MAKING THE CITY
by
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FOR TEHRAN

To the giants, home and pomegranates

CONTENT

On the Cover:
A manipulated version of Erik Fischer's image of Toronto. The image is produced by charting the location of Flickr photos, tweets, and locations from which someone has posted to one or both services.

A DOCUMENT ON TACTICAL URBANISM

This thesis is documentation of my inspirations, research and concluding projects about city living/building. The work is particularly motivated by the personal relationship of people and places and how in Modern cities, compared to their traditional counterparts, it is difficult to foster a sense of belonging and ownership. Certain qualities of the urban built environment - namely its segmentation by function - play significant roles in this dilemma. To counter the interrupting affects of a functionalist city on the everyday life of people a series of experiments were undertaken in the tradition of the Situationist International. These experiments were aimed at stimulating seamless perceptions of the city by disrupting the common hierarchies of the built environment through curating psychogeographic experiences of the city as well as temporary appropriation of spaces and their functional transformation. My position, however, as an ordinary citizen in respect to the complexity, scale and politics of urban development prompted an approach to the task that is commonly known as Tactical Urbanism in the contemporary culture. The adopted approach is fundamentally defined by strategic use of limited time and space, which Michel de Certeau identifies as 'tactical making-do'. Tactic is method of a player to achieve a particular goal in a field that is dominated by other players. In the context of this thesis, the field is the city; and the intended impact is creating shared/public urban spaces that are reflective of the plurality of individuals who live in Toronto, while the dominating players are identified as the government (political dominance) and corporations (economical dominance). The City controls the shape of urban built environment by means of policies while corporations dominate the city

through their strategic investments and depth of financial power that they have Tacticians, on the other hand, have no command over the city and can only influence the totality of the field by series of independent strikes at the right time and at the right place. Tactical Urbanism therefore refers to short-term actions that have become popular in the contemporary urban culture as a result of the gradual fragmentation of power and surge of innovation in the private and individual realm. Tactical moves may result in permanent and fundamental changes.

Experiments presented in this dissertation, contain such tactical moves as interim use of houses destined for demolition for making alternative exhibition spaces and temporary appropriation/curation of generic urban landscapes for creating personal narratives of the city. Together they test the boundaries of an individual's relationship with their city and try to answer personal curiosities about collective making of the city, to locate the place for 'otherness'. In this sense these autonomous and alternative creations are argued to be not only the lifeline of a vibrant and resilient city in accommodating all its eccentricities, but also a necessity for building a just city.

The theoretical backgrounds and arguments included in the thesis contextualize experiments within the roots of modern and contemporary urban/spatial theories, culture and philosophy. At the turn of 20th century George Simmel, the renowned German sociologist, was one of the first people to observe and debate the discrepancies between the built environment of modern cities with the inner working of human nature. The resulting fragmented self that was theorized by Chicago urbanist and sociologists found it even harder to find a place and express its authenticity in Functionalist cities of the 20th century that were conceived from a distant and impersonal view according and according to rigid plans that could not respond well to social changes. Critique of Modern Planning, the Functionalist approach to city building, by the avant-guard group Situationist International in 60's and the alternative tools that they developed for their proposed urbanism made possible a human centric perception of the city. However, it wasn't until the recent history of resistance and action, articulated by Michele De Certeau in his seminal work 'The Practice of Everyday Life', that people have been able to once again directly influence and take part in making cities according to their personal connections with the urban environment.

The four experimental projects included in this thesis are undertaken between June 2012 and October 2013 and represent personal and collective work (as credited) to materialize aforementioned vision. A documentary video on The Weybourne Project, the last experiment in the series, compliments the thesis to show the process and nature of the work. However, it's noteworthy that ideas and poetics of creating space through Tactical Urbanism were pushed to materialization because of a firm belief in experience as a form of learning and unlearning; to make new imaginations. Therefore an important aspect of thesis' argument is embedded in the experience of those events, which is untranslatable to text. This document is as a result only a partial report of the capacity of the tactics used for making of these 'other' spaces.

INTRODUCTION
Making the City

MAKING THE CITY : TORONTO
Introduction

In the 2011 edition of "Cities of Opportunity", a report published annually by the international audit and consulting firm Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC), Toronto is ranked as the second best city in the world to invest in world-wide[1]. This is the first time that the city is positioned alongside such alpha cities as New York (1st place) and London (3rd place) for attracting world capital. The increasing interest in Toronto as a city to invest in might be an opportunity to encourage much-needed densification of the city and expansion of its decades old infrastructure. But the pressuring effect of this newly found interest in economic capacities of the city is also challenging the integrity of our city building aspirations. The rapid and generic nature of the resulting development is the source of a lot of debate among politicians, citizens and investors. In the meantime, the city's urban policies are lagging behind in adjusting to the new and alternative spatial strategies in urban culture. A century of modern urbanization and growth has resulted in new technologies, social patterns and economies that allow people to take ownership of their environment in more immediate ways. To build an inclusive and relevant contemporary urban identity for a city that is growing fast, both in population and size, the city has to diversify its building methods.

In the recent years, a friction between Ontario's provincial government and Toronto's City Hall has become palpable, which is an indication of a highly charged era of growth for Toronto. Toronto, as the largest metropolitan city in the country has a high stake both in provincial and national economy. The

city has been growing by almost 100,000 people every year since 2001. and is under tremendous pressure to provide housing, transportation and jobs for its inhabitants. The provincial government as a result has injected $9.5B investment directly into city's transportation infrastructure to ensure its healthy growth[2]. But the course of events suggests that Ontario's government is also taking advantage of its overruling powers to influence the stream of capital directed towards Toronto, to ensure its appropriate absorption. This is especially evident in easing the administrative process for large building projects in the city. Financial realities of construction, coupled with scarcity and high value of land in favorable precincts of the city is pushing investors to demand permits for denser, taller and bigger projects. The pressure is aggravated by the lengthy and at times complicated nature of building permit applications in Toronto. However, every time that the city tries to put a cap on development or control the growth by rejecting proposals, Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), a legal body of provincial government that hears applications and appeals in relation to land issues, zoning by-laws and such, overturns city's decision. In fact the OMB's over 60% rate of approval has garnered it a reputation in Toronto for favoring developers.

Cities are cornerstones of civilization and hotbeds of creativity, cultural progress and identity making[3] . The inherent complexity and heterogeneity of the city is essential in vitality of our existence. Cities act as mega hubs of social interaction, trade, education and health services. They provide us with a concentration of endless possibilities for fulfilling our needs. And to provide a rich life for their inhabitant cities need to be developed and sustained from many different fronts. Monotonous developments and growth patterns only dampen these vitalities. Even from a financial point of view multiplicities and differences are instrumental in creating a well-greased economy. As the PWC reports on the state of cities in the world, beta cities such as Toronto, San Francisco, Stockholm or Sydney in competition with other cities rely on innovation, people and new visions rather than traditional resources, to ensure their success[4]. By ignoring

1. **Cities of Opportunity** www.pwc. com/us/en/cities-of-opportunity/ **(accessed April 2014)**

2. **Eglinton Cross Town Newsletter** http://www.thecrosstown.ca/news-media/whats-new/province-approves-metrolinx-5-in-10-plan **(accessed June 2014)**

3. **Ann Power. "At Home in the City"** in *Endless Cities* – **ed. Ricky Burdett, Deyan Sudjik (London Phaidon Press Ltd. 2007) 364**

4. www.pwc. com/sv_SE/se/hallbar-utveckeling/assets/cities-of-opportunity-2011.pdf (accessed April 2014)

the plurality of visions in making the city, and putting too much emphasis on economic justification of urban development we may be compromising a significant advantage of Toronto in competing with other emerging world cities.

Contemporary Toronto is a city shaped as much by the grand narratives of its planning practices[5] as it is by the micro narratives of its immensely diverse population[6]. However, the current cultural renaissance of the city is more evident in its food, music and literature than it is in its architecture or spatial politics[7]. Since the 1960's various attempts has been undertaken to reform the urban built form of Toronto. It has been City's recurring method to stimulate these reforms by means of official plans, zoning by-laws, building codes, recommendations and mandates, most of which are incongruous with each other[8]. Interestingly, the critical micro narratives that are providing the city with it legs and arms to animate its cultural and social changes are hardly addressed in any of these documents. Outside the realm of festivals and entertainment, they seem to be entirely absent from the City's vision in building Toronto. Even when they catch political attention of the City as alternative agents for place-making and urban development, they cannot secure a long-term or substantial support from the City. Kensington Pedestrian Sunday is a monthly occurrence during summer in which neighborhood's streets are reserved for pedestrians only and are infused with many different cultural and entertainment events. It was conceived and developed through innovative initiations by the community of Kensington Market neighborhood. After several years of being held independently, the community gained the financial support of the City Hall, only to lose it on the second year. [9] Pedestrian Sundays are arguably one of the most inclusive, diverse and iconic events in Toronto, so to continue the tradition it is

now held by the support of people, local businesses and volunteer activities. In another case, and in the context of Toronto's current golden age of restaurants, food truck industry has made a significant resurgence, however years after its immense popularity among people it is still struggling with the City for a sensible by-law that supports its mobile and none-location based business[10]. In comparison to cities like Berlin or San Francisco that have already accepted and support less formal processes of urban activities and temporary action in such programs such as Tempelhofer intermediate use lab or Pavement to Parks, it is taking Toronto a long time to break away from the fixed notions of space, time and function in conceiving the city.

In reality, Toronto is a city that evades any sense of cohesion; its identity is always at the verge of becoming, an anticipation that never leads to a satisfying and unifying condition. A culture of production and management of space that is based on long-term projections is disharmonious with the fluid realities of contemporary city. While in these plans people, places and time are reduced to their scientific and visual representation such as maps, data and excel sheets the resulting city can hardly absorb the multiplicity of scenarios on the street level and respond to the spontaneous and changing needs of its inhabitants, making it a city that is considered 'cold' to its residents.

This thesis argues for an urban environment that reflects more accurately the multidimensional and complex sum of Toronto's narratives; an urbanism that is informed by pluralities of vision and formed by ingenious and independent actions of its inhabitants. To compliment achievements of masterplanning and other utilitarian making of the city Tactical Urbanism is suggested as method to realize projects that can deliver small scale projects for subtle needs of people. In doing so four experiments were undertaken between June 2012 and October 2013 to examine possible ways of an individual's influence upon the city and their position in regards to building the city. Two separate streams of experiments were thus formed, one that can be succinctly defined as temporary appropriation of privately owned spaces and their functional transformation and the other by restructuring the common narrative of public

5.Julie-Anne Boudreau *Changing Toronto : Governing Urban Neoliberalism.* **Toronto :** University of Toronto Press, 2009, p.150-51

6.Mark Sterling "Buildingondowntown" *EWT/Eco Web Town* no.7, (2013) par.29, http://ecowebtown.eu/n_7/pdf/07_06.pdf (accessed August 18, 2014)

7.Edward Keenan, "Making a scene: a bunch of youngish indie rockers, political activists. And small-press literature are creating cultural history of Toronto" in *Utopia, toward a new Toronto* ed. Jason McBride and Alana Wilcox (Toronto: Coach House Books, 2005), 25

8.Mark Sterling "Buildingondowntown" *EWT/Eco Web Town* no.7, (2013) par.97, http://ecowebtown.eu/n_7/pdf/07_06.pdf (accessed August 18, 2014)

9.http://torontoist.com/2008/05/tall_poppy_inte_56/ (accessed September 22, 2014)

10.http://www.thestar.com/news/city_hall/2014/04/03/council_adds_new_rules_of_ the_road_for_food_trucks.html (accessed September 22, 2014)

spaces through a dynamic and ludic act of walking. By creating autonomous spaces (one physically and the other in the narrative environment) both these streams operate in between the two worlds of private and public (spaces owned privately but open to interested public or collectively owned but reinterpreted as personal spaces) these experiments were attempts in creating places that welcome 'other' activities and narratives that are missing from, neglected in or entirely opposed to the dominant mode of urbanism that is forming Toronto today. By questioning the existing hierarchies of space prescribed by policies and practices of economy these experiments aimed at creating spatial experiences that are seamless with the poetics, needs and ambitions of the everyday life of urban Toronto. Most importantly they aim at making it possible for people to imagine another Toronto.

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CHAPTER I
Apprehensions, Poetics and Experience of the City

THE CITY & THE INDIVIDUAL

In 21st century, more people are living in urbanized settlement than ever before. Whether it is the formal metropolis, sprawling suburbs, or the informal slums, man-made and manufactured environments are shaping the humanity in fundamental ways. The dialectical relationship that exists between people and places is the channel through which urbanization shapes the lives of people. The dynamics between the society and the city is stimulated through the ways we build and experience the built environment. Behind every edifice that grows tall, every street that stretches across the city and all the varieties of public spaces that are spread about our neighbourhoods, there is a will to define an aspect of human life. Whether by sheltering our bodies, providing opportunities for growth or fulfilling our need to connect with others, cities are weaving an intangible fabric of our lives that is essential to our being. Our social network is determined by the ease of access to different parts of the city. The very house we live in defines the concept of home and security and the way we engage with public places and the crowd influences our social identities. As we build cities, they give shape to our existence.

The processes through which the space is affecting people's lives are complex and formed from many different fronts. Compared to more pronounced and tangible phenomena such as the economy or the geography of the city, dynamics of people and places are difficult to map or reproduce through a set of premeditated calculations. Due to their extreme malleability and fluidity, human relations resist rationalization or compartmentalization that are common in the technocratic and scientific approach. Some of the simplest connections that one has with places in their city may be the result of years of interaction and evolution. On the other hand, the rapid urbanization of the past century is infatuated with quantifiable and universal measures. This vision of space, more than often, is too narrow for relating to the intricacies or the varieties of human needs. Inevitably many of them are excluded from the process of urbanization. George Simmel, observes this dilemma in its early ages in 1907 Berlin:

> "Punctuality, calculability and exactness, which are required by the complications and extensiveness of metropolitan life, are not only most intimately connected with its capitalistic and intellectualistic character but also colour the content of life and are conducive to the exclusion of those irrational, instinctive, sovereign human traits and impulses which originally seek to determine the form of life from within instead of receiving it from the outside in a general, schematically precise form. Even though those lives which are autonomous and characterized by these vital impulses are not entirely impossible in the city, they are, none the less, opposed to it as 'in abstracto'." [1]
>
> *George Simmel*

The aspects of the modern city that are concerned with efficiency, specificity and profit, which build a large portion of cities today, are inherently in conflict with the unpredictable and unplanned nature of human's life. As Capitalism advanced in the later decades of 20th century, more cities began to calibrate their infrastructures and architecture according to the mechanics of production and logistics of distribution; intimidating the more intimate qualities of the cities. Functional performance and efficiency preceded familiarity, and speed triumphed beauty. The growth of a mass market supported by generic, consumable and easy to adopt cultures acted as an influential backdrop in cornering possibilities for authenticity and unique self-expressions into highly privatized or fragmented moments.

