommon.

After the Berlin Wall fell in 1989, the former death strip cut across the city like a bewildered belt: unbuilt and bounteously barren. In the time following the reunification, Berlin was a shrinking city; a quarter of all residential housing was left uninhabited, often on the fly, and as a result doors were left unlocked. As the city debt was through the roof, rents were low and contracts up for grabs. Empty houses benefited new experimental living structures and squatting was as common as white bread. Like New York during the previous decade, Berlin proved to be a seeding ground for a booming counterculture; punk, rave, and graffiti writing became synonymous with the city's international reputation. However, much like the economic aftermath in New York, the urban void—combined with the freshly

An-Bau chair.

Creative Cities

Soon-to-be support beams for the roof structure, with cut-out slots for the sliding windows.
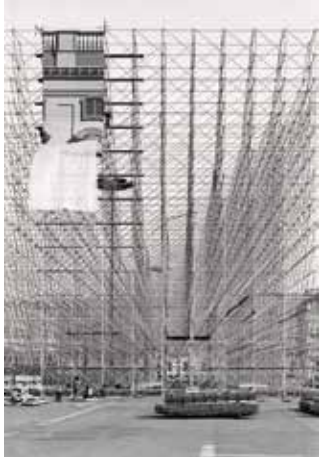
Installation of the hand-painted Berlin Palace Baumaske (1993).

Inside of the Baumaske at Potsdamer Platz (2015).

Bauakademie

expanded market economy—created a raging city revitalization plan. The wild bio- and socio-topes of Berlin's post-war urbanity allowed for all kinds of imaginations, some of which proved to be more conservative and dominant than others …

Soon after the wall came down, a lobby group started working for the rebuilding of the Berlin Palace, aspiring to re-establish the building's former magnificence by imagineering its once pivotal presence. Having been granted permission from the Berlin Senate and finance from private donors and corporate sponsors, the façade was hauled up and wrapped around the world's largest steel pipe scaffolding at the time (1993).

Down the road, Potsdamer Platz had historically acted as a site for grand imaginations of the city's imagined future: the first Berliner railway station (1838), the place for the first German street light (1882), the first subway station to be completed in the city (1902), the first German public radio transmissions (1923), the first German traffic light (1924). It was the grand meeting place for the political, social, and cultural scenes up until the Nazi regime, when it was cleared for the Reich Chancellery. During the Cold War, the district was left a great void, bisected by the Berlin Wall.

In 2001, a *Baumaske* mock-up of an art-deco edifice (facing the Sony building) crowned the newly privatized Platz. A sign of the time.

The third *Baumaske* to be installed (2004) was at Schinkel Platz, replicating the Bauakademie.

It was initiated and maintained by "The Friends Association Bauakademie"—a private lobby group with the intent to attract desire and support for the reconstruction of a true-to-original Academy of Architecture, which had been gradually destroyed and finally removed during the

political turmoil of the past century.

As real estate capital has continued to balloon, fake façade after fake façade has been replaced with blustery construction sites that have been eventually transformed into brick-and-mortared apparitions of the city's dead past.

The once-utopian margins have been buried under monoliths of capital, concrete, and retro-futurism. The topography of the concrete riverbank into which Hus AB once was bolted is now radically transformed. The square across the street has been renamed Mercedes-Platz, with the slogan "The New Entertainment District: Modern, International, Vibrant." Living Levels, a luxury condo complex towers over the plot of the long-gone shack. The area is branded as Media Spree, and it's the biggest transformation of urban planning in Europe since the reunification of Germany in 1989. With housing as a commodity, rising rents are spreading across Berlin like a raging plague.

*

The art-deco plastic façade at Potsdamer Platz was suddenly hauled down in 2017, making room for its physical spitting image in "Berlin's most modern shopping district," as the official tourism and congress organization advertises it; here, "every shopaholic will find plenty to do."

The only faux-façade left standing is the Bauakademie, where the winds of change are (so far) only making the façade ripple a little.

After two decades of creative and economic influx, Berlin has become the sixth-most expensive European city to reside in, with Paris in first place. As an example, the cost for rental housing in Berlin increased on average by close to 40% between the last quarters of 2020 and 2021.

Hus AB (April, 2003).

Living Levels (April, 2023).

www.berlin.de/en/attractions-and-sights/5630419-3104052-mercedes-platz.en.html

www.visitberlin.de/en/potsdamer-platz-leipziger-platz

The International Rent Index (Q4, 2021).

TOWARDS ANARCHITECTURE

ROBIN EVANS, (1970): 58.

In the same way that the upheavals of war and later reunification allowed for the influx of artists and outcasts, the lives and livelihoods that flourish in contested spaces are disregarded in schemes of urban renewal. The vision of a well-maintained, brick monument that is projected on the tarp enclosing this space does not include inhabitants of the unruly city in its blueprint.

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An-Bau

Contesting the idea of an academy (inherent in the concept of the Bauakademie), I start offering the container as a covert study space, a gathering place suspended 16 m overground.

Much of the interior is constructed with bolted X-Y-Z-joints. Hinging on the historical past of the place and space, I name it the An-Bau. "An-" as a prefix of negation, like in Anarchism (without a ruler), and Bau (German for building; structure; construction). An-Bau: a building without a building. At the same time it negates the conservative and retro-futurist concept of the prospected Bauakademie. There's a reference to the wordplay of Anarchitecture in this—understood as an autonomous social practice, where buildings, rooms, and other bodies are set out of control. Permeable, moldable, (scaf-)foldable. Accessible.

It thus follows an anarchist ethics: refusing that which renders us unable to think and act differently.

As I later come to find out, the verb *Anbauen* was commonly used in Rotwelsch. The word refers to

In 1970, Robin Evans published an article, titled Towards Anarchitecture, in which he wrote about the tectonics of non-control. It is not clear if this influenced the artists, architects, and musicians who together formed a collective in New York in 1973 and thereby cemented the mythic concept of Anarchitecture.

the praxis of informally accessing secured premises by way of lockpicking. Rotwelsch was spoken on the social margins of central Europe: a secret language that developed among vagrants and nomadic craftspeople—Tinkers—during the 13th century. Linguistically it was constructed with a German substrata, with influences from Romani, Czech, Yiddish … This underground parlance, a so-called *thieves' argot*, suffered from systemic repression and have gradually dissipated since mid-20th century.

An-Bau—as in informally accessing and *unbuilding* the world from its inside. As Jack Halberstam puts it: "We have to unmake, unbuild, and unimagine the current condition."

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It is not unusual for places that have been upended by bombings to recover lost ecosystems afterwards. Seeds that have been stuffed under the topsoil are laid bare and come into crop.

Beneath the ground lies recovery.

Wildly overgrown fallow patches of land are called *Brache* in German. This could be translated to what Gilles Clément calls *the third landscape*: the sum of all humanly exploited land where natural processes are still resisting. These places are far from unused. On the contrary, they are fertile ground for intersecting communities and creatures, not least in cities. Spaces which ideas are projected upon, where imagination can take root. Berlin-based philosopher Andreas Weber refers to this as *enlivenment*: a structure of coexistence—against the binary split between nature and human—towards "a common household of matter, desire and imagination."

*

Friedrich Kluge (1901): 373. *Rotwelsch: Quellen und Wortschatz der Gaunersprache und der verwandten Geheimsprachen.*

Unbuilding

Jack Halberstam (2020). "Wild Things: An Aesthetics of Bewilderment."

Brache

Sandra Bartoli (2021): 219. "From the Havel Landscape Plan to Berlin Green Archipelago to the West Berlin Biotope Map: Degrees of Resistance."

Gilles Clément (2004). *Manifesto of the Third Landscape.*

Andreas Weber (2019). *Enlivenment: Toward a Poetics for the Anthropocene.*

A pivoting door. Mounted on stubby pieces of scaffolding pipe, the door turns around its own axis. On one side, an archive of plant specimens from the wild spaces below. Rainwater is poured into the upper right corner of the structure, from where it runs through all three levels and, if overflowing, into a canister on the back. Perforated pipe pieces are filled with soil; submerged in the underlying water deposit, they keep the plants moist.

The other side of the door holds a small kitchen unit, with space for storing dry or canned food; a stove; pots, plates, cutlery, glasses, and cups; a fresh water supply, connected to a makeshift sink and a wastewater unit, rigged to flush the toilet.

In the locker, you'll find supplies for bricolage: pieces of wood, cables, scrap metal, and other bric-a-brac. There's also a selection of tools and books.

*

Throughout the first few months, I move around warily in the newly discovered wilderness, wading through the weedy growth and climbing the squeeking scaffolding. Silent, so as not to catch anybody's attention. I eventually get comfortable with how to move around swiftly along the scaffold piping. The hinterland has a bewildering impact on my movements and my imagination.

*

The influence that space has on its inhabitants is central to Henri Lefebvre's philosophical oeuvre.

By way of an intricate, overlapping, and dialectical analysis, the production of space is systematized under three intersecting categories: *perceived, conceived,* and *lived space.* As often in Lefebvre's theories, concepts are always in flux, changing names and perspectives. The spatial also appears as, e.g., *the real, the symbolic,* and *the imaginary,* or *spatial practice, representations of space,* and *spaces of representation.*

Space is never neutral but is equipped with political agency: from how it's experienced to the thinkable alternatives and their materializations.

Spatial Triad

Henri Lefebvre [1974].
The Production of Space
(1991).

In other words, as an instance of the joint action between them, people find themselves 'in' a seemingly 'given' situation, an organised situation that has a 'horizon' to it and is 'open' to their actions. Indeed, its organisation is such that the constraints (and enablements) it makes available influence, that is to say, 'invite' or 'inhibit', people's next possible actions.

The unity outlined is defined by a convergence which only practice can actualize between:

the goals, spread over time of political action, from the possible to the impossible, that is, what is possible here and now, to what is impossible today, but will become possible tomorrow in the course of this very action

NIGEL THRIFT.
(1997): 130.

HENRI LEFEBVRE.
(2003:2): 164.

Snaking soil pipe.

Humboldt Forum taking form.

Lefebvre's spatial triad thereby supports an approach of sited and situationed knowledge, where information is affected by the spatial setting and its conditioned context. The unruly hinterland behind the façade would have appeared to me as an impossible space if it wasn't witnessed and experienced. From inside of the seemingly impossible: a radical imagination of the *is-possible*.

*

Behind the pivoting door, the privy, equipped with a dry separating toilet. Urine passes through a hole in the floor into a roughly 50 m long repurposed plastic pipe, snaking down the scaffolding into a rainwater harvesting tank. Next to it, I have installed a composting station for degradable remains. *See [C] on p. 63.* From an inserted window, cut-out next to the toilet which can slide open, you see out over the wild grown hinterland.

The ongoing construction of the Humboldt Forum building rises above, behind the billowing façade.

*

Questions of the commons   are contradictory and therefore always contested. Behind these contestations lie conflicting social and political interests. Indeed, "politics," Jacques Rancière has remarked, "is the sphere of activity of a common that can only ever be contentious." At the end of it all, the analyst is often left with a simple decision: Whose side are you on, whose common interests do you seek to protect, and by what means?

        Again, the commons, in a way, have to be invisible, secret, clandestine.

DAVID HARVEY. (2012): 71.

JACQUES RANCIÈRE. (1999): 14.

ANTONIO NEGRI. (2018): 320.

Invisibility

Invisibility, considered from this angle, becomes synonymous with an uncontrolled fugitive setting and, at the same time, that which is still waiting to be revealed: a phantasmagoric force beaming behind the façade or under the surface.

Brandon LaBelle provides an important ethical perspective with respect to the invisibility that accrues in machineries of coercion, through processes of social segregation or as variants of censorship and ostracism. Making others invisible is described as absolutely decisive in a visual regime. Invisibility thereby relates to situations of marginalization and makes clear how forms of agency are based on the ability to be seen. The binary relationship between the visible and invisible is made yet more complex when the invisible is understood as what we are not *allowed* to see, in forms of intelligence or manipulation, or as a retroactive instrument: to (in)visibilize through historiography.
    Or the other way around:

Brandon LaBelle (2017). *The Invisible Seminar.*

                    invisibilization is not necessarily the opposite of visibility: more often than not, invisibilization *is* in fact visible and can be objectified.   the apparent paradox of apparatuses (such as biopolitical discipline, ubiquitous surveillance, entertainment, advertising, police profiling, medical or scientific imagery) that invisibilize by way of exposure or overexposure.

MATHILDE ARRIVÉ. (2020): PARAGRAPH 8.

Veiling and revealing are—as in Harvey's argument about the commons—contradictory and therefore always contested. Self-imposed invisibility is my modus operandi: in the explosiveness of making and moving beyond instances of control, in the spatiocultural underground, in the formation of clandestine commons.
    What's critical is the right to visibility on one's own terms, not least as a means of shaping alternative social structures and identities that are vulnerable to societal norms and laws.

As such, invisibility is not only a tactic of counter-public formation; rather, invisibility shifts the paradigmatic terms by which public power is to be understood. By bringing into relief the regime of visibility as an apparatus, a biopower, invisible practices amplify the blind spots and the negativities within which other imaginings and logics, poetics and politics may take shape, however elusive or hesitant, withdrawn and distressed.

BRANDON LABELLE. (2018): 85.

Beyond the powerful act of rendering others invisible as a form of marginalization, or the purposive deployment of invisibility by subversive subcultures in order to exercise the power that a particular position affords them, there's also the invisibility of power itself. Mark Fisher describes this as an aspect of *Capitalist Realism* that

Mark Fisher (2009). *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?*

is more like a pervasive *atmosphere,* conditioning not only the production of culture but also the regulation of work and education, and acting as a kind of invisible barrier constraining thought and action.

IBID: 16.

These paired elements of the invisible—the power of the invisible and the invisibility of power (who's looking and who's being watched?)—often seems to go unexamined. Part of my uneasiness with perpetuating the term "marginalized" stems from the ghosts hidden in the periphery of the word. "Marginalization" isn't an inherent quality or state of being for an identity or idea, those sets of characteristics are pushed into that position by someone or something.

Those someones or somethings often go un-named in discussions or discourse about who the marginalized are and what can be done—the ones doing the marginalizing get to be invisible. Hidden in the passive voice.

*

Sometimes, in the evenings, crowds of people gather inside of the Red Hall. They access the space through the official main entrance, in front of the Schinkelplatz. They watch slideshows, chat, and consume white wine. I observe them from up in the scaffolding as they discuss the future Bauakademie and its role in urban planning.

One evening, after they have left, they've forgotten to lock one of the windows, so I climb inside to look at their moodboards and mindmaps up close; "reviving the Preussian heritage"; lists of possible sponsors; economic planning; the future of cities. That same night, I reverse-engineer that window so that it appears secured from inside, but allows me to open it just enough from the outside to unlatch the locking rods.

Even Schinkel's original intentions appear more radical than the new political program of the Bauakademie. As Sandra Bartoli reminds us, quoting Schinkel himself, he "developed a system for including 'elements of nature in the compo-sition of buildings' and a practice of enhancing ... the features of the existing landscape. ... an idealized society where the architecture ranged from the hut ... to the palace, and the whole interlaced in the garden." With the suspended shack dangling above the unruly hinterland below, in coexistence with the existing land-scape—the shack across from the Palace—the lobby group seems to have gotten closer to Schinkel's true ambitions than they are aware of.

"The conventional antagonism between city and nature dissolved."

Open Window

Sandra Bartoli (2021): 213. "From the Havel Landscape Plan to Berlin Green Archi-pelago to the West Berlin Biotope Map: Degrees of Resistance."

Heinz Schönemann (1993): 8. *Lenné und der neue Gartenzeit.*

Bartoli: 221.

*

The main area is designed to be a place for gatherings. A bench, a table and a couple of chairs. The room is heated and well-lit. Two large sliding windows provide a view of the surrounding nature 16 m below. Overleaf: the table is temporarily mounted on the wall, with the pulley system in position for hoisting from the ground level.

*

Autonomous Dissemination

In the mid 1990s, I spent a couple of years working as a postman. A period of my life marked by gloomy mornings, monotonous and seemingly endless labor, and eventually a pair of worn-out knees.

But there were some good things about that job; I volunteered to be a stand-in for when other mail carriers called in sick. It was through this opportunity that I got to know all the districts and soon enough I had visited each and every building in Stockholm. Most often places were equipped with code locks. In the case that you couldn't get in there were tricks for how to get the doors open, information that was shared informally amongst my fellow workers. The go-to method for opening four-digit code locks was to decipher which of the buttons on the keypad was the greasiest, followed by thumb-and-index-finger-tapping them repeatedly with both hands, in a random order. Serendipity and patience provided access.

For a more scientific methodology in decoding digit combinations, one can apply the mathematics of permutation: an equation that determines the number of possible combinations in a set when the order of the arrangements matters. A combination of four digits can accordingly only have twenty-four different combinations.

The oily matter of *sebum* is decisive in the deposition of fingerprints. Unlike most parts of the human skin, the finger tips don't produce sebum. It is assembled when for example touching your face (the highest concentration of sebum on the human body is behind the ears).

In the pandemic there was an evident decrease of fingerprints. With fear of infections came a consumer rush to alcohol based hand-disinfectants and soaps. 2020 peaked at an increase in sales close to 2000% compared to the year prior. Hands were wiped clean like never before, leaving haptic devices spotless and shiny.

1234	2134	3124	4123
1243	2143	3142	4132
1324	2314	3214	4213
1342	2341	3241	4231
1423	2413	3412	4312
1432	2431	3421	4321

Keys to Cities (& Countries)

Many cities, countries even, are equipped with locks that are master-keyed: there, one key can open many locks. Not only to infrastructures but also to residential housing complexes, for the convenience of first responders and couriers.

France has a national set of 21 master keys, while the Germans are left with a slide-in latch-card or whatever informal tricks are passed amongst the postal peers or others that perform routine unofficial entries.

Roughly 80% of all residential buildings in Austria share the same key: the Z-key. Since the patent protection expired in 2004, anyone can rightfully have it copied by a locksmith. It operates a locking cylinder that usually is built into the bell board or the intercom. A quarter turn clockwise allows a small bolt to be pressed on the inside, usually onto a standardized microswitch, which in turn triggers the power to buzz the door open.

"Z-Schlüssel" (1:1).

When freedom is practiced in a closed circle, it fades into a dream and becomes a mere representation of itself.

MACKENZIE WARK, (2018): 7.

An-Bau Dispatch

With the aspiration of the An-Bau to function as a commons of sorts, I wanted to reach people outside my existing community. For this purpose I put together a letter, stuffed in an envelope along with a few printed pictures. I distributed these in randomly chosen residential letterboxes throughout the city. But instead of only distributing it in Berlin, I also delivered these letters in other cities (Paris and Vienna, amongst others).

In the end, about 3,000 letters were delivered. These dissemination efforts not only attempted to invite people to partake in the very real commons behind the billowing Berlin façade, but also to expand the mental territories of other places. An-setting boundaries, buildings, and imaginations.

Viennese bellboard.

Imagining spaces of transition, spaces-as-thresholds, may contribute to the prefiguring of possible practices of space-commoning. It seems that common space may be captured in representations of a society beyond capitalism and domination that stem from a threshold-like imagination. In between the present and the future, in between absolute outside and a recognizable inside, representations of common space are representations of liminal experiences and liminal practices. Common space is liminal, and the representations that attempt to prefigure it are bound to be equally liminal.

Prefigurative politics is a form of understanding political action that highlights a consistency between means and ends.

STAVROS STAVRIDES (2016): 241.

AN–BAU
An Illustrated Dispatch
about the Unruly Hinterland
of a Fake Façade

*

In 1968, Henri Lefebvre released his pivotal rallying cry for the Right to the City (*Le droit à la ville*) in which he shared his concerns about the dawning degradation of urban life. In this influential publication, he promoted the radical democratic idea of "the right to urban life, to renewed centrality, to meetings and exchanges, to time and life rhythms" which, as he put it, "would enable a full and comprehensive use of these moments and places." The modernist transformations in France during the post-war period formed the basis of Lefebvre's social critique. The colonialization of everyday life, the establishment of satellite suburbs, infrastructure designed for industry, and residential segregation—all these physical and social changes, that along with the extensive bureaucratization and standardization of urban life—led up to the mythologized insurgent reactions in Paris 1968.

    At the core of Lefebvre's philosophical and political argument is the call for *action*, understood to hold the potential of a critical performativity. He advocates the merging of culture and politics with possibilities to create access to the urban, whereby art can become *praxis* and *poiesis* on a social scale: the art of living in the city as work of art.

For the Right to the City to work, we need "to negate it by moving beyond it, moving through it as Lefebvre implied we should."

The promise of praxis has always been promoted as primary within an anarchist ethics. This arguably separates it from how Marxism came to be developed, not the call for it, but the priority of applying it in direct-action. As David Graeber puts it: 1) Marxism has tended to be a theoretical or analytical discourse about revolutionary

The Right to the City

Henri Lefebvre [1968].
"The Right to the City" (1996).

Ibid: 179.

HENRI LEFEBVRE (1996): 173.

Andy Merrifield (2011): 475.
"The Right to the City and Beyond."

David Graeber (2001): 331. "The Twilight of Vanguardism."

strategy; 2) Anarchism has tended to be an ethical discourse about revolutionary practice.

Here, the praxis of making isn't conditioned by one's position in the apparatus of production. Material is scavenged and repurposed. So is space and place.

*

Centrality

An-Bau, in the bird's nest. Behind it, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The commons of the shack, in its surrounding wilderness, propose a praxis of dissent and invite possibilities for participation in the production of deviant perceptions—both in reclaiming physical space and in the understanding that the ability to do so is not outside the realm of possibility.

The reciprocal relationship between the material world and behavior (similar to the way that theory and praxis dialectically feed into and inform each other) isn't always considered when contemplating the nature of cities.

All population groups could be given radical access to the city's resources—given space to experiment and to realize genuinely alternative everyday lives. The city could become a place for encounter and communication. Normality and limitations could be dissolved, in favor of a fusion of playfulness and unpredictability. In other words, centrality is not just a geographical designation, but the very possibility of accessing the radix of urban development.

In the end, it comes down to perceiving, conceiving, and living, the sociospatial conceptions of Lefebvre's trialectics.

What we *conceive* to be possible is informed by what we've *experienced* as being possible, and what we can *practice* as possible; they all merge in lived space.

HENRI LEFEBVRE. (1991): 40.

The perceived – conceived – lived triad (in spatial terms: spatial practice, representations of space, representational spaces) loses all force if it is treated as an abstract 'model'. If it cannot grasp the concrete (as distinct from the 'immediate'), then its import is severely limited, amounting to no more than that of one ideological mediation among others.

ITALO CALVINO. (1974): 127.

Those who arrive at Thekla can see little of the city, beyond the plank fences, the sackcloth screens, the scaffoldings, the metal armatures, the wooden catwalks hanging from ropes or supported by sawhorses, the ladders, the trestles. If you ask, "Why is Thekla's construction taking such a long time?" the inhabitants continue hoisting sacks, lowering leaded strings, moving long brushes up and down, as they answer, "So that its destruction cannot begin." And if asked whether they fear that, once the scaffoldings are removed, the city may begin to crumble and fall to pieces, they add hastily, in a whisper, "Not only the city."

*

During the first week of December 2019, the scaffolding and its plastic façade are suddenly being dismantled. I do my best to salvage the trees, shrubs and ferns, transplanting them into Berlin's largest park, the Tiergarten. The weather is mild and I will see most of them sprout again in the coming spring.

I observe the construction workers as they let the façade drop to the ground in a cloud of dust. The choreography of the workers disassembling the enormous scaffolding is impressive to witness: it's like a ballet along three axes. They secure the An-Bau to a crane, and lower it down onto a waiting truck, engine running.

The crows roam around Berlin after the structure has been taken apart. I see them everywhere. Rooftops, railings, ridges. They're sitting on my balcony, glaring at me through the open door. As if they didn't already have my attention, they push my flowerpots crashing down onto the pavement.

Disassembled Assembly

Trans-plants.

Dis-place.

*

Reclaim & Occupy

The importance of reviving and practicing the Right to the City, in favor of a more egalitarian and sustainable urbanism, can be seen in the light of the Reclaim the City movement that arose around the turn of the millenium, which saw protests take to the streets in reaction to unaccommodating urban transformations. In that same spirit, about a decade later, the sociopolitical movement of Occupy drew participants on a global scale, with demands of "real democracy now." In that regard, the frameworks of Reclaim and Occupy rhymes with Donna Haraway's call for "staying with the trouble." Not only in the sense of supporting kinship between odd ones (Oddkin), but also not to fall into other dominant logics: the constant push towards productivity, of making anew, from scratch (on behalf of invisibilized labor and natural resources that is). Instead, this would imply an ethics of maintenance and care, of keeping communities alive and making use of the already existing (without falling into retromanian traps of nostalgia, extractivism, and cultural appropriations). In that regard, staying with the trouble is a call for territorial struggle; for zones to defend.

Donna Haraway (2016).
Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene.

ZAD: *zone à défendre* (zone to defend) is a a form of protest and resistance, typically an area of land that activists occupy and defend against development projects or other forms of environmental or social harm.

*

William Gass once wrote that we should "dream beyond the bricks,"[1] but I think now, with so many bricks in place, that it is necessary to dream our way through them.

JILL STONER. (2012): IX.

The An-Akademie

The only thing left standing on site is the former showroom, the Red Hall, where planning and lobbying meetings had been held, now left deserted. With a friend, I return inside through the double-hinged window, and so the An-Bau evolves into its next form: *the An-Akademie*.
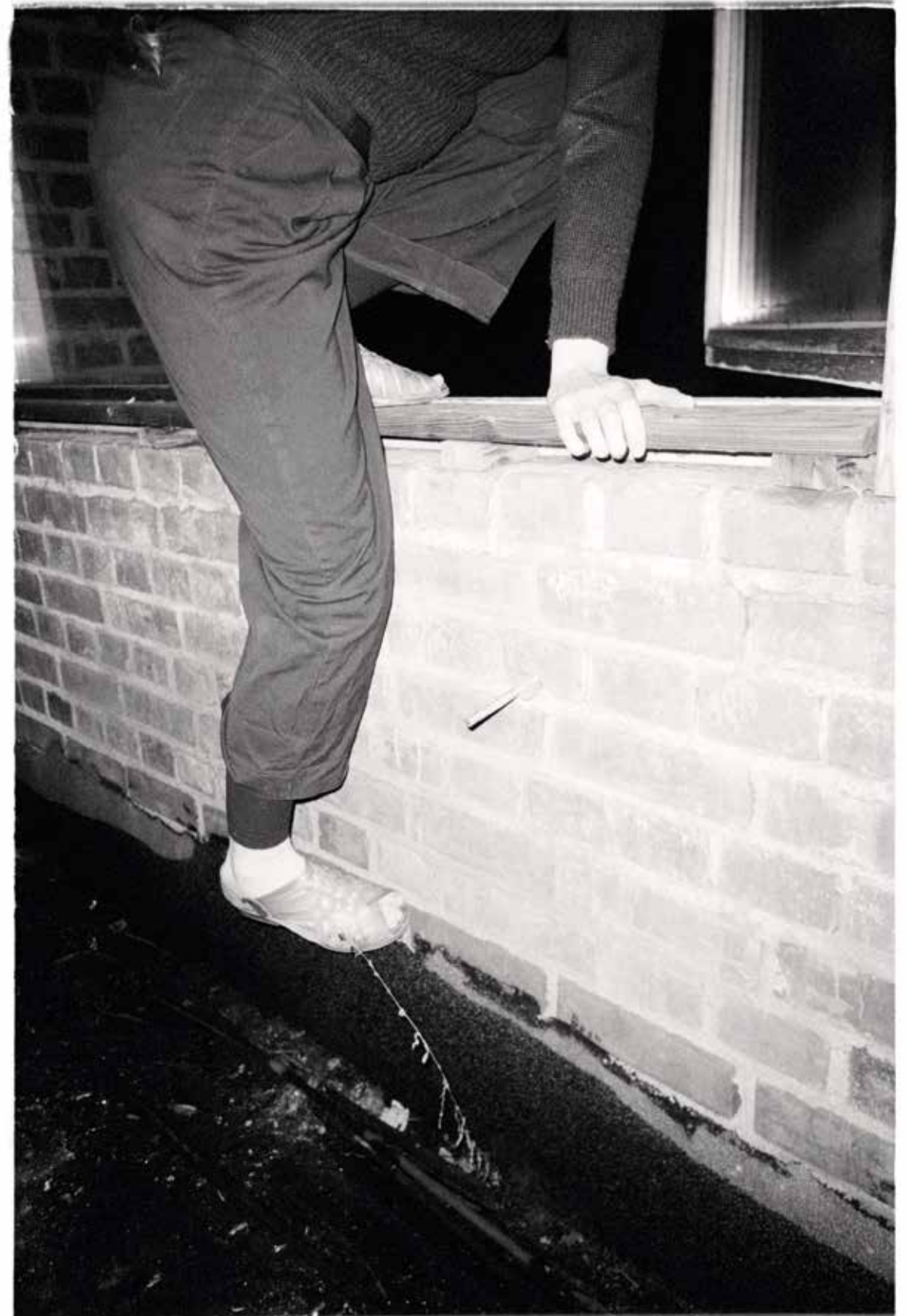
Façade tugged inside.

Having climbed through the window, you enter into a spacious hall constructed of intricate brickwork. There's a strangely enjoyable acoustic effect when sounds bounce off the arches, making you momentarily lose your sense of orientation. Behind a door that unlocks from this side, lies the foyer, where you also find the main entrance, locked.

As with the suspended container, I instinctively start cleaning up—sweeping the floor and sorting the materials left behind: some laminated plywood, tubular lights, scaffolding pipes, electric cables. I improvise a bench.

The sun-bleached plastic façade is also left on site, folded and stacked in piles. This material is now repurposed into screens for projections and partitions. Curtains are cut from the same stock. When yanked aside, the pompous architecture surrounding the space is unveiled. The curtains cover the space in the evenings so that the bright lights from the An-A can't be seen from outside.

I initiate a small library: a double-sided shelf in three levels that allows its onlooker to circle around it and to browse the content of brightly colored covers. Xeroxed bootlegs, with zip-tie bindings and machine-typed titles: *Teaching to Transgress*, *The Government of No One*, *Constituent Imagination*, *The Unknown City* … I have my preferred timeslot when I use the library, an hour or two before noon.

A young couple frequent the same hours, going through one book after the other. When I arrive, either of the two, or both, are often sitting in the far back of the space, curtain half open, allowing just enough light to shine in to where they sit. We don't talk much but I enjoy their presence. One is a rapper, she tells me. Tall and rangy. The other shies away from conversation, with a sweet buck-toothed grin. I guess he

bell hooks (1994).
    Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom.

Ruth Kinna (2019).
    The Government of No One: The Theory and Practice of Anarchism.

Graeber & Shukaitis (2007).
    Constituent Imagination: Militant Investigations Collective Theorization.

Borden, Kerr & Rendell (2002).
    The Unknown City: Contesting Architecture and Social Space.

knows his library manners and I appreciate this.

I often arrive to a pile of freshly washed dripping dishes. I assume that the reading duo are cleaning up from the people using the An-A throughout the night, but it's never mentioned.

I also don't know who introduced them to the space, and I like it like that.

EX LIBRIS.

Armchairs are built from construction plywood and aluminum square pipes, the seats are woven out of webbing slings; material salvaged from the Berlin Palace construction site, just across the river. A part of the fence is carried back inside the An-A and fitted into a kitchen unit. Heavy, cumbersome furniture is equipped with wheels, allowing the space to be reconfigured depending on its activities.

Sometimes rats find their way inside, so I install a shelf on one of the terrazzo cast columns, preventing the rodents from feasting on any of the edibles from the kitchen (rats can only jump about 90 cm high). Instead, a leftovers bucket is put at their disposal, stuffed to one side in the backyard.

As the space gradually turns into a place, with structures allowing for things to happen, more people come to experiment with it, in it.

The only requirement is to accept its ethic of clandestinity: it's a social place but not a public one, this means keeping a low public profile. As Kodwo Eshun put it; "Dissapearance is our future … undetectible, not identifiable, invisible not recognizable, stealthy not public." Instead, people are informed and invited by word-of-mouth and playful forms of dimmed enticements.

Template for the An-A armchair.

Assembling the An-A armchair.

Clandestine Commons

Kodwo Eshun (1998): 122.
    More Brilliant Than The Sun: Adventures In Sonic Fiction.

An-Academic Dissemination

David Harvey (2013). *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution.*

AN-AKADEMIE
Through Invisible Passages
to an Unruly School

Another dimmed enticement—
countermarked two-cent coins:

"BEHIND THE FAKE FAÇADE
THE AN-AKADEMIE."

I eventually also put together another letter — *An-Akademie: Through Invisible Passages to an Unruly School.* It is distributed in 3,000 copies, in the same informal way as the An-Bau dispatch.

*

For David Harvey, the city is understood as the polemical epicenter of economic growth vis-à-vis class struggle. In his book *Rebel Cities*, he looks at movements like Occupy and how urban riots have increased globally over the past decade.

By placing these in a historical context, against the background of, for example, the Paris Commune and the political progressiveness of 1968, he cements the importance of urban resistance cultures that strive for sustainable development, both socially and ecologically. He draws parallels to urban protest cultures and to the prevailing political situation. Supported by Lefebvre's own position on the subject, Harvey insists on the importance of relating to the conditions and needs that we face. Whether they are technological, social, or climate-oriented, the guidelines are clear; an inclusive urbanity is requested, in constant pursuit of an everyday life marked by the unexpected. This demands methods to capture the more sensitive qualities that are generated in the urban space, what I term *urban sub-affects*: low-intense processes that do not always appear significant but which, through their subliminal character, have a grinding effect on the sensuous urban experience of the population. The urban commons is also thoroughly mapped, from its decisive importance for the city's historical development to a series of conceivable future models. With reference to Hardt & Negri's position on the subject, Harvey states that the metropolis should be regarded as a kind of factory for the commons: an anti-capitalist platform and starting point for political activism.

The commons is subject to contestation; it is represented in environments and urban transformations that are enforced with a neoliberal agenda. A typical example is the expansion of gated communities, an exclusionary form of commons which, by way of its hostile architecture, clearly marks who is included in and excluded from this controlled community. The capitalist commons, with its logic of the free market, does so at the expense of the social commons. In the urban context, it falls under processes of gentrification. The greater the qualities of the commons produced by a social group, the more likely an approaching machinery of appropriation-hungry, profit-maximizing stakeholders becomes.

Global capital is drawn to local initiatives—the more transgressive they are, the better. The social and spatial forms that against all odds manage to oppose this instrumentalization are therefore crucial. "There are instances in which you have to be more subversive and underground, so to speak." David Harvey (2016). *The Insurgent Architect.*

*

After a couple of months of building and installing furniture, the locks to an entrance are suddenly changed. In response, to play with the janitor, I completely remove the door and seal the doorway with plaster sheets and white paint, leaving but a slim square opening in the wall.

Two framed pictures, which until now have been hanging to the left of the entrance, are moved sideways so that one of them covers the hole. A frame of scaffolding is secured to the back of it, balancing the heavy picture, and fitted with ball bearings at the joints to function as sturdy hinges. Secured with magnets it allows visitors to pop the picture off the wall, and have it effortlessly swing open to grant passage.

Door gets removed ...

a framework is installed ...

and four plaster boards
seal the doorway.

Der Architekt

Schinkel baute nicht im „Schinkel-stil", sondern folgte konsequent seiner Überzeugung, jede Bauaufgabe vom Packhof bis zum Schloss als Herausforderung eigenen Charakters anzunehmen. Das zeichnete ihn im verunsicherten 19. Jahrhundert aus. Sein reflektiertes Verhältnis zur überlieferten Bautypologie und den historischen Stilen verhalf ihm dazu, ein Neuerer zu werden, der jede architektonische Lösung an jedem Ort als einmalig und nicht wiederholbar verstand. Sehr früh begab er sich damit auf den Weg zu einem Ideal der Baukunst, das jenseits der hergebrachten Konvention als künstlerische Schöpfung nach Neuerung und nach Harmonie strebt. Auf diese Haltung berufen sich bis heute viele und mit gutem Recht.

Die Schule

Angesiedelt war das erste deutschsprachige Polytechnikum zunächst in einem Gebäude am Hausvogteiplatz und dann von 1800 bis 1806 in der Münze von Heinrich Gentz, einem Initialbau des Klassizismus am Werderschen Markt. Die nächsten 30 Jahre vergingen mit einer provisorischen Unterbringung am Stadtrand, bis endlich 1836 der schinkelsche Neubau bezogen wurde. Ihn teilte sich die „Allgemeine Bauschule" mit der obersten Bauverwaltung, der Oberbaudeputation. Und so wurde es bald zu eng. 1879 wurde die Bau- mit der Gewerbeakademie zur Technischen Hochschule vereinigt, die fünf Jahre später einen Neubau in Charlottenburg bezog – bis heute das Hauptgebäude der Technischen Universität Berlin.

It's not a matter of opening or not opening the door, not a matter of 'leaving the key in the door'. The problem isn't whether or not there are keys: if there wasn't a door, there wouldn't be a key.

*

Amidst the rambling in the framed testimony of the Bauakademie i find a valid point: "The proximity to praxis was and will remain a specialty."

Ursula K. Le Guin makes fun of the word "praxis." A beloved term for Marxists, she jokes, "apparently because they liked x's." But I enjoy how "praxis" exits off the tongue. The crack-and-ooze when you say it. It's like unexpectedly stepping on a dry branch when sneaking, it makes you freeze in the move as the snap thins out. Or rolling off the curb with a heavily loaded bike, chainlock rattling as you ride off. Or slamming a heavy door with keys left in it. It is a word that promises response from a body at work: action and result. So, I'll stick with praxis, even though Le Guin's attitude makes me grin.

    As a matter of fact, the Bauakademie was completed the same year that Karl Marx moved to Berlin for his law studies (1836). A decade later he wrote about the revolutionary importance of practical-critical activity: Praxis.

*

Once behind the framed testimony, you find yourself in a chamber-like passage, you push open a second door and step into a dimly lit room, the air smells of coffee and ink. The backside of the large image that you swung open shows an affiliated passage in subterranean Paris.

*

Ursula K. Le Guin (2004): 7. *The Wave in the Mind: Talks and Essays on the Writer, the Reader, and the Imagination.*

Karl Marx [1845; 1888]. "Theses On Feuerbach" (1938).

Playing the Passage

The removed door, turned into a lockpicking workshop on wheels.

Steve Pile (2005).
Real Cities: Modernity, Space and the Phantasmagorias of City Life.

Similar to Steve Pile, Italian philosopher Federico Campagna understands *magic* as a radical framework, through which we can engage with and comprehend the world in a different way. It involves a re-enchantment of reality, where the boundaries between rational and irrational, natural and supernatural, blur. Magic becomes a means to challenge the prevailing norms and structures of society: a tool or method for subverting social hierarchies and for questioning established power dynamics.
Embracing *magic* allows us to reshape our perception of reality, transgressing the boundaries imposed by conventional discourse and opening up new avenues for transformative change in the world.

Federico Campagna (2018).
Technic and Magic: The Reconstruction of Reality.

Playing the passage is performed as a prank on the official owners of the estate, but just as much a gesture to the informal visitors I'm inviting. It's an effort to create some of that magic that was present within the bewildered scaffolding. Here, the visitor is instead invited into a foyer without windows. When pulling one of the framed pictures, a big bright hall is revealed, with big windows facing the historic city center: a surreal entrance.

*

In *Real Cities*, Steve Pile untaps a phantasmagoric reading in relation to modern urbanism. Through four models—dreams, magic, vampires and ghosts—he argues for the importance of recapturing our imaginary capacity in times of rationalization and standardization. The real city conjures from a latent utopian web, slumbering under sediments of construction dust and monolithic architecture.
The concern of phantasmagoria, as Walter Benjamin described it, is not only to recognize how it affects and influences the urban citizen, but to understand *how* it arises in the production of the city. Walter Benjamin [1927–40]. *The Arcades Project* (2002). Dreams, following Pile's argument, reveal how desire and anxiety are generated in the city, springing from unfulfilled desires shaped by the prevailing political climate. Based on the Freudian concept of *dream work*, where dreams are described as a highly complex process where emotions and meanings performs a multitude of variables, leaving the host unaware, Pile accounts for a psychoanalytic reading of the city and its built environment. Railing at the city where every element appears as overdetermined, and where a suppression of our needs and desires is implemented through systems of power and dominance.

Freudian dream work is useful in understanding how moods and atmospheres in the cityscape are generated and subliminally internalized. This stream of ideas was well represented both in Surrealism and Situationism, where it was studied through transformative sensitivity operations in the forms of *transitions* and *psychogeographies*.

Pile suggests that in order to make the urban imaginary understandable, one needs to examine the tangle of subjects that make up urban life—consciousness, ideas, imaginations, information flows, etc. This means that phantasmagoria not only relates to the perceptible impressions that characterize the public space, but also to the spirituality beyond the tactile or visible; it reveals a complex unity of social, historical, spatial, psychological, lived urban spaces. In other words, apart from its citizens, the real city consists as much of matter as of fleeting dreams.
The concept of *magic* is viewed in light of the practice-oriented, based on the hopeful wish-fulfillment of urban life. Unlike the dream, magic presupposes a kind of occult maker-practice. Through combinations of magical objects and formulas, incantations, spiritual places and rituals, higher powers are called upon. The city that beckons with the fulfillment of wishes, but at the same time casts a curse on its inhabitants: the phantasmagoric urban magic. As Pile concludes, "In the phantasmagorias of city life, there are always possibilities for dreaming the real city anew." Pile: 182.

*

I understand the academic institution to be a sanctuary for some, also in the unruly city, but it's hard to engage in discourse if those crowded interiors conceive of their corner as the whole world. When setting up these para-academic

The Berlin Palace—nowadays named *the Humboldt Forum*—seen from the An-Akademie, on what used to be Marx-Engels-Platz, now Schloßplatz. Once again behind a solid façade.

As stated by Alexandra Richie: "no other city on earth has had such a turbulent history; no other capital has repeatedly become so powerful and then fallen so low. ... This city's identity has always been based not on stability but on change."

Alexandra Richie (1998): 21.
Faust's Metropolis: A History of Berlin.
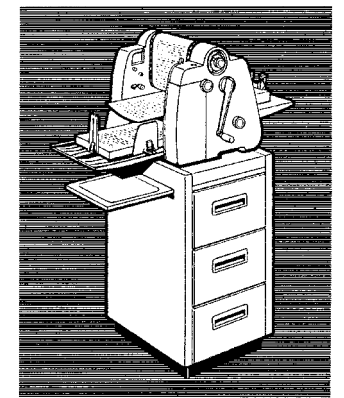
Hand-cranked stencil duplicator.

Moten & Harney (2013). *The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study.*

Deleuze & Guattari (1987): 367. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia.*

Ibid.

"Anarchism is primarily an ethics of practice; and it insists, before anything else, that one's means must be consonant with one's ends; one cannot create freedom through authoritarian means; that as much as possible, one must embody the society one wishes to create. This does not square very well with operating within universities that still have an essentially medieval social structure, presenting papers at conferences in expensive hotels, and doing intellectual battle in language no one who has not spent at least two or three years in grad school would ever hope to be able to understand."

David Graeber (2001): 332. "The Twilight of Vanguardism."

spaces, I've found refuge in Moten & Harney's *The Undercommons*—conceptualized as a speculative practice of *study*, for entanglements with others on the margins, seeking context and community to learn and unlearn in alliance.

Many of the thinkers I refer to come at the issue of undisciplining and radicalizing forms of knowledge production. What I'm interested in is ways to derail from sedentary studies (what Deleuze & Guattari calls *royal science*, taking place "on paper and off site"), towards sited studies where knowledge is developed through sharing and through spontaneous improvisation, directly on site and from the circumstances, spaces and materials as they present themselves (*nomadic*, or *minor science*). A posture of critical praxis that merges and develops in a deviant production of space.

The An-Akademie: an academy without the medieval social structure of academia.

By claiming that space and place—with its history of knowledge production and its recent ongoing plans for once again becoming an academy relating to architecture and urban development—it contests both past, present and future ideas of urbanism.

The core curriculum involves questions on autonomy, emancipation, radical imagination, and, most importantly, how these are put into praxis. It could be considered a sort of undercommons: the An-Akademie is a physical location for inventing new frameworks through a transgressive scholarship.

The setting and location are designed to influence the outcome. The imagination of the independent scholars— the writers, the printers, the readers, the dancers, the diggers, the climbers—is stimulated by the seemingly impossible setting of the space, audaciously located in the midst of the

governmental quarters. The very center of the city, historically and politically.

The hall—20 x 10 m wide, 5 m high—is a lived space where a variety of strategies and permutations are tried out; lock studies, trapdoor engineering, furniture making, magnetic experiments, EMP-jamming, hacking, book printing. Along with this there are screenings, meals, readings, dance practices, pirate radio broadcasts, performances, theater plays, presentations of all kinds.

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At least 100 keys have been handed out to give people access to the space, and from these an unknown number of duplications have been made. I've no idea how many keys are in circulation at this point, or how many people are using the space. I find that to be a healthy condition for studies, in terms of unpredictability and random encounters.

Two years into the An-A, the planned reconstruction of the Bauakademie is still due. There have been some minor efforts from the janitor to secure the doors. When he changes the locks, we run classes in lockpicking, lock-gutting, and manufacturing fitting keys, whereafter these are put in circulation. It's part of the field study going on at the An-Akademie, dealing with contested space and applied praxis.

Each time a new lock is installed, I also play with building alternative passage-ways, like the reverse-hinged window. Or turning a wall into a door. For a short period of time, a group of people printing pamphlets are present in the space; they are keen to bring their colossal Heidelberg letterpress onto the premises. To be able to bring it inside, a boarded wall at the back of the hall is cut, fitted with hinges, and secured with a retractable dowel. Invisible if you don't know about it. *See* [H] on p. 63.

Stencil for duplication.

An-A key (1:1).

Stenciled duplications.

Similarly, the strategy of walking through walls, as Israeli architect Sharon Rotbard reminds us, is reinvented for every urban battle in response to local conditions.[38] It was first described in Marshal Thomas Bugeaud's 1849 draft of *La Guerre des Rues et des Maisons,* in the context of anti-insurgency tactics used in the class-based urban battles of 19th-century Paris. Instead of storming the barricades from the front, Bugeaud recommended entering the barricaded block at a different location and "mouse-holing" along "over-ground tunnels" that cut across party walls, then taking the barricade by surprise from the flank. On the other side of the barricades and a decade later, Louis-August Blanqui wrote this microtactical maneuver into his *Instructions pour une prise d'armes.* For Blanqui, the barricade and the mouse-hole were complementary elements employed for the protection of self-governing urban enclaves. This was achieved by a complete inversion of the urban syntax. Elements of circulation – paving stones and carriages – became elements of stasis (barricades), while the existing elements of stasis – walls – became routes. The fight in the city, and for the city, was equated with its interpretation. No longer merely the locus of war, the city became its medium and its very apparatus.

See related observation (L. Lambert), p. 106.

Walking Through Walls — **Weizman's observations of 19th-century contested urban space is followed up with a testimony of the ethical implications when theories drift and shift; from subversive ideas from beneath to other-than-intended applications. His text gives evidence for how the Israeli Defence Forces (IDF) appropriatie the Blanquian tactic of walking-through-walls. More recent critical concepts—swarming, holey space, and rhizomes—are also implemented as strategies of the war machine.**

The conceptual opposition between *tactics* and *strategies* is dwindling as dissensual cultures and aesthetics descend into the maelstrom of co-option that dominates the contemporary city.

*

The same day that I finish building the wall-door, roughly a dozen of people enter the fenced-off ground that surrounds the backside of the An-A, followed by a blasting excavator. Two containers are also installed on site, one of which carries a tarp displaying a company logo: a group of archeologists and architectural historians.

I watch them from behind the curtains as they start digging away. In the following weeks, a large mass of unearthed matter piles up around the excavations, exposing the underlying brick structure of Schinkel's old academy. Small old intricate objects are labeled and organized neatly on tarps, laid out on patches of undug topsoil. As they leave work in the late afternoons I like to carefully inspect their findings up close: ceramic shards, bones, pieces of glassware, clay pipes, bottles, bricks. Some of the scooped-out mud is harvested and brought inside. Maybe we can separate its argil? Distilled, and placed in the windowsills to catch the heating morning sun, it results in a big chunk of warm-grey clay.

From material scavenged at a close-by construction site I build a potter's wheel: four Bishop's-Hat paving stones; a road sign mounted with ball bearings on a scaffolding pipe; a 280 mm x 55 mm pine wood seat, heat-stamped with *Tiefbau*; 40 mm thick aluminum pipes for road signs; a scaffolding board, sliced into 40 mm wide stripes; a sheet of 20 mm construction plywood; a 12-liter plastic bucket; 40 pcs of M8 bolts; small scraps of 18 mm laminated birch plywood.

*

Michel de Certeau (1984). *The Practice of Everyday Life.*

Here, de Certeau differentiates *strategy*; the purview of power, from *tactics*; the praxis of making-do by those who *lacks* power.

The result of the latter is what he terms b*ricolage*.

Unearthed shards.

These 33 kg pentagonal-shaped aggregate concrete slabs— Bishop's Hats (*Bischofsmützen*) —line the pavements of the German capital, along with Cat Heads, Bones, Charlottenburgers, and Hog Bellies (*Katzenköpfen, Knochen, Charlottenburger,* and *Schweinebäuche*).

Just as Paris was built from the extraction of its underlying Lutetian limestone, Berlin was built with bricks, amassed and baked from the muddy clay of the riparian zone of the Spree. The two cities share a similar etymology: where Paris has its Latin origin in *Lutum* (mud), Berlin is argued to derive from the Old Polabian word of *Berl*, meaning swamp—*Swampin*. These two cities, like many other, formed along muddy riverbanks of rivers and coasts, of merchant and trade routes. Both once walled and defended from small islands, they have since outgrown their historical centers: Île de la Cité (City Island) and Museumsinsel (Museum Island).

But, in Galeano's universe, where, as he explains in "The Origin of the World," the world was made by atheistic, anarchistic, and stubborn bricklayers but credited to a damning God, it is always the standpoint of those bricklayers that provides the overarching diagnostic and imaginative framework.

AVERY F. GORDON. (2018): 30.

Bricks are one of the oldest known building materials, dating back to 7000 BC. These ones are from the 1830s, unearthed when digging a tunnel beneath the An-A.

The Berlin clay had different qualities depending on its site of extraction. Bad brick façades needed to be covered with a shielding surface of plaster to avoid being weathered and fall apart, better bricks were set aside for more prestigious construction work.

Karl Friedrich Schinkel's Bauakademie was one such project. Because of the higher quality of bricks, he restrained from coating the construction with a shielding stucco, revolutionizing the aesthetic ideals of the time to make it one of the most prominent buildings of German architecture, at the threshold of modernity in the 19th century.

The building was destroyed during WWII. The remaining ruin was demolished shortly after the city was bisected with the Berlin Wall in 1961, situated in East Berlin.

*

It makes sense that Berlin is a derivative of the underlying asset of the muddy "Berl-." Berlin is a miry city, you notice this when you go below street level; damp basements turn solid matter into mold; stalactites dangle in subway ceilings.

There is no Parisian limestone beneath Berlin. There might be in some million years, under the burning sun, when debris and earthly matter have compressed into cataclysmic compositions.

If the barricade is the retrenchment that belongs to the Parisian spirit, the fugitive praxis of tunneling and wall climbing is arguably Berlin's reversed rendition. An estimated 300 people were able to escape through clandestinely dug tunnels under the Berlin Wall during its 28 years in existence.

Close to 5,000 people managed to transgress the Berlin border, some by scrambling over the four-meter wall. The number of failed escapes is undetermined. 140 people are known to have been killed in this fugitive act.

*

Three years into the An-Akademie, some people have left, more have joined.

Occasionally, the locks are still being changed. Sometimes notes are left behind, asking us to pack up and leave. We do buildering workshops—walking on walls—and start a class in tunnel excavation: a hatch is carefully sawed in the wooden floor, hidden in the boarded grid. Beneath the boards, a concrete fundament. We chip away through the 70 cm slab before reaching the soil. Much like the long-gone archaeologists, we dig through historic remains as the tunnel expands beneath the building, creating a new passage for entry and exit. An-archaeology. The dug-out soil is spread thin across the backyard, so as not to reveal our ongoing excavation.

The invention of the ring kiln (patented by Berliner building officer Friedrich Hoffmann in 1858) was decisive for mass production. In 1873, there were 150 ring kilns in the brickyards of Brandenburg, firing an estimated 500 million bricks per year. Shipped on cargo boats down the Spree, from which the saying "Berlin was built from a barge" derives ("*Berlin ist aus dem Kahn gebaut*"). This period, the so called "Gründerjahre," was a time of economic upturn. (*See* sidenote, p. 69.)

PHOTO: KLAUS KÖPPEN (BUeV ARCHIVE).

An escape tunnel in the making. Berlin, 1964.

Buildering: a portmanteau of *bouldering* and *building*.

A few months after the tunnel is finished, the sludgy ground is now more of a basin. We notice how the construction workers on the site across the river use a device to remove water sipping up from beneath. We install one too, having the muddy water spill into a drain and out in the river.

Under the paving stones, the riverine mud.

Nowadays, in the ruinous age of globalism, Berlin's crater-sized clay pits have filled up with water and the city's construction materials are extracted and imported from elsewhere: Chinese cement, Russian pine, Swedish iron ore, Polish granodiorite ...

*

At the end of 2022, the doors at the An-A are completely replaced and the building is fitted with a high-grade security system. However, at this point, the building is already completely permeated. The An-A is instead accessed through the "mouse-holed" nexus of under- and "over-ground tunnels."

Eyal Weizman (2006): 66.
"Lethal Theory."