In the coming decades, after Simmel's analysis of the mental state of people in

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1. George Simmel, *The Metropollis and Mental Life,* http://www.blackwellpublishing. com/content/BPL_Images/Co
ntent_store/Sample_chapter/0631225137/Bridge.pdf .13-14 (accessed June 5, 2014)

large cities, Chicago urbanists and sociologists, Wirth and Park, felt at unease with the incommensurability that Simmel had drawn between the self and the city. They in fact began to celebrate the consequent fragmented self and the density of differences in highly urban societies as a mechanism to protect oneself from high degrees of stimulation in the city. By assuming seemingly different or even opposing roles, one is able to be more responsive and engage with various groups, environments and occasions. As Richard Sennett investigates the themes above in his book, 'The conscience of the Eye' , he also promotes difference as a virtue of cities. The city dweller is able to acquire membership in 'widely divergent groups' and to explore various segments of their personality[2]. In his view, the role of the urbanist is to develop narratives that besides laying out hard goals and facts have the property of discovery and exploring the unforeseen. He advises an "Open System" in which growth admits conflict and dissonance; and an architecture that has incomplete forms, fostering a greater connection between the building and the fabric of the city.
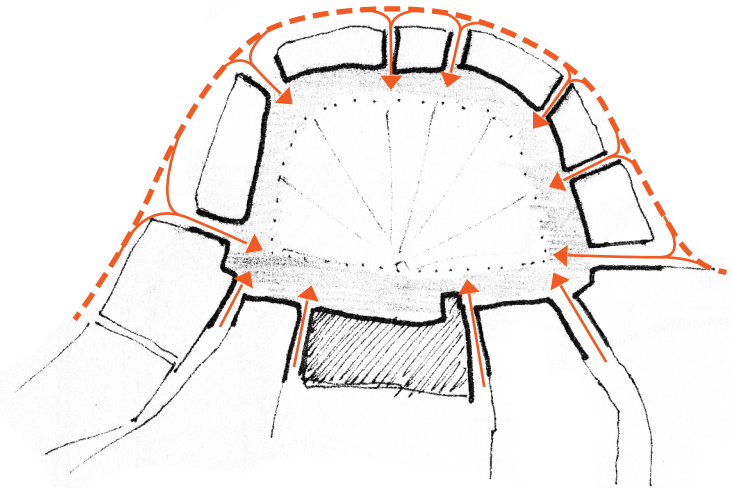
Historically, many cities were equipped to accommodate the dynamics of difference and variety of roles in their public spaces. The simultaneous need for subjectivity and inclusion were met with creation of multi-purpose and open to interpretation spaces. Some were deliberately built according to plans others grew organically and in ad-hoc model. Bazaars, piazzas, main streets, souks, arcades, agoras, theatres and city squares often came to being as instruments of social and cultural diversity—places of collectively-acceptable individual behaviours[3]. As Anthony Vidler explains, these public spaces were as much governed by the spontaneous needs of their users as by their functional performances, exemplified by the Parisian arcades of the early 19th century French metropolis. The simultaneous presence and interaction of the bourgeoise, the poor, the merchant or the entertainer signified the arcades as grand mixer of different ethnicities, class, age and gender[4]. They were places to measure the true pulse of the city.

It is noteworthy that their success in being inclusive of differences and frictions,

Piazza del Campo in Siena, Italy is on a daily basis a place for street vendors, restaurants, cafes and shops. Its slightly sloped ground towards the City hall is ideal for lounging and once a year turns into a racing track. The hashed area is Palazzo Publico (previously the monarch's mansion and currently acting as the City Hall), the slightly grey area indicates the area that is transformed into the race track and the arrows show the various entrances into the piazza.

besides the political or cultural values of the times, was also reflected and shaped by their architectural organization. The commonality among all above examples is in their simultaneous capacity for allowing pause or movement. Such static roles and events as the merchants, observers or random encounters were as easily placed as the traffic of goods, strollers and daily routes. This is achieved through creation of porosity, thresholds, centrality and easy access, in form of fairly large 'urban rooms'. In fact, application of such elements facilitates a sense of place through the set of relations that they encourage between people and the built form. With less emphasis on monumental or iconic perception of the environment, buildings or objects, and instead accommodating fluid and changing events, a diversity of social relationships are encouraged in these places[5]. In these public spaces form is not concerned with the exactitude of its performance, but rather with the processes that take place in them.

2. Richard Sennett. *The conscience of the eye.* New York: Alfred A.Knopf, 1990.127
3. Anthony Vidler. *The Scenes of the Street and other Essays* (New York : Monocelli Press,2011) 84.
4. Ibid. 81.

5. Richard Sennett ," The Open City" in *Endless Cities* ed. Ricky Burdett & Deyan Sudjic (London, Phaidon Press, 2007), 294.

According to David Harvey's analysis of space, for example, a bazaar without the people, exchange and goods is only the sum of its material geometries—a stretch of an internal street in a cluster of buildings. In his matrix of spatiality (Appendix 1) he categorizes spaces that are "embedded in or internal to process" as relational or relative, in comparison to an absolute perception of place. He further explains that relational spaces are inseparable from the events that take place in them. In this sense, Sennett's incomplete urban architecture, corresponds to the notion of relational space (as a place that is not bound by its specific architecture or isolated programming). This ambiguity and openness to different relations between users and objects naturally encourages inclusiveness. The majority of public spaces that exist in modern cities, today, are in comparison, are more fixed and are designed as absolute and determined objects. And if not opposed to, they are either indifferent or an obstacle to the fluidity and diversity of personal expressions of an individual. In fact the irreproducibility of highly personalized experiences, through rapid mechanical production has resulted in cities that are populated with repeatable spatial products and personas:

> "Contemporary public space reflects the organization and bureaucracy of the city. Its efficiency, which is attuned to the collective, has a debilitating effect on the individual. The pre-programmed space is one-dimensional. Human beings are demoted to the status of road users, recreationalists, or shoppers. Their behaviour is laid down. All the ingredients of the street scene are geared to a clear and standard use. Codes dictate behaviour. The layout of the public landscape is one of prescribed paths and pedestrian crossing lights. This pusillanimous one-dimensionality ignores the intelligence of the inquiring urbanite[6]."

Adriaan Geuze

From the Greek Polis to the contemporary post-modern mega cities societies in every city had to take a position in regards to the issue of public and private—

the type of activities and roles associated with each and their consequent spatial organization. In this way, each city, in the form of building philosophies that they adopt, endorse or reject a dialogue between the two poles of personal and collective. It is valuable thus, to examine some of the most recent developments in the recent history of building public spaces in Toronto.

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6. Adriaan Geuze , "Accelerating Darwin" in *The Artificial Landscape* ed. Hans Ibelings (New York : Nai Publishers 2000), 256.

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TORONTO: PRIVATIZATION OF URBAN LANDSCAPE

Toronto's recent wave of urbanization is intensely competitive, fast and concentrated in the areas best served by the limited transit infrastructure of the city. Densification is most notable in select areas: Downtown core, Etobicoke City Centre, North York City Centre, Scarborough Centre and Yonge-Eglinton Centre. These areas have been specifically identified and endorsed under *Places to Grow Act, 2005* as part of an initiative for planning "healthy and prosperous communities throughout Ontario". A document, titled "Growth Plan for the Greater Golden Horseshoe", was consequently prepared by the government of Ontario to map out the size, location and density of current and future urban growth in these areas. As a result of this focused interest the provincial government is directly involved in the urbanization of Toronto, specifically by means of improving the infrastructure of these areas and controversial relaxation of building policies through Ontario Municipal Board. Currently a disproportionate number of large-scale developments are being built by the private sector in these areas.

Centrality and more developed transportation network around these areas make them some of the most populated and desirable precincts in the city—naturally looming as great opportunity for property developers of all kinds. Corporations are involved in building large residential, commercial, and entertainment facilities in these hubs, at times taking over a few city blocks with their proposed developments. The sheer size of the urban landscape that is being produced by the developers as a result is, however, alarming. Unlike the government or communities, developers have no long-term stake in the well-being and success of their projects on intricate levels. They are primarily motivated by short-term gain and the dynamics of real estate market; entirely

divorced from the cultural and social implications of their developments in the decades to come. In the design process their primary focus is on reducing risk and maximizing profit. And they do so by limiting the number of factors at play to utmost predictable, calculable and rigid items as possible. The sense of place that is formed by the unpredictable encounters, unplanned events and the personal relationship with space have no role in the strictly number-driven processes of development that is common in these areas. The emerging patterns of living, working and urban culture are too fluid for the standard frameworks set up to produce malls, condominiums, office towers and other formulated architecture of this newly developed areas. As more land is being transferred to corporations, the city is witnessing a higher degree of homogeneity. As a result of rampant presence of corporate standards in urbanization the urban space is noticeably more commercialized and exclusive.

In the recent decades, to mitigate the suffocating effect of aggressive developments on communities (both in size and intent), the City has stepped in with a rewarding system encouraging developers to "give back" to the neighborhoods. The system was invented by New York-based consulting firm Voorhees in 1961 as a mechanism to ensure sufficient air and light to the streets of Manhattan. At this time densification in form of tall buildings had already become the quintessential component of urbanism in New York, and a defining element for the city that was witnessing an intense growth from the beginning of 20th century. In a report to New York planning department Voorhees succinctly describes the process as below:

> "In order to bring more light and air into streets surrounded by tall buildings, as well as to create more usable open space, a bonus device has been established to encourage the setting back of building from the street line[7]."

Ever since, these two simple lines have evolved to become the basis for a set of agreements between the City and developers outside of the zoning by-laws. These agreements allow the City to grant special provisions to proposed

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7. Jerold S. Kayden *Privately Owned Public Space: The New York City Experience* (John Wiley & Sons New York : 2000). 11

development in exchange for built or cash benefits for the City. It is most common for developers, however, to bargain for taller building heights (air-right) in return for providing a public space, often within the property of the development. Privately Owned Public Spaces, better known as POPS, are the direct outcome of this process.

Throughout the years POPS have become a ubiquitous form of public space in compact parts of cities across the globe; and yet they have proved to be one of the least used and unsuccessful variations of social space in any city. In New York alone 3.5 million sq.ft of POPS have been produced in the past 50 years, out of which only 16% are actively used. The rest of them play insignificant or no role in the everyday life of people[8]. This is a great underperformance and waste for a city in which land is one of its rarest and most valuable commodities. Yet they persist as a tool of negotiation between developers and officials. In Toronto the failure of POPS, as a remedy to densification without diversity or lack of common spaces, can be partially explained by ineffective principles of exchange between the officials and the developers. But it is more so derived from the extreme inward looking process of spatial production common in corporate development. Studies show that lack of guidance for councillors (who are directly in charge of negotiating with developers), absence of professionals from negotiation process and limited supervision over design and operation of these public spaces have compromised potential capacity of section 37 of Toronto's zoning by-law (under which these spaces are secured)[9].

Today most POPS are strategically designed in ways to underplay their presence as an accessible public space. In Toronto, over one millions sq.ft of public space[10] is tucked behind the buildings, inside the lobby area of tall towers and occasionally above street levels, making them difficult to find or intimidating for passersby to enter. The constant presence of security guards, heavy surveillance and limited hours of operation are other reasons that deter the public from freely using them. POPs deliver no significant benefit to the city and have become an easy instrument of gaining increased profit for the developers.

In reviewing the design, development and performance of POPS, they appear as yet another instance of missed opportunity in the history of Toronto for making inclusive and dignified social spaces. But ironically they also point to an alternative process of developing shared spaces. For over Sixty years Toronto has been developed according to the ideals of Modernists, which solemnly sought purity, but above all harmony in the city—secured by religious separation of life functions, and use of public and private duality as a way of demarcation. However, in building of POPS critical decisions about location, form and function of public spaces, a matter of governmental mandate, are made by private citizens (in form of corporations) who have access to large resources (money, land and time). This official deviance from the traditional role of the City as the sole governor and provider of the public sphere, ironically posits a decisive form of action for independent individuals : the ordinary citizen. POPS set strong precedent for delegating the development of public spaces to independent, unofficial and unelected parties and are a hail to the emerging patterns of growth outside the common functionalist practices of city building in Toronto.

8. Department of City Planning City of New York *Privately Owned Public Space* http://www.nyc.gov/html/dcp/html/priv/priv.shtml (accessed July 24, 2014)

9. Aaron A. Moore, "Trading Density for Benefits : Toronto and Vancouver Compared" in *IMFG Papers on Municipal Finance and Governance* no.13 (2013) http://munkschool.utoronto.ca/imfg/uploads/220/imfg_no_13_moorer3_online_final.pdf (accessed July 10, 2014)

10. City of Toronto City Planning Division *Protecting and Increasing Access to Privately Owned Publicly Open Accessible Spaces* http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2013/pg/bgrd/backgroundfile-59381.pdf (accessed July 24, 2014)

FUNCTIONALIST URBANISM : ABSOLUTE SPACE, ABSOLUTE TIME

Functionalist Urbanism was first conceptualized in the beginning of 20th century by a group of Modernist architects who formed the Congrès International d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM). The group was consisted of such prominent figures as Le Corbusier, Giedion and Van Eesteren, with other European members. They undertook the task of developing an urbanism that would solve the pressing problems of their time. In early 20th century, the members of CIAM saw a world bewitched by maladies of medieval streets and historical buildings in front of them that could only be cured through total rethinking of the city and life within it. In 1930, a few years before members of CIAM issued the iconic Athens' Charter, in a letter arranged as "Response to Moscow", Le Corbusier expresses his distaste for the existing fabric of Moscow and, except for a few monuments, suggested total demolition of the city[11]. The same solution was devised for slums and the unsanitary narrow streets of Paris. The truth is that the traditional city was crumbling under the pressures of industrial revolution, but to surmount its messiness and undesirability CIAM was prepared to take radical positions. This emphasis on discontinuation of the past and complete dissociation with the history was emblematic of the Modernist movement.

Despite untested or tested and failed[12] position of CIAM about the city, After WWII, their rational approach to city-making became extremely popular internationally. Europe at this time was in urgent need of reconstruction and America was facing a thriving economy and was in desperate need of growth. The group's concentration on function as city's main organizational tool, and the universality of the three themes of work, housing, and leisure, made Functionalism a viable and fairly consumable solution for a wide range of cities in the world. Toronto gravitated towards a functionalist paradigm in the early 1960's and began its experimentation with urban planning influenced by principles of Functionalism with Finch & Steels area[13].

To achieve a universal urbanism CIAM followed a scientific approach to city-building that was first invented by Dutch architect Van Lohuizen. Commissioned by Amsterdam's Urban Development Section, Lohuizen developed an analytical guide for development of small factory towns. His method was based on collection and analysis of physical and demographic data. First, he would identify the number of factories built in an area. Then he would ascertain the number of workers and people associated with each industrial plant. From these data, then, he would calculate the number of houses and scope of infrastructure needed. In presentations, accordingly, places of work, housing and recreation were codified in three colours connected together with a transportation network . Numbers, in conversation with these coded maps of subject areas, would then determine the size and location of future development. Adding a few other variables, such as land sizes and density, CIAM members used the same methodology to analyze 33 mostly European cities to provide a guideline for a universal and modern urbanism. Based on their findings they formulated a response to their mandate: to develop an urbanism that would take advantage of the new modes of production (mass production specifically) for resolving architectural problems of the time (mostly housing) through a Modernist language.

A new modern technocracy—using CIAM case studies—allowed a categorization of spaces in the city into a series of distinctive functions. This pattern of urbanization has specifically aimed at developing more rational and collectivist societies[14]. The capacity of scientific positioning also gave the city

11. Eric Mumford. *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism 1928-1960* (Cambridge : The M.I.T Press 2000), 46.
12. Ibid., 270.

13. Julie-Anne Boudreau. *Changing Toronto : Governing Urban Neoliberalism* (Toronto : University of Toronto Press, 2009), 124.
14. Ibid. , 273.

designer, or planner in this case, the advantage to measure, locate and control any development from a fair distance. By limiting the number of functions and eliminating chance from the design process, the space went through a process of objectification. This facilitated trade, arrangement and re-arrangement of space according to a prescribed set of internal rules independent of site-specific events. This has become possible through strategic positioning of the planner that Stefano Boeri compares to a 'zenith gaze' over territory[15]. From this position local codes are irreducible and are interpreted as chaos. The observer is unable or uninterested in local cultural context or the architectural conventions with cultural significance (not measurable with numbers and geometry recognizable from this view). This positioning of the planner reinforced the already existing notion of industrial city as a uniformly chaotic phenomenon that could be subject to scientific improvement from above[16]. To solve possible conflicts that may rise between the individual and the grand plan in favour of an abstract collective, (since the collective is also measured, observed and rendered from distance) the scheme emphasizes on the features common among presented cities . This notion of the city further alienated people as individually unique elements from the process of design and exacerbated the mechanization of the city.