Transpierce the mountains instead of scaling them, excavate the land instead of striating it, bore holes in space instead of keeping it smooth, turn the earth into swiss cheese.

DELEUZE & GUATTARI.
(1987): 89.

*

A final remark: if one would still consider the main entrance more convenient, the janitor has once again stowed away the new keys. This time in a four-digit key-safe on the right side of the entrance. The only question that needs to be asked for access: what year did Schinkel's Bauakademie open? Or, what year did Marx move to Berlin?

"Bauakademie Roter Saal."

45,95 M

[B]

[H]   [A]

[E]   [F]

[C]

[G]

[D]

N
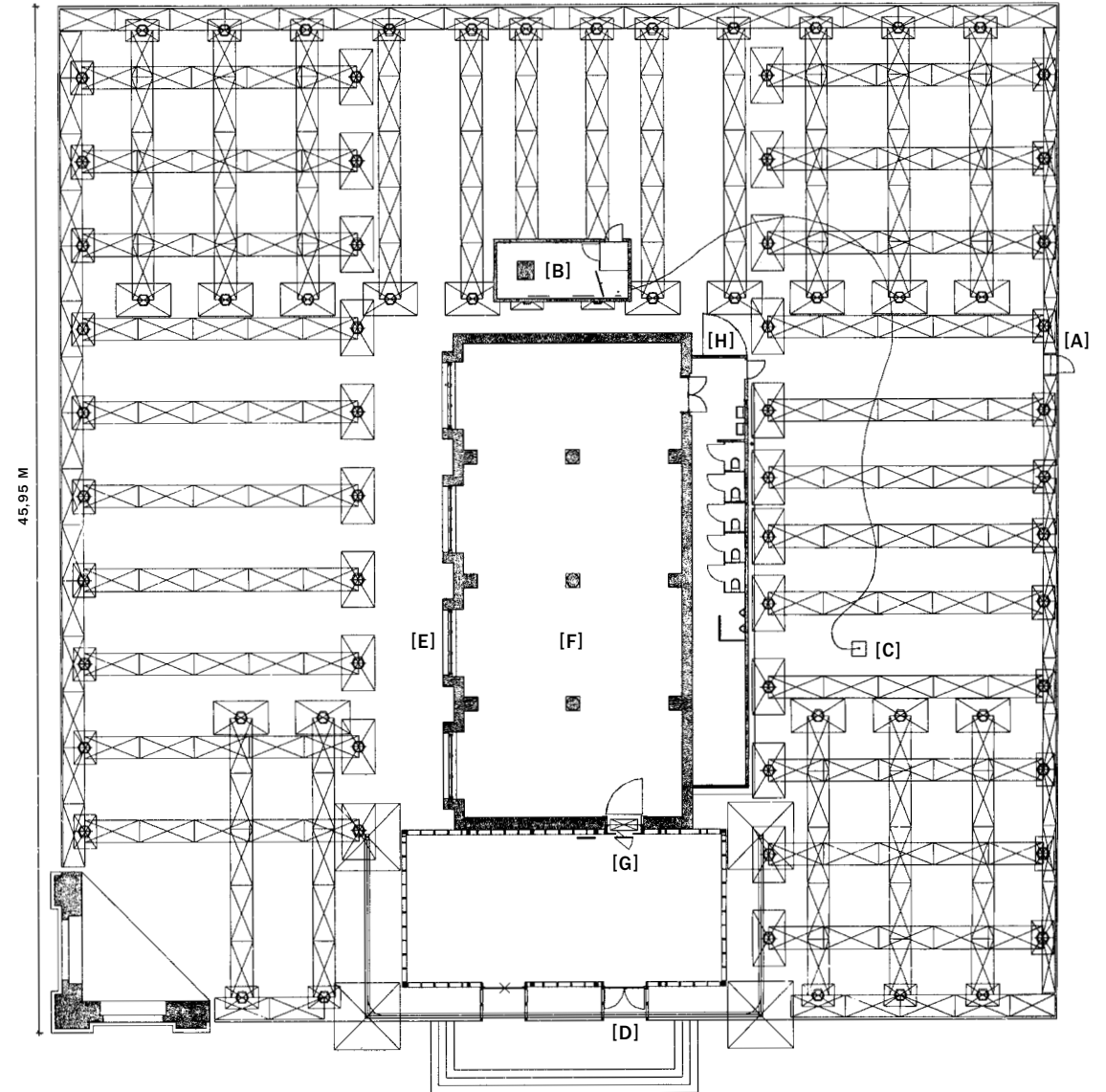
A   Back door
B   An-Bau
C   Compost
D   Main entrance
E   Reverse-hinged window
F   An-Akademie
G   Trapdoor (framed text)
H   Trapdoor (wall)

Y

DE-INVENTING PARIS
Digging Passages, (G)Hosting Buildings, and Manufacturing Keys

The tarmac of the French capital is sprinkled with access points for katabasis, covered by removable concrete lids and iron cast plates. Beneath the surface, tunnels stretch out in a labyrinthic mesh. To descend into this underworld is to connect with a cultural history of refuge and asylum, as rich as it is diverse, that dates back to a time when Paris was still called Lutetia, around the 4th century.
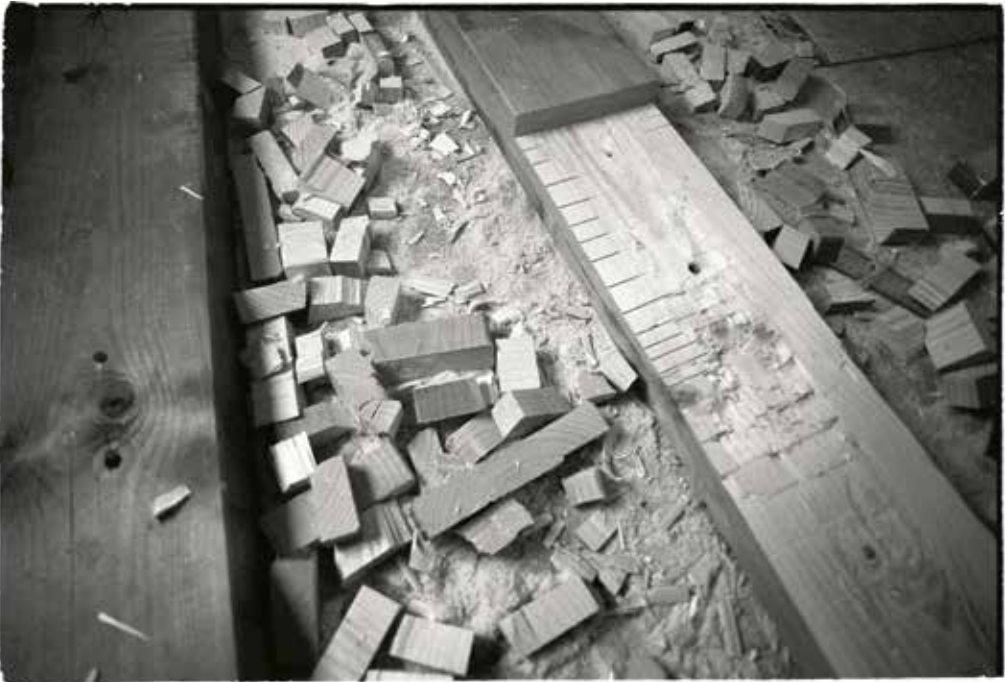
Katabasis: downwards journey, from Greek *katá-* 'downwards' and *baínō* 'go'.

Much of the Île-de-France sits on Lutetian limestone, which accumulated chiefly during the Eocene, when the region was for around 5 million years an area of calm bays and lagoons of seawater. Marine life thrived and died in abundance there, settling on the seabed as silt that was eventually compressed into stone. Lutetian limestone is an excellent building material: ranging from warm grey to caramel yellow in tone, durable and cuttable to a clean edge.

All cities are additions to a landscape that require subtraction from elsewhere. Much of Paris was built from its own underland, hewn block by block from the bedrock and hauled up for dressing and placing. Underground stone-quarrying began in earnest towards the end of the twelfth century, and Parisian limestone grew in demand not just locally but across France. Lutetian limestone built parts of Notre-Dame and the Louvre; shipped on Seine barges into the river network, it became a major regional export.

The residue of over 600 years of quarrying is that beneath the south of the upper city exists its negative image: a network of more than 200 miles of galleries, rooms and chambers, organized into three main regions that together spread beneath nine arrondissements. This network is the *vides de carrières* — the 'quarry voids', the catacombs.

*

A Place in the Mud

Where Berlin was built from the muddy clay of the riparian zone of the Spree, Paris was built from the extraction of its underlying Lutetian limestone. The two cities share a similar etymology. Berlin has its origin in the Old Polabian word of *Berl*, meaning "swamp." *Lutetia Parisiorum* is the ancient name for Paris. Before getting occupied by the Romans, it was the capital of the sub-Celtic tribe of the Parisii, founded on the muddy banks of the Seine in the mid-third century BCE. *Lutum* is the Latin word for mud. Lutetia—a place in the mud.

ROBERT MACFARLANE (2019): 137.

Bisected by the Seine River, Paris splits into two material halves, with predominantly gypsum on the Right Bank and limestone on the Left Bank.

The very name of the city recollects its origins, including the quality of the ground it stood on and the physical material excavated to create it. Imagine the centuries of renovations and PR campaigns needed for the city to reinvent itself from "A Place in The Mud" to "The City of Light."

*

In 1981, a band of 13-year-old punks developed a life-long attraction to the subterranean tangle beneath the French capital. As their interest increased, so did their skills in gaining access.

However, they did have some problems with finding their way around in the vast network of tunnels ...

On August 15, 1982, three of these impassioned youngsters went on a mission. They managed to make their way from the quarry voids into the basement of the Ministry of Telecommunications (there was a grated metal gate, but their lanky bodies walked straight through it).

They were on the hunt for the maps of the Parisian underground. The first thing was to localize the key cabinet, which they instantly found inside the unguarded security headquarters. With the use of these keys, they spent much of the night searching through one office after another. As day was about to break, their efforts were finally rewarded—the (in)complete atlas of the PTT tunnel network was found, its many pages piled on a dust-covered bottom shelf.

Shortly after, one of the youngsters, Natacha, unlocked the main entrance using one of the newly found keys and shut the door behind them. (Noteworthy was their ethical sensitivity of main-

Surficial deposits

Rupelian formations:
—Fontainebleau sands
—Oyster marls
—Brie limestone
—Green marls

Upper bartonian formations:
—Supra-gypseous marls
—Gypseous marls
—Infra-gypseous marls
—Green sands

Lower bartonian formations:
—Saint Ouen limestone
—Beauchamp sands

Lutetian formations:
—Brackish marl
—Lutetian limestone

Ypresian formations:
—Cuise sands
—Upper sands
—False clays
—Auteuil sands
—Plastic clay

Montan marls & limestone

Campanian chalk

Lazar Kunstmann (2018): 185. *La culture en clandestins: l'UX.*

Maps to the Underworld

As Hôtel de Ville (the City Hall) was set on fire by insurrectionary communards in 1871, the topographical archive of Paris was obliterated. About a decade later, 21-year old Émile Gerards (*see* appendix) was commisioned conductor of the I.G.C. (*see* p. 70), partly responsible for managing a new subterranean cartography. A survey that was left partly incomplete.
 Some underground sites in Paris remains unmapped to this day. By the authorities that is.

tenance and care: the keys and the maps were secretly put back at the archive after duplications were secured.) The trio departed at dawn, arms full of maps, walking off down a deserted Avenue Duquesne. Was Natacha dreaming? No, she recalls, this nocturnal mission was *beyond* her imagination. Too perfect to fit in any reverie.

Overlapped & Undermapped

"Lay down a map of the land; over that, set a map of political change; over that, a map of the Net, especially the counter-Net with its emphasis on clandestine information-flow and logisitics—and finally, over all, the 1:1 map of the creative imagination, aesthetics, values. The resultant grid comes to life, animated by unexpected eddies and surges of energy, coagulations of light, secret tunnels, and surprises."

Hakim Bey (1991): 100.
T.A.Z.: Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism.

Some weeks later, they discovered a hidden value in the documents. As they assessed the looted goods, they placed some maps marked with the same arrondissement on top of each other, holding them against the light. The possibilities appeared endless. Through the connections revealed in the overlapping images, they could localize the exact venues where the masonry walls were thin enough to make it possible to break through into otherwise sealed-off tunnels, bunkers, basements. That same night, they dug their first subterranean passage, granting access from a concrete telecommunications tunnel into an old limestone quarry.

*

Rebuilding 19th-century Paris required vast volumes of material assets. For this purpose, limestone was extacted from the Left Bank, south of the Seine. In turn, this hollowing out of Paris' underbelly created what can be regarded as a spatial negation of Haussmann's "revitalization" of the city's medieval grid. This urban substructure and its many myths contribute to the mental, social, and spatial formation that shapes and informs the city's collective (un)consciousness.
    Not only Lutetian limestone was extracted from the city's underbelly, but also sand (for glass and smelting processes), gypsum (for plaster manufacturing), and green clay (for bricks and tiles). The frenzy of Baron Haussmann's material extraction expanded the pre-existing

Haussmannian extractivism, 19th Century.

mined mesh, adding up to over 300 km of intertwining tunnels beneath the city.

With this break into modernity, it wasn't only the military machine that was granted access to Paris, but also the unleached force of a liberal market. The observations of David Harvey bears witness to this transformation, which he calls *an extroverted urbanism*: Haussmann's one hand establishing a commodification of the urban, fitting the city with with a speculative property market, shopping arcades, and commodity fetishism, while the other hand concurrently performed a forceful social centrifugation. As Harvey further argues, this city renewal was paramount in executing a displacement of the lower classes into the urban periphery, by relocating industrial land use, demolishing low-income neighborhoods and massively increasing housing rents in the center of the city.
    To this day, Paris is highly marked by socio-economical segregation. The "regularization" of city planning, which Harvey holds was initiated under the rule of Napoleon III, increasingly appears as a blueprint in processes of contemporary post-democratization.

*

Numerous surveys testify to the ongoing colloquial appropriation of the Parisian underground throughout the city's history.
    The anthropological studies by Barbara Glowczewski are summarized in the book *La cité des cataphiles*, which also includes historical and ethnographic research from Jean-François Matteudi, Violaine Carrère-Leconte, and Marc Viré.
    The publication meticulously unfolds the history of the *cataphiles*, the name given to the clandestine walkers of the old quarry networks of Paris—a labyrinth forbidden to the public,

Paris' quarries are marked with dates of consolidation. Here, the year of Napoleon III's coup d'état.

David Harvey (2003): 146.
Paris: Capital of Modernity.

Ibid: 133.
As Paris experienced the aftermath of the Haussmannian real estate bubble—a situation that partly triggered the French invasion of Prussia to save the economy (the Franco-Prussian War)—Berlin relished from the post-war economic gains, from which the city expanded and transformed into a global metropolis.
    In Paris, the ruinous conditions opened up possibilities for the Paris Commune to take place.

The City of Cataphiles

Barbara Glowczewski, et al. (1983).
La cité des cataphiles: Mission anthropologique dans les souterrains de Paris.

Some manhole covers are marked with the acronym I.D.C.: *Inspection des Carrières* or *Quarry Inspection*. These are access points for the *General Inspectorate of the Quarries* (*Inspection Générale des Carrières*)—*the* government agency who's monitoring the Parisian underground and in charge of constraining any unauthorized access and activities taking place within.

In an email correspondence with Lazar Kunstmann on the topic (2023), he writes:

"A public official once asked me: *why, after all these years, have the General Inspectorate of the Quarries never succeeded in restricting all informal access to the old Paris quarries?*
My response was that the authorities in question have never understood the direction of force: the "cataphiles" who are willing to do anything to maintain access to these spaces, aren't doing so because of an attraction to the underground network as such. It is triggered by an urge to escape the over-ground conditions. The *direction* in which the pressure is exerted is decisive for any counter-movement."

Félix Guattari (1983): 14. "Préface: La ville d'ombre" (my translation).

which furrows under the metro and the sewers of the left bank. Each generation of Parisians has its "explorers" and many denizens, young or old, have had the opportunity to stroll or feast in these Lutetian cavities. As much as the underground manages to pierce and arouse mental maps, produce void-effects, and spawn generations of ghosts, it is frequented by a subcultural community with a rare ability to dissolve the social boundary and vertical distinctions that characterize life above ground. The underworld attracts people from all sediments of society.

Throughout the centuries, resistance fighters, religious outcasts, Communards have passed through the quarries, so too the smugglers, under the wall of the Fermiers Généraux. The cataphiles are hence the heirs of a long tradition of clandestinity that with consistency and discretion has produced anecdotes and underground legends about the city. Their stories have blended lived experience, historicity, and diverse imaginaries of refuge, treasures, ghosts, desires, resistance, occultism and secret ceremonies, which are all linked to the underground world. This is an underworld that collects and unleashes forgotten memories of the city with a vengeance from the repressed world of the dead, haunting the hierarchies on the surface.

As Guattari writes in the preface of La cité des cataphiles: "*This 'anthropological mission in the undergrounds of Paris' demonstrates to us that, on the slightest pretext, collective subjectivity can snowball—or nocturnally spiral—from the crudest singularities—a century-old graffiti, the debris of a naïve bas-relief … to turn it into a diastasis of mystery, an enzyme of desire, capable of vampirising the imagination of successive generations.*"

*

Beneath the ground, roots from the vegetation above dangle from the ceiling. It smells of wet soil; the air is damp and much chillier than the hot summer night left behind. At the far end of the tunnel, in a cloud of dust, there are a couple of lights moving around and a racketing ruckus that only gets louder the further one goes. I meet with two women who are in the process of making a crawl space. Some praxis involves securing access to the restricted maps. Some praxis involves holding the overlapping maps up to the light, and make visible the weak partition walls. Some praxis requires jackhammers to open passageways to connect the individual systems into a joint network. *See* appendix.

*

Retracting to life in the underworld is as old as any structure of domination. Historically, the underground has served as a projection surface and locus in widely differing cultures; either politically motivated, conditioned by faith and religion, or by general lawlessness. Some would argue that this stratum has been central in the evolution of Western environmental imaginations.

There are similar symbols that are also widely experienced as threatening and uncontrolled but at the same time as alluring and liberating; for example the night. The night is, Joachim Schlör writes, one of the few segments of urban existence that the modern city has not yet fully succeeded in taming and colonizing. The night still challenges the day, with its promises of the fulfillment of wishes and the release of repressed desires. It hereby shares qualities with the underworld, providing a certain space for transgressive practices that oppose an urban landscape that from dawn till dusk is dominated by commercial forces. A sliver of authenticity, to which the threshold spaces belong, transitioning between

Thursday, July 25, 2019. The thermometer indicates a soaring 42.6 degrees Celsius, the warmest day in Paris' history.
The average temperature in Paris' quarries is 14 degrees, all year round.
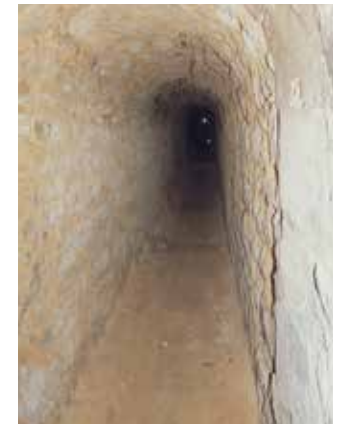
Underground Utopias

Harriet Hawkins (2020). "Underground Imaginations, Environmental Crisis and Subterranean Cultural Geographies."

Joachim Schlör (1998). *Nights in the Big City: Paris, Berlin, London 1840–1930.*

above and below; viaducts, cellars, or labyrinthine medieval alleys. Haunted shadow worlds, like passages to an other reality that could be found in *The Hawthorn Archive*, tracing utopian margins in slaves running away,

AVERY F. GORDON. (2017): VIII.

marronage, piracy, heresy, witchcraft, vagrancy, vagabondage, rebellion, solder desertion, and other often illegible, illegitimate, or trivialized forms of escape, resistance, opposition, and alternative ways of life. This other utopianism produces "temporary autonomous zones," to use Hakim Bey's phrase

Avery F. Gordon (2017).
The Hawthorn Archive: Letters From the Utopian Margins.

The publisher describes the book as a "polyglossic tome that, through its writing on various social struggles against slavery, capitalism, and other forms of authoritarian control, encourages the sustained practice of developing a socio-political consciousness."

As much as the subterranean and the hidden can be viewed in opposition to the mapped and controlled character of the surface, it increasingly renders an obnoxious attraction of market forces to capitalize on its mystified authenticity. It's the inherent logic predicted by Marx and reframed by Lefebvre: "The ruling class seeks to maintain its hegemony by all available means." Henri Lefebvre (1991): 10. *The Production of Space.* **It's essential for the dominant status of capitalism: that there are critical voices to instrumentalize and incorporate into the growth machine.**

Despite the persistent erosion from commercial extractivism and its repeated attempts to control the urban cracks along its measures of resilience, some threshold membranes still manage to restrain structures of dominance, while allowing for dreams of dissent and radical imagination to seep through. In some cases, as this chapter seeks to testify, it is made possible by clandestinely linking the subterranean landscape with the monolithic structures of domination that rests upon it. The urban substrata affords a praxis of dissent, with dissimilar habits and other possibilities for participation in the production of deviant perceptions. It undermines the sensories produced through the political hegemony. The appearance of another world in the world; a new mode of being in common, where the order of the sensible is shaken.

Erik Swyngedouw (2017): 48.
"Insurgent Urbanity and the Political City."

Jacques Rancière (2004).
The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible.

"States of mind have material consequences. They make things happen." And dialectically; the material world *affords* our behavior.

*

The contemporary phenomenon of retracting to Paris' quarries follows a tradition of withdrawal and dissent. But the modern concept of *underground* can also be understood as a capitalist conception: a space that is largely generated by way of extractive operations. The rationalization and colonization of the underground increased markedly during the first half of the 20th century, with the expansion of subways; sewers; gas, electricity, and telephone lines; and, further, with the post-war expansion of consumer culture and its antiseptic architecture of subterranean shopping arcades. With these developments, the underground came to be partly normalized.

Before this "subterranean turn," the underground was a space largely understood by way of religion and mythology. Its haunting qualities have, however, continuously morphed and echoed the political landscape. On the one hand, the *organic* undergrowth is diametrically opposed the technological control apparatus. But even the *inorganic* landscape often appears as unpredictable and uncontrolled; here, the uncontrollable comes spilling into cellars, subway tunnels and other infrastructures. Shrouded in obscurity, it attracts informal contestation, not least because of its general lack of supervision and the darkness that it provides. Similarly, it can be comprehended as a spatial representation of the human psyche—the underworld as a phantasmal projection surface for the latent or subliminal human consciousness.

*

James Donald (1999): 8.
Imagining the Modern City.

James J. Gibson (1979).
The Theory of Affordances: The Ecological Approach to Visual Perception.

Subterranean Turn

Rosalind Williams.
Notes on the Underground: An Essay on Technology, Society, and the Imagination (1990).

David L. Pike.
Subterranean Cities: The World beneath Paris and London, 1800–1945 (2005).

Metropolis on the Styx: The Underworlds of Modern Urban Culture, 1800–2001 (2007).

Deleuze & Guattari (1987). *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia.*

Gilles Deleuze & Félix Guattari's theories of spatial negotiations are helpful here. With some overlappings with Lefebvre's spatial theory, they indicate a binary oppositional relationship that is undermined by introducing a third category as an example of all the thousands of differences that undermine and complicate the opposites: *striated*, *smooth*, and *holey space* jointly account for how authoritarian power and grass-rooted resistance operate in the production of contested space.

Holey Space

Holey space, as the concept suggests, is an underground and volatile place, hidden and invisible. The itinerant craftsperson, the blacksmith, the metallurgist, is the rover of these cavities.

Metals—marking the basic division of historical eras of iron age and bronze age—the matter, dug out from underground sediments and processed with high heat to become infinitely malleable and reusable. Holey space, the realm of the blacksmith, brings attention to how metals derive from underground and nomadic conditions.

The concept of *holeyness* evokes the margin of the subterranean—tunnels, caves, mines, sewers, and burrows—with its connotations of clandestine and illegal activities, and of the unknown. A space where complexity, ambiguity, hybridity, contradiction, and otherness prospers (what Lefebvre might have called a "lived space").

Subterranean Paris, 2022.

The smooth and the striated are interdependent; between the two is a continuous exchange.

The capitalist force, when theorized as a striated space, accordingly produces pockets of counter-cultural possibilities as it advances. It is in this light that we can understand Haussmann's material exploitation. Prior the modernization of Paris, the narrow streetscape had proven effective for popular uprisings. Meandering medieval streets were helpful to evade the onslaught of

artillery. So was the contemporaneous lack of house numbers, which allowed for an invisibilised and labyrinthed resistance. The new star-shaped street grid provided for swift military operations; the wide avenues enabled an array of authoritarian technologies, not least the photographic overview. Accordingly, in order to rationalize the built environment, Haussmann hollowed out the city's underbelly. What wasn't calculated was the *creation* of uncontrollable places of dissent of the kind it attempted to erase: the entangled, unstraight, wild mesh of tunnels.

What other fleeting-beyond, sensous, and rupturing spatialities in the contemporary city can be termed Holey? Spaces that are in exchange with radically transformative methods for the production of the city and its rights on demand …

Wolfgang Scheppe (2021). *Taxonomy of the Barricade: Image Acts of Political Authority in Paris, May 1968.*

As Scheppe clarifies in his book, it was in fact the renowned photographer Nadar, famous for his catacomb documentation in Paris during the mid-19th century, who invented the aerial instruments for photography. This technology was appropriated by Napoleon III to overview and control Haussmann's newly built, straightened street grid.

It was in turn momentarily reclaimed by Nadar and his anarchist comrades, leading up to the Paris Commune.

and the question of control over the mines always involves nomadic peoples. *Every mine is a line of flight* that is in communication with smooth spaces

So, to continue , we occupy many places on many maps, with different scales, with different cartographies, and it is because we both occupy highly circumscribed places on maps drawn through power cartographies and also exceed these confinements, that it is possible to imagine new places, new histories – to dream that resistance is possible. Maybe resistance is already a place on the map, but – more likely, from the discussion above – maybe it is about throwing away imposed maps, unfolding new spaces, making alternative places, creating new geographies of resistance.

DELEUZE & GUATTARI. (1987): 88.

STEVE PILE. (1997): 30.

✳

A hand-drawn map of subterranean Paris. The wanderers see things that the cartographers don't, unless the cartographers are wandering. Overlooking above; understanding beneath.

✳

"Within the fractal complexities of actual geography the map can see only dimensional grids. Hidden enfolded immensities escape the measuring rod. The map is not accurate; the map cannot be accurate."

Hakim Bey (1991): 97. *T.A.Z.: Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism.*

The Urban eXperiment

The kids of 1968, who in 1981 had managed to informally accquire the maps from the municipal archive, have continuously been—and still are—making their way around in the Parisian subterranean. These days, they go under a collective nom de plume: *The Urban eXperiment*. They are organized into teams with a team specializing in infiltration; a team running an internal messaging system and coded radio network; a team providing a database; a team organizing underground theater plays, screenings, and concerts; a team doing (an)archiving; a team doing restoration; a team doing construction work. Whatever the task at hand and despite scarce conditions, social configurations and resourcefulness are both employed.

The Urban eXperiment is an organization based on fieldwork, and concrete and real actions, which tends to reject concepts that lack the possibility of immediate application. As an autonomous structure, the group do not yearn for freedom from prohibitions as much as freedom from any notion of authorization that puts innovative and creative endeavors at risk of recuperation.

We share an ideal of clandestinity—a stealthy posture from which the photographic documentation in this chapter belongs as a rare exception.

Undercurrent Currency

Much like other fugitive spaces and cultures, Paris' underground is increasingly becoming the subject of creative-city marketing: of co-option and commodification.

The notion of the urban *underground* – in contrast to earlier associations with political and countercultural movements – has gained currency in an era of intensified city-marketing and cultural entrepreneurship. With this development, subcultural artforms and arts festivals are often deployed to hype and generate cultural capital for the city. This commodification of the underground is accelerated by contemporary trendspotting and cool hunting, whether in informal networks and social media, or by the marketing and advertising industries.

CAROLYN BIRDSALL. (2013): 115.

In 2014, Jean-Louis Missika (then-deputy to Mayor Anne Hidalgo) launched a dubious campaign called *Re-inventing Paris*, which set out to privatize the crumbs of property that was still in municipal possession. Presented as unused or defunct, these crowded squats, out-of-bounds playgrounds, and unsanctioned communal gardens were in fact widely used by informal means.

The campaign was widely criticized for its false pretense and subterfuge in producing a "sustainable urbanism." International media censured it as a charade for selling off of valuable assets, under the false pretense of a socially and ecologically sustainable agenda, something that clearly didn't have an impact on Hidalgo and her political peers. Paris had cashed in 600 million Euros.

The contested space of subterranean Paris was concurrently put in a chokehold. In 2017, Missika and Hidalgo launched the second phase of this neoliberal push-and-pull plot, called *Re-inventing Paris 2*. The land offered for sale this time around was underground: defunct subway stations, tunnel networks, culverts, and basements. The campaign's promotional materials paraphrased the classic '68 maxim, with "Under the Cobblestones lies the Future."

As often with these revitalization projects, the spaces offered up for sale weren't uninhabited. Among many others, members of the clandestine Parisian group The Urban eXperiment had long created and maintained these subterranean spaces: a vivid and vital (under)commons.

Beneath the surface, the signal qualities of the contemporary urban landscape are not playfulness but control, not spontaneity but manipulation, not interaction but separation.

*

Re-Inventing Paris

newcities.org/reinventing-paris-building-city-bottom/ (Accessed 2017.)

www.reinventer.paris (Accessed 2017.)

SUSAN CHRISTOPHERSON. (1994): 409.

Under the Cobblestones lies the Future!

The Reinventing Paris call for projects was an indisputable success and constituted a milestone for Paris. First, in terms of method, as it enabled to define new ways to fashion the City by mobilizing multidisciplinary teams and by bringing to the fore how it is used by the public. The CFP, which offered to revive sites of outstanding significance, attracted many famous experts – architects, thinkers, artists, etc. – and allowed for new talents to emerge.

Then, through its architectural projects, both spectacular and imbued with great sensitivity, which will lead to the emergence of hybrid, shared, and environment-friendly one-of-a-kind sites in the very heart of Paris.

Based on this success, we are now happy to launch Reinventing Paris 2. Entitled the "Subterranean Secrets of Paris," this CFP opens up new horizons. Indeed, it proposes to bring together partners who wish to utilize their real estate expertise in new contexts. It also promises to reveal an unexpected world – that of the subterranean city – by offering up unknown, unusual and remarkable spaces to the teams' creativity.

This second edition takes on a new dimension by focusing on Paris' underground spaces. It reflects the promise of remarkable and unknown sites that are full of challenges and exceptional potential. It will unite several partners with the City of Paris, including EFIDIS, Paris Habitat, RATP, Renault, the RIVP and SNCF, who have accepted to participate in this original approach to urban renewal.

On the same principle as the previous calls for innovative urban projects, "Reinventing Paris - The subterranean secrets of Paris" opens up a new dimension. It invites you to explore one of the facets of the city which is still greatly under-appreciated: its underground world.

The underground of Paris is indeed a special real-estate resource which benefits from high quality capital for a more successful and resilient city.

Underground spaces, which were explored at different stages of history in some world metropolises, including Paris through the Les Halles project and at the metropolitan level today with the Grand Paris Express, still hold potential which can be capitalized upon.

As a topic, the depth of the city should not be only assessed in terms of height. It should be part of a broader reflection on the city as a "four" dimension space. This reflection should become systematic. It should have an impact on all urban projects, particularly those at the heart of the metropolis where the density and the maximization of exchanges make it all the more significant.

Through various underground or surface level sites, the aim of "Reinventing Paris - The subterranean secrets of Paris" is to encourage different stakeholders in the city to integrate this reflection in the most detailed level of urban production. By encouraging the emergence of innovative, audacious and relevant solutions bringing to the fore the potential of the underground world for improving the quality and the attractiveness of urban areas, the aim is to contribute to an open discussion about the sustainable, resilient and welcoming city.

This announcement reads as a perfect parody of the system it represents. Befuddled and co-optive, draining the city of one of the most vibrant commons that remains for its denizens. A neoliberal scheme under false pretenses of sustainability, colonizing both space, praxis, history and myth, refusing the culture it so blatantly appropriates.

Blatant Appropriation

Under the Cobblestones, the Beach.

Bernard Cousin (2008).
  Pourquoi j'ai écrit:
  sous les pavés, la plage.

The Co-optive City

SOUS VOS PIEDS,
UN MUSÉE

Réservez votre billet sur
musee-egouts.paris.fr
RMC

MUSÉE
DES ÉGOUTS
DE PARIS

Another example, as advertised
by the Paris Municipality (2022):
"UNDER YOUR FEET, A MUSEUM"
(The Paris Museum of Sewers).

Andy Merrifield (2011).
  "The Right to the City and
  Beyond."

The aesthetic legacy of Guy Debord and the Situationist International has long been held up as the irreverent precursors to "street artists," but as mayor Anne Hildago showed with the unveiling of the Re-Inventing Paris campaign, the original rabble-rousers are also prey to depolitizised recuperation. "Under the Cobblestones, the Future!" had been a challenge to tear up the very material of the street. "The Future" the Situationists encouraged people to find underneath was one of hands-on political action, unearthing Paris' radical recent past to meet peoples' sociopolitical needs and demands. The Future that the Situationists were referring to was not a subterranean shopping mall. What used to be a potent concept of spatial appropriation was again turned into an ad campaign. Even Lefebvre's Right to the City has been rendered a defanged idea of civic participation. These kinds of exuberant calls for radical change and transformation are diverted into

rebranded urban renewal projects and creative cities promotional slogans. These false promises of a participatory "makeshift urbanism" in city marketing campaigns aren't offering to develop structures that would allow denizens to deepen their relationships to place or each other. These projects serve only to stimulate the growth of capital by way of a cosmetic pop-up urbanism, and continue to limit the scope of what people should expect from "renewal" projects and reinforce circumscribed spaces in which they're permitted to engage with their cities.

Praxised imagination and imagined praxis are continuously put in extractive chokeholds. It's a condition from which fugitive motions take off.

Alexander Vasudevan (2017): 147.
  The Autonomous City: A History
  of Urban Squatting.

*

The location of the planned entrance is vigilantly mapped out, whereafter the roofing slabs are carefully, silently upended, one after the other, until a passage is finally cleared. But underground is not only a spatial stratum. Equally important is the cultural asylum that carries the same epithet—the underground as refuge, in the shielded, and as concealed. The rhizomatic quarries are linked to the surface, not only by way of the manhole covers in the street, but via many of the brittle basement floorings beneath those houses on the Left Bank.

Undermining
the Monolith

Here is the notion that an authentic space is not static – a locked room for the conservation of values – but dynamic: a cave which can be enlarged until it has hollowed out the foundations of the ruling order. Authenticity is like a termite or a death-watch beetle, gnawing away expanding spaces within apparently solid structures.

*

Culture has had a decisive role in the development from industrialism to post-industrialism.

With neoliberalism, we find ourselves in a political condition which is directly appropriated from the forms of counter-culture that emerged during the 1960s, with demands for autonomy and clear ideals around authenticity, self-management, and anti-hierarchy. All of these demands have been appropriated and fitted into a neo-managerial system, where independent workers act out their own precarization in the gig economy that builds from this malleable workforce. There's the method of marginalization—refusing access and keeping the disruption off limits. This is connected to what is seen in media, what's reported on, what is acceptable to include in visual culture.

Then there's what I've described here as a process of co-optation: the overexposure of previously autonomous subcultures. Inviting them up on stage to take part in the performance—their presence in that space either legitimizes the script handed to them, or casts them in roles that ridicule their attempts or methods. Or it makes them appear quaint. Anachronist attitudes often engulf the once-disruptive aesthetics.

  With *Retromania*, Simon Reynolds presents a critical study of contemporary pop culture's addiction to its own past. As much as his observation is primarily concerned with music, the same is highly applicable to the visual language of anarchist subcultures like punk or graffiti writing. Like cultural caricatures, caught in a degenerative loop. However, as Kristin Ross remarks: while thinking and action are not the same, they must continuously return to each other for renewal. Referring not only to Lefebvre's spatial triad but to a precedent note written by the Communards in 1871, she argues for a "reciprocal penetration of action and idea."

Making caricatures of dissent, framing the order for participation in civic life, and incorporating

Boltanski & Chiapello (2005). *The New Spirit of Capitalism.*

Simon Reynolds (2011). *Retromania: Pop Culture's Addiction to Its Own Past.*

Kristin Ross (2015): 92. *Communal Luxury: The Political Imaginary of the Paris Commune.*

radical tactics are all cogs in the co-optive machine which is used to expand dominance by undermining those perceived to be operating off-script. My conception of contested spaces, as shown through my methodologies and ongoing projects, is that the land and people of the unruly city exist on their own terms—growing and changing and creating their spaces. They were there before the circus came to town, and the tensions described in terms of "contested spaces" are the encroachment of other outside forces into homes and commons which the people of the unruly city have relationships to.

*

In response to the encroaching privatization of subterranean Paris, a counter movement has been triggered—migrating up from the underground, bypassing the surface, and into the vertical architecture that stretches above (and beyond) the sky of the French capital. In contrast to the classic illicit house occupation, where unused buildings are appropriated and publicly announced, there is instead an approach of invisibility, where fully active municipal institutions are made use of.

  (G)Hosting is a ghostly method of invisibly hosting houses and temporarily rewriting their functions. This, in co-existence with other official utilizations, and without anybody (except the informal users themselves) recognizing these parallel turns of making use, brings buildings into play. Architecture is an antenna tuned to the past, luring ghosts inside. Some are invited, others not.

  A common understanding of the ghost is that of retribution of past wrongs; "the unexpiated guilt of sins for which they (or we) are yet to atone." As such, the ghost is a product of memory and imagination. The ghosts of the Communards are haunting Paris from its underground.

Anabasis (upwards journey, from Greek *ana-* "up" and *baínō* "go").

Fugitive Motion: Along the Vertical

(G)Hosting

Merlin Coverley (2020): 32. *Hauntology: Ghosts of Futures Past.*

Invisibility is as much a perception as an actual condition. Both are inhabited by ghosts. And again, not only the imagined kind you might find in spectral tales—with bodies of fume and wind—but spooks with tools, in flesh and blood: rambling in the hollow and entering buildings from beneath, and wandering through walls (but, with the lesson learned from Natacha, ideally through the main entrance, with the use of a key acquired through a variety of informal means).

The times of haunting soon-to-be-ruins and left-behind-houses are long gone. With the ongoing radical transformation of urban space, driven by the dominating fierce force of capital, these ghosts have tramped into already active spaces. Invisibility is the tactic, and the ghost is the occupier.

The haunt, Jack Halberstam writes, brings bewilderment to the controlled. It makes solid mass echo hollow—a zephyr in the vacuum-sealed. It deceives systems and structures of power in society with a variety of subversions, spotting flaws and frailties as it permeates the monolith. An oozing agency that beams from the built environment, making façades peel like slapdash stickers. Crumbling, unfolding, invitingly cracking open. "Haunting … refers us to what's living and breathing in the place hidden from view: people, places, histories, knowledge, memories, ways of life, ideas."

As Esther Peeren & María del Pilar Blanco aptly unfold it in *The Spectralities Reader*, the spectral has been a powerful metaphor for encounters, disturbing forms of otherness throughout human history: "The ghost, even when turned into a conceptual metaphor, remains a figure of unruliness pointing to the tangibly ambiguous."

*

Jack Halberstam (2020b). *Wild Things: The Disorder of Desire.*

Avery F. Gordon (2020). *Ghostly Matters: Haunting and the Sociological Imagination.*

Peeren & del Pilar Blanco (2013). *The Spectralities Reader: Ghosts and Haunting in Contemporary Cultural Theory.*

Ibid: 1.

What The Urban eXperiment had already learned was how to transgress the underground strata, up into the vertical world.

For both, public space is not a preconstituted entity created for users; it arises only from a practice (or counterpractice) of use by those groups excluded from dominated space.

ROSALYN DEUTSCHE. (1996): XVI.

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From the cramped entrance, it smells of incense and mould. We crawl inside the space, entering from behind of a murky shelf; it is full of dented and grimly staring plaster Jesuses.

The lights are on: a row of humming fluorescent lamps. Behind a chicken-wire fence, there's a cavity in the wall, where human bones lay piled up. We're in the crypt of our destination: a medieval limestone church on the city's Left Bank.

A fugitive movement from the underground towards the vertically constructed takes off.

And so, beyond the underground water, Bosco's cellar recovers its stairways. After this poetic pause, description can begin again to unreel its itinerary. "A very narrow, steep stairway, which spiraled as it went higher, had been carved in the rock. I started up it" By means of this gimlet, the dreamer succeeds in getting out of the depths of the earth and begins his adventures in the heights.

GASTON BACHELARD. (1958): 24.

For a stretch of months, we visit the building together regularly, after-hours, entering through the opening in the tunnel ceiling.

Having walked up and down the stairways countless times, one of us remarks that it's odd how low the ceiling is on one floor, compared to the long flight of steps to reach the roof above. The stairs don't add up. We return with tools.

We measure and calculate the space whereafter we vigilantly cut a hole from beneath, in the boarded ceiling. Having climbed inside, we find a sealed off mezzanine. Unseen, unused, unknown.

Clandestine Mezzanine

… and Bachelard continues:

"In fact, at the very end of countless tortuous, narrow passages, the reader emerges into a tower. This is the ideal tower that haunts all dreamers of old houses: it is 'perfectly round' and there is 'brief light' from 'a narrow window.' It also has a vaulted ceiling, which is a great principle of the dream of intimacy. For it constantly reflects intimacy at its center."

*

Possibility in Centrality

Centrality is not just a geographical designation, but the very *possibility* of co-constructing the urban machine. Lefebvre came up with a number of reformulations of the Right to the City concept over the years: the right to space, the right to difference, and the right to centrality. With this, the call widened from a *city* perspective (form) to an *urban* perspective (process).

The question reads: how can the right to the city—with its sensible demands for centrality, everyday life and self-governance—be activated, in favor of a more egalitarian and sustainable urbanism in the prevailing condition?

How can the idea of a radical access to the city's resources be revived, to include all groups within the population, accessing spaces to experiment and to realize unalienated and yet alternative ways of partaking in the urban process?

Mark Wigley
(2018): 341.
Cutting Matta-Clark: The Anarchitecture Investigation.

BEYOND INSIDE-OUTSIDE —
ABOVE — BELOW — OVER AND
UNDER ~~ALWAYS~~ WITHIN .
BY WORKING

WORKING

GORDON MATTA-CLARK (1970–78).

| SCRET PLACES BREAKS IN THE ORDERED
TEXTURE HIDE/OUTS .

IBID.

LIBERATING OUR MINE
FROM OVER THEIRS

IBID.

*

We refit the newly cut-out entrance into a hinged hatch. From a procured square metal pipe, split into two halves along its three-meter length, a ladder is manufactured. It is designed to unfold in a swiveling 90° motion. When folded together, it's secretly attached in the ceiling, made to imitate the appearance of the preexisting cabling lattice.

The rififi'ed space is gradually adapted to fit our needs. Material procured from the street is hauled up, passing from one person to the other, up the circling staircases. We hoist the heaviest objects with a pulley along the façade and through a lucarne, into the mezzanine. Furniture is assembled with overlapping XYZ-joints: eight chairs, six tables, seven lamps, a bed, a sink and a toilet. Piece by piece, the space is turned into a workshop.

*

With reflections on the current post-political climate and what's described as *the zero-ground of politics,* Erik Swyngedouw calls for a praxis-oriented protest culture that is resilient, with an understanding of the political pitfalls of critical art and design (2010). Where forms of control and exercise of power have been implemented at the expense of the vitally political public which is characterized by dissent and space for action. This is referred to what Rancière calls *the democratic scandal*; while democracy promises equality, it produces oligarchic governance in which political authority seamlessly merges with economic power. Jacques Rancière (2006): 295.

"Proper urban politics," Swyngedouw argues, "fosters dissent, creates disagreement and triggers the debating of and experimentation with more egalitarian and inclusive futures."

Erik Swyngedouw (2011): 14. *Designing the Post-Political City and the Insurgent Polis.*

He contends, much like Debord et al., that art and design activism in the current political climate is doomed to be appropriated, rendering the majority of it counterproductive as it contributes to the maintenance, acceleration even, of a broken system.

The condition for reintroducing a true democracy hence depends on radically democratic forms of activism: forms that are socially inclusive and are able to develop from spatial practices. It's "about claiming/producing/carving out a metaphorical and material space by those who are unaccounted for, unnamed, whose fictions are only registered as noise."

Erik Swyngedouw (2018): 138. *Promises of the Political: Insurgent Cities in a Post-Political Environment.*

Or as Slavoj Žižek puts it:

the political act (intervention) proper is not simply something that works well within the framework of the existing relations, but something that *changes the very framework that determines how things work.*

SLAVOJ ŽIŽEK. (1999): 199.

authentic politics is, the art of the *impossible* – it changes the very parameters of what is considered 'possible' in the existing constellation.

Designing dissent in a post-political climate requires a transgressive imagination, capable of reshaping urban space into a radically democratic arena. In the absence of an inclusive urbanism, political life must proceed from margins and gaps: "space of political engagement occurs within the cracks, in between the meshes and the strange interlocations that shape places that contest the police order. It is here that design, as a renewed political practice, can intervene."

Swyngedouw (2011): cover.

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'Change life!' 'Change society!' These precepts mean nothing without the production of an appropriate space.

HENRI LEFEBVRE. (1974): 59.

Space is crucial for any culture of commons—to pursue new radical imaginaries and translate them into other direct democratic forms of spatial and material practices. As Swyngedouw sees it, critical urban theory is "bankrupt," if it does not have any means to radically challenge the political space. Making theories from analysis is not sufficient. Instead, he argues, the "embryonic" needs to be rooted in action, like the Occupy movement. Symptomatic for these forms of political movements is the proximity to praxis and, ultimately, the capacity to claim and defend re-politicized space.

Erik Swyngedouw (2017): 50. "Insurgent Urbanity and the Political City."

Every place is some place, but a spot is a place that holds utility for a community. Skaters, and wall writers, through desire and imagination, turn places to spots every day. Spots can last a day or decades, and the ones that last become a widely known secret.

STEVE 'ESPO' POWERS. (2023).

In the end, everything in politics turns on the distribution of spaces. What are these places? How do they function? Why are they there? Who can occupy them? For me, political action always acts upon the social as the litigious distribution of places and roles. It is always a matter of knowing who is qualified to say what a particular place is and what is done in it.

JACQUES RANCIÈRE. (1999): 201.

*

One after the other, locks from throughout the building are temporarily unmounted and brought back to the clandestine mezzanine. From analysing the dismantled locks, keys are manufactured, whereafter the locks are reassembled and put back in place.
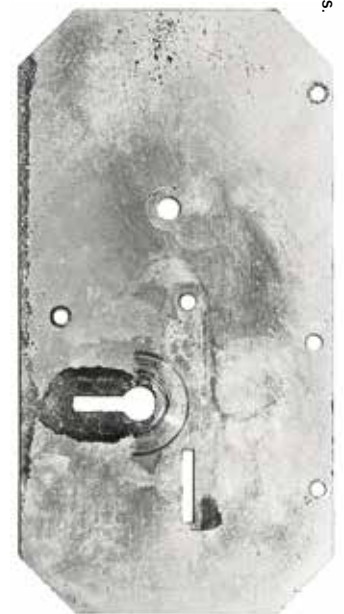

Cover plate of an 8-lever lock.

*

Co-optation of Critical Aesthetics

Adam Kraft (2004): 6. *King Size: A Project About Tags, DIY-Craft & Subcultural Globalisation.*

Woody, with a bricolaged marker. Photo by Martha Cooper (1982).

Much like how 17th-century commoners were criminalized due to politics of privatization.

See Peter Linebaugh (2008). *The Magna Carta Manifesto: Liberties and Commons for All.*

Growing up with graffiti writing throughout the 1990s has had a tremendous influence on my practice. Whether spatial, social, or material, it follows a certain methodology—that of reusing, permutating, and repurposiring existing structures and forms. At that time, markers for tagging were manufactured from chalkboard erasers, old deodorants, and other random everyday items. Ink was also widely experimented with: boiled, pigmented, mixed with automobile brake fluids—anything that could possibly make your mark survive the cleaning buff. Spray nozzles were informally collected from shops that stocked whatever kinds of pressurized cans on the shelves: starch spray, bug repellents, toilet refreshers …

Again—anything that you could get your hands on, which could modify the paint spurt to a satisfying dimension and help you perform the aesthetics and expressive aspirations of your shoestring-budget craft. Creativity was generated from constraints; in relation to time, space, and tools. Kids learned how to be resourceful as resourceless.

Since then, graffiti culture has come to share the same destiny as most other subcultures: that of complete and utter commodification. The DIY-engineering maker culture only exists as a marginal practice and has instead been replaced by a prefab urban art industry, selling standardized and over-priced consumables.

When looking at that early methodology, there's surely a political agency embedded within graffiti writing, a capacity of critical craft. The increased criminalization of graffiti writing could be argued to have had a radicalizing effect on some of its practitioners, repositioning them from *subculture* to a praxis of *counterculture*. This countercultural craft and positionality are still essential to my practice—to remaining autonomous and to being able to manufacture instruments for access,

furniture for habitation, means of communication, or whatever else that might be needed to make things happen. It follows the logic that I picked up as a teen—the take-what-you-find/use-what-you-get mentality. That shoestring budget is indeed still my prevailing condition.

The question of the ethics in the performance of one's praxis has surely also carried over from my graffiti days as well, and I'm aware that some people are never going to see past the illegal or criminal aspect of creating in the modes that I do. "The unlawful" and "the illegal" refer to actions not permitted under the law. Criminal action is a practice in direct violation of a law, "against the law." I've considered the ethical implications of my craft and know precisely where I draw my line. Echoing Graeber's account of anarchism, Jack Halberstam frames the ethics of praxis as one "that intends to take apart, dismantle, tear down the structure that … limits our ability to find each other, to see beyond it and to access the places that we know lie outside its walls." Jack Halberstam (2013): 6. "The Wild Beyond: With and For the Undercommons." The ethical concerns of praxis are thus not unexamined—considered are the whys and hows and to what ends—and there is political purpose in the scaffolding of the ethical framework. Civil disobedience is the practice of breaking an unjust law. Who restricts access and what gives them the right? Who decides and enforces the laws and what gives them the right? These are questions that might offend some people, while others might be the opposite: enpowered by an embodied disrespect for the shady legitimacy of private property and the dubious order of things.

Maybe there is real danger there, or maybe critics are making a big deal over nothing. A gauge of the effectiveness of a political movement, though, lies in the efforts and methods the powerful employ to undermine them.

Critical Ethics

Adjustable workshop lamp, made from a scaffolding pipe, found wood and procured wiring.

Again, graffiti experienced increased criminal- ization but the arguably more successful tactic was the embrace of graffiti by galleries and the art world. Removing the art form from its urban context largely neutralized any political power graffiti could further employ as a counter-cultural movement. It was one way to remove a potentially powerful tool used in contested spaces, to simply absorb it into a less politically charged space: the white cube of the gallery.

Craig Castleman (2004): 60. "Gotten Up."

Autonomous Aesthetics

Street Art, for some brief time, aimed to use the tools of hypervisual advertising and DIY methods to nominally reclaim public spaces. It didn't take long for those aesthetics and tactics to be subsumed back into advertising and other structures of visual culture. The practice was so completely undermined and made ridiculous that I caught myself describing "eruptions of auton- omous aesthetics" to avoid typing the words "Street Art." This critical culture of expression had gotten co-opted to a degree where I didn't want to have any association with the term. Part of witnessing that process of co-option led me to make the switch 20 odd years ago from visual expressions of art in urban spaces to these more clandestine and transgressive works that are presented—unfolded—throughout. Ubiquitous visibility was no longer the right tool for the job.

What used to be a politically potent praxis of spatial appropriation was again turned into an ad campaign.

The more radical forms of urban activism become 'an unending process which can destabilise, displace, and so on, the power structure, without ever being able to undermine it effectively'

ERIK SWYNGEDOUW. (2011): 40–1.

(Žižek, 2002b: 101) and are as such doomed to fail. The problem with such tactics is not only that they leave the symbolic order intact and, at best, 'tickle' the police order (see Critchley, 2007), but also, as Žižek puts it, 'these practices of performative reconfiguration/ displacement ultimately support what they intend to subvert, since the very fields of such "transgressions" are already taken into account, even engendered by the hegemonic form'

The visual squeezes consciousness through a narrow slit, on the other side of which it ceases to be my or your consciousness and becomes a mindless copy of the things themselves.

CAMIEL VAN WINKEL. (2005): 18.

To underestimate, ignore and diminish space amounts to the overestimation of texts, written matter, and writing systems, along with the readable and the visible, to the point of assigning to these a monopoly on intelli- gibility.

HENRI LEFEBVRE (1991): 62.

I see tactics oriented towards the invisible as being less prone to "support what they intend to subvert," as quoted above. The clandestine is less concerned with establishing a visual impact, an aesthetic which would be fairly easy to repli- cate and co-opt. Instead, it can create territories of sensory transgression.

Slavoj Žižek (1999): 264. *The Ticklish Subject: The Absent Centre of Political Ontology.*

Jacques Rancière (2004).
The Politics of Aesthetics: The Distribution of the Sensible.

Jacques Rancière (2007): 12.
On the Shores of Politics.

Jacques Rancière's *The Politics of Aesthetics* refers to an order of what is recognized as (im) possible through sensation—that which, established by disciplines and boundaries, determines the territory of the thinkable, visible and possible. In effect, a regulation of what can be done. By departing from such an aesthetic order of distributed sensibility, there is the possibility to make true politics, of peeling off the foreclosing façades of Western democracy, where the order of things is contested by the denizens, or *Ochlos*: the part who have no part.