Another disruptive property of Functionalism for cities, including Toronto, was its perfect alignment with the aggressive forces of the Capitalist economy. Very early on members of CIAM discussed their position in regards to Capitalism and decided to embrace its dynamics[17]. Although the stark segmentation of life into separate functions was not economically motivated, but it allowed a much deeper manipulation of human societies by corporations. Dispersion of people, loss of cities in their traditional dense forms, heavy reliance of people on automobile and creation of extensive network of roads, created a fertile ground for production and consumption oriented cities[18].

"Capital flow presupposes tight temporal and spatial coordinations in the midst of increasing separation and fragmentation. It is impossible to imagine such a material process without the production of some kind of urbanization as a "rational landscape" within which the accumulation of capital can proceed. Capital accumulation and the production of urbanization go hand in hand [19]."

By allowing the city to be reduced to its functions and representations in such utilitarian ways, the human differences became to be perceived as chaos and their uncertain nature a threat to the system. Harmonious performances are, thus encouraged by creating spaces that have strong inward look—whether public or private. Conceived with very limited reference to the actual context, the elements of a Functionalist city are located and designed only in regards to their use and connection to transportation network. In adopting the same culture of city-building, Toronto's landscape has also witnessed growth of such singular spaces: suburban high-rise, malls, big-box stores and office parks. According to Harvey when the space is conceived in such absolute terms (also common in Functionalism), it becomes a 'thing in itself' and exists independently from any other space or element. This is a departure from the relative notion of the space common in traditional public spaces of the historic cities. Absolute Spaces are successful in clear framing of events and banishing any uncertainty and ambiguity. However in case of unforeseen events they are unable to respond. Due to deviance, as a natural quality of a growing city and its dwellers[20], a negative or suppressed tension is thus inevitable between people and the absolute expressions of the city.

This very limitedness vision of the city attracted serious criticism from within and outside. The very own leftist members of CIAM provided an acute criticism about shortcomings of Functionalism in addressing the varied dimensions of urban life as early as 1933. But unfortunately they gained no attention by senior members of the group[21]. From outside of the group, also, philosophers, urbanists,

15. Stefano Boeri, "Eclectic Atlases" in *Urban Media Lab* http://urbanmedialabtraffic. files.wordpress.com/2012/04/boeri_eclectic_atlases.pdf (accessed April 2014)
16. Eric Mumford. *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism 1928-1960* (Cambridge : The M.I.T Press 2000), 54.
17. Ibid 47.
18. David Harvey. *The Urban Experience* (Baltimore : The John Hopkins University Press,1989), 35.

19. Ibid., 35
20. Richard Sennett. *The Conscience of the Eye* (New York : Alfred A.Knopfe 1990),126.
21. Eric Mumford. *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism 1928-1960* (Cambridge : The

architects and sociologist reacted strongly to the rigidity of Functionalism to the point of shunning the Functionalist City as "anti-idea of city" [22].

Gradually new departures from such elite and purist vision of the city began to take shape. Rejection of a totality that could within itself include an entire world, had a significant role in sparking a series of movements in urbanism that are generally known as post-modern. People like Venturi or Rossi began to look into the existing fabric of their cities to rediscover meaning and value in the local nuances of architecture and urbanism. Those that were formed from the street level, by ordinary people and in course of history, began to attract attention. Previously snubbed from high modernism, attempts in absorbing these properties back into the culture were made in various ways by people like Jane Jacobs, Leon Krier and Collins and Koetter. Important to this argument is the renewed interest in the public notion of cities as these post-modern scholars and practitioners began to rethink the fabric of the city and its architecture. The modernist city had seen an intensified use of private realm as a place of personal freedom. Segregation of work, living and leisure had further complicated the notion of public and private. The subject of the 'other' had become a huge source of anxiety in the modernist city. It confused the place of identities or activities that were not taken into consideration in the long-term planning of cities[23]. The significance of these post-modern era movements is in admitting to the incommensurability of some of life experiences and de-stigmatization of placing them in one project or under one title[24].

Among reactions to Functionalist City, however, the Situationist International is unique in the political position that it has adopted against Modernist utopian principles. It is bringing the focus of urbanism on the complex psyche of individuals, and the quality of human experiences in the urban geography. To that end they also developed powerful concepts and tools both for measuring qualitative features of the city and conceiving urban environments that are seamless with human experience.

MIT Press, 2000), 64.
　　22. Ibid 272
　　23. Fredric Jemeson *The Seeds of Time* (New York : Columbia University Press 1994)
152
　　24. Ibid. 168

THE SITUATIONISTS : THE FRONTIERS

In reaction to CIAM's over simplified and determinist modes of urbanization the radical group Situationist International (S.I.) was one of the most outspoken critics. They were initially formed under the title of 'Letterist International' in the 1950's, formed as an avant garde movement. The Situationists were non-conformist and revolutionary group lead by protagonist Guy Debord with a significant role in the uprising of Paris 1968 (specifically through Lefebvre). S.I. rejected the notion of any artistic or architectural 'production' under the conviction that any ideas, even revolutionary against the system, would be appropriated by the Capitalist economy and will be reproduced to perpetuate its existence. Therefor they limited their work to forms of "experimental utopia", as French philosopher Henri Lefebvre describes, mostly created with the help of imagery, imagination and poetic productions[25].

However, their critique of urbanism was consistent, elaborate and potent even though they were unable to gain the attention of their contemporary architectural or urban thinkers[26]. To them the crisis of urban planning was a political and social issue, rather than an architectural problem. They make this position clear through an analysis they offer on Modern urbanism in an article published in 1961 about Mournex, a newly-built factory town of 12,000 people. The so-called *grands ensembles* that Mournex was also modeled after were a type of assembly of residential buildings, school, shopping center, theatre and other communal facilities in which residents were assigned to different houses based on their income. For their very functionalist make up, these towns heavily lacked social and cultural substance and were the subject of criticism from many fronts. However, the Situationist's concern was barely the beauty or even the lack of culture, but that these towns were the embodiment of the hierarchical

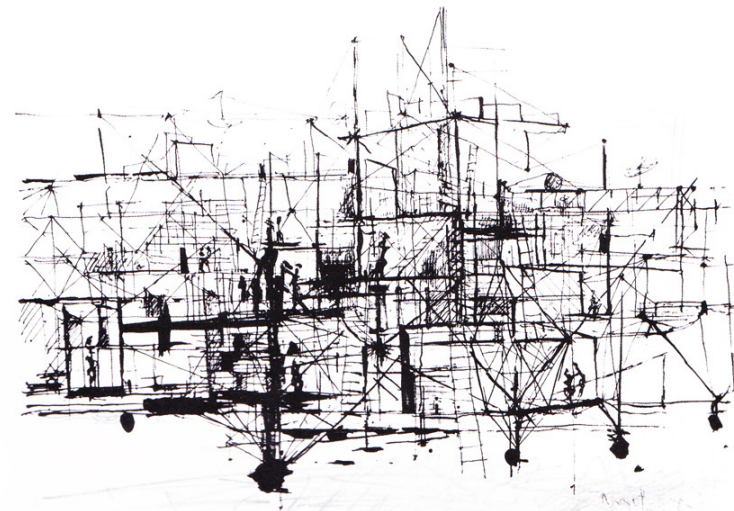　　25. Tom McDonough *The Situationist and the City* (Brooklyn, NY : Verso, 2009), 106.
　　26. Ibid., 28-29.

organization of advanced capitalism[27]. Division of housing type, based on income and marital status, to them presented itself as a concrete expression of the graduated rewarding system of the economy[28]. It also alerted a notion of control and power over private and public property. As mentioned previously this had become possible by Functionalism aligning itself with political principles of Capitalism and absorbing its perception of time and space.

To develop their iconic criticism of urban planning, the S.I adopted a particular concept for studying the city, which sits in stark contrast with that of functionalism, coined as Psychogeography. It is the body of knowledge about the city that is gained by observing and engaging with the urban environment from the point of view of a flâneur. Flaneurie, a practice developed in the 19th century by a few intellectuals, most notably Charles Baudelaire, is consisted of taking strolls in the city to observe, get inspired and be immersed in the urban life without direct social contact. They would allow themselves to be drawn and directed by the stimulants in the environment and take as few cues from their presumptions as possible for navigating the city. Psychogeography specifically focuses on the relationship of an individual with their surrounding with a great emphasis on flows of the city. The psychogeographic walk, or dérive, encapsulates the dialectics of urban life experienced in an ordinary day by an individual. By asking its subject to give up their familiar reasons for moving in the city, dérive provides the mood for releasing oneself to the solicitations of the site, to pay attention to currents of the city, its fixed points or vortexes. In reference to urban sociologist and geographer Chombart de Lauwe's map of a student's commute in Paris (over the course of a year), derives were documented by innovative maps. These maps included temporal qualities of space by including flows, time or a narrative of the journey. Back to Harvey's division of space, the practice allows one to examine and evaluate the performance of urban spaces from both relative and relational point of view, which are more affiliated with the social, emotional and actual properties of the space.

Naturally the S.I sought a flexible and dynamic urbanism that could adapt

to everyday situations of life. The two distinct aspects of this urbanism were first, a new lifestyle in which people are liberated from work and are free to engage with their creative desires (homo ludens). In this life people were free to activate the temporary, the emergent and the transitory[29]. And second, to build environments that were seamless with this freed and spontaneous mode of living. To them an emancipated city that could yield to the state of the individual was the highest priority and the most rudimentary condition for human progress post Capitalism. The only recorded vision of this rather futuristic utopia[30], other than in writing, is Constant's drawings and sculptures (models) of the New Babylon. In his iterations of the Situationist utopia the city is consisted of elevated linear paths for circulating among different zones of 'moods and ambience'. Each place reflects a different dimension of our emotional and psychological being: happiness, sadness, ecstasy or even frustration. These zones, were imagined as highly porous pods, connected to each in every direction across this elevate paths, suggesting an extremely mobile, almost nomadic, mode of living.

2a

27. Tom McDonough *The Situationist and the City* (Brooklyn, NY : Verso, 2009), 24.

28. Ibid., 24

29. Ibid., 119

30. Ibid., 116

However, the S.I in many occasion, also suggested *détourenment* as a method for achieving some aspects of Unitary Urbanism in the existing city. *Détourenment* is defined by adopting other cultural products and deflecting their original expression in such ways to convey intended artistic, cultural or political messages. Characterized by appropriation and diversion, the practice was originally developed by Surrealists and further developed by S.I into an urban mode of action. Eradication of institutional functions such places of worship or appropriation of roof tops, and infusing them with everyday life activities were some of the ways they saw for realization of Unitary Urbanism in the contemporary city.

History, unfortunately, hasn't unfolded according to S.I's vision. The human beings are currently neither freed from the purposes of Capitalist economy, nor have the cities come to grasp with responding to the full range of urban dweller's psyche. However, the colourful and highly imaginary renditions of a city that is indistinguishable from the mental state of its inhabitants has inspired variations of ideas and attempts in making human-centric cities. Dérive, psychogeography and détournment also, each by their own means, opened new doors for understanding, engaging and building cities. By putting an unprecedented and honest emphasis on the individual as the initiating point of conceiving the city, they also celebrated every day people as possible frames of reference and agent of change .

TACTICAL URBANISM : A GUIDE TO INDIVIDUAL ACTION

"Sly as a fox and twice as quick : there are countless ways of making do."

Michel De Certeau

In the event of misalignment of interest, people enter negotiations with each other to find the best compromise in reaching their goals. The same is true with people and the city. People are constantly engaged in a form of negotiation and appropriation with the built environment around them: at an intersection when faced with fast-paced traffic, when objecting to proposed projects in the city, or building their own personal map of the city while walking.

In each occasion, people are trying to test, navigate and possibly expand the field of influence in a mutually shared space. Either subtle or grand, these are necessary for levelling the dynamics of power in the city. But in a city like Toronto where its urban development is increasingly influenced in favour of economy, this levelling is becoming more difficult. Rules and regulations prohibit 'informal' agents to implement any lasting and permanent change to the city. However, the livelihood and success of any city, as shown previously, is in resisting the urge to integrate these different forces. In order to build some resilience it is necessary for the city to preserve these micro narratives. They are agents of adaptation and flexibility in a situation that the behemoth of city's governance is unable to keep up with change.

On a global and even local scale the 'consumer', though, may appear trapped in the large net of corporations' economic agenda[31]. In a money-oriented society it may seem impossible to make any considerable affect on the city in an absence of power. But within this vast territory of consumer-corporate relations endless forms of autonomy are possible. In his influential work, Practice of Everyday Life, Michel de Certeau draws the distinction between the ways formal and informal actors exert influence in a shared field. Most informal moves or 'making dos' counted in the script are unconscious forms of influence, such as walking, reading or cooking, but his analysis of these "acts of everyday life" also set a solid framework for an individual's conscious action upon any chosen field, in this case, the city.

De Certeau argues that the difference between the methods of individuals for affecting a system and the technics of dominating players lie in the advantages and disadvantages in regards to control of time and space. Compared to the powerful players in the field, the consumer, or in this case the city dweller lacks a fixed base from which to manage their relationship with the external world (city). In a city, the political players are equipped with legislative and political tools and a base from which to impose and maintain an order prescribed by an elite body in the City. Through zoning by-laws, policy-making, official plans, recommendations and management of city incomes and taxes the political order is managing its relations from within. To preserve its position, it is also continuously at work to avoid unpredictable influences from outside, creating a rigidness in action and decision-making processes. By stream lining and mechanization of processes the system tries to simplify a rather complex issue. Through this rationalization and controlled relationships the City is also capable of expanding its area of influence, increasing its number of relationships effectively. An investor equally, gains and protects his or her influence over the city through lobbying, control of capital and privileged insight to the future developments from the base of their business.

In contrast to policy-makers or private investors, a citizen has a fairly weak

position in regards to appropriation and control of space in the domain of objectified and monetized city. Their relationship with other people or the government is also subject to change based on conditions that are dictated mostly by exigencies of their life rather than a pre-set of internal policies or rules. Compared to the general public, the political body of the city or those with great financial asset (eg. corporations), have a strategic position that is perpetuated by their established 'properness'—a triumph of place over time. They postulate a place that can be delimited as its own, serving as the base from which to protect them and their interests from what is external to their system; the Other.

In contrast with a strategy, tactic is the tool of the weak[32]. Tactic is described as a calculated action determined by the absence of a proper locus. Tactical players are fluid in manner, sharp in action; but unable to keep their winning. The consumer, or citizens, by avoiding delimitation of the external, equips him or herself with conditions necessary for autonomy. Everything and anything can be deployed for attaining the intended result. In the absence of pre-existing rules of engagement or large operation, the ordinary citizen is capable of interacting with more diverse and unpredictable situations and can establish instantaneous connections as needed. Since they are moving in the territory of the Other (the organizational institutions), their strength lies in keeping all the field open for their actions. Lacking a base, the tactic holds mobility and has to accept the offerings of the moment, taking advantage of time and resources. An individual can then alternatively depend on manoeuvring in the framework laid by the dominating power and make use of its existing elements, not to dominate but to move and make changes. This is precisely how individuals and entrepreneurial forces, which are not necessarily foreseen or accommodated by the official system, take action in regards to their motives. Lacking a field of vision, compared to the position of one who devises strategy, a tactical player operates in isolated actions, blow by blow, and gains their validity in relation to the pertinence they lend to time. To change the organization of the space to their favour, then, the individual makes rapid moves to transform opportunities

31. Michel De Certeau. *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1984), 35-39.

32. Michel De Certeau. *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1984), 39.

into favourable situations. However, since the success of an individual lays in their agility and lack of base, they cannot keep their win; hence the temporal quality of their achievements[33].