This would be an active politics that challenges the policed order of inclusions and exclusions, of what is felt, seen, heard, and perceived. A politics of affect, accomplished by spatial, material, and theoretical practices, oriented towards a subversive distribution of the sensible.

In order to imagine the unimaginable—whether it is about spaces, living conditions, or coded systems—imagination draws on experiences. Praxis becomes a form of speech-act that contributes to our perception. The membrane that separates perception from memory is porous; the exchange is continuous—memory informs imagination, and the other way around.

Brazing stand.

SCRIBBLER UNKNOWN, 1968.

Be Realistic. Demand the Impossible. A classic maxim of Paris '68.

The long-term projects that I have been engaged in connect with Lefebvre's ideas, where "differences endure or arise on the margins of the homogenized realm."

The shelters and refuges I've constructed over the years are integrated with and inspired by the transformative flux of the city—often making use of the spaces exposed and the materials discarded in its building and rebuilding. Both the form of the physical structures and the collaborative spirit with which they are often created have been exercises in "making possible." Each work becomes a monument to the is-possible— a concrete, non-abstract refutation to any arguments which claim another way of creating or engaging with the city beyond the commercially sanctioned to be impossible. The defiant existence of the work proves alternatives to transgress a prescriptive reality.

*

View from the loo. Three intersecting battens jointed with bolts at the hip, with a curved piece of plywood forming the table top. The metal square pipes were collected from the material stock of the street, repurposed from their intended function of displaying street signs.

There's a daybed with a fold-up backrest, where the latticework is made of webbing-slings found at construction sites.

Along the walls, five workshop tables have been similarly constructed—all clad with wooden top boards except for the brazing station which supports a paving stone (brought by train from Berlin, as Paris—in Haussmanian spirit—has replaced the symbolic local paving stones with tarmac). The lamps are made from scaffolding pipes, with adjustable positions.

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Henri Lefebvre (1991): 373.
The Production of Space.
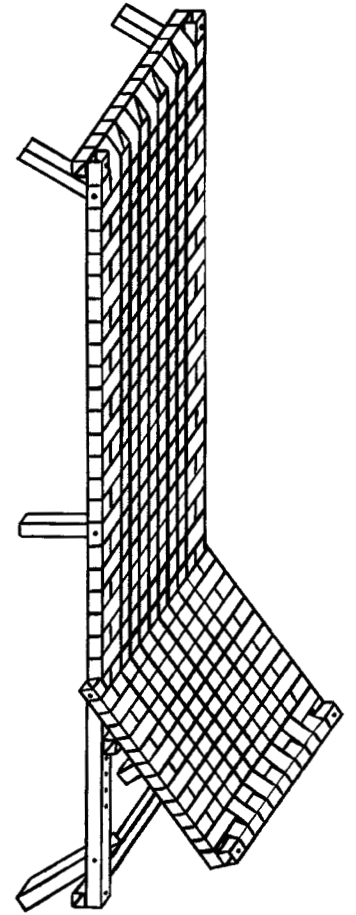
Daybed sketch.

Hidalgo's so called "Re-invention" of Paris consolidates the existing social and spatial inequalities of the city, by way of its pursuit of the logic of economic growth and territorial competition. It has alarming consequences for sociospatial justice and for a grassrooted management of the spatial production.

It's all part of a widening gap caused by segregation and huge inequalities in wealth between the center and the peripheral suburbs.

In *Retromania*, Reynolds reasons around the rampant recycling of the prefix *Re*: "bygone genres *re*vived and *re*novated. Vintage ... material *re*possesed and *re*combined." The Paris politics follows the same logic: "Re-inventing" Paris is a desperate squeeze of a city that has sold all its assets. All that remains are crumbles. To sell these, authenticity and the city's critical past is recuperated.

The prefix "De" marks a posture of unwinding the action referred. De-coding, de-installing, de-constructing, de-contextualizing. Deterritorializing social sedimentation. De-constructing to not succumb to what has been previously processed and conditioned—by history, institutions, authorities—and hence promoted as natural. De-construction is not a construction that supervenes afterwards, or from an outside. It is always already embedded within all architecture. It's where the ghosts resides.

Simon Reynolds (2011): XI.
Retromania: Pop Culture's Addiction to Its Own Past.

"On Debord's account at least, the organization was dissolved precisely because its recuperation was by 1972 already complete. By then the Situationist International had become custodian not of its own past activity but merely of its image. It had become merely a collective celebrity, part of the spectacular consumption of 'radical chic'."

McKenzie Wark (2008): 10.
50 Years of Recuperation of the Situationist International.

De-inventing Paris

In these cases a "cultural surplus" is clearly effective: something that moves above and beyond the ideology of a particular age. Only this "plus" persists through the ages, once the social basis and ideology of an epoch have decayed; and remains as the substrate that will bear fruit and be a heritage for other times. This substrate is essentially utopian, and the only notion that accords with it is the utopian-concrete concept.

ERNST BLOCH.
(1970): 95.

Exploration of the possible-impossible has another name: u-topia. There is no thought, today more than ever, without this exploration, and the discoverer does not turn away ̶h̶i̶s̶ gaze from obstacles, especially if ̶h̶e̶ wishes to circumvent them. This   exploration of the possible-impossible brings back lucidity. It situates reflection and meditation on their proper territory once again. There is no place without an other place and the other place, without the elsewhere and the nowhere. No topia without u-topia. No topology nor typology without imaginary. No countryside or landscape without roads, without the search for a way out. No journey without a project

HENRI LEFEBVRE.
(2003): 210.

On a map of Paris
                    u-topia can be neither
read nor seen, and yet it is there in all its glory.
            In general, this place, imagined and real, is found near the borders of verticality, the dimension of desire, power, and thought. Sometimes it is found deep within the subterranean city imagined by the novelist or poet, the underside of the city given over to conspiracy and crime. U-topia combines near and distant orders.

HENRI LEFEBVRE.
(1994): 129.

The intention, then, would be to empower people to create a utopian city built of transformative physical forms and socialised forms of governance and economy. Each stage in the freeing of the city – in its form and process – would necessitate further transformations in form and process.

STEVE PILE.
(2005): 178.

Similarly, Avery F. Gordon places the utopian within reach, *at the margins*. Not as a non-place but as a possible one "that we have the human and material resources to build in the present."

Avery F. Gordon (2018): 25.
The Hawthorn Archive: Letters From the Utopian Margins.

Once again I return to the question—to the praxis rather—of access. *Sharing* access is the fundamental ethic. Whether as a duo, a dozen or an unruly three-digit crowd: it's the key that unlocks the commons.

Key to Commons

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KEYS

A CATALOGUE AND
APPROACH OF COOLED
SPACES ~~THAT~~ TO BE CARRIED
IN THE PIRKE.

"Deep Hook" lockpick.

Tension wrench.
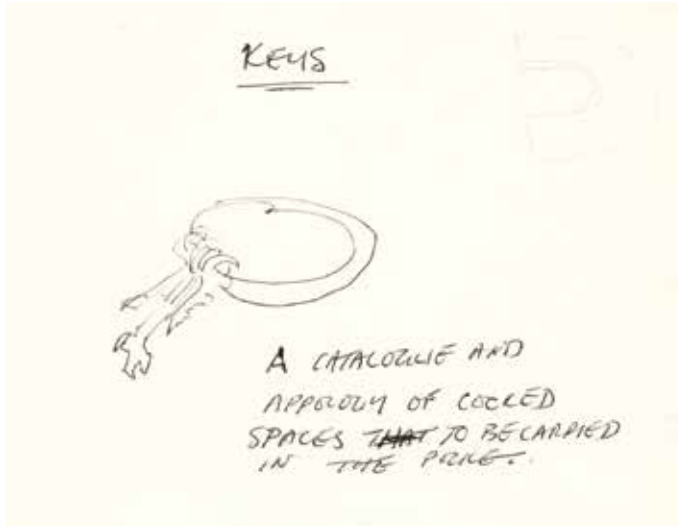
Smithing Itinerancy

In Paris, that same spirit leads us to set up a workshop with all the equipment to provide access through the crafting of curious metal objects. The manufacture of keys becomes a tool to preserve cultural artifacts, create commons, make connections and devise course corrections. Actions like these can be regarded as an extension of the city's history of resistance, but also a promise for its future. These are daily deviations that allows for reclaiming roles in the unruly city, and show hometown pride in Lutetia, A Place in the Mud.

The functions of the space are symbiotic: the social amalgam and that of the workshop to aid in the manufacturing of keys. Machinery has been installed—some handcranked, others engine operated—for the express purpose of milling, cutting, sanding, piercing, and duplicating small objects that provide access. Scrap metal and key blanks are refined into working dimple keys, tumbler keys, lever keys, or other instruments that serve the same purpose—that of opening doors: a workshop for itinerant smiths of sorts.
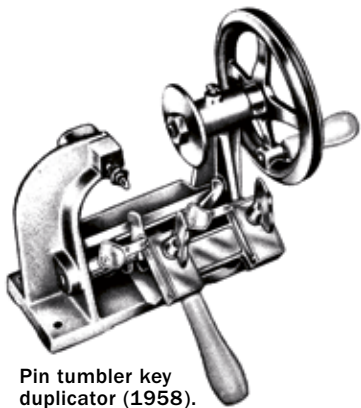
Pin tumbler key duplicator (1958).

Pinning tray with a gutted 6-pin tumbler lock (master-keyed).

Refuse

The separating toilet.

The specially-designed, pedal-operated sink provides the water for flushing. The chain of an old flushing unit moves a piece of steel to allow water to flow from the reservoir, which has to be periodically refilled with water and carried back by hand. The residue of water is arranged to run from the sink, through the piping, to flush the urine separating unit in the toilet, and further down the drainpipe, and into the sewer some 30 meters beneath the hidden space.

Without a pre-existing plumbing, we need to insert one and to connect it with the main waste water pipe running beneath the building, in the sewer system. That same infrastructure that was built during Haussmann's modernization frenzy, where eight massive sewer pipes to this day lead out in the river Seine, feeding the downstream with E. coli and refuse.

The insurgents who are involved in the manipulation of matter are material profaners who dig, cut, pierce, accumulate, throw, punch, push, pull, spit, and patch hylomorphic matter, transforming it into an abject, allagmatic architecture. The insurrectional city of the future sees these insurgent profaners armed with shotcrete guns, pumping a viscous concrete onto piles of objects assembled in its streets. The slurry oozes across each surface before drying eventually, and forming the solid mounts and slimy caves that compose the new landscapes of resistance.

LEOPOLD LAMBERT. (2012): 101.

Radical Bricolage

The poster on the wall. Studying the historical photographic material from past insurgencies in Paris, from the era of the Haussmannization to modern times, there are a few recurring objects to be spotted in the formation of barricades and other subversive arrangements of matter-flows.

One of them is the quarter-shaped cast-iron, designed by Gabriel Davioud by request of Baron

Haussmann (1859), installed in formations of circles to protect the roots of the trees that was included in the new city regularization plan. About 80,000 trees were planted to line the streets throughout the capital.

During the span of a spring night in 2021, we assemble twelve of Davioud's tree grates into a spheric spur-of-the-moment barricade monument: 198 cm in diameter, 660 kg. At the time of installation, we're unaware of the serendipity of the location, Rue Rébeval, on the foot of the Belleville hill. Only later do we find out: the exact address—out of the 6,000 streets that constitute the lattice of Paris' inner-city streets—is argued to have been one of the last standing barricades during the Paris Commune, 150 years prior to our intervention.

GRILLE EN FONTE SERVANT À GARANTIR LE PIED DES ARBRES.
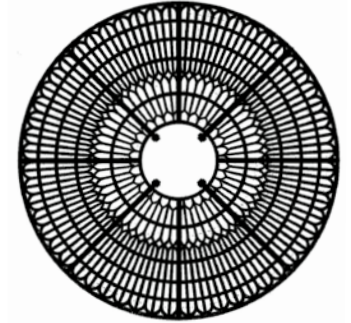
Eric Hazan (2015): 122.
A History of the Barricade.

One of Gabriel Davioud's cast-iron covers, encircling the base of a pollarded plane tree at Rue Rébeval.

Barricade on Quai Pelletier (today Quai de Gesvres). Photo: Bruno Braquehais (1870–71).

Barricade on Rue de Vaugirard, Paris' 6th arrondisement. Photographer unknown (1968).

Au reste, les barricades sont des retranchements qui appartiennent au génie parisien: on les retrouve dans tous nos troubles, depuis Charles V jusqu'à nos jours.

F.-R. DE CHATEAUBRIAND. (1848): 599.

François-René de Chateaubriand writes: "For the rest, the barricades are retrenchments that belong to the Paris spirit: they are found in all our uproars, from Charles V to present time."

Protests pile up like historic sediments beneath the Parisian tarmac. 1588, 1684, 1789, 1830, 1848, 1871, 1968, 2005, 2018, 2023 …

Revolutions, demonstrations, riots: all radical methods of expressing disapproval permeate the psyche of the city and are continually procured and inserted to inform and build radical imaginations and critical futurabilities. The limestone quarries along with Haussmann's street ornaments: when viewed in Deleuze & Guattari's scheme of the smooth, striated, and holey spaces, there's a continuous positioning between the intended and the de-purposed. The limestone buildings lining the widened boulevards were a martial strategy to prevent protesters from barricading the narrow, medieval street grid. Instead, hollowing out the city's underbelly created an uncontrollable space of dissent and the cast-iron fittings have been repurposed into assemblages of dissapproval.

The itinerant smith unlocks fugitive paths.

Freeing practices, things, and situations from their normal use, either by decontextualizing and rendering them 'inoperative,' but in this also preparing for a different use, or by retrieving a potential that lies hidden inside them, by prying them apart through a kind of spectral analysis, might be a way to allow such practices to act as a transformative power.

SVEN-OLOV WALLENSTEIN. (2015).

Paris (May, 1968).
Photographer unknown.

Beauty is in the Street.
Poster by Atelier Populaire (1968).

In this light, the emblematic 1968 motto "under the cobblestones, the beach" not only expresses a critique of human domination over nature, a refusal of alienated labor, or an homage to the poetics of the surrealist precursors—it also recollects the radical political past of Paris, sediments that are ready to be dug out and reactivated at any given moment.

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From Roots to Roofs

Striated space becomes smooth, and vice versa. An inverted gravity—shooting, rocketing, rising instead of falling, plummeting, descending. An ascending, fugitive movement: skyward, overhead, aloft. From the hollowed undergrowth towards the extracted and the vertical system's reorganization of matter. Anabasis. An agile and amorphous movement, much like a rhizomatic root. Unfolding, sprouting, blooming, like weeds climbing scaffolding—from the underground into the towers and garrets beneath the rooftops. It's a fugitive movement, but also proof of the denizens' resilience and how extensive points of connection create a foundation that is very difficult to undermine.

"Verticality," Bachelard writes, "is ensured by the polarity of cellar and attic, the marks of which are so deep that, in a way, they open up two very different perspectives for a phenomenology of the imagination." As much as dreams are related to our waking life, so is our imagination. Things afford behaviors: keys afford access and movement, not only to passages, spaces, and places, but to different imaginaries of what those spaces might be turned into.

Modern societies are saturated with vertical metaphors that in turn organize hierarchical categorizations along that axis. As Stephen Graham notes in his book *Vertical*, verticality as continu-

Gaston Bachelard (1964): 17.
The Poetics of Space.

ously shaped everything from language, societal rankings, mental gradings, religious stratifications, etc., in line with the dominant logic and its justification of the vertical order we now experience. What's lacking are methods of spherical, geopolitical research and praxis: research and praxis that concerns spatial *volumes*, instead of studying flat *areals* as separate from verticalities or vice versa. "Geo-politics," Eyal Weizman writes, "is a flat discourse." He continues: "It largely ignores the vertical dimension and tends to look across rather than to cut through the landscape." Maps are invisibilizing *places*, as such aren't defined by borders but cut across space as social moments: *unfixed*, *contested*, and *multiple*.

Stephen Graham (2016).
Vertical: The City from Satellites to Bunkers.

Stuart Elden (2013).
Secure the Volume: Vertical Geopolitics and the Depth of Power.

Eyal Weizman (2002): Chapter 2.
The Politics of Verticality.

Doreen Massey (1994): 5.
Space, Place and Gender.

And the particularity of any place is, in these terms, constructed not by placing boundaries around it and defining its identity through counterposition to the other which lies beyond, but precisely (in part) through the specificity of the mix of links and interconnections *to* that 'beyond'. Places viewed this way are open and porous.

IBID.

It was first when the maps were stacked on top of each other and held up against the light by the snooping kids in Paris that their radical imaginations of movements within the city were unlocked: horizontally, vertically, transversally. Permeations from which mental maps could be drawn and expanded upon, to this day. Always in movement, never still, in a triadic production of subversive space: perceived, conceived, lived.

As the old forms of opposition reveal their ineffectiveness, or more often their complete inversion into complicity with the existing order, an irreducible dissatisfaction spreads subterraneanly, undermining the edifice of the affluent society. The "old mole" is still digging away, the specter is reappearing in all the nooks and crannies

Given this conundrum, is it possible to conceive of a resistive archi-tecture? Two different operations on matter – aggregating and digging – can be seen as acts of creation toward two po-tentially resistive architectural typologies: the barricade and the tunnel.

When unfolding Lambert's taxonomy of resistive architecture, a praxis appears that unites the up-high and the down-low. Fused between the barricade and the tunnel are the unruly, invisible spaces: mapped and maintained behind (mostly) rigid façades in seemingly monolithic buildings.

Of great importance is the ethic of mainte-nance. Because in the backwaters of the neo-liberal system, with an ever-retracting state, the duty of care appears left to the denizens. "Built to be seen … the façade is a lie," Lefebvre writes, adding: "What's behind this ornamented representation of power?" The informal and invis-ible activities that take place within the walls of the built environment have a certain quality of making their potent façades crumble in the eyes of the viewer—the impenetrable and unchange-able status, unlocked and undermined. Tunnels, ladders, keys, pulleys, hidden hatches, bricolaged chairs, toilets, and tables; these elements all add up to the unruly city, with its de-purposing of the built environment and its detachable elements.

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Clockwork

We leave via the roof, under a dark tangerine sky.

Between a bouquet of scraggly chimneys, the clock on the Panthéon can be seen; it will soon be 4am. As we descend, Lazar tells the story of how The Urban eXperiment in the span of a year (2005–6) clandestinely took it upon themselves to repair that clock, after it had been out of order for close to 40 years and the bureaucratic farce that followed:

In the office of the Administrator of the Panthéon, all that could be heard was the creaking of the par-quet and of the wooden furniture. We were seated opposite the Administrator, Mr. Bernard Jeannot, but also of his pusillanimous subordinate, Mr. Pas-cal Monnet.

A woman, almost transparently pale, was seated behind her desk; she was Bernard Jeannot's secre-tary. She was no more willing than the other two to break the silence.

I spoke:

–Here is Lanso and Natacha Serguine of the UnterGunther group. Under the direction of Jean-Baptiste Viot, they have taken it upon themselves to repair and restore the clock.

I was met with silence and confusion. Even the secretary had stopped typing.

–Uhm … The Panthéon clock, I added, in case of not having been precise enough.

–Aaah … said Jeannot, glancing at his deputy, to be sure he was still there. There was a moment of silence. Then Jeannot cleared his throat and spoke again:

–But … Uh … How?

–On their own, I replied.

–Finally … I mean, when?!

–Throughout the past year.

–Really? But … I haven't been informed.

–It's in order, Mr. Jeannot. As much as this restoration was done in a professional way, it was also done in a strictly clandestine way.

–You mean, at night?

–Well, not only. But yes, occasionally at night, I said, checking that my colleagues approved.

Jeannot marked his astonishment with a nod and a furtive look at his deputy, who was trying to make his head disappear into his shoulders.

–Oh, that! said Jeannot in lack of anything better. Seeing that all this remained very abstract for Jeannot, I suggested to him:

–But, maybe you would like to see the clock in question?

–Oh yes, he said, suddenly more curious than awkward. *Where is it?!*

–Lanso and Jean-Baptiste will lead you there, I said, getting up.

Jeannot looked at his deputy with an expression of disbelief, but with a genuine will to be proven wrong. All except the secretary, who had resumed typing, followed Lanso and left.

Arriving at the foot of the north-east staircase, Natacha took a brass key from her pocket and opened the door—Jeannot and Monnet, along the guards standing around, couldn't believe their eyes.

At the top of the staircase, we entered the galleries that runs beneath the buttresses. Lanso unlocked and opened the doors and Natacha closed them behind us with her key. Jeannot and Monnet looked around as if seeing these parts of the Panthéon for the first time—which probably was the case.

PHOTO: URBAN EXPERIMENT (2005).

Once there, Jean-Baptiste opened the cupboard which contained the innards of a magnificent 19th century clock. It shone with a thousand lights as the brass cogs reflected in the finely polished steel.

As if hypnotized by the superb machine, Jeannot reached towards it, as if to verify that the wonder was indeed real.

−*No, Monsieur Jeannot*, Jean-Baptiste stopped him. *Do not put your fingers on the brass, it leaves marks.*

−*Yes yes, of course!* Jeannot apologized, *what a magnificent job!*

Jean-Baptiste gave him more details about the history of the clock and how it worked, handing him the crank that allowed the mechanism to be wound up. Jeannot listened to the watchmaker with delight, asking for yet more details on the restoration.

J-B, adjusting the clockwork.

Monnet, for his part, was not listening at all. He had darkened another notch. Taking refuge in a corner of the cramped room, waiting impatiently for Jeannot and Jean-Baptiste to be done with their conversation on watch maintenance.

−*But, are you telling me that you restored it on site?* said Jeannot. *How did you manage in such a small and cluttered space?!*

−*Actually*, Lanso said, *we've installed a workshop higher up in the building. Are you interested in seeing it?*

−*Oh, but of course!* Jeannot exclaimed, *let's go—how fantastic!*

−*We're glad that you like it*, Lanso replied.

−*I find it extraordinary!* Jeannot trilled, before continuing: *As I often say, there is no fatality in the face of the slowness of the Administration, it just takes courageous initiatives like yours!*

Monnet looked at Jeannot in fury, appalled to see how quickly his superior had changed sides.

−*It shows that anything is possible with determination!* Jeannot twinkled.

Monnet didn't agree, breaking his silence:

−*More than that, it shows our incapability*, he grumbled, obviously not sharing the exaltation of Jeannot.

PHOTO: URBAN EXPERIMENT (2005).

The Administrator of the Panthéon didn't listen. He was already following Lanso, impatient to see the UnterGunther's workshop.

Along the way, as we passed through a part of the Panthéon that Monnet knew, he noticed that Lanso was opening all doors with one single key, even though they were supposed to have different locks.

He tried his key, to see if it worked on those doors too. It didn't.

Once through the colonnade and up the stairs leading to the cupola, Lanso stopped and opened a door to his left, half way up the stairs.

He welcomed Jeannot to step inside: a circular hallway, located between the top of the columns and the base of the dome.

On the right, a thick red curtain. Jeannot came forward and carefully retracted it to see what was behind. His eyes widened and he quickly closed them again, turning back to Lanso and the others, looking for confirmation that he wasn't dreaming. Lanso just nodded at him.

On the inner part of the arcuate room, boxes of watchmaking equipment were lined up, all neatly arranged. In the center was a large square table surrounded by eight very wide club chairs, two on each side. In the back of the space one could make out a cloakroom and folded workbenches. On the exterior side, the oval holes overlooking the Luxembourg gardens were hung with red fabric like that of the entrance, to protect against drafts.

Throughout the space, shelves had been arranged, including books, an old lamp radio, a world map, and an ivy stand. Jeannot slowly walked around, seemingly perplexed, as if he had entered a flying saucer (which in a certain way was the case, because of the shape of the space and its altitude).

–*I need to sit down*, Jeannot said, catching his breath. *May I?*

–*Make yourself at home,* Lanso replied.

All took their places in the self-made armchairs around the square table—except for Monnet, more sullen than ever. His superior asked him to sit down, he sat down obediently, nonetheless reluctant. Once he recovered from his emotions, Jeannot, intoxicated by the friendly atmosphere of the workshop, began to tell us that he had always wanted, for this monument, a much more active cultural life and had always wished that the heights of this monument "were accessible at night, so that we can frolic here."

–*Here you are*, Lanso told him, *now you can*.

–*Yes, it's fantastic … Wonderful!*

After a short talk, as we were about to leave, Monnet was seemingly furious seeing his administrator openly admiring the Pirates' camp. He asked the question that had been burning his lips from the start:

–*Anyway, what is it that you expect from us?*

Everyone was taken aback for a moment by such a question. It was Jeannot who responded:

–*But … nothing! They inform us, that's all. It's a selfless act, for art's sake.*

Lanso gave me a bewildered look—the UnterGunthers had just found a spokesperson. And not just any spokesperson: Mr. Bernard Jeannot, Administrator of the Panthéon.

In his armchair, Monnet had sunk so deep in annoyance that you could now barely see him sticking out of the armrests.

*

In the aftermath of the rendez-vous, Monnet took it upon himself to re-establish a sense of authority in the building. He reported Jeannot's carte blanche posture to the higher administration, which had his boss removed from service.

In return, Monnet was granted the position of his former superior. He didn't hold back from action, but immediately took Lanso, Natacha, Jean-Baptiste, and Lazar to court, arguing their intervention to be an act of vandalism upon the French patrimony, by way of unlawful trespassing.

In court, the judge's reaction was immediate and clear:

–*You must be out of your mind to bring these four citizens to court, because of accomplishing something that you and your administration have failed to do for four decades. Case closed.*

Monnet didn't last long on the job, but made sure that the clock stopped working before leaving his position.

12 years later, the novice head of the Panthéon recognized that the clock needed to be repaired. He contracted a well-renowned artisan to come and refurbish it.

As the clockmaker arrived with a band of assistants, the cheeks of the transparently pale secretary flushed red. She nervously whispered to the unknowing administrator:

–*It's them again! Jean-Baptiste Viot and his gang of clandestine workers!*

*

Leaving the church chuckling, with chiming keys in one hand and a dimmed flashlight in the other.

It is as though she had hacked her thigh–length cloak from some bit of tarpaulin tugged from some piece of scaffolding.

The front door closes and a newly manufactured key locks it. Outside, the street lays in almost total silence. The only thing to be heard is the winding whine from a close-by bus shelter advertisement, along with the bleak buzz of the doodlebugs swarming around its pesky lights.

The black tarmac is still warm and gummy from yesterday's burning sun, which is just about to rise over the French capital again. As the city wakes up for another day, damp footprints of Lutetian mud are drying white, spreading out from plate-covered underground exits like the trails of looming ghosts.

Lived, conceived, perceived: from here, the façades of Paris are crumbling.

Z

OFF THE BEATEN TRACK
A Steal-Away Shack, with a Window
Facing the Abyss

A rainy autumn night in Copenhagen 2002, E.B. Itso and I discover a place that has fallen in-between, into oblivion. A room that is not only between rooms, but between tectonic plates, temporalities, technologies, and ideals.