From an urbanist's point of view, thus tactic versus strategy is more concerned with the small-scale, establishing relationships among objects and informal players. And more than frequently its accomplishments are temporary and fleeting, all in great contrast with the common concept of the city as a structured and lasting entity. As illustrated, modern cities are mostly developed according to set of long-term plans that are drafted from a strategic point of view. The goals they promise to deliver are also structured in such ways to be immune to the influences from outside of their framework. But in this current climate of change and plurality, could an urbanism formed by short-term goals and temporary, incomplete structures (devised by none planners) offer sustainable solutions to the varied range of problems that cities face today? or are they just another blow to the deconstruction of cities as we know them?

As Bishop discusses, in the post civil society, where there is a steady decline in creation of public spaces, and when the economy is experiencing ever-faster cycles of production and consumption, the temporary may be in fact one of the most sustainable solutions to developing some aspects of the city. In the liquid conditions of the contemporary city, social forms and institution have no longer enough time to solidify and, thus, cannot serve as frames of reference. Furthermore the many uncertainties that shadow the economy make it difficult for construction processes to guarantee their expenses and outcomes. On the other hand, alternative agents such as ordinary people and entrepreneurs are able to garner conventional and unconventional resources by collaboration, crowd funding and sharing to build projects according to their needs—in just the right time and scale. In this fashion, Bishop argues, that urban sites are transformed from static commodities to fluid utilities that through an open-source place making' are defined incrementally; a successful process of transformation from the absolute to the relational (refer to Harvey, Appendix 1). Temporary projects can also be successful catalysts for larger projects that

are spearheaded by governments.

Consequently tactic is pursued as the ruse for applying solutions to some of the simple issues that are complex to solve by officials. The bottom-top orientation of action in Tactical Urbanism makes it inadvertently a potent tool for protest. But most importantly it suggests and includes the variety of urban projects for instant improvement of the urban environment. They are frequently resulted from subtle manipulation of existing spaces, and within the means of the community or individuals who initiate it. Tactical Urbanism in this way is the surgical tool for citizens to take control of their built environment. In Toronto Thorncliffe Park Women's Committee has exactly done that by transforming the under-used green spaces around the modernist residential blocks of the neighbourhood into an active bazaar that is operated by the residents of the towers. This process is especially valuable as people themselves become frames of reference for urban formation, filling the gap that evaporations of institutions and negligence of master plans have left behind. Once this fluid space and time of action is dominated by the players, they can employ strategy to perpetuate the affects and objectives of their projects, instigating bigger and more permanent changes[34].

Intensification in use of space due to higher densities, changing patterns of work and the increasing mobility means that shared urban spaces are expected to play greater and more diverse roles in people's lives. To activate the dormant capacities of the existing city to such ends, Tactical Urbanism offers a strong action oriented and relational approach to the city. It is concerned with the local population, is extremely site-specific and invests in readily available resources for place-making. Tactical Urbanism, despite being a recent phenomenon in city-making, is arguably reformulation of people's intuitive reaction to the shortcomings of their cities, and their spatial needs. Following pages depict how a group of domestic workers in Hong Kong form "Little Manilla : a lively population who every Sunday take over the plaza of HSBC Bank, and transform it from a global financial icon to a local market where people exchange goods, organize deliveries back to Philippine and socialize with one another..

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33. Michel De Certeau. *The Practice of Everyday Life* (Berkeley : University of California Press, 1984), 29-42.

34. Aurora Fernandez Per "Editorial : Strategy and Tactic in Public Space" in *a+t Magazine* Issue 38 (2011)

3a

4a

5a

19

CHAPTER II
Experiments & Implementations

'OTHER' SPACES

"Our production is the event, the discovery of new territories[1]."

Aldo Innocenazi

The society is a place of alliance and the city is the place where those bonds take place in. In 2012 with an urge to personally form a space that would foster and accommodate some of my very personal interests in the city I began experimenting with the resources that was available to me. The very first project was an accidental endeavour on urbanism, shortly after which 'Society of Homo Ludens' was formed: a studio with an aim to develop similar projects with more coherence and better suited resources. The remainder of projects in this chapter represent experiments with walking as a mobile space, commissioned work and further development of the concept of the very first project. These projects are designed for the purpose of discovering new field for action and developing further development of detournemnt techniques and expanding the range of useful tactics for reaching the objectives of each project. However in all project there's an underlying theme of creating a form of 'other' spaces for free expression, self-realization and practice of our very personal interests in the public realm.

1. Aldo Innovnazi, member of Stalker in conversation with Flaminia Genari - June 1996

MAP OF PROJECTS
Fields/Points/Locations

The Weybourne Project
4

The Divadale Project
5

The Soudan Project
1

Toronto

● Field of Action

● Point of Action

— Street

#YOUAREINALABYRINTH
3

2
Playthewalk

LAWRENCE E

401 HIGHWAY

EGLINTON E

MOUNTPLEASANT

BAYVIEW

AVENUE RD

YONGE

BATHURST

COLLEGE

DUNDAS W

BLOOR W

QUEEN W

TIMELINE OF PROJECTS
Including original case study & future project

0 CITY INDISTINGUISHABLE
(See Appendix 3)

II PLAYWALK
25-28 April

IV THE WEYBOURNE PROJECT
25 October

2011   FEBRUARY

2012   JUNE

2013   APRIL   OCTOBER

2014

NOVEMBER   2015

I THE SOUDAN PROJECT
8 June

III #YOU ARE IN A LABYRINTH
5 October
Nuit Blanche

V THE DIVADALE PROJECT
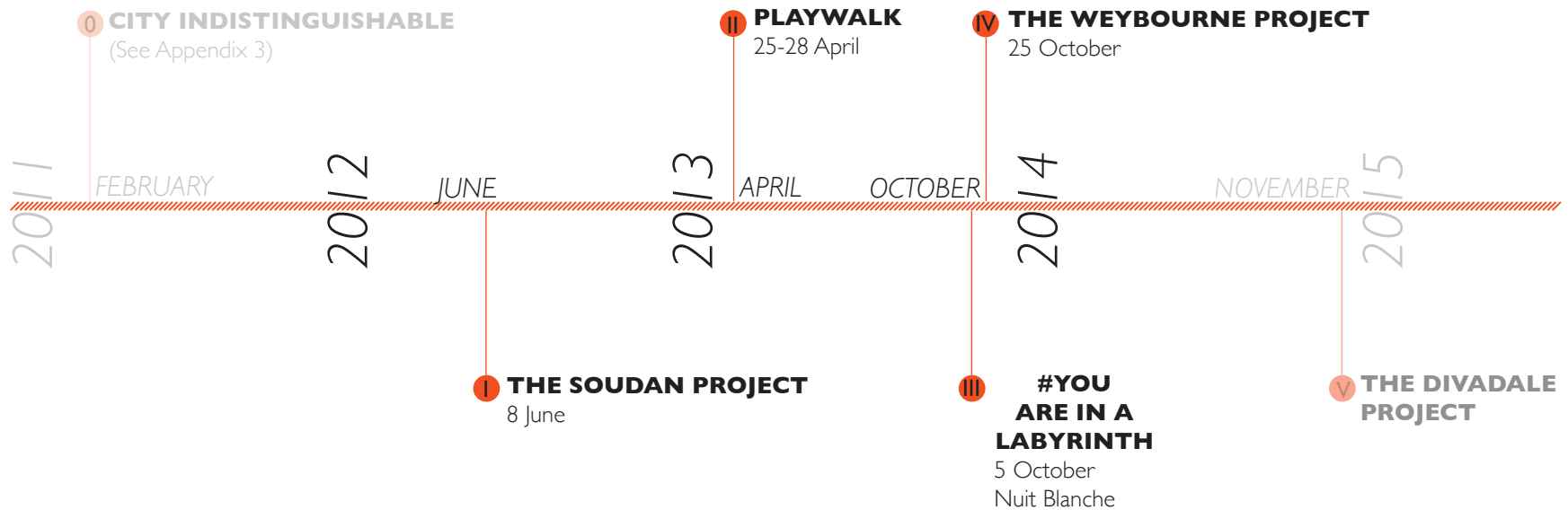
PROJECT I.

THE SOUDAN PROJECT
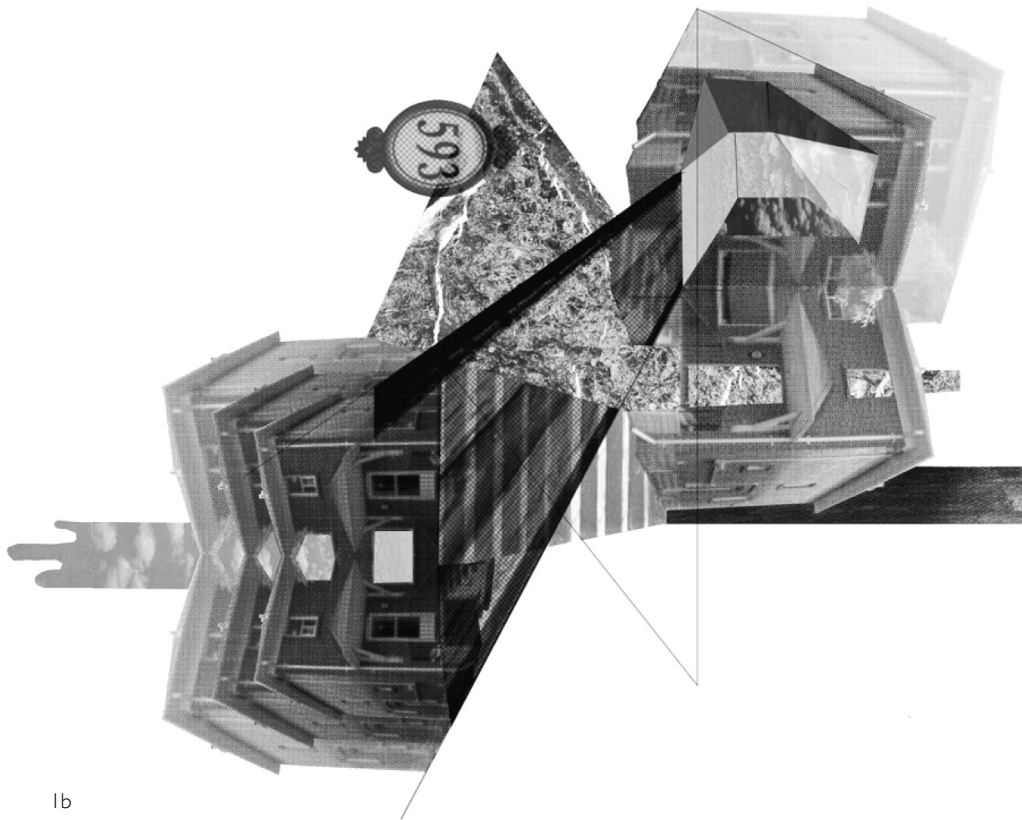
1b

ACTION : art installation in a house that is slated for demolition

ACTORS : Talayeh Hamidya + 10 artists

TOOLS : Construction tools and materials

DURATION OF PROJECT : Six months

IMPLEMENTATION TIME : One week

EXHIBITION DATE : June 8th 2012, and weekends of June

SITE : East Mount Pleasant, Toronto

DESCRIPTION : A group of architects and artists took on the task of uncovering the psychology of house/home through a set of spatial installations. As the owner of the house moved out the participants took over the house for one week and the resulting work was open to public to view for four consecutive weekend during summer 2012.

THE SOUDAN PROJECT

The Soudan Project was conceived under this impression that the identity of the city is not shaped only by how it looks and functions but also by the way it is experienced and imagined. As a fairly young city, Toronto's identity is yet to be formed; and the city has still many soft spots that can be influenced, shaped and determined. The recent surge of urban growth in Toronto is an excellent opportunity for everyone to take part in shaping the identity of the city. From food adventures, to music, high-tech start-ups and social inventions, the city is a fertile ground for experiment and creation. Yet to make a fundamentally critical work one has to dance with the political and financial intricacies of this urban change. In this project I aimed at taking advantage of the liminal position that properties, destined for demolition, enter in. Many inner suburbs of Toronto are witnessing a rather accelerated wave of change shaped by small developers who are looking for short-term gain with small capital. Sitting at one of the most favourable residential neighbourhoods of Toronto the house that I had access to was subject of speculators and was going to be demolished to make room for a new house that would sell for a profit. The processes, of these small developments, entail a period of administrative work during which most of the time houses sit empty with a suspended function as a house.

The space is stripped off of its function, with no commitment to its past or future users, and rendered an optimal opportunity for manipulation and transformation of space into playful, imaginative or contemplative spaces. I was specifically interested in transplanting such radical function as an art exhibition because of my personal interests, and but also to interrupt the monotonous and rather homogeneous rhythm of its residential neighbourhood.

Through invitation a small group of architects and artists (introduced in next pages) arrived to build upon/inside/over the existing spaces in the house with a focus on the psychology of this former dwelling. The curatorial narrative and the ensuing work was generated around a key question:

"What have you always wanted to do to a house?"

The result consisted of five site-specific installations that were formed with the spaces inside the house, as well as a live performance, by total of 10 artists and architects.
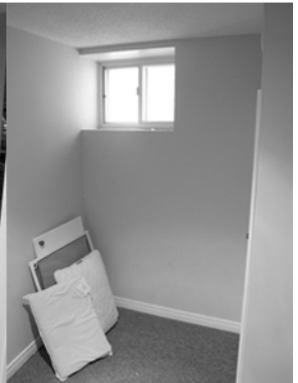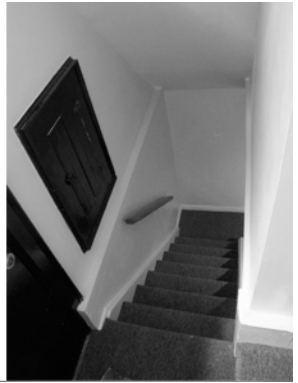
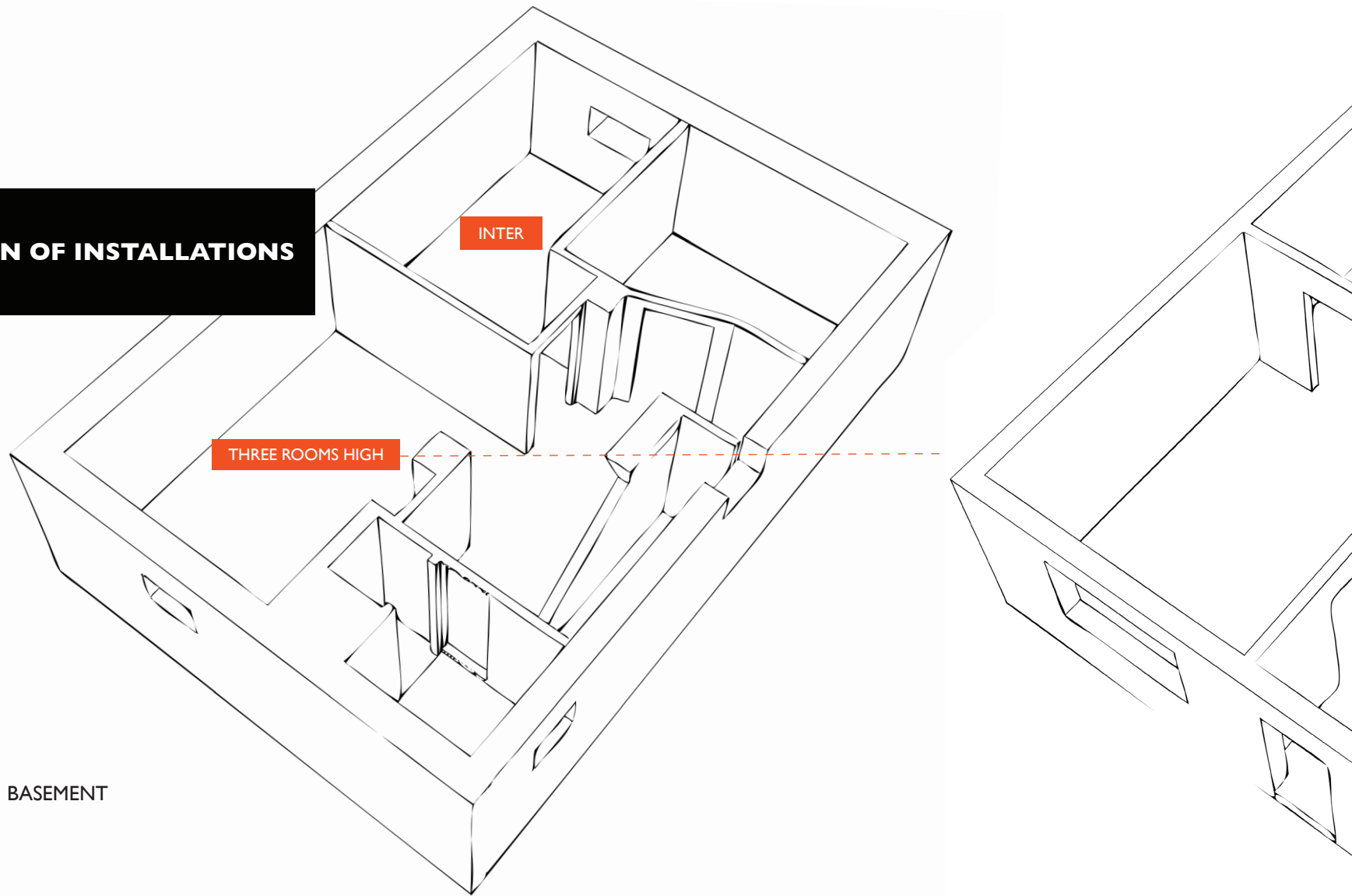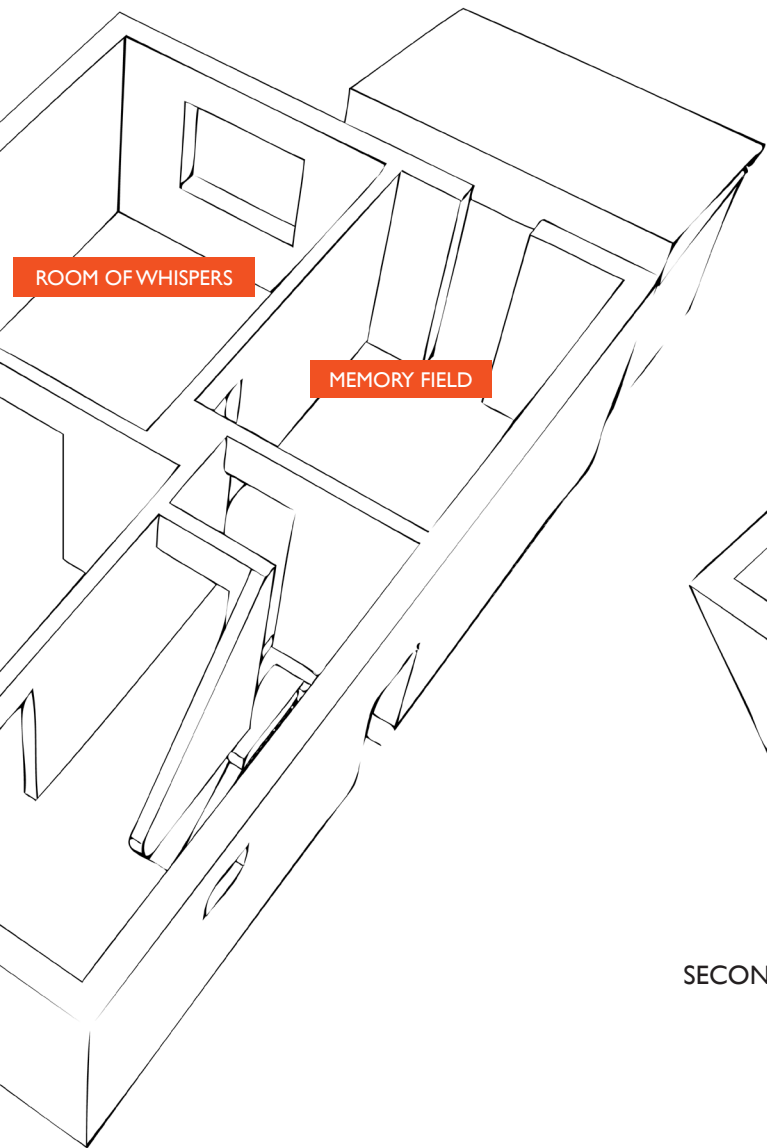## SURVEY OF THE HOUSE
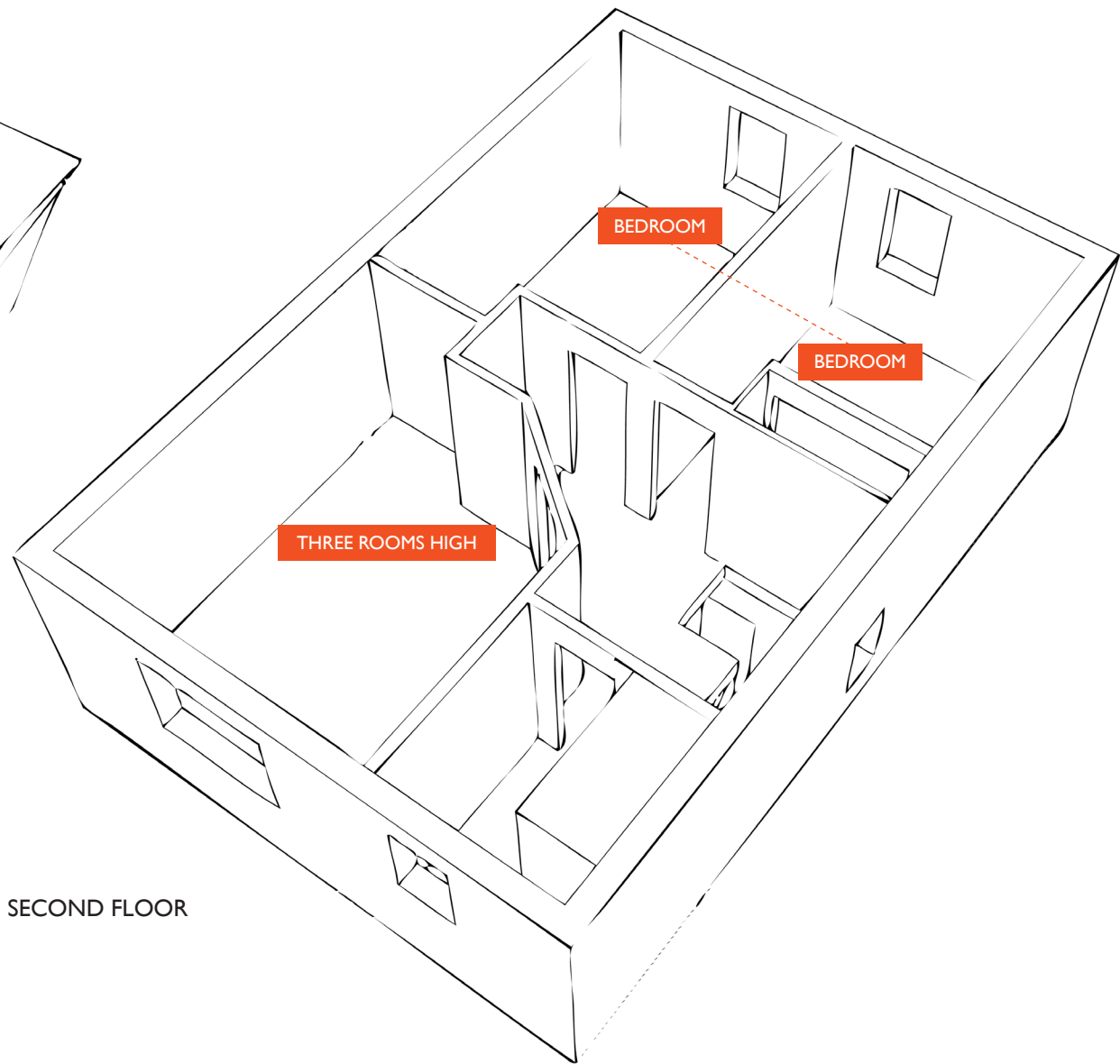Dimensions, Connections, Views, Flows & Objects

SECOND FLOOR

29

FIRST FLOOR

GARDEN

30

BASEMENT

31

LOCATION OF INSTALLATIONS

INTER

THREE ROOMS HIGH

BASEMENT
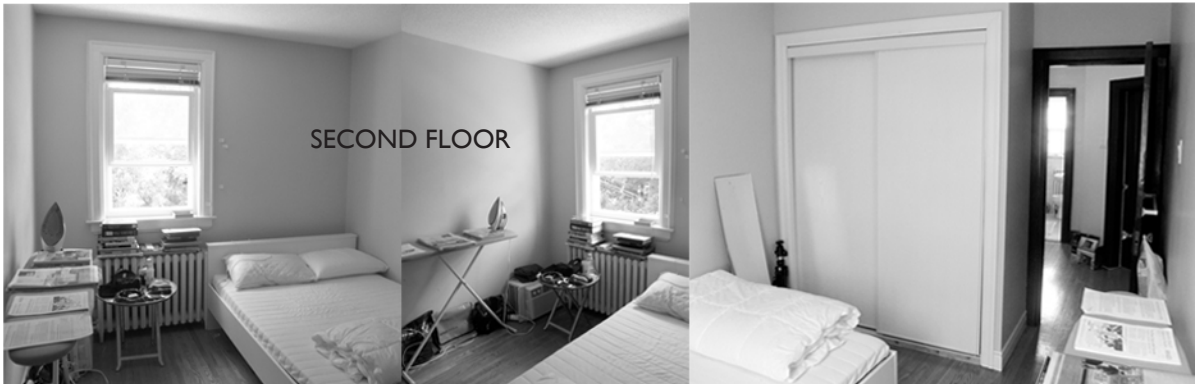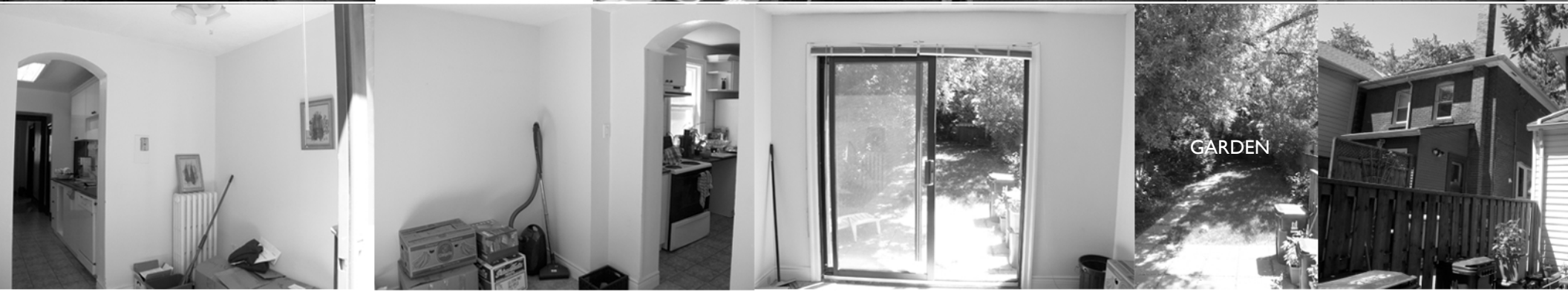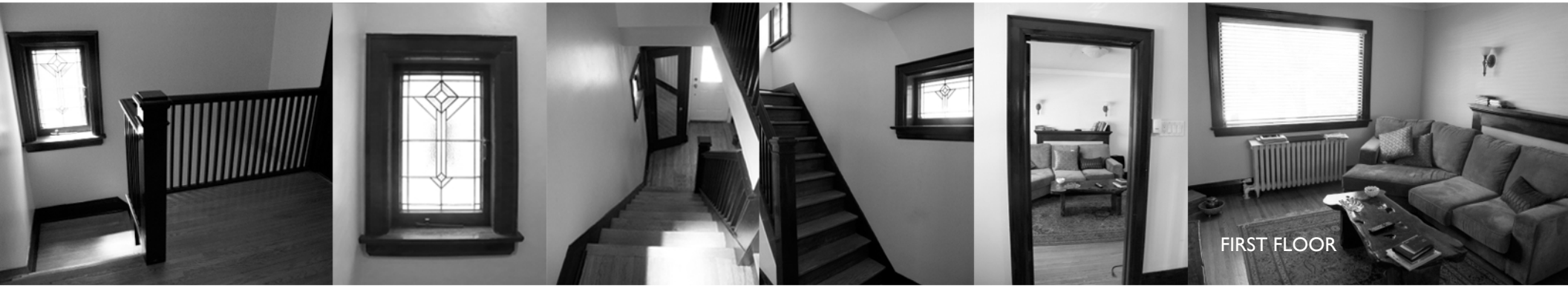
ROOM OF WHISPERS

MEMORY FIELD

BEDROOM

BEDROOM

THREE ROOMS HIGH

SECOND FLOOR

THE BEDROOM
Sue Tang

"This bedroom, my bedroom, is soft. Here, we collide with others on an unstable ground. The space in between us is challenged. Memories and traces of naughty recumbency are absorbed by a forgiving surface. The house, stripped down and exposed, provides the framework for this new ground. This bedroom instigates contact and play, altering our habitual conception of bed."