The entrance is concealed with a tangle of pipes. Some are steaming hot, snaking into the underground, and others lead to a big concrete cistern. Judging from the acrid stench, the tank seems to store both the discharge from the public toilets, as well as the refuse of sweet-foul frying oils from the burger chain's kitchen; both are situated in the main waiting hall, above where we stand. From behind the pipes and further through a long narrow passage, jam-packed with warped wooden boards, we scramble into a back-of-beyond space. The floor is thick with soot and muck, which covers a stack of yellowing newspapers from the 1980s, a broken ladder, and other random debris that are scattered across the roughly cast concrete flooring. All of it slightly trembles when the commuter trains come roaring by, behind the wall. For a couple of months, we keep busy collecting material from the neighboring streets. As the trains pause for the night, we carry our gleaned stuff down the tracks, into the space. Inside the room, where the concrete ceiling once was cast in two separate levels, we build a clandestine loft.

Clandestine loft.

PHOTO: ANDREAS ROSFORTH.

Per Axel Buur (1945–2012).

Taking Place

The new room is built to align with the lower edge of the ceiling, making the hidden space almost impossible to spot for the unknowing visitor; a hidden room, within a forgotten one.

We fit it with two beds and a kitchen. Electricity is rewired from the tracks into the space.

Four years later, the Central station is in the process of being thoroughly renovated, and all foundational elements are to be inspected and refurbished. As expected, the construction workers find the hide-out.

This triggers an alarmist outcry in the media —how was this possible?! In a time marked by fear of repercussions, because of the Danish involvement in the ongoing invasion of Iraq, was the public safe from harm? The charming station chief inspector Per Buur appears on state television to comment. He's not upset, rather the opposite; he's curious and cheekily avows that he doesn't intend to invoice us for any four years of retroactive rent, nor for the informal use of electricity. But, in a statesmanlike manner, he promises the audience that such an intervention will not be possible to pull off again. The station has been fitted with high-security surveillance technology and as part of the current renovation any off-spaces have been either reactivated, sealed, or demolished. This is a proclamation that we view as a playful challenge: a game of contested space.

After all, the right to the city is not given, but taken.

We play with imagining the seemingly impossible—could we deinstall one of the track-sided shacks, and put it on the rails, turning it in to an itinerant place? Unfortunately, the train schedules turns out to be too unpredictable. It's too irresponsible to execute the fugitive impulsive of putting a shack on the track and taking off.

Instead, we stumble across another possibility.

Temporary cut-out passageway.

DSB sink in HBG2.

Hovedbanegården Nr 2
(Central Railway Station No. 2).

Making Public

During the extensive ongoing construction work, a number of bricks have come loose from their positions in a wall, next to the tracks under the station building. With a little help, a passage in the size of a pizza box is now possible to jiggle out, barely allowing our bodies to squeeze through for closer inspection. Behind it, a high-narrow shaft, no more than two times three meters wide, but with over ten meters to the ceiling.

For one year, we're busy constructing a new hidden loft. The conditions have changed and we decide to do it in the gap between the construction workers' shifts; 2:30–4:45am.

We begin with making an inventory of DSB's old material warehouse—a dilapidated wooden barn, not far from the station—and modestly scavenge some of its ageing assets. We catalog parts of it; for example, the hardwood moldings that are laying around in every form and shape, from the time when train interiors were built of wood. A small selection is procured; in order to manufacture picture frames and other precise carpentry. Tossed in a bush between two train tracks we find a sink, adorned with DSB's old emblem. We reckon it must have laid there for half a century or longer, all covered in moss and debris. The sink is brought back to the loft and is fitted with piping, which zig-zags away into a flushing drain. Fresh water is continuously brought back in bottles and poured into a repurposed carboy, fitted with copper tubing and a turning tap. Little by little, piece by piece, we advance with installing our new space. We name it "HBG2."

February 27, 2008—exactly one year after Herr Buur appeared on national television—we make a public announcement. Overnight, while regional trains are parked near the Central station, a vinyl text is attached on twelve of the cars; one train set in English and one in Danish.

*

Most of the interior of HBG2 is procured from discarded train wagons: two tip-up chairs, blankets and bed sheets, a couple of shelves, a radiator, a mirror, three lamps and wiring cables. On one of the walls, we hang a selection of the portraits we've taken over the years at the station. The floor is decorated by pyrographing a replica of the pattern that makes up the tiled floor in the large waiting hall. In the ceiling we install a hatchway, through which we can access the roof of the building. DSB hardwood moldings are installed on top, to weather-seal the structure, along with procured sheets of heavy-duty tarpaper.

The last thing we install is a remote-controlled winch, bolted in place inside the loft. A wire-fitted hatch is hand-cranked open, which in turn allows for the elevator to be operated. It takes a minute to lower it down, and twice that to ascend, one person at a time, secured in a hand-stitched seat suspended by cords at the ends.

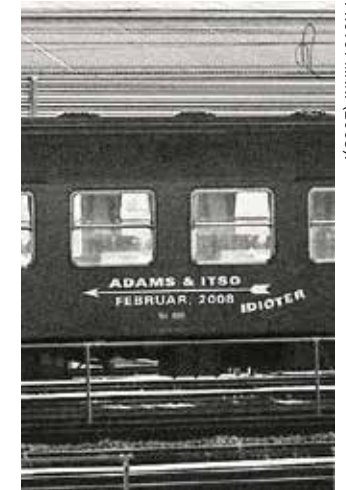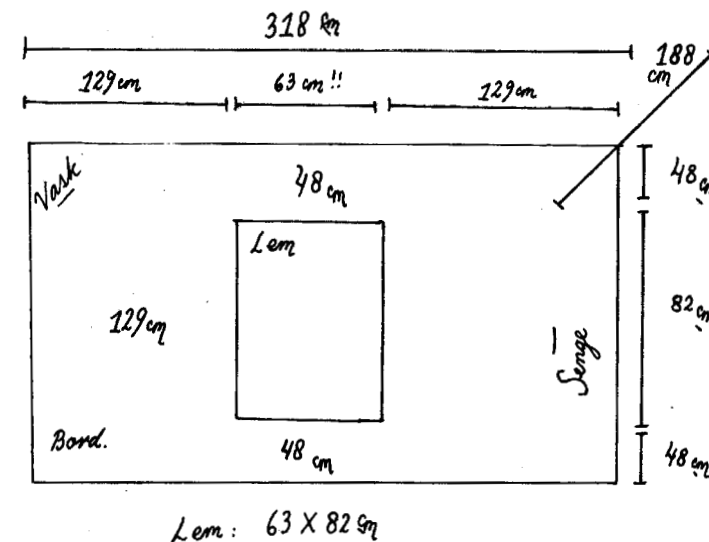Message in return from the railyard workers (with letters peeled from the next wagon) spelling: "IDIOTS."

Keys to operate the lift. →

318 cm
129 cm — 63 cm !! — 129 cm — 188 cm
Vask
48 cm
Lem
129 cm — 48 cm
82 cm
Senge
Bord.
48 cm — 48 cm

Lem : 63 X 82 cm

15 years later and the loft is still there.

*

Centrifugal Urbanism

Along with sprawling urbanism and the densifying processes that accompany the neoliberal agenda, the city centers increasingly produce a centrifugal and excluding force. Built like capitalist forts, they are seemingly inaccessible, foreclosed, and impermeable for those who can't fulfill the economic preconditions.

But cities are not as monolithic as they might appear from a distance, even if that's the illusory impression that authorities aim to produce. Cities are sedimented structures, built atop the bodies that precede them. And as odd layers pile up, cavities emerge, invisible from above, between strata of inflexible systems. Pockets of radical possibilities, fantasies, dreams, desires, which are possible to inhabit and imagine with magmatic matters, and viable to haunt from beneath, behind, beyond. These indeterminate zones appear closely related to what Ernst Bloch referred to as *the utopian margins*, which Avery F. Gordon has picked up and developed further. Following Gordon's argument, the concept has its historical roots in slaves running away, marronage, piracy, herecy, witchcraft, vagrancy, vagabondage, rebellion, soldier desertion, and other often illegible, illegitimate, or trivialized forms of escape, resistance, opposition, and alternative ways of life. As a spatial phenomena, Gordon describes the utopian margins as elusive, vague and secretive places that emerge and recede in practical relationships with others. Such interstitial gaps both host ghosts of past times, as well as current undercurrents; they are fertile places out of view, where imagination can root, sprout, and bloom.

Ernst Bloch (1970). *A Philosophy of the Future* [1963].

Avery F. Gordon (2017). *Letters from the Utopian Margins: The Hawthorne Archive.*

Ibid: XII.

utopian margins   surround actuality with *real and objective possibility.*

*

In the time that follows, the newly built houses cast their shadows over the station building.

In the large waiting hall, a shrewd economy is setting up; it takes the form of franchised commerce and pay toilets. Following strategies of so called "Hostile architecture," benches are removed and classical music blares through disjointed speakers, intended to disperse and displace the precariat of homeless and drug addicts hanging around.

It remains to be seen whether the renovation and modernization of the main station went over budget and needed to be covered by increased commercial activity in the waiting hall, or whether this was the plan from the very beginning. In addition, the adjacent area belonging to the Danish State Railways is being privatized. A big chunk of the track area is to be upended. A number of hotels and condos are to be built. Within a few months of the trains having been redirected, the soon-to-be-removed tracks are overgrown with tall grass and weedy shrubs.

To be truly visionary we have to root our imagination in our concrete reality while simultaneously imagining possibilities beyond that reality.

BELL HOOKS. (2000): 110.

"train stations are truly factories of dreams" ("Le Rêveur parisien," *Nouvelle Revue française,* 1927).

WALTER BENJAMIN. (1999): 405.

With the condition of the terminal tracks, the itinerant fantasy comes back to life: to vacate one of the small cabins that are resting along the railroad—seemingly unused, soon to be removed or demolished. To cut it adrift and leave the creative city behind.

At dawn on November 14, 2009, shortly before the new edifices are to be built and the rusting tracks are still resting on sleeper logs and macadam, we lift an abandoned worker's shack onto a hand-built wooden rail cart. East-bound, we push it to the outskirts of the city, a place where the rusting rails merge with trafficked tracks.

On a sooty wall beneath the station, in the tunnel of track No. 6, we leave a hand-painted message:

An old shack along the tracks
at Copenhagen Central Station.
Lifted to a handmade cart at dawn
and pushed down the line.
Drifting away from the city
with new places in mind.

For years to come, we keep the shack hidden away on a weedy meadow, on the outskirts of town.

Differences endure or arise on the margins of the homogenized realm, either in the form of resistances or in the form of externalities (lateral, heterotopical, heterological). What is different is, to begin with, what is *excluded*: the edges of the city, shanty towns, the spaces of forbidden games

HENRI LEFEBVRE. (1991): 373.

*

The capitalist city creates fantasies of evading it —of escaping under its surface and into its cracks, but also *away* from it: of leaving the urban context in refusal of the dominant logic of growth and competition. Since Richard Florida coined the concept of the "Creative City," spreading its strategy like a neoliberal messiah, western cities have increasingly adopted economic models based on the cultural assets that develop and are reproduced within. With the shift away from traditional agriculture and industry

Wheels for the track cart.

Creative cities

Richard Florida (2002). *The Rise of the Creative Class.*

based economies, the capital is to be generated from an emerging creative class: "people in design, education, arts, music and entertainment, whose economic function is to create new ideas, new technology and/or creative content."

Ibid: 8.

*

ROY ANDERSSON (2007): 1:17:58. PHOTO: GUSTAV DANIELSSON.

- Where are you off to?
- We haven't decided yet.

Roy Andersson (2007).
  You, the Living.

In Roy Andersson's film *You, the Living*, there's a scene that I find particularly captivating: a recollection of a dream, where the newly-wed couple Anna and Micke casually travel in their unmoored apartment building, adrift on the train tracks. A house without an address, constantly meandering; unset. Transgressing the logic of an edifice as stationary and fixed.

**   Hakim Bey refers to similar escapades as acts of *psychic nomadism*, whether real or imagined:**

Hakim Bey (1991).
  T.A.Z.: Temporary Autonomous Zone, Ontological Anarchy, Poetic Terrorism.

Vital in shaping TAZ reality is the concept of *psychic nomadism* (or as we jokingly call it, "rootless cosmopolitanism"). Aspects of this phenomenon have been discussed by

IBID: 104.

Deleuze and Guattari in *Nomadology and the War Machine*, by Lyotard in *Driftworks* and by various authors in the "Oasis" issue of *Semiotext(e)*. We use the term "psychic nomadism" here rather than "urban nomadism," "nomadology," "driftwork," etc., simply in order to garner all these concepts into a single loose complex, to be studied in light of the coming-into-being of the TAZ.

The concept of TAZ underscores the existence of unfixed zones of dissent in late capitalism— zones that are equipped to refuse participation and avoid recuperation. As such, it's clearly influenced by Guy Debord's *The Society of the Spectacle* and its treatise on how modern mass communication transforms everyday life into a simulacra of itself.

Guy Debord (1967).
  The Society of the Spectacle.

Jean Baudrillard (1981).
  Simulacra and Simulation.

**   TAZ is hence a philosophy of evading the spectacle, where only the autonomous can plan autonomy, organize for it, create it. A bricolage made from whatever fragments—land, matter, time, imagination—that serves the new purpose. What's crucial here is the ability to work beneath the radar, to be in touch but out of view: a tactic of disappearance, as he frames it. Within the framework of TAZ, psychic nomadism is a praxis of movement: of being already elsewhere before the map can be adjusted by any authority.**

Bey: 96.

Ibid: 95.

Ibid: 126.

Ibid: 96.

GORDON MATTA-CLARK (1970–78).

PASSING THROUGH AND AROUND TO COMPLETE A SPACE-. . . .

NOT BUILDING BUT ~~UNFRESHAT~~ ~~WORKING~~ A RESTURING CHANGING THE DIRECTIONS OF A LOAD.
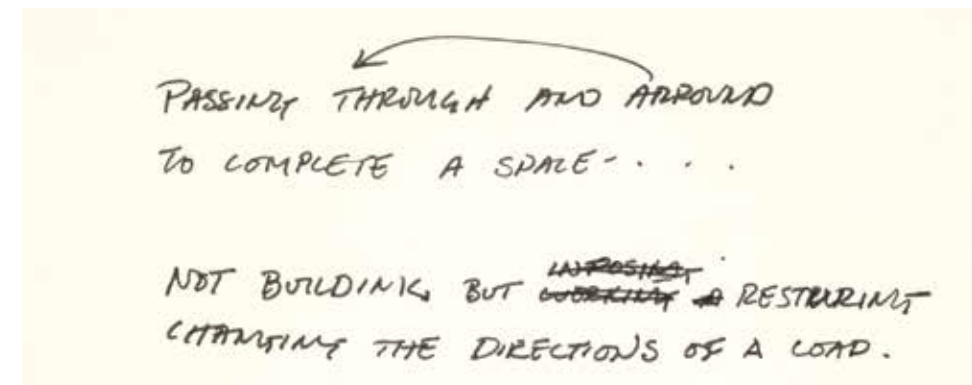
In retrospect, it's clear that the the the *You, the Living* scene and Bey's philosophy informed our imagination, in combination with the daily flow of travelers and commuters affecting the station's ambience with their fugitive daydreams of going elsewhere.

*

Rebuilding the interior

At the meadow, the shack is rolled off the tracks and into the shrubbery. With the lever lock picked open, the moldy interior of the shed is torn out and transported to a close-by recycling station. Procuring materials for rebuilding the interiors follows the same process as with the clandestine lofts.

During the night, the machinery at the construction sites of hotels by the Central station is at our disposal. Materials as well. Sheets of plywood are cut to walling dimensions. Boards of pine are run through their planer, and sawn to fit the flooring surface of the shack. Insulation is procured and brought back to the shack.

Behind a dumpster at the railway yard, we find a panoramic window, made from thick insulated glass. Hardwood slats, from the cataloged material stock in DSB's dilapidated barn, are cut to fit and nailed in place; they cover the joints between floors, walls and ceiling. A bunkbed and a collapsible tabletop are built from found wood. The bottom bed is built to also function as a cubicle, with a hinged top lid, for stowing away loose objects: a gas stove, canned food, kitchen utensils, tools. We also salvage some furniture from a laid-off sleep-compartment wagon: a ladder, storage nets, a tip-up chair, bedsheets, pillows, and blankets. From the opened lock, I make a couple of fitting keys from a bike spoke, two coins, and a 6 mm steel rod.

*

Hang tag from DSB's decaying storage space.

PHOTO: FRED NELL (1980).
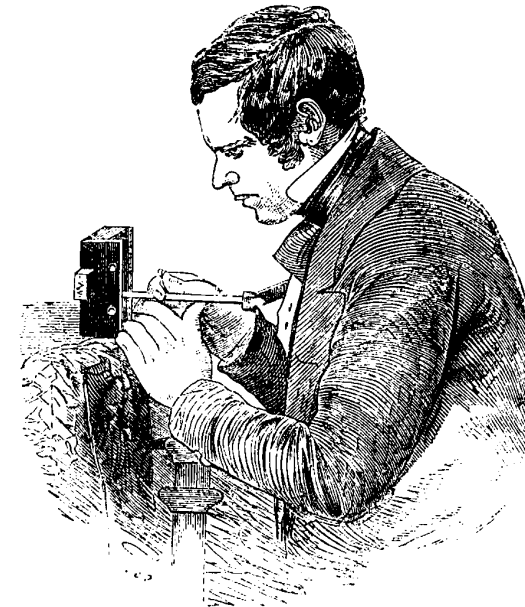
Pictured: A.C. Hobbs picking the lever tumbler lock of a manufacturing rival at the Great Exhibition in London, 1851.
  Originally published in *The Illustrated London News*, August 2, 1851 (141–42):

"The lock having been examined and found to be fairly locked, Mr. Hobbs produced from his waistcoat pocket two or three small and simple-looking tools, and proceeded to work. Within twenty-five minutes from the time of commencing, the bolt of the lock flew back … As may be imagined, this performance created a great deal of excitement in the world interested in locks and keys."

Locks are by no means a modern invention. In Egypt, already around 2,000 BC, doors were secured with ingenious wooden constructions, with alterable plugs mounted in a shielding case—out of sight—securing a locking bolt. A stick with a profile corresponding the inner form provided access. With the Industrial Revolution, standardized locks were introduced, largely informed by principles of the ancient Egyptian design heritage. This construction still dominates the market through pin tumbler locks.

The standardizations, high-precision machinery, and the production of interchangeable parts that came with the first industrial revolution, all sparked the creation of the security industry. The mass production of means to secure property also allowed for a standardization of the tools and methods to bybass and manipulate locking mechanisms. Since modern locks are still produced with many of those early proven vulnerabilities, the lockpicks that were invented at the time are still applicable.

Egyptian lock from around 2,000 BC.
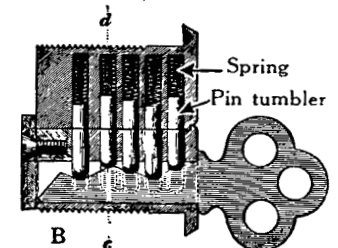
Linus Yale Jr's adopted version, patented in 1851.

David Churchill (2015): 52. "The Spectacle of Security: Lock-Picking Competitions and the Security Industry in mid-Victorian Britain."

A.C. Hobbs (1853). *Rudimentary Treatise on the Construction of Locks.*

See additional 2-in-1 picks on pp. 90–1[B] and in the appendix.

In a spectacle of security that wasn't uncommon at the time, at the Great Exhibition in London (1851) lock manufacturers competed in picking the locks of their rivals in front of large audiences.

It was here that Alfred Charles Hobbs was able to achieve the seemingly impossible in picking the highly regarded Chubb lever tumbler lock with his revolutionizing "2-in-1 pick."

168 years later—with a self-built device replicating Hobbs' instrument—we were able to unlock and access the steal-away shack.

<div align="center">✱</div>

Lines of Flight

The movement of things can be felt and touched and exists in language and in fantasy, it is flight, it is motion, it is fugitivity itself. Fugitivity is not only escape, "exit" as Paolo Virno might put it, or "exodus" in the terms offered by Hardt and Negri, fugitivity is being separate from settling. It is a being in motion that has learned that "organizations are obstacles to organising ourselves"

JACK HALBERSTAM. (2013): 11.

Deleuze & Guattari (1986). *Nomadology: The War Machine.*

Hakim Bey's concept of TAZ is, as he argues, an offspring of Deleuze & Guattari's nomadic thinking. In their *Nomadology*, the duo analyze three types of lines, which together form an assemblage: some lines, they note, serve to uphold a structure (molar lines); other lines expand the structure, in search of possible changes (molecular lines); and, finally, a third type of line departs from the structure, seeking to avoid imposed change, evade oncoming forces, and connect the assemblage with structures outside of its own body (lines of flight).

All together they form a bricolage of unruly movements—a "resistant ethics of becoming-imperceptible, strategizing a continuous invention of weapons on the run."

Ibid: cover.

In his book *Stolen Life*, Fred Moten elaborates on the attraction towards an outside, with his descriptions of fugitivity as a transgressive motion —a movement, as opposed to the paralyzing state of inertia and stagnation where currents and flows are unable to exist.

Fred Moten (2018). *Stolen Life.*

Fugitivity, then, is a desire for and a spirit of escape and transgression of the proper and the proposed. It's a desire for the outside, for a playing or being outside, an outlaw edge proper to the now always already improper voice or instrument.

IBID: 131.

This sense of the fugitive can be used to understand the act of stealing away, not least in regard to the undercommons resistance to co-optation —a:

strategic necessity to obfuscate and encode the intentions, knowledges, and understanding of subversive activity that approaching strategy as wisdom gestures toward. It is a necessity particularly for artistic-political-media interventions, which as we have learned all too well and paradoxically not well enough, are prime arenas for the decomposition of subversive energies. This would be not an art of the public, of an assumed or pre-given audience, but an art of the undercommons as described by Stefano Harney: a strategic reframing of artistic-political interventions around taking very seriously the question of with whom and why one is communicating.

STEPHEN SHUKAITIS. (2016): 148.

The steal-away shack thus follow a genealogy of escape, that recalls the way in which unsettled and subversive groups responded to urbanization-by-force in the 19th century. With the upheaval of the commons that was imposed through industrial capitalism, sharecroppers—deprived of soil and land—were displaced from the rural to the urban to make their living, thereby instating the economic logic of urbanization.

In response, a vast culture of nomadism developed. This Vagabondism in turn made the state develop measures to control the escaping mass,

Vagrancy & Urbanization

transforming the energy of mobility into an energy of urban productivity by sedimentary regulations.

The nomad was already in the middle ages widely considered undesirable and treated with great suspicion. Much like the "Gypsy" (a derogative that derives from *Pilgrims from Egypt*), the Vagabond developed coded languages and other tactics of invisibility along the migrant routes, in defense of their utopian margins.

*

Papadopolous, Stephenson, & Tsianos (2008): 47.
Escape Routes: Control and Subversion in the Twenty-first Century.

The steal-away shack, installed on a railroad wagon.

Fugitive Motion: Along the Horizontal

Our ambition isn't to settle with the shack at the outskirts of town, but to get as far away from the city as we possibly can. Not just to a field, surrounded by a declining industry at the edge of town. The dream of the shack, at once itinerant and stationary—the logic of its place of origin, in complete reversal—is suddenly given a very real opportunity. In an informal agreement with a ranger, we lift the refurbished shack onto an empty freight wagon, whereupon it is fastened with tension straps and a securing undercarriage.

We then secretly install ourselves, before the train tugs off; with the shack squeaking, heaving and wobbling us north-bound.

We build cabins. We move. We are invisible.

MARIELLE MACÉ (2018): COVER, QUOTING JEAN-MARIE GLEIZE (2015).

*

The fugitive movement can be seen as a response to the neoliberal framework of the creative city, a condition of urban creative peasantry where the cultural crops are harvested through dispossession by the capitalist machine.

The vast urbanization process during the past three centuries, one could argue, was built on a continuous promise of inclusion, difference, benefit, and participation. The privatization of the rural commons intensified the centripetal force, displacing people from rural areas and forcing them to participate in the making of expanding cities. Northern Scandinavia, where the indigenous Sámi population was dispossessed of their commons to make way for the mining industry, was no exception.

Similar processes continue to displace people to this day, but in the modern city a maelstrom of structural problems has been added: gentrification, social polarization, involuntary displacement, accumulation by dispossession. This is a condition that renders the "urban contract" invalid.

The big difference between past and present urban conditions, as argued by Christian Schmid, lies in how urbanism today is experiencing a polarization between private and global. On the one hand, urban space is overrun by a neoliberal

David Harvey (2004): 63. "The 'New' Imperialism: Accumulation by Dispossession."

Christian Schmid (2012): 46. "Henri Lefebvre, the Right to the City, and the New Metropolitan Mainstream."

wave pushing the prevailing market logic, and on the other, it confronts a tendency of homogenization, which is triggered by universal rationality and its associated technologies. Therefore, it's not only the unique characteristics of place, environment and location that are threatened with disappearance, but also the very preconditions for a radically democratic space. This wear and tear contributes to a loosening of urban units, something that stands in direct contrast to the urban life that Lefebvre projected: the city as a center, with the possibility of liberating heterogeneity from isolation. A place for encounter, communication, and information, for dissolving normalities and limitations in favor of a fusion of playfulness, inclusivity, and unpredictability.

*

Vagabondism

The European vagabondism of the 19th century has many lineages. In this period, rootlessness was widely triggered by the privatization of the commons: a politics of displacement sought to bring labor power to the growing cities. Vagrancy can hereto be understood as a dissensual path: a refusal of work in the factories and of the urban model at large. With this followed an increased legislation, a sedimentation-by-force, which undermed the movement of those trying to escape it by criminalizing daydrifting and homelessness.

In North America, vagrancy increased dramatically after the Civil War (1861–65) and peaked with the economic depression of the 1920s. A malleable workforce of itinerant workers (often referred to as boomers, tramps, or hobos) traveled across the country by freight train, in search of a paycheck along the line. Many lived a precarious existence and continuously had to invent possibilities for income: loggers, bridge snakes, skinners, muckers, chimney sweeps, tinners, wire artisans, knife grinders, peddlers …

Todd DePastino (2003). *Citizen Hobo: How a century of homelessness shaped America.*

Roger A. Bruns (1980): 8. *Knights of the Road: A Hobo-History.*

PHOTO: DOROTHEA LANGE (AUGUST, 1939).

PHOTO: RONDAL PARTRIDGE (1940).

PHOTO: RONDAL PARTRIDGE (1940).

Another typical work for the itinerant workers was in the mines. Many would slog away in iron ore mines and at steel forgeries in the winters, and lay the cast tracks for the expanding web of railroads during warmer seasons.

Mines, Rails, & Power

We can understand the formation of power only from the perspective of escaping people, not the other way round.

Control is a cultural–political device which comes afterwards to tame and eventually to appropriate people's escape.

PAPADOPOLOUS, STEPHENSON & TSIANOS (2008): 43.