2b
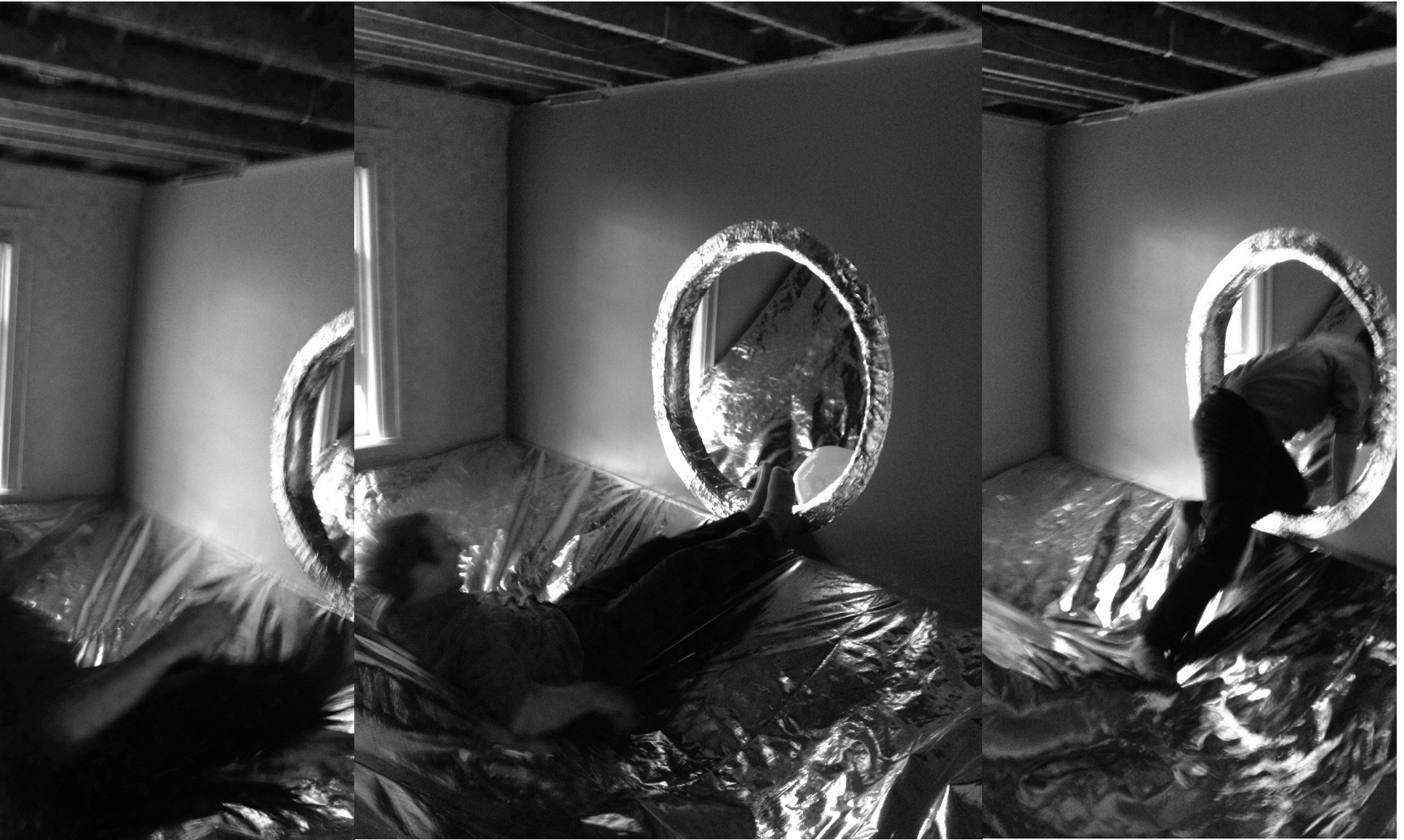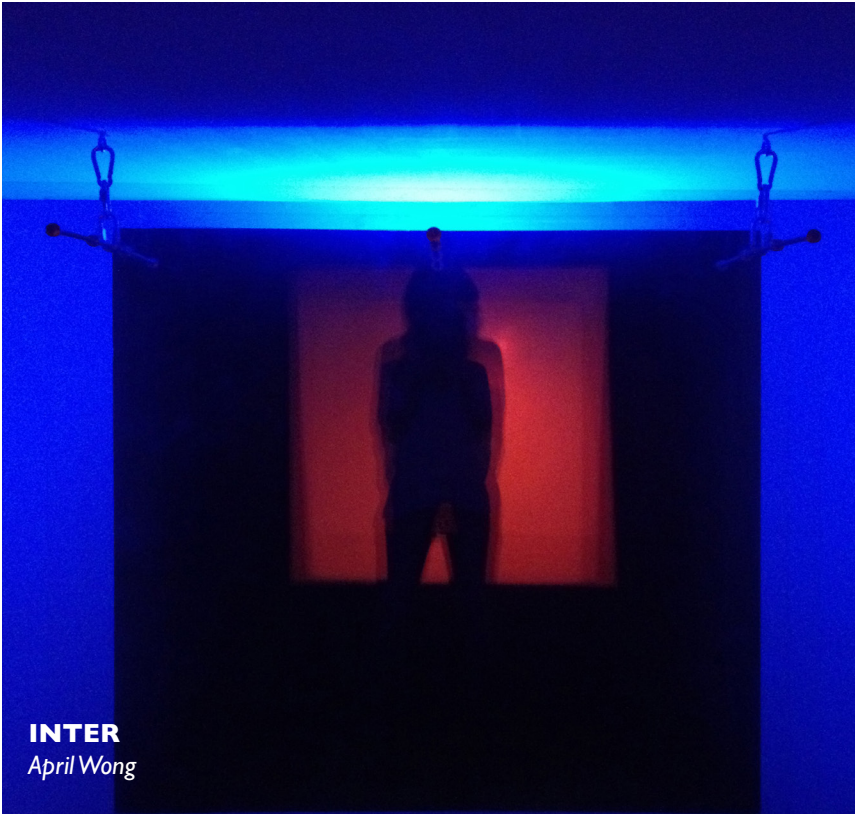
INTER
April Wong

"The underbelly of the house is blue. Burrowed into the earth, wet and moist from reflection and ingestion. The dark corners stir around us, blurred and refracted as we linger with luminescent eyes. Suspended in mid-air, like an open portal, a series of glass panes create a virtual space of uncertain depth and uncharted realm."

3b

INSTALLATION PROCESS
''INTER''

38

JUNE 7
12:32 a.m

39

ROOM OF WHISPERS
Gelareh Saadatpajouh, Ramin Yamin, Shaun Motsi

"Sometimes an old house creaks and whispers, sometimes it cracks and shouts,
and yet sometimes it just sits and listens. 593 Soudan is an old house."

4b

SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION
Location of microphones and receivers within the house - Room of Whispers

5b

6b
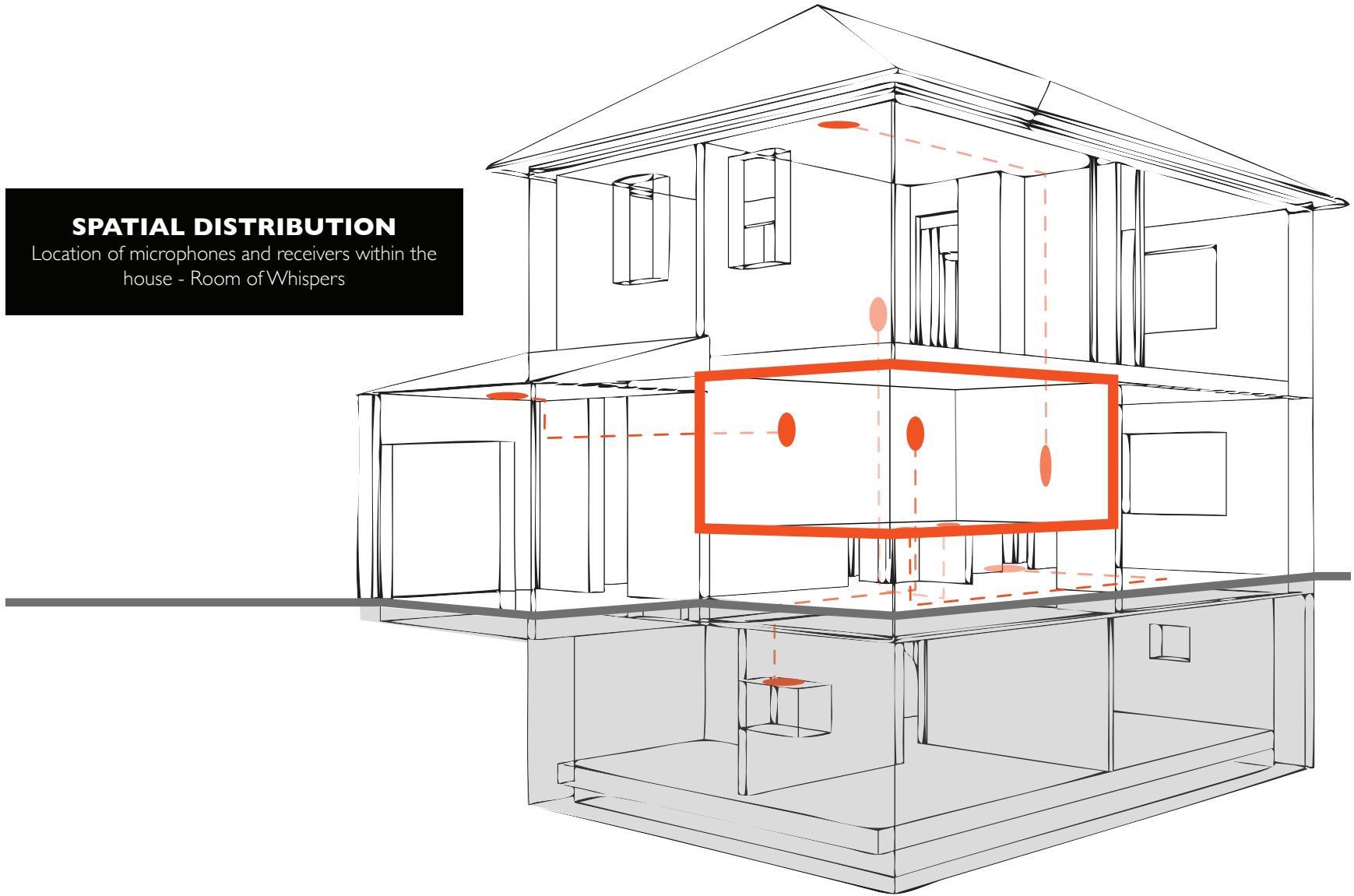
THREE ROOMS HIGH
Co.Labs
Andrew Azzopardi, Shamir Panchal, Henry Murdock, Geoff Christo

"The Soudan house has a basement, a foyer, a living room, a dining room, a kitchen, an extension, 3 bedrooms, 4 closets and 2 bathrooms. The house is unoccupied, soon to be levelled. The function of this building as a house/home is now questionable. The separation between each of these rooms becomes suspect. In this vacancy we want to uncover potential organizations and atmospheres."

8b

44

45
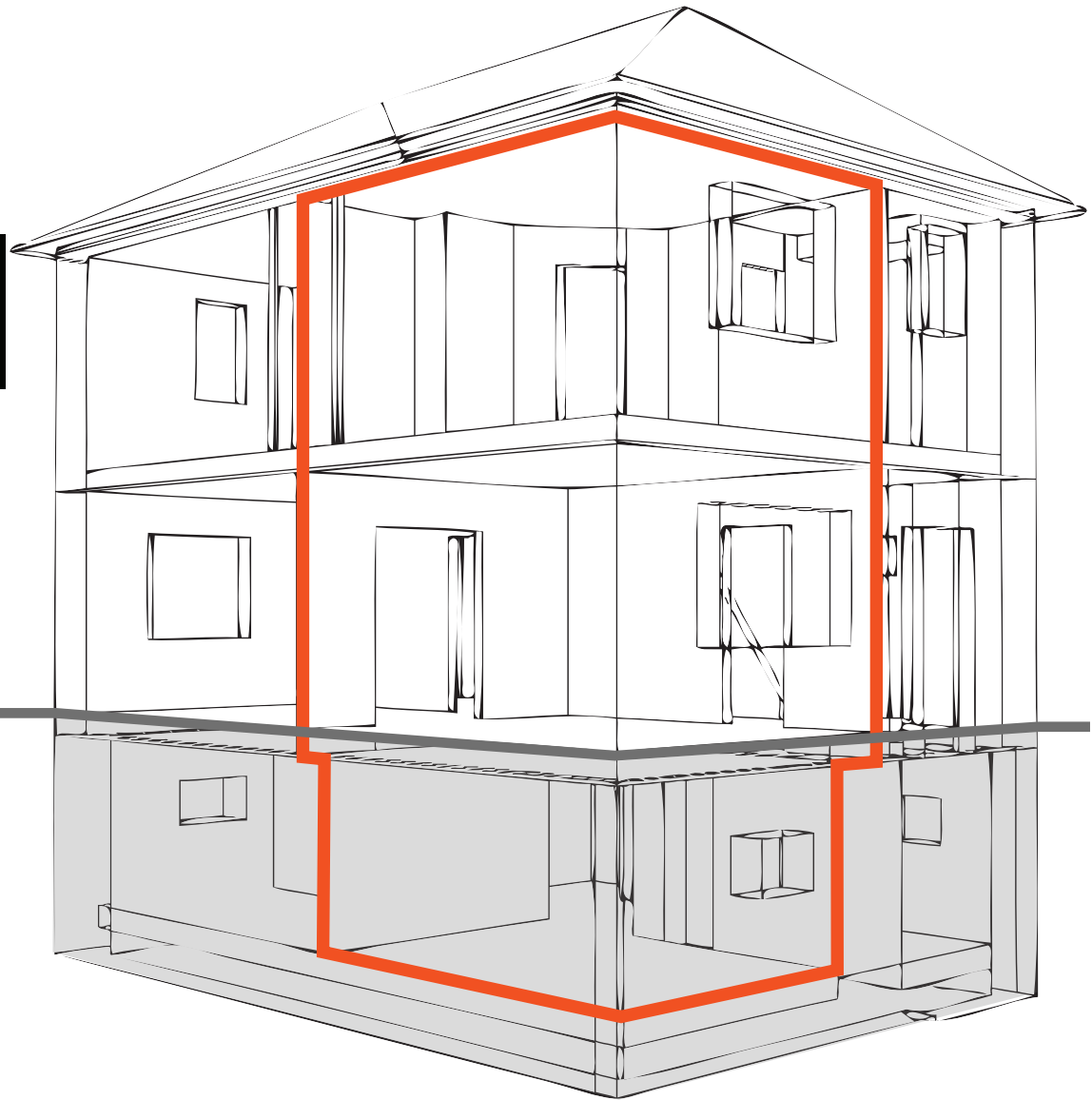
JUNE 6
11:28 a.m

INSTALLATION PROCESS
"Three Room High"