This was a pull-and-push urbanism, which modern society is now reproducing at an increasing pace—whether in metropolitan gig-economy structures or the interlinked instrumentalization of migrants to perform underpaid labor in slave-like conditions.

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Queer Lines along Involuntary Parks

We flutter along rails lined with chamomile and thistles; bristlegrass, blue hair grass, silver hairgrass and grass pink; staggerweed and rupturewort; buttercups, corn-cockles, and small seed false flax; earth smoke, mountain clover, and moonwort.

for Thoreau, queerness situates human desire within a wild world of other desires and pleasures;

a desire, in other words, not to be *on* a train nor a deep admiration *for* the train, but a desire directed *at* the train.

JACK HALBERSTAM. (2020b): 20.

Like the spontaneous flora to be found in cities (urban flora), railway flora is made up of a potpourri of plants with the most diverse origins and life stories. Just like the travellers that meet on station platforms, so the plants that grow along the tracks come from every corner of the globe, and if we stop a second to listen to them, we hear the countless different tales they have to tell. Their presence here is essentially due to human activity: the transportation of goods and seeds, the creation of grounds with no humus yet often full of nutritious substances, or even factors which are hard to imagine, like the use of salt grit in winter or contamination from heavy metals. Despite having no such intention, while building and managing railway courses, human beings have created habitats capable of hosting many of the rarest plant species in our country.

ERNESTO SCHICK. (2015): 18.

Such biotopes are what Bruce Sterling refers to as *Involuntary parks*: spaces in a polluted world under complete human domination, that still manage to thrive and regenerate in military exclusion zones, radioactive regions, industrial waste lands.
  The terrain that snakes along the North American railroad is, according to Sterling, the only remaining biotope of the original prairie: a proto-colonial ecological order.

The northbound freight train is mostly parked during the day in a train yard or on a sidetrack in the middle of nowhere. I don't know if the Swedish railroad qualifies as an involuntary park. If so, it surely doesn't stretch far from the tracks.

During the bright midsummer nights we roll through industrial landscapes and forest clearings. We pass Örebro, Falun, Garpenberg: societies that grew out of the mining industry. In this region, zinc, lead, silver, and gold was extracted already during the fourth century BC. The Falun copper mine was active for a thousand years and supplied Europe with about two-thirds of its copper needs during the years it was active. Also the extractivist technology used to unearth the underground metals was subject to worldwide export.

After four nights of traveling, we cross the Arctic Circle. Suddenly, in the thinning landscape, appears an immense crater: 385 km^2 and 450 meters deep. It is the Aitik copper mine and the train stops to load.
  Every year, about 34,000,000 tonnes of ore is mined here, from which 67,000 tonnes of copper, 51 tonnes of silver, and 1.9 tonnes of gold are extracted. 570-ton trucks that load 45 cubic meters of rock in one scoop, rolling on wheels that are four meters in diameter, undermining the Sápmi land.
  Another hour of traveling and the train stops again, this time to change the driving staff. We're in Kiruna, another region marked by the mining of the earth. Next time we'll pass here, the whole city will be completely displaced! To save itself from the thinning city crust and the awaiting collapse into the pit of a hollowed land. After 120 years of extraction, 6,000 people are forced to move, along with many of the older buildings.
  Meanwhile, the mining proceeds.

Mining Country

Being from mining country myself, every time I see the skyline rising, I imagine the pits being dug down to make it possible. In any case, the infrastructure of the extraction of resources and labor on a planetary scale is now doubled by one that extracts information on a planetary scale – as if it were the oil, coal, and iron ore there for the taking by a new ruling class. Ironically, the city becomes the mining site for this extraction, embedded in a third nature not just of built form but of planetary computation.

MCKENZIE WARK (2021): 32.

PHOTO: FREDRIC ALM (2019).

Moving Kiruna City.

Using wordplay and found images, *the Anarchitecture Group* explored issues related to cities, ways of repurposing the built environment, and the role of property in capitalist production. There is little evidence that the show ever took place, other than the invitation and the related photo-essay published in *Flash Art*, June 1974.

An image from the 1974 Anarchitecture exhibition comes to mind; a wooden two-story house has been freed from its original site, piled with wooden blocks on an improvised cart, and placed on a floating barge, which is seemingly adrift. Anarchitecture as an autonomous social practice of art and science where buildings, spaces, and other bodies are no longer controlled. In Kiruna, conditions appear opposite.

A 130-TON FRAME HOUSE AFLOAT ON THE PATUXENT RIVER (1972). PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN.

The play between the material (the physical places and handmade tools) and the less-tangible (the ideas of trespass and motions through space) are important, and both the physical and immaterial characteristics can be connected to the subversive act of undermining:

undermine ▶ verb [with obj.] **1** erode the base or foundation of (a rock formation). ▪ dig or excavate beneath (a building or fortification) so as to make it collapse.
2 lessen the effectiveness, power, or ability of, especially gradually or insidiously: *this could undermine years of hard work.*
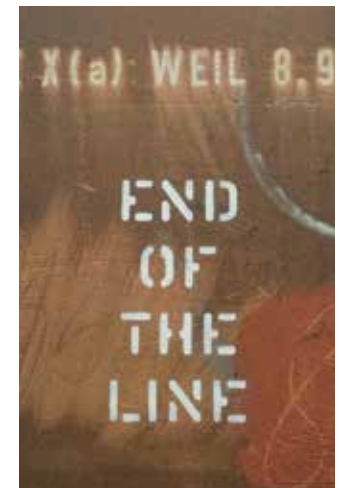– DERIVATIVES **underminer** noun.

ROGET'S THESAURUS. (2019): 1934.

VERBS **4 reject authority, defy authority,** usurp power, usurp authority, enthrone one's own will; take the law in one's own hands, act on one's own responsibility; do as one pleases, go as one pleases, indulge oneself; be a law unto oneself, answer to no man, undermine, arrogate; resist control; overthrow, depose, topple, disempower

OXFORD DICTIONARY. (1998): 417.4.

In those definitions, we find the very literal action of digging and excavating—the material world always present—and a description of the physical extractivist methods employed to acquire the materials to build cities, followed by a series of descriptions of subversive actions used to weaken something less tangible. The word "undermine" brings to mind shadowy figures chipping away at the foundations of a great monolith. It's a romantic idea: that a few fugitives and renegades can either topple the status quo or ruin it for the rest of us, depending on where you tend to position yourself in that scenario.

*

After four days and five nights, we reach the end of the line. At the 68th parallel north and a buffer stop overlooking the Norwegian Sea.

Undermining

Undermining, just like the fugitive act, is subject to contestation: one act hollows out the land in its quest for continuous growth, while the other tries to re-establish a radical imagination to undermine that dominant order.

What the global application of underground space and the global division of urban space can tell us about this new development of capitalism is where its peripheries are and where its contradictions arise.

DAVID L. PIKE. (2007): 312.

kollektivtrafiken i Sverige

From the tracks that shoot out over the ocean, the mined minerals used to be loaded straight down onto the moored cargo ships. The loading procedure these days have been effectivized to meet the increasing amounts of shipped ore.

You can hear the approaching heavy-load freight trains shriek and grumble from a distance. On average they arrive twelve times a day, making the shack tremble as they roll by on their way down to the harbor, returning shortly after, with empty wagons rattling along.

At the end of summer, we leave the steal-away shack at the side of the tracks as we travel down south again. We'll be returning again during autumn.

*

Our intention in building and maintaining the first house at the Central Station was never to make a public spectacle out of it. But as it turned into one, we felt obliged to keep challenging the grand narrative of centrality at the location.

After finishing the second apartment (HBG2), we had made a public statement on two of the trains that were parked by the station overnight.

As a sequel to that act, we want to do something similar about the steal-away shack. The context for communicating this is decided to be split between its original location and its fugitive path, up north. For this purpose we measure the grids of freight train wagons and compose a fitting text that is possible to read from some distance and in half a minute.

We also wanted to access DSB's infrastructure to communicate with the commuters of Copenhagen. For this reason, we need to get our hands (or eyes) on the master key.

The praxis of illicitly copying keys has likely been around as long as there have been locks. There are testaments from prison escapes where the fugitives have been able to replicate the keys of the patrolling wardens. E.B. stumbled upon information about the notorious Danish jailbird Carl August Lorentzen, famous for his many prison escapes. On one occasion he was able to file down a soup spoon to the dimensions of a working key, with which he successfully could unlock the gate to his cell and walk around freely at night to map and plan his escape. There's no information about how many spoons Lorentzen had to modify before finding success. But as the sign that he left behind in the tunnel (which, after a year of digging, led him out on December 23, 1949) says: "Where there's a will, there's a way."

The article *Reconsidering Physical Key Secrecy: Teleduplication via Optical Decoding* reviews the art of teleduplicating in light of technological developments. All major lock manufacturers produce their keys according to standardized grids of depths and spacing.

Consider the master key of the Danish State Railways, for example: the *ASSA Twin 6000*. A high-security key with six cut-out grooves spaced 3.8 mm apart, with nine possible depths, ranging from 4.03 to 8.83 mm. By using a high-resolution photograph, like a 4K video still taken with any modern telephone, it is fairly easy to decipher the code of the key and to make your own copy.

The engineering data (as with the ASSA Twin 6000) is often to be found on the manufacturers' internet domain. Any train driver or other DSB personnel tends to display the key: it is either hanging on a belt clip or made visible when used to lock or unlock. In other words, it is not a difficult operation to take a photograph of it. To replicate your copy, you then only need a fitting key blank, a digital caliper gauge, and a handfile.

Laxton, Wang, & Savage, 2008.

Lorentzen's spoon-turned-key.

Cut spacing (mm).

6,7

3,8

3,8

3,8

3,8

3,8
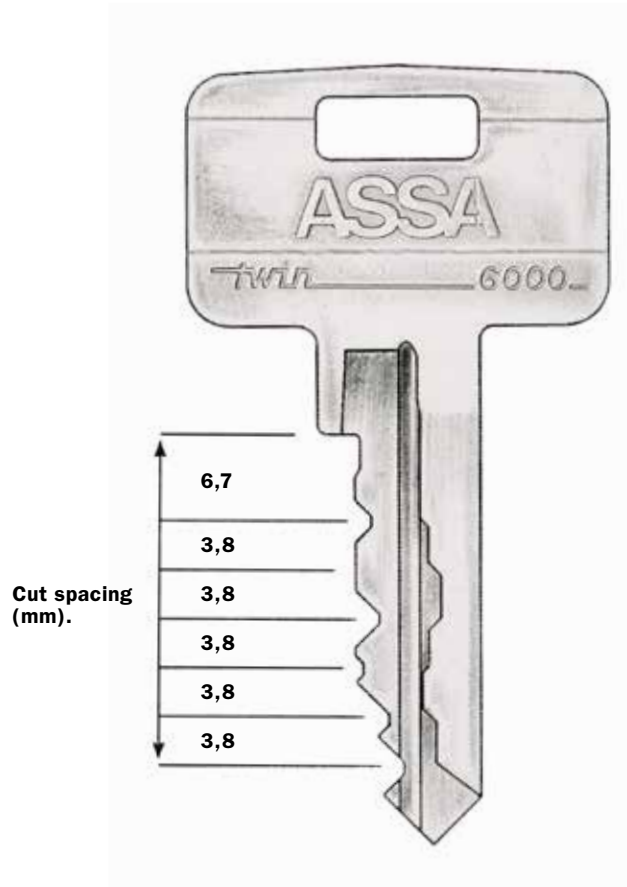
Example of depths (mm).

45°

General design of the ASSA Twin 6000:

A. [1] is the deepest cut, [9] is the shallowest.

B. Maximum adjacent cut of five increments difference. For example: a [1] cut next to [6] is acceptable, but not [1] next to [7].

C. Depths: measure from bottom of key blade to bottom of the cut.

[1]: 4,03	[4]: 5,83	[7]: 7,63
[2]: 4,63	[5]: 6,43	[8]: 8,23
[3]: 5,23	[6]: 7,03	[9]: 8,83
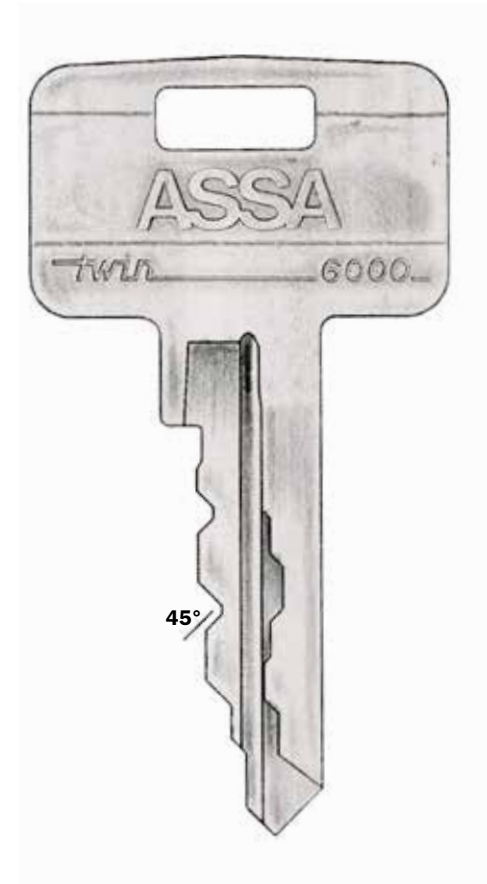
D. The peak of the cuts are of little importance. When filing the key by hand the final result could look like illustrated above.

E. The 45 degree angle of the cuts allow a smooth operation and avoids the key getting stuck on the bottom pins of the lock.

F. Depth scheme:

9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

*
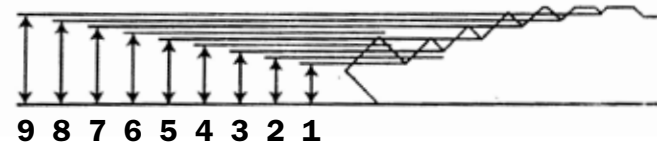
"The key I have, it's a 400-key. And it's a master key for all the trains in New York City. And I got this key from my friend, he let me make a copy of it. And how he originally got it, uh, you can either get it from a conductor or a motorman, and the way you get it—you gotta steal it from them. You take the whole bunch of keys, and from then on you can make a thousand copies and distribute them among all of your friends."

Don's statement (transcribed). *Watching My Name Go By* (Julia Cave, 1976): 18:57.

A writer's keys to the city. *Subway Art* (1984): 33. Photo by Martha Cooper.

Dissensual Dissemination

Access was crucial element of the art when I was a graffiti writer growing up in Stockholm. The holy grail was getting hold of the SL key, which would open the doors to the subway system: the stations, tunnels, train yards.

The thuggish would steal it from the cleaners—in the split second when the key was left in the lock unsupervised. Rich kids would buy it "under the counter" from the few ticket booth clerks who accepted their extravagant offers. We didn't know the art of teleduplication and locksmiths would refuse to make us copies, seeing what the labeled key was intended to open.

I was neither plucky nor plushy, but it turned out that I was lucky—on Christmas Eve 1994, I found the key jammed in a subway lock, and I wasn't leaving until I had managed to wiggle it out. To this day, I carry it on my keychain (not for nostalgic reasons, the key still works).

For the dissemination of dissensual aesthetics, the subway was the site and surface of desire.

When E.B. and I were planning the unsanctioned presentation about the steal-away shack, we wanted to make use of its original context: the Copenhagen Central Station and the fugitive path along the rails up north.

As mischevious youngsters both of us shared a habit of sneaking in to the driver's cabin at the back of moving subway trains. From in there, it happened that we used the microphone to adress the passengers. These messages spoken over the loudspeakers were never very thought-through, but had remained as an exciting possibility of communication in our shared imagination.

For the occasion of our informal action of dissemination we decided to inform the passengers over the loudspeakers in one of the S-trains.

When S-trains arrive at the central station in Copenhagen, there's an average stop of 80 seconds before continuing. This was the economy of time to communicate with the passengers. But instead of speaking directly into the microphone, we decided to equip one of the trains with a remote-controlled MP3 player. The device was invisibly inserted under the dashboard in the drivers cabin, interrupting the function of the microphone only when pressing our remote control.

When the train arrived at the main station, we could play our recorded message, as if spoken by a ghost. From what we saw, nobody payed any attention to the unconventional announcement. People were either occupied with their telephones, or wearing headphones. Often both.

We also printed a newspaper in 3,000 copies that was freely distributed at stations and in the trains. These appeared to have the same impact as the sonic message: none. The same result as the 34 commercial billboards at the station that we replaced with our photographs.

Not long after, touch screen displays were installed in the driver's booths, rendering our hidden device incompatible and useless. We later de-installed the ghost-machine. Subway and commuter trains elsewhere are still using that "vintage" technology.

Innards of an S-train dashboard.

End of the Line. A 48-page tabloid, printed in 3,000 copies, in black-and-white, and distributed freely.

"Jeg har fundet vej ind til førerrummet længst bag i toget, herfra kan jeg kan tale til jer via mikrofonen. Normalt er S-toget næsten lydløst, bortset fra en sagte klagen ved nedbremsning og acceleration. Kupéerne er forseglede; de hermetisk lukkede døre tillader kun et strejf af frisk luft at trænge ind.

Hovedbanegården kan ses ud af vinduet. En labyrint af fast food-kæder og pengeveks-lere lokker handlende ind; tilskynder dem til at finde en udvej. Tæt ved hæver et nybygget hotel sig. Spejlfacaden reflekterer en bygge-grund, som inden længe vil rumme endnu et højhuskompleks.

Det var i dette område, endnu før den rasen-de byfornyelse, at Adam og E.B. Itso stjal et vejrbidt skur, skubbede det ned ad sporet og væk fra byen på en håndbygget jernbanevogn. I årevis stod det skjult i byens udkant, imens dets interiør gradvist blev renoveret med dertil anskaffede materialer.

Da lejligheden bød sig, blev skuret løftet op på et nordgående godstog. De rejste med i skuret, hele vejen til der hvor sporet ender; et sporstop med udsigt over Norskehavet. Et sted de har besat lige siden.

Dokumentation af denne handling er præ-senteret i en gratis folder, og billeder er blevet ulovligt installeret i reklamestandere mellem spor 10 & 11 på Hovedbanegården.

Tak for jeres opmærksomhed, nu må jeg gå."

"I've managed to sneak into the driver's cabin in the back of the train and I'm speaking to you through the microphone. Normally this type of S-train is nearly silent, apart from a little whimper when it slows down or accelerates. Compartments are sealed off; hermetic doors partition its chambers, allowing only a whiff of fresh air to pass.

The Central Station can be seen out the window; the labyrinth of fast food chains and money transferring facilities luring consumers deep inside, challenging them to find escape. Next door, a newly built hotel towers above. The mirrored façade reflects a renovated lot, soon-to-be yet another high-rise edifice.

It was from that plot of land, just before the raging city renewal, that Adam & E.B. Itso stole a weather-beaten shack and pushed it down the tracks, away from the city on a make-shift railroad cart. It stood hidden in the outskirts for years; its interior gradually being refurbished with procured materials.

When the opportunity arose, the shack was lifted onto a north-bound freight train. They traveled the whole way inside the shack, to the very end of the line where the tracks shoot out to a buffer stop overlooking the Norwegian Sea — a place they have occupied since that day of arrival.

Documentation of this action is distributed in a pamphlet, free of charge. Pictures have also been unlawfully installed in the advertising spaces between track 10 & 11 at the Copenhagen Central Station.

Thank you for your attention, I'd better get going."

Desocialization   Even though we had created access to DSB's infrastructure, and with this carefully added a row of different communications, we were unable to reach the audience of commuters.

With all the information that the urban population is continuously fed in public space, this comes as no surprise. As residents, we're (often unconsciously) developing methods of shielding ourselves from an increasing commercial communication. Many turn to their handheld screens for distraction, which is becoming just as saturated with such information.

According to marketing experts, we are daily exposed to between 4,000 and 10,000 advertisements. Even if that is a North American statistic, I reckon that it isn't much different elsewhere in our globalized world. Whether we react with refusal or endazzlement, or a combination of both, it's contributing to a condition of desocialization. Attention is permanently fragmented and dispersed through constant micro-stimuli.

Resistance, then, cannot simply address itself to changing external physical space, but must also engage the colonised spaces of people's inner worlds STEVE PILE (1997): 17.

Indeed, it could be argued that the production of 'inner spaces' marks out the real break point of political struggle ... maybe.

*

One-on-One   Some months later and a different tactic. A one-on-one format where my friend Hannah gently interrupts strangers in the subway, sharing information about some of these underground works. For one week, we randomly drift in the U-Bahn network, intervening and documenting.

What we don't expect are the stories, reveries and experiences about the subterranean city that Hannah receives in return. Each of which, about 50 in total, are accounted for after the meetings and archived for future reference.

Unterhalten. Berlin subway, 2018.

*

Blasé Attitudes

Georg Simmel (1903).
"Metropolis and Mental Life."

At the turn of the 20th century, sociologist Georg Simmel studied the consequences of modern city life in his hometown, Berlin. In Simmel's view, a fundamental problem for urban inhabitants lies in the challenges attached to modern society, with its booming mass-culture, information technology, and competitive living conditions.

This incapacity to react to new stimulations with the required amount of energy constitutes in fact that blasé attitude which every child of a large city evinces when compared with the products of the more peaceful and more stable milieu.

Combined with this physiological source of the blasé metropolitan attitude there is another, which derives from a money economy.

IBID: 14 (1950).

In other words, the apathetic attitude is not a new phenomenon, but a condition that has surged with technological development, market liberalism, and gloomy future analyses over the course of more than a century.

Our imagination isn't accidentally dwindling; it is being co-opted, suffocated, corrupted and starved of the oxygen it needs.

ROB HOPKINS.
(2019): 188–89.

Might it be that the more deeply we are immersed in crisis and the more dystopian the future appears, the less able we are to imagine a way out?

The format for *investigating* the imagination that has flown and for *sharing* the fragments of results that have emerged demands new and different methods.

*

Having returned back up North, we find a dramatically changed condition: at the exact place where we had placed the shack, an immense construction site had established. To effectivize global logistics, one of the longest suspension bridges in Europe is being built: the Hålogaland Bridge. The objective isn't local, regional, or national. As part of the new silk road, Chinese investments are behind the decision and support the process by providing engineers and construction workers to carry out much of the labor.

The shack keeps being relocated. Everytime we return to the site, we find the shack in a new place, mostly amongst the rubble and trees that have been removed to make way for the new infrastructure. When we aren't following the development at the location, we follow local reports.

At one point, the shack shows up roadside on an online map, in street view.

And here right in front of you is the great suspension bridge. Forbidden to make it sway from side to side, I shall certainly make a point of doing just that.

O Suspended Bridges, etc.

LOUIS ARAGON.
(1926): 180.

From the viewpoint of the migrating shack as it's continuously pushed around to make way for planetary urbanism, with the movement away from the "center," the center ⟵⟶ periphery dualism collapses.

Therein centrality creates its own periphery, crisis-ridden on both flanks. The two worlds—center and periphery—exist side-by-side everywhere, cordoned off from one other, everywhere. The 'menace', Lefebvre says (1989, p. 16), is that this amorphous monster we call 'the city' becomes a planetary metamorphosis totally out of control.

ANDY MERRIFIELD.
(2011): 469.

A strange journey indeed! Nature enters into exchange value and commodities, to be bought and sold. This 'naturality' which is counterfeited and traded in, is destroyed by commercialized, industrialized and institutionally organized leisure pursuits. 'Nature', or what passes for it, and survives of it, becomes the ghetto of leisure pursuits, the separate place of pleasure and the retreat of 'creativity'. Urban dwellers carry the urban with them, even if they do not bring planning with them! Colonized by them, the countryside has lost the qualities, features and charms of peasant life. The urban ravages the countryside: this urbanized countryside opposes itself to a dispossessed rurality, the extreme case of the deep misery of the inhabitant, the habitat, of to inhabit. Are the rights to nature and to the countryside not destroying themselves?

In the face of this pseudo-right, the *right to the city* is like a cry and a demand. This right slowly meanders through the surprising detours of nostalgia and tourism, the return to the heart of the traditional city, and the call of existent or recently developed centralities. The claim to nature, and the desire to enjoy it displace the right to the city. This latest claim expresses itself indirectly as a tendency to flee the deteriorated and unrenovated city, alienated urban life before at last, 'really' living. The need and the 'right' to nature contradict the right to the city without being able to evade it. (This does not mean that it is not necessary to preserve vast 'natural' spaces).

The *right to the city* cannot be conceived of as a simple visiting right or as a return to traditional cities. It can only be formulated as a transformed and renewed *right to urban life*. It does not matter whether the urban fabric encloses the countryside and what survives of peasant life, as long as the 'urban', place of encounter, priority of use value, inscription in space of a time promoted to the rank of a supreme resource among all resources, finds its morphological base and its practico-material realization. Which presumes an integrated theory of the city and urban society, using the resources of science and art. Only the working class can become the agent, the social carrier or support of this realization. Here again, as a century ago, it denies and contests, by its very existence, the class strategy directed against it. As a hundred years ago, although under new conditions, it gathers the interests (overcoming the immediate and the superficial) of the whole society and firstly of all those who *inhabit*.

No better occasion, then, to discuss the commons in a time wherein 'the commoners of the world can no longer retire to the forests or run to the hills' (Linebaugh 2014, p. 40), wherein common custom has become crime, and wherein the realm of commoning has transcended from the street to the state and from the peasant to the politician. I want to find out whether capital has nowadays discovered the commons, or if the commons can and must remain invisible in order to survive.

That act of imagining one's position in creating and maintaining common space—whether imaginary or real—is of fundamental importance.
Lefebvre's triadic overview conceives of shared social space as being informed by three interlocking force fields: *perceived* (the concrete, physical objective descriptions), *conceived* (abstract, symbolic representations), and *lived* (the everyday experience informed by both the objective and subjective). It's not hard to see how my works engage with and interfere with those three spatial conceptions—where the everyday experience of trespass and transgression leads to the physical constructions and interventions in city landscapes in order to co-create an altered perception of what the physical world could be.

Production of (Common) Space

Henri Lefebvre (1991). *The Production of Space.*

The crows in Berlin didn't carry seeds with the intention to feed the fox (as far as I know) but their daily movemets through the city contributes to what grows there. That's more in line with my impulse to create the things that I have (and why "making visible" these projects feel at times like an artificial exercise). Building and maintaining these structures is a praxis to remind myself and those close to me that our experience of the world remains true, and that reasserting agency through direct action is one of the myriad ways to make the "previously unimaginable" part of our collective memories and lived everyday experience. And around it goes.

The unruly city could be considered a symbolic representation (*conceived*) but through my works and this publication, it is revealed to be a concrete, physical, objective reality (*perceived*), since as a result of my actions and experiences (*lived*), it is arguably a real true space that anyone has access to.

Or could have access to.

However, the suggestion that power relations might produce discontinuous spaces, which resistance might transgress or move between, implies that there could be other places in the map of resistance. One possible way to remap resistance, then, is to think about the ways in which power relations are incomplete, fluid, liable to rupture, inconsistent, awkward and ambiguous. Now, spaces of resistance can be seen as not only partially connected to, but also partially dislocated from, spaces of domination.