JUNE 6
12:56 a.m

JUNE 6
2:36 p.m

JUNE 6
2:55 p.m

47

9b

48
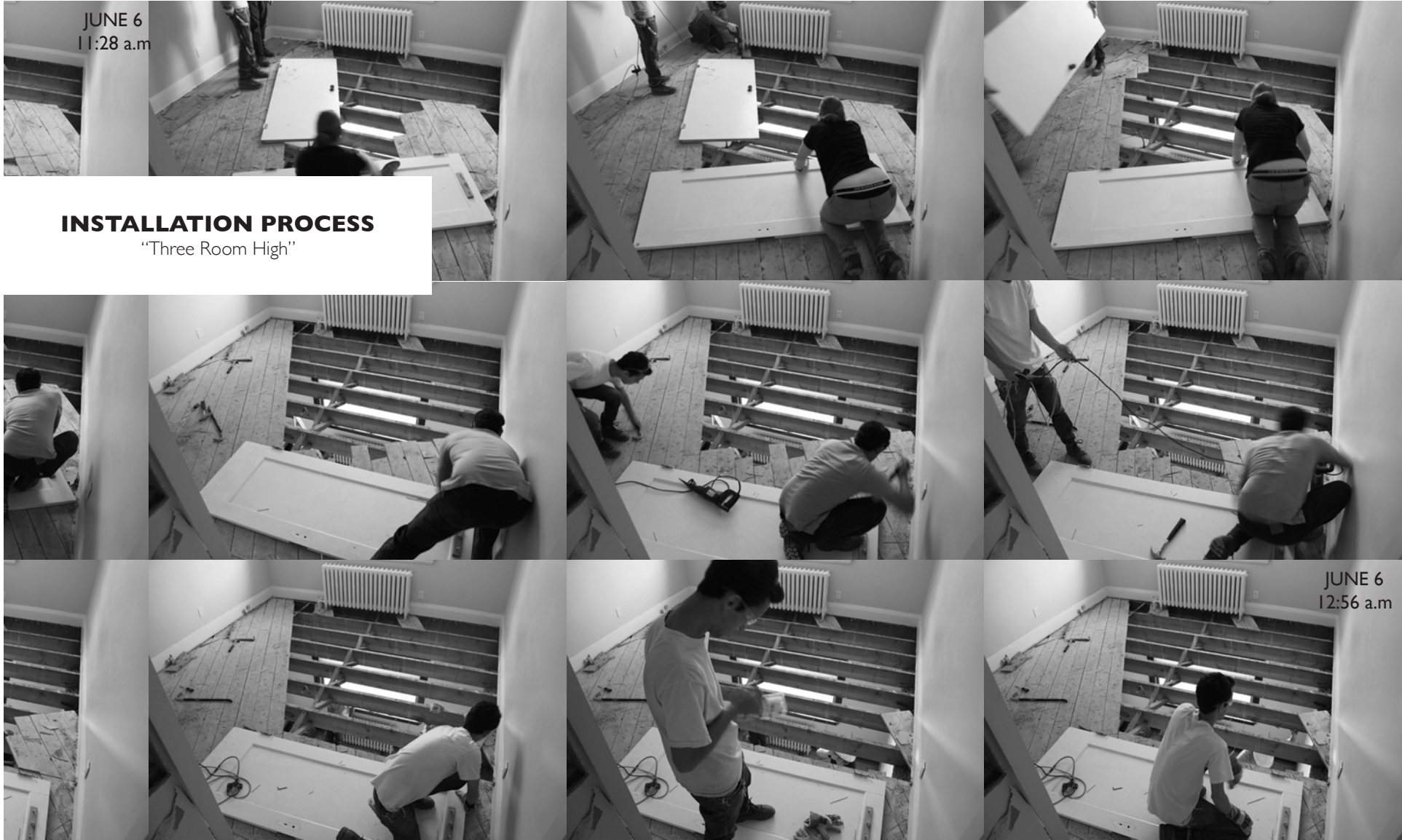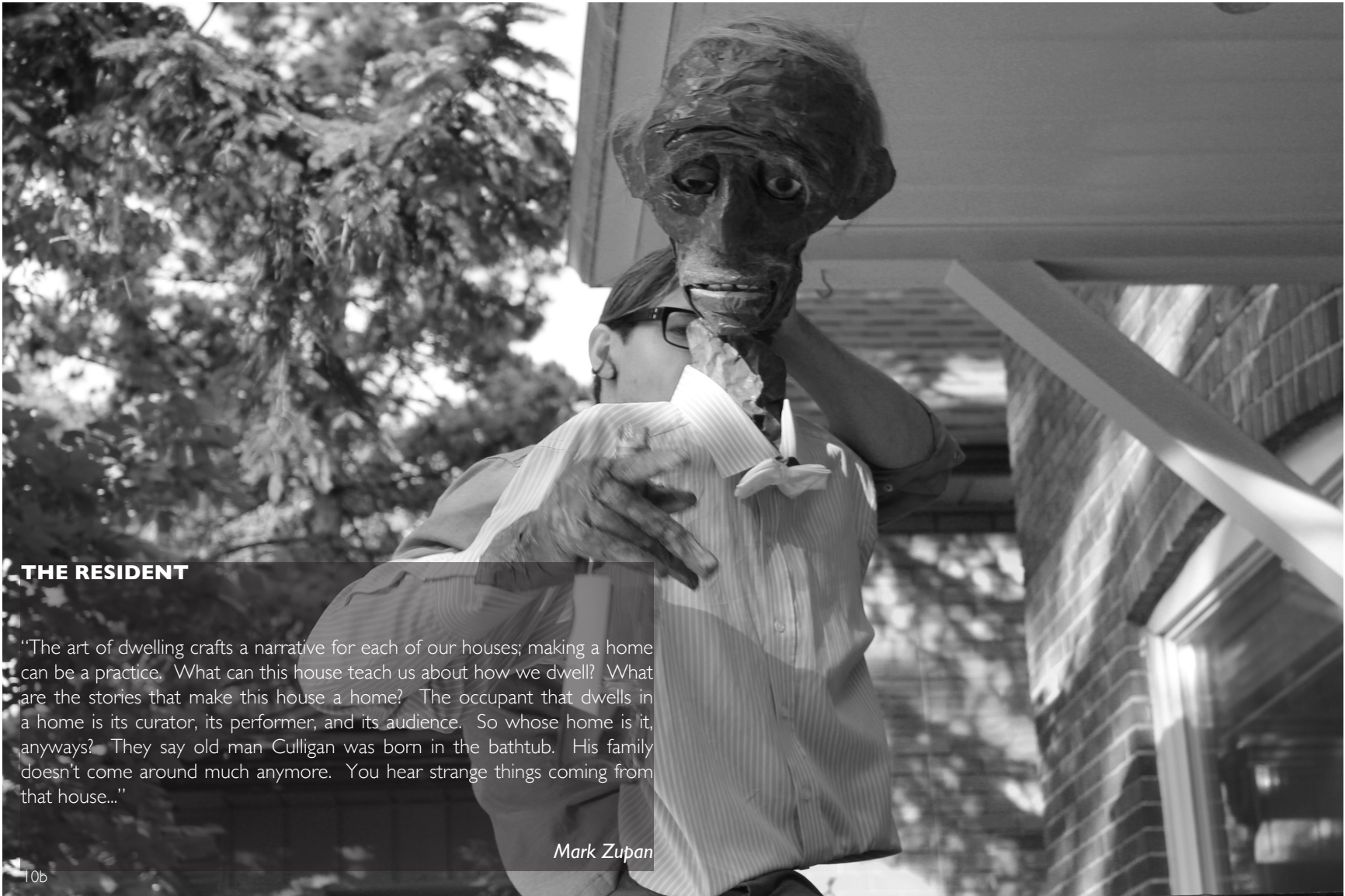
THE RESIDENT

"The art of dwelling crafts a narrative for each of our houses; making a home can be a practice. What can this house teach us about how we dwell? What are the stories that make this house a home? The occupant that dwells in a home is its curator, its performer, and its audience. So whose home is it, anyways? They say old man Culligan was born in the bathtub. His family doesn't come around much anymore. You hear strange things coming from that house..."

Mark Zupan

10b

49

"Oh you kids...you take as long as you want to take those photos but I'm gettin' old I gotta go and get me a nap one of these days..."

MEMORY FIELD

"Influenced by the work of video pioneer Dan Graham, Memory Field, incorporates the use of delayed video signals to invite the viewer into a state of perpetual mnemonic feedback. By fracturing the linear time perception (via time-lag) the viewer experiences the nature of their own subjectivity through the juxtaposition of two video signals displaying separate moments of space & time in a reverse chronology. In this sense the viewer becomes the subjectivity of their contemplation, and, temporarily, in full engagement of present moment through a collapsing of space/time, then & now. The viewer experiences themselves as both participant and observer simultaneously, disrupting our traditional experience of art as standing arrested in individual contemplation before an object."

Jamie Usas

PROJECT II.

PLAYTHEWALK (PLAYWALK)
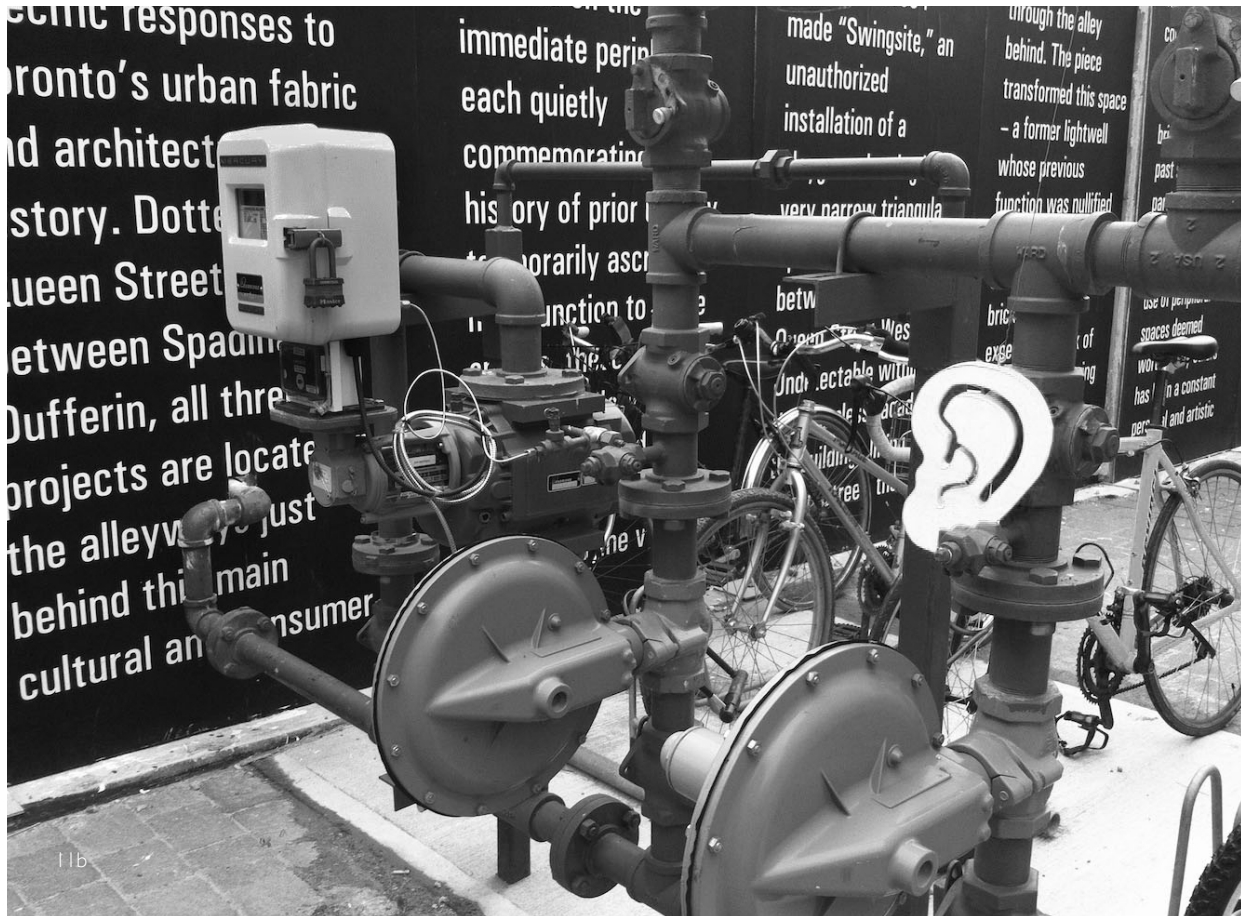
ACTION: Transforming the urban landscape into a curated playground

ACTORS: Society of Homo Ludens * + Studio JAY WALL

TOOLS: Fabricated signs, a curated map and a cargo bicycle

SITE: West Queen West Triangle, Toronto, CANADA

DURATION OF PROJECT : 6 Months

IMPLEMENTATION TIME: One night

EXHIBITION DATE : April 25-28th, 2013

DESCRIPTION: By locating signs that represented a sense or suggested an action Society of Homo Ludens invited urban explorers to use their senses or curiosity to explore and play with the city, getting to know their urban environment in a personal way. The accompanied map, like any typical exploration map, suggested routes, local icons to see and possible places for interaction with the ordinary elements of the city - a refreshed and experienced imagination of the city.

PLAYTHEWALK (PLAYWALK)

Toronto's urban landscape is going through a tremendous change, especially in its downtown area with an increasing growth in density and development of new infrastructure needed to support this growth. The pace of this change is so fast that despite design consideration that are taken in planning and architectural studies, more than often, the streets that host these changes are sucked out of their much evolved urban life; and it takes years before they appear and perform as places that support the social life of the city. Lack of diversity of activities and meaningful places of meetings in some of these newly developed dense areas is reminiscent of suburban atmosphere.

This award-winning project, Playthewalk, aims at bringing people's attention to possibilities of reconciliation with these impoverished urban environments, and the city in general, through play. With an emphasis on senses and simple curiosities and inspired by the everyday interactions of people with the city, Society of Homo Ludens curated an urban exploration map for the newly developed West Queen West Triangle that suffers from lack of activity on the street level despite its high density. To tackle this issue, through a dogged psychogeographic study of the area, we identified the possibilities of interactions, places of interactions and most compelling routes to explore the place. In translating these discoveries into a replicable, yet authentic experience, a series of dots on the map corresponded to a series of planted CNC fabricated signs in the area, each suggesting a form of sensory or playful interaction with the environment : an ear for listening, a nose for smelling or a hand for experiencing the texture and feel of the materials in a specific place. 'Playfields' refer to pleasant places for linger, pause and play whereas doted paths suggest an uninterrupted walking flow with most number of Playsigns.

On this map certain buildings and characteristics of the neighbourhoods are also highlighted as 'icons' in the tradition of tourist maps, an aspect of familiarization that is further developed through a 'souvenir shop' created by Studio JAYWALL. A mobile cart (sponsored by Spacing Magazine) that included crafted items inspired by the neighbourhood and found objects from the site (rail spikes, constructions gloves, vintage glass jars, etc.). This mobile souvenir shop was present in the site during the three-day show as part of Grow-Op 2013 at Gladstone Hotel.

Additional playful information on the map such as the sun path (helped to convey the shadow casting behaviour of buildings and other urban elements), a word-puzzle based on a series of graffiti and a list of dares to challenge enthusiasts invited for more creative indulgence in the neighbourhood.

The curated map in essence unfolded an open-ended narrative that would gain its meaning and traction only through participation. By exploring the neighborhood, discovering the signs, and upon personal discoveries the participants were encouraged to form a personal perspective of a place that lacked vibrancy. The use of play proved to be an effective tool due to its universality and inclusiveness. Since there is no loss or gain in play, those who partook in the project relied on their own instincts and personal preference for exploring the place.

During the three-day exhibition the project attracted 200 people and hosted guided walks by Architect David Oleson and Activist Helen Mills, a music parade with Lemon Bucket Orchestra and The Calypso Ensemble and became a fertile ground for further installations by artists Time & Desire and the international activist group Urban Repair Squad.

Since 2013 Playthewalk has evolved to become Playwalk. Playwalk is an ongoing project. For further information refer to playwalk.ca

SURVEYING THE LANDSCAPE
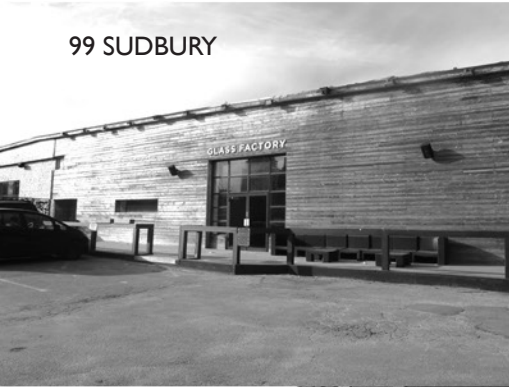Fields, Flows, Paths, Objects & Boundaries
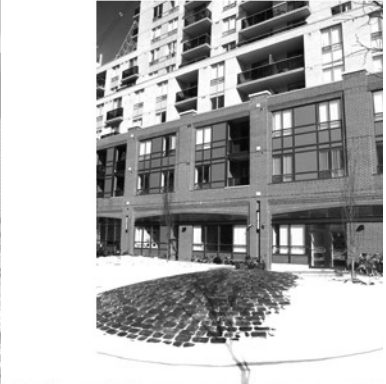
TRACKLANDS

99 SUDBURY

5

LISGAR PARK

TRIANGLE GATE

3

9

NARROW
WALK

BLACK HOLE

ABEL STREET

THINGS ON THE OTHER
SIDE OF TRACKS....