STEVE PILE. (1997): 14.

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In the end of 2018, as the Hålogaland Bridge is due to be inaugurated, we contact the manager at the construction site. We inform him that we've serendipitously "discovered our long-gone shack" at the side of the road, next to his trailer office. Did he have anything to do with the shack's displacement? He assures us that he didn't, but that he was more than willing to help us have it instantly removed from the location. A win-win deal.

And so we move further out, into the Nordland archipelago.

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The city also, like the hut, has its roots in the soil.

ROBERT PARK (1925): 1.

The framework of temporality and the action of withdrawal is embedded in both the typology and etymology of shacks and huts. The outcast camp; the hobo jungle; the migrant barracks—all belong to an architecture on the margins, on the threshold of inside and outside.

Etymologically, it is argued that "shack" derives from the Proto-Germanic *skakanan*: a movement of flight or escape. The root of *(s)keu-* means "to cover" or "conceal." This corresponds to the Swedish word, where *skjul* (shack) is rooted in the verb "to hide"; *skjula*. The element of hiding is also embedded in the definition of the Hut, also this of Proto-Germanic origin: *Hudjon-*, to the Old English *Hydan*, also here: "to hide."

Culturally and politically, there are the urban withdrawals of Henry David Thoureau, Martin Heidegger, Ted Kaczynski, et al.; these testify to a male tradition of refusal and refuge—the privilege of an ascetic existence in the hermit's hut.

The artistic legacy of Beverly Buchanan presents a history from the perspective of North American slavery. Here, the shack is in complete contrast to the palace of the white slaveholder, and unfolds a genealogy of escaped slaves and maroon communities: an existence in hide-out spots along the underground railway. "I believe the entire world is descendant from shacks," is machine-typed in capital letters and glued to the lower corner on one of her drawings —a collaboration with poet Alice Lovelace.

In light of the writings of Gaston Bachelard, the phenomenology of huts is one that belongs to the dreamer: "a dreamer of refuges dreams of a hut." Gaston Bachelard (1964): 30. *The Poetics of Space.*

Whether attached to a concrete ledge on the bank of the river Spree, or on top a scaffold in an unruly hinterland, or built into a Copenhagen ventilation shaft, or balancing at the edge of the Eurasian continental plate—they all are liminal spaces of fleeting existence, temporary monuments to margins, between the seen and the unseen.

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ILLUSTRATION: SOPHIA THOREAU (1854).

H.D. Thoreau's Walden refuge.

BEVERLY BUCHANAN & ALICE LOVELACE (1990).

Buchanan's Shack.

PHOTO: RICHARD BARNES (1998).

Kaczynski's confiscated cabin.

It wasn't long after we had arrived to the island that the deadening force of capital encroached even on that remote region, creeping up the back, seeping around the sides, rolling in from sea. New extraction projects are starting up as the Norwegian government has given the order to begin extensive prospecting of deep sea mining off the coast, all within sight of the off-shore island where the steal-away shack still currently stands its ground.

We witnessed the blur of the *Capitalocene* from the window of our migrating shack, passing through landscapes on a flat wagon of a north-bound freight train. Thousand-year-old open-pit copper mines along the train route are still being gouged at. The iron-ore extraction machinery is so intense in Kiruna that they've relocated the entire city to get at what's under it. The hollowing-out of the polar underground continues.

Norway, which throughout the first two thirds of the 20th century was regarded as economically underdeveloped, is today among the Top 10 richest countries in the world, based on the oil discoveries made along the southern coast during the early 1970s. The oil industry remains the mainstay of the Norwegian economy to this day, with mineral extraction being next in line.

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Undermining

There's a key point in the definition of *undermining* that is easy to gloss over. "Undermine" is a verb that is used with an object, and much can be hidden at both ends. What is being undermined and who are the stealthy actors doing the insidious harm? This field study—along with that located in Paris (Chapter Y)—re-envision the scope of the underground, and recognize the constructive roles needed to build, create, and weave new robust social structures that are tough like gnarled roots.

Rather than making use of the common concept of *Anthropocene*, which targets an abstract humanity, I use the concept of *Capitalocene*, viewing the current ecological crisis as a political and systemic malfunction that needs to be addressed as such.

"From this standpoint, the phrase *anthropogenic climate change* is a special brand of blaming the victims of exploitation, violence, and poverty. A more nearly accurate alternative? Ours is an era of *capitalogenic* climate crisis."

Jason Moore (2019): 50. "Who is responsible for the climate crisis?"

Here, the truly unruly city can be shown to be the ever-branching, overlapping multitude of systems through which denizens have the power to sustainably shape their environment.

As much as I cherish the romanticized image of the fugitive—the stealthy criminal which the word "undermining" often conjures up—I'm still aware of how that popular conception benefits the actual few nefarious actors who are eroding not only the physical natural environment around and below us with their unexamined extractivist actions. These actors are also able to conceal their insidious efforts to stealthily destroy both the ecology and the denizen's ability to form and maintain communities. The powerful few are undermining the connections created between the many many, and operating at a scale so pervasive that it's rendered invisible: a part of the atmosphere. It's therefore important to locate the object, *who* or *what* is being undermined. Not for semantic reasons, but to recognize what we're seeing: who are the actors in contested spaces, who is made protectively invisible by the passive voice, and which activities actually fit the definition of undermining?

My research rejoices in the subversive—the little figure chipping away in the dark—but we can't lose sight of the reverse: the active ways the powerful undermine alternative structures.

Is a neighborhood "vulnerable" or targeted?

A nation "underdeveloped" or overexploited?

Is an action or idea "radical" or entirely reasonable when looked at from the position of someone without the power to define the terms of the discussion?

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The steal-away shack is placed at the edge of the Eurasian continental shelf, overlooking the sea as it drops a thousand fathoms into the abyss.
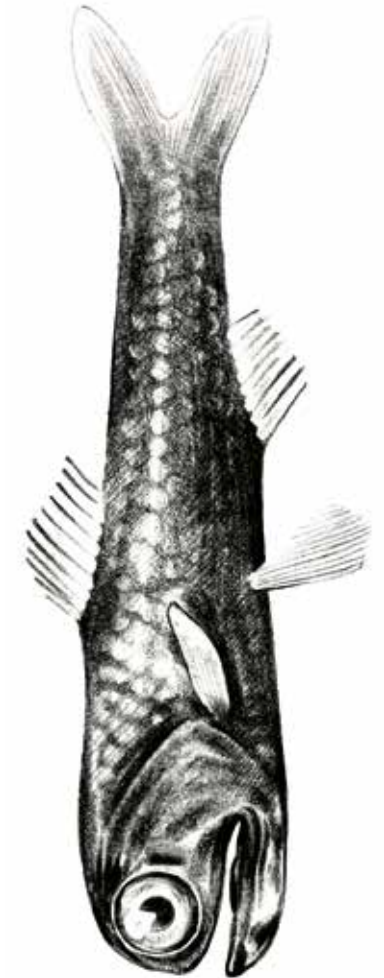
Drawing of a deep-sea fish, found washed up on the shoreline next to the shack.

Teetering at the Tip

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If shacks are threshold spaces of the built environment, the stretches of land that are continuously covered and uncovered by tidal seas and storms can be seen as their natural equivalent.

Rachel Carson describes the shoreline as a marginal and non-binary space: in constant transition between above and below, between the visibility of the retracted ocean and landscapes veiled beneath the surface of the flooded shore.

Tides, the rise and fall of sea levels, are caused by the combined effects of gravitational forces exerted by the Moon and the Sun, and by the rotation of the Earth. According to Albert Einstein's theories of general relativity, time moves differently deep below sea level compared to the highest peaks of planet Earth: one-billionth of a second less, every year. He called this phenomenon *gravitational time dilation*.

The life beneath the surface appears to brim with wilderness. It is freezing cold for E.B. and myself to swim out, but wearing wetsuits we're able to stay in for up to an hour at a time.

We watch orcas come all the way in to waist-high water. Further out, it happens that whales breach the surface, wheezing salty blows from dives deep down. Their tails majestically flap up before they return downwards into the bathypelagic zone. Sea eagles circle overhead.

Life landwards, however, is marked by death.

Familiar and unfamiliar creatures are washed ashore, meshed with plastic debris—beat-up buoys; decomposing fish; sun-bleached bottles and styrofoam shards; the skeleton of a sperm whale calf, entangled in a fishing net.

We spend a day cleaning up, only to find the the dead-end cove scattered with trash again a few high tides later.

Liminal Space & Place

Rachel Carson (1955): 1–8.
The Edge of the Sea.

As Jack Halberstam said it: "That's the project here of bewilderment: to send you into a spiralling set of references that confuse us as to where we are in time, space and power." (2020).

Wheezing Whales

Poe's Maelström, illustrated by Arthur Rackham (1935).

Within eyesight of the shack, some hundred meters off the coast, you spot the tidal whirlpool of Moskenstraumen. It's a place and a phenomenon with a distinct representation in 19th century litterature. As such, it is a hub of a popular imagination related to the underground. It's here that Jules Verne's Nautilus ship spirals down, never to return. A testimony from an author who was politically attached to anarchism, where the deep sea symbolized a detachment from despots: "On its surface iniquitous rights can still be exercised, men can fight there, devour each other there, and transport all terrestial horrors there. But at thirty feet below its level their power ceases, their influence dies out, their might dissappears."

In *A Descent into the Maelström*, Edgar Allan Poe's refers to the same place. Here, the protagonist is able to achieve the seemingly impossible: to ascend from inside the cataclysmic Maelström by clingeing and climbing on the swiveling debris, all the way back up to the surface.

Together, they make two examples of the political and cultural legacy of the 19th century in the Western world: with the fascination of the deep sea and underground as a source for imagination—at once a locus of possibilities and a genesis of hellish fate.

"The innate dynamism of the modern economy, and of the culture that grows from this economy, annihilates everything that it creates—physical environments, social institutions, metaphysical ideas, artistic visions, moral values—in order to create more, to go on endlessly creating the world anew. This drive draws all modern men and women into its orbit, and forces us all to grapple with the question of what is essential, what is meaningful, what is real in the maelstrom in which we move and live."

Marshall Berman (1982): 288.
All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity.

Jules Verne (1872): 57.
Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Seas.

Edgar Allan Poe (1841).
A Descent into the Maelström.

See p. 121.

David L. Pike (2007).
Metropolis on the Styx: The Underworlds of Modern Urban Culture, 1800–2001.

We can now think of a future that is all ocean; we can imagine an ocean full of garbage; we live with a future severely curtailed, and we acknowledge a past that has delivered us here and now. Our world is not the promise that wildness held out to us and that was courted and inhabited by queer thinkers in the early years of the twentieth century; it is a disaster of our own making and one that will take a complete revolution to reverse.

The tiniest event can tear a hole in the grey curtain of reaction which has marked the horizons of possibility under capitalist realism. From a situation in which nothing can happen, suddenly anything is possible again.

JACK HALBERSTAM. (2020): 179.

MARK FISHER. (2009): 81.

David Graeber (2022).
Pirate Enlightenment, or the Real Libertalia.

Hakim Bey (1995).
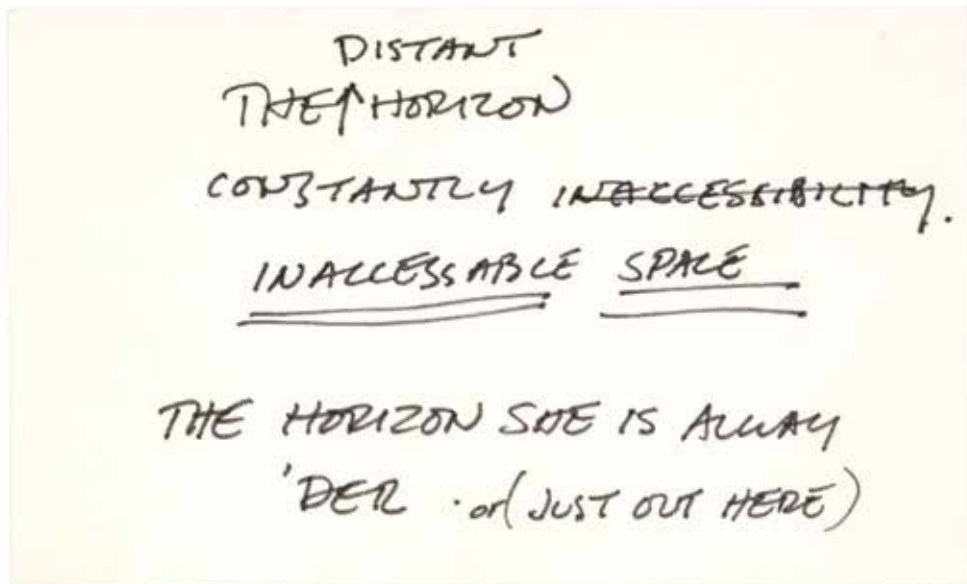*Pirate Utopias: Moorish Corsairs & European Renegadoes.*

Stevphen Shukaitis (2009).
(Interview with AK Press.)

A sidenote on linguistic evasion: *Buchte* is the Rotwelch word for shack. Adopted from German, where it translates to *bay* or *cove*—a hide-out with a renegade reference embedded within. *See* pp. 32–3.

Sverker Sörlin (1988): Ch. 2.1.
Framtidslandet: Debatten om Norrland och naturresurserna under det industriella genom-brottet.

In a world of rising oceans, where mineral extraction platforms are towering up at the horizon and an endless mass of plastic debris is continuously being washed ashore: the spatial poetic of the curved-in cove can be seen in lights of a mystified past—as an asylum of mutiny, of free-living freebooters: a utopian pirate settlement of free thinking, based on equality and direct government by the people, those who have "gone to Croatan," where languages merge and transform, like the ones developed and practiced by gypsies, criminals, and other oppressed groups on the fringes of society.

Like the utopian bay, Verne's political concept of the submerged—where power ceases and might dissappears—is increasingly overshadowed by a mineral and maritime capitalism. The northern polar circle is once again turning in to a colonial project of an Arctic Eden: a raging force of natural exploitation that is on the brink of causing irreversible ecologial concequences.

GORDON MATTA-CLARK (1970–78).

DISTANT
THE↑HORIZON
CONSTANTLY INACCESSIBILITY.
INACCESSABLE SPACE
THE HORIZON SIDE IS ALWAY
'DER · or (JUST OUT HERE)

INSIDE THE GLACIER but how and where and why no one says the word *lost*. We're going a new way says Sad as they head toward what looks like a big doorway. G has maps open but in the dimness cannot read them. The road stops at a square red sign IMPASSIBLE. They don't mean us says Sad backing up to go round the sign.

ANNE CARSON. (2013): 44.

PHOTO: BOB BROOKS (1962).

A house, buoyed with oil-drums, relocating along the coast of Newfoundland, Canada.

If the wild has anything to tell us, it is this: un-build the world you inhabit, unmake its relentless commitment to the same, ignore the calls for more, and agree to be with the wild, accept the wild, give yourself to the wild, and float or drown in its embrace.

JACK HALBERSTAM. (2020b): 20.

It's clear that humanity is in desperate need of a revival of our radical imaginative abilities; like Bey's and Graeber's recollections of Libertalia, or Haberstam's demand for the Wild, in order to imagine the unimaginable, we must be willing to derail and leave the beaten track.

Since most of history's giant trees have already been cut down, a new Ark will have to be constructed out of the materials that a desperate humanity finds at hand in insurgent communities, pirate technologies, bootlegged media, rebel science and forgotten utopias.

MIKE DAVIS. (2010): 30.

*

E.B. and me build a raft that the shack is put onto. Anchored to a rock, it awaits the next fugitive phase and a rising ocean.

SCAFFOLDING

Stories about places are makeshift things. They are composed with the world's debris.

Maybe you read this book from the back, like slipping through a trapdoor at the An-Akademie. Or you read this as a closing observation, or by simply leafing the pages at random. It is of little importance—I like to see this book as the unruly city it aims to portray; they both have multiple possibilities for openings, movements, and passageways.

Set across three chapters, this book compiles field studies, photo documentation, and descriptions of work processes for three projects that locate and help create a social and spatial phenomenon which I call "the unruly city."

Even if the practical constructions, historical investigations, and cultural theory analyses explored in the thesis do not give access to the physical places themselves, they unlock rooms in the reader's political imagination, by showing that such spaces exist.

These three studies propose a praxis of dissent, and invite possibilities for participation in the production of deviant perceptions—both in reclaiming physical space and in the understanding that the ability to do so is not outside the realm of possibility. I explore the mutable "nature" of cities, building on political philosophy, actions that have shaped those places, and actions that show what those places could become. The accounts of three site-specific interventions in urban settings—Berlin, Paris, and Copenhagen—address both my interventions into the landscape, and the integrations and collaborations that sought to create community on those sites.

I share a set of tactics and tools—both physical and analytical—that were used to make possible and imaginable. This document contributes to "making visible" a sliver of the creative disobedience and collaborative processes that shape and reshape urban spaces.

Manufactured keys, trapdoors, dug-out tunnels, informal dissemination, bricolaged furniture, loopholes, pulleys, hatches, and shacks recur throughout the study; each of these tools, methods, or architectural elements support a praxis of transgressivism and stealth.

In order to imagine the unimaginable—whether in the form of spaces, living conditions, or coded systems—we create narratives. Praxis becomes a form of speech act that contributes to our perception. The membrane that separates perception from memory is porous; the exchange is continuous—memory informs imagination, and imagination informs memory.

Analogous to the ways that abstract (capitalist) space is divided into higher- and lower-status spaces, centers and peripheries, and inclusion and exclusion, the project chapters follow movements along these axes: Outside⟷Inside, Central⟷Peripheral, and Below⟷Above.

∗

X
PP. 17–64.

In Chapter X, *An-Building Berlin*, we find ourselves in front of a gigantic fake façade in the historic city center of Berlin. We see how the story of the unruly city continues to develop, and find out where the urban, fugitive, narrative motion of slipping behind the veil takes us.

Y
PP. 65–112.

In Chapter Y, *De-inventing Paris*, we descend into the literal underground, through the catacombs, quarries, and sewer systems to something that is difficult to conceive, even when perceived and having had a camera pointed at it.

The beauty of this underworld isn't only in the weeping limestone, the webs of roots, and the attics overhead, it lies in the intricate connections of community thriving in the hidden spaces.

In Chapter Z, *Off the Beaten Track*, we set out from a city center to the end of the line. Specifically, from Copenhagen central station following the freight tracks 2000 km north to beyond the polar circle at +68˚N.

Z
PP. 113–62.

While this concluding text has been constructed to serve as a scaffolding for weeds of thought to climb, the three project chapters are arranged like metaphorical maps. Each chapter is oriented to the fugitive directions that the narratives travel in.

A single site in Berlin is shown through a series of transformations—the time-lapse showing a place turned inside out, unearthed, contested.

The maps that lead us up through the towers of Paris were acquired by infiltrating the basements of ministries and need to be unfolded and held up to the light, to see where the systems overlap and connect.

The vagabond journey along the tracks to the outer reaches of Nordic mining towns are marked with hand-drawn signs and symbols, daydreams, and slivers of deep-time memories.

Altogether, they make up an unruly bricolage of field notes and quotes, photos, and observations, practical instruction and dreamlike rumination. A palimpsest like the cities themselves—a layered composition in transition, always in process, never still.

Every story is a travel story—a spatial practice.

M. DE CERTEAU. (1984): 115.

∗

Outside ⟷ Inside

In Berlin, positioned on a transversal axis, we witness what may be hidden in plain sight and the creation of physical locations for practical study. We move from standing in front to the hinterland behind: a reversed, bewildered reality where the dichotomic logic of inside/outside appears to be completely reversed.

Below ⟷ Above

In Paris, positioned on a vertical axis, we witness a subterranean community evade undermining forces by relocating to spaces up above, beneath the rooftops of municipal office buildings.

The fugitive movement in Chapter Y thereby retreats from the increased privatization of subterranean spaces by commercial interests to expanding the concept of "the underground" all the way up to the rafters of the city's towers.

Central ⟷ Peripheral

In Copenhagen, positioned on a horizontal axis, we take a ride to the edges of a tectonic plate (all the way out there, as in a *line of flight*), observing migration and urban dissolution as an ongoing process of planetary transformation.

Chapter Z through follows a geneaology of escape that recalls the ways in which unsettled and subversive Vagabonds responded to urbanization-by-force in the 19th century.

<div align="center">*</div>

X–Y–Z

When we illustrate the three axes coming together again, we see a familiar shape. The very particular construction joint I've used in building make-shift furniture in all the projects: toilets, shelves, tables, chairs, benches, lamps. *X–Y–Z.*

The imaginary made material and back again.

This is not a story of criminals and renegades, instigators and trouble-makers plotting attacks on the peaceful status quo. The denizens and the unruly city are under relentless insidious attack
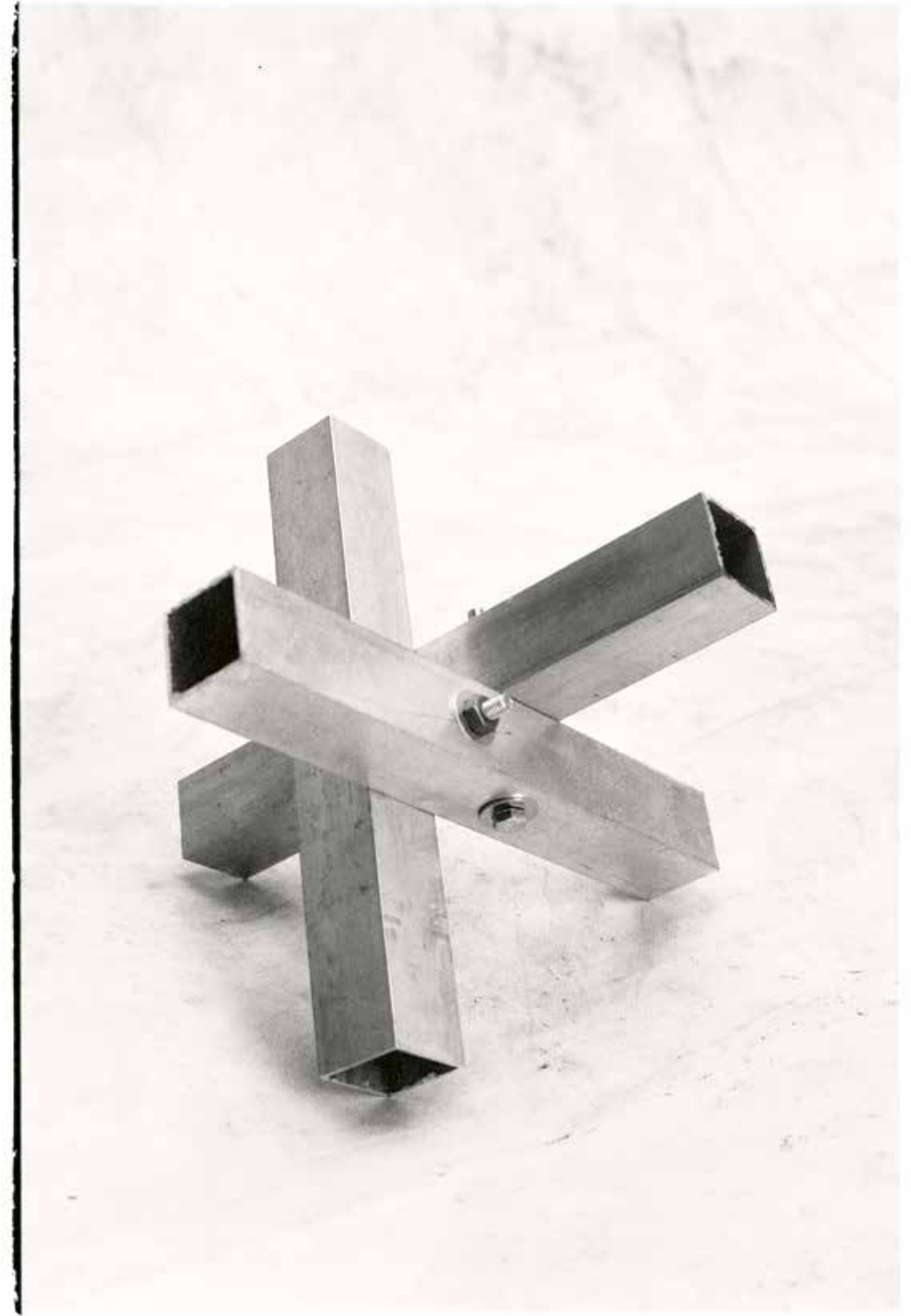
Three bolted axes (X–Y–Z) of 40 mm aluminum square pipes.

by capitalist, industrialized, culturally hegemonic forces. And the reason these dynamics are rarely framed that way is a result of their co-optation/undermining techniques.

The projects I present along the three fugitive axes can be regarded as exercises in changing the shape of that stage, of reimagining the scope of the city, and expanding the range of roles for its actors. In the ways that the works in Paris extended the idea of "the underground" up into the city's rafters, the projects originating in Copenhagen work to expand the borders of the unruly city beyond city limits and back in time.

It's not a natural or comfortable process for me to make visible my previous and ongoing projects—the hidden and invisible nature of the work has, at times, been an integral aspect to maintaining its existence. But we need to dig deep, and put personal discomforts aside, in order to recognize the distinction between seeing a structure—whether a hand-built shelter or a system of oppression—and understanding what goes into it. This involves a process of exposing where the materials come from, and the foundations they were built on. I want to make the distinction between the act of making possible ("the work"), the act of making visible (the "documentation" of the work), and, finally, the act of making sensible (the various "disseminations" of the work).

<div style="text-align:right">the networks are many</div>

and interact, without any one of them being able to surpass the rest; this text is a galaxy of signifiers, not a structure of signifieds; it has no beginning; it is reversible; we gain access to it by several entrances, none of which can be authoritatively declared to be the main one; the codes it mobilizes extend *as far as the eye can reach*, they are indeterminable

; the systems of meaning can take over this absolutely plural text, but their number is never closed, based as it is on the infinity of language.

ROLAND BARTHES. (1974): 5.

HENRI LEFEBVRE. (1996): 63.

The triad of these efforts serves to move towards ways to revive the idea of a radical access to the city's resources, which includes all groups within the population, opening up spaces to experiment and to realize un-alienated and alternative ways of partaking in the urban process. These are exercises to encourage wild participation in the co-creation of what I refer to as the unruly city, which isn't a fantasy place or a political impossibility, but a hidden environment which already exists, though it is often kept inaccessible. This idea of radical access to the city's resources also includes making these theoretical underpinnings comprehensible and accessible. Communication is crucial.

This work wants to break up systems, not to substitute another system, but to *open up* through thought and action towards *possibilities* by showing the horizon and the road. Against a form of reflection which tends towards formalism, a thought which tends towards an opening leads the struggle.

However, for ethical reasons, this undertaking—throughout, in various degrees—

must remain elusive, vague, secretive, a place that emerges and recedes in practical relationships with others.

AVERY F. GORDON. (2018): XII.

Adam, Spring 2023.

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