4

2

6

CRANE LAND

GLADSTONE
HOTEL ★

TRIANGLE
GATE

WEST QUEEN WEST

WARD 18   WARD 19

TRIANGLE
TRACK
LANDS

SUDBURY

7

1

COURTYARD

BLACK
HOLE

3

9

5

DOVERCOURT

6

2

LISGAR
PARK

LISGAR

4

ABELL

CRANE
LAND

ART LANE

8

10

SUDBURY

99

URBAN LOUNGE

TO KING

THINGS ON THE OTHER
SIDE OF TRACKS...
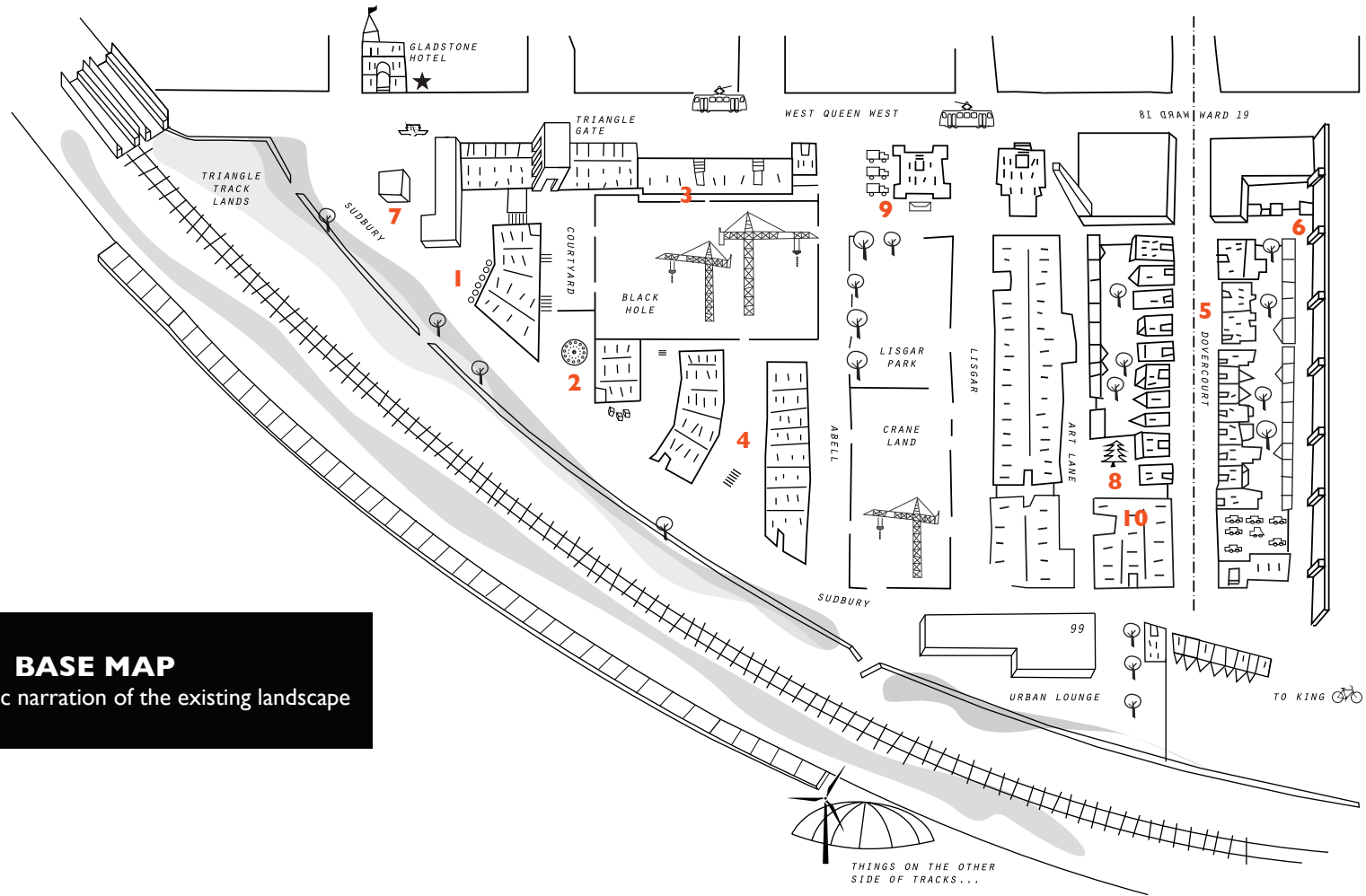
BASE MAP
Psychogeographic narration of the existing landscape

60

Victoria Taylor
Landscape Architect - Curator

"URBAN LOUNGE"

David Oleson
Architect

10

ART CONDO

R53

CURATION PROCESS
Allies, Places, Random Encounters, Senses & Titles

BROKEN SOCIAL SCENE

8

TRIANGLE

Helen Mills
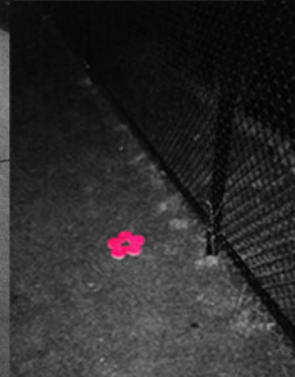Activist with 'Lost River'

TRACKLANDS

Black Hole

1169 & 1171
Queen W

Bird Habitat

7

1

Map Prototyping

Playsign Mock-up
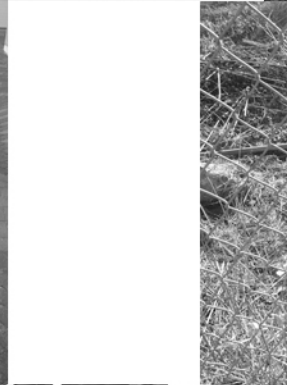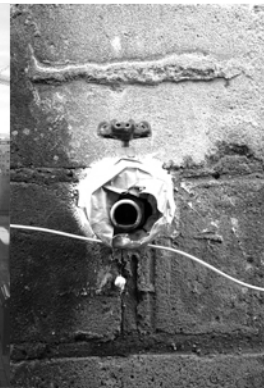
Souvenirs

FABRICATION & INSTALLATION
of Playsings

Installation

Playsigns

"LOOK AROUND"

12b

"WAVE TO A TRAIN"

13b

"DROP A SEED BOMB"

14b

"PICNIC HERE"

15b

"FEEL AROUND"

16b

"LISTEN"
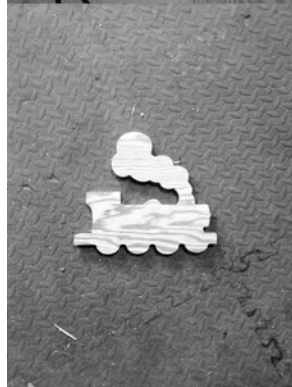
17b

TRACKLANDS

FULL PINK MOON
ON APRIL 25

GLADSTONE
HOTEL

N

TRIANGLE
GATE

WEST QUEEN WEST

WARD 18 | WARD 19

TRIANGLE
TRACK

SUDBURY

FINAL MAP
Curated components laid upon the
psychogeographic map

COURTYARD

BLACK
HOLE

LISGAR
PARK

LISGAR

DOVERCOURT

PLAY THE DARE!

Say hello to your neighbour
Eavesdrop on a conversation
Invent your own silly walk
Make sounds
Roll down a hill
Try planking
Walk barefoot
Visit an Open House
Stage a protest
Take a blind-folded tour (ask at Map Station)

COMPLETE THE
WORD PUZZLE

ABELL

CRANE
LAND

ART LANE

ADOPT-A-ROUTE

Some of the Play the Walk signs are
numbered. Jot down these numbers in the
order you discover them. For a chance to
win a Triangle Treasure, stop by the Map
Station or text the digits to: 905-399-4329

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____

SUDBURY

99

ASYLUM STREAM

TO KING

LEGEND

URBAN LOUNGE
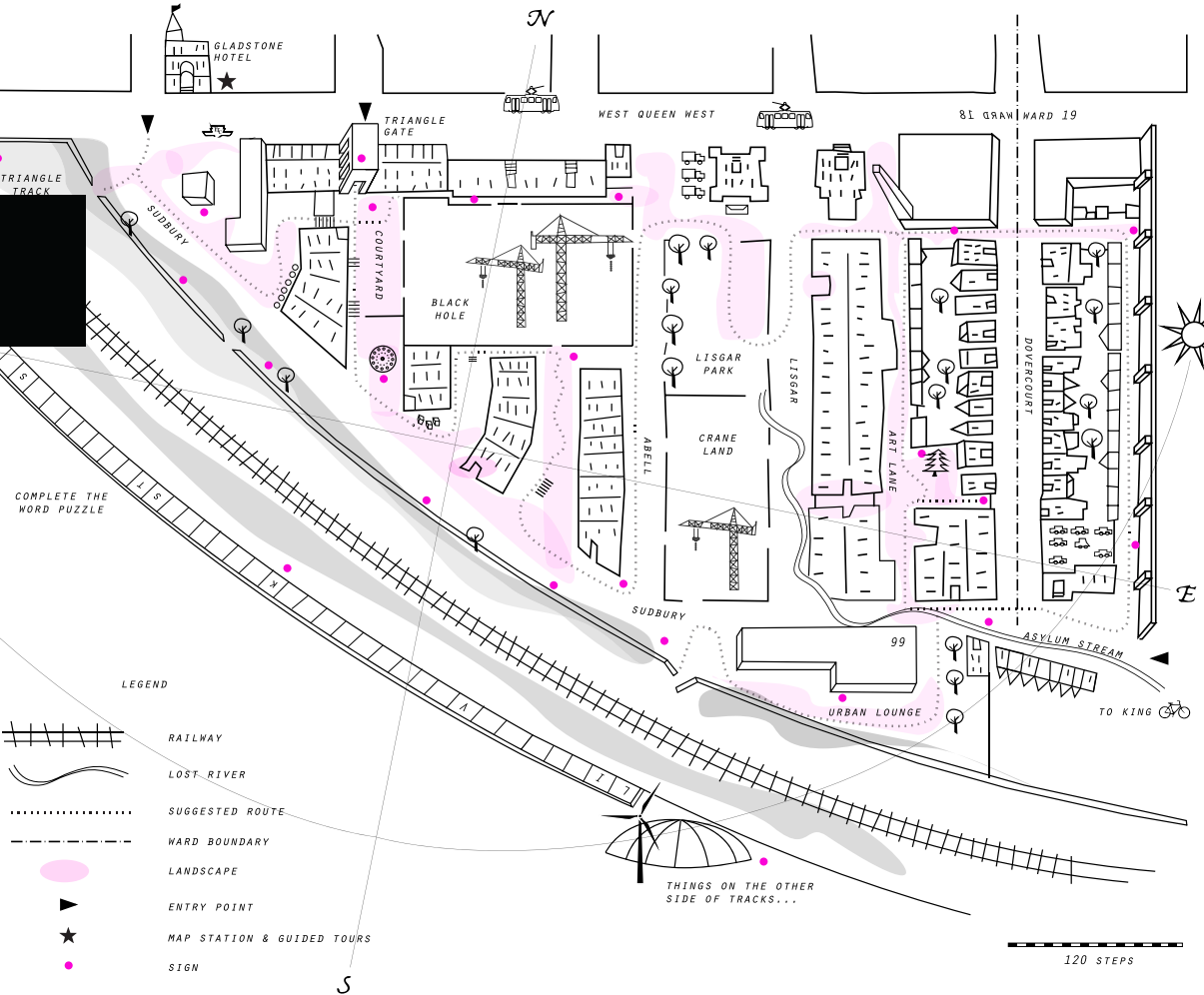
RAILWAY

LOST RIVER

SUGGESTED ROUTE

WARD BOUNDARY

LANDSCAPE

ENTRY POINT

MAP STATION & GUIDED TOURS

SIGN

S

THINGS ON THE OTHER
SIDE OF TRACKS...

120 STEPS

66

OTHER ACTORS
Music parade by Lemon Bucket Orchestra, Installation by Time & Desire & Walking tour by David Oleson & Helen Mills

PERMIT PLAYING

Permissions to play @ TIMEANDDESIRE

18b

SOUVENIR SHOP
Postcards, rail spikes & train-pressed pennies

spacing.ca

spacing

play
the
walk

American Avocet
Lost Bird of the Garrison Common

WQWTriangle
Since 1884

68

WQWTriangle
Since 1884

Crane
Built Environment of Triangle

PROJECT III.

#YOUAREINALABYRINTH

19b

ACTION : Hacking map of Nuit Blanche festival to lead people to a community garden

ACTORS : Society of Homo Ludens + Farsan Farahani & Shayan Javan (sound operations)

TOOLS : Stencil, sound system, recording box

SITE : Downtown Toronto, CANADA

IMPLEMENTATION TIME: One night

EXHIBITION DATE : October 5th, 2013

DESCRIPTION: Every year in Toronto during Nuit Blanche the city enjoys art from dawn to dusk. A map will guide visitors to various locations that art is displayed, on the streets, public squares, galleries and museums. In 2013 Society of Homo Ludens, printed a different path on the streets of Toronto to lead Nuit Blanchers from their usual path to a community garden to make and experience a collaborative sound installation.
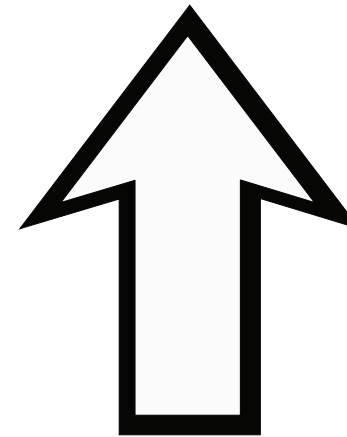
#YOUAREINALABYRINTH

When you first arrive to a city most people are drawn to its main streets where crowds of people, the density of shops and ease of access to public transportation make them an easy destination. They naturally become the bearing, the beacons and the main corridors for navigating the city. Soon familiarity and routine solidify these streets as the boldest strokes of the image of the city in our minds. Queen street West is a linear street that stretches for kilometres in east-west direction in downtown Toronto and is an iconic element to the fabric of Toronto. #Youareinalabyrinth is an attempt to reorganize the memory and experience of this street and add depth and dimension to its presence.

In 'You are in a Labyrinth', the city is imagined as a labyrinth where the users are encouraged to take alternative paths to a destination and organize their walk with an attentive presence in the city. Commissioned by Queen West BIA during Nuit Blanche, the project is focused on Queen West' system of back lanes and the streets that feed to them. To this end the map of Nuit Blanche was used to identify where most visitors will be walking during the event and a series of arrows that were sprayed on the sidewalks by means of a stencil would lead pedestrians to the centre of the labyrinth. The choice of labyrinth as a spatial organization is significant because unlike a maze it is designed in such a way that the participant is always on the right path and will reach the centre as long as they follow the path (in this case formed by the signs on the ground). Once arrived to the centre the visitors would be greeted with a sound box at the entrance of a small community garden tucked between two buildings. People were invited to record their voice in this box and proceed to the heart of the parkette where they were surrounded by eight sound speakers that

reverberated the recorded voice of the participant mixed with those of seven people who arrived to the sound recording box before them. The accumulative and participation based installation put an emphasis on the collective identity of the city beyond language, origin or identity.

By placing a # sign the printed arrows became an effective tool of connecting people's experience of turning the city into a labyrinth in social media. Compilation of images shared on instagram and tweets created an alternative and conceptual map of the city accessible to everyone.

YOU
ARE IN A
LABYRINTH

PHOEB

BEVERLEY

SOHO

SURVEY OF THE LANDSCAPE
Flow, Views & Accesses

QUEEN WEST

SPADINA

RICHMOND

PETER

WIDMER

STEPHANIE

JOHN

McCAUL

ST.PATRICK

UNIVERSITY

QUEEN WEST

JOHN

DUNCAN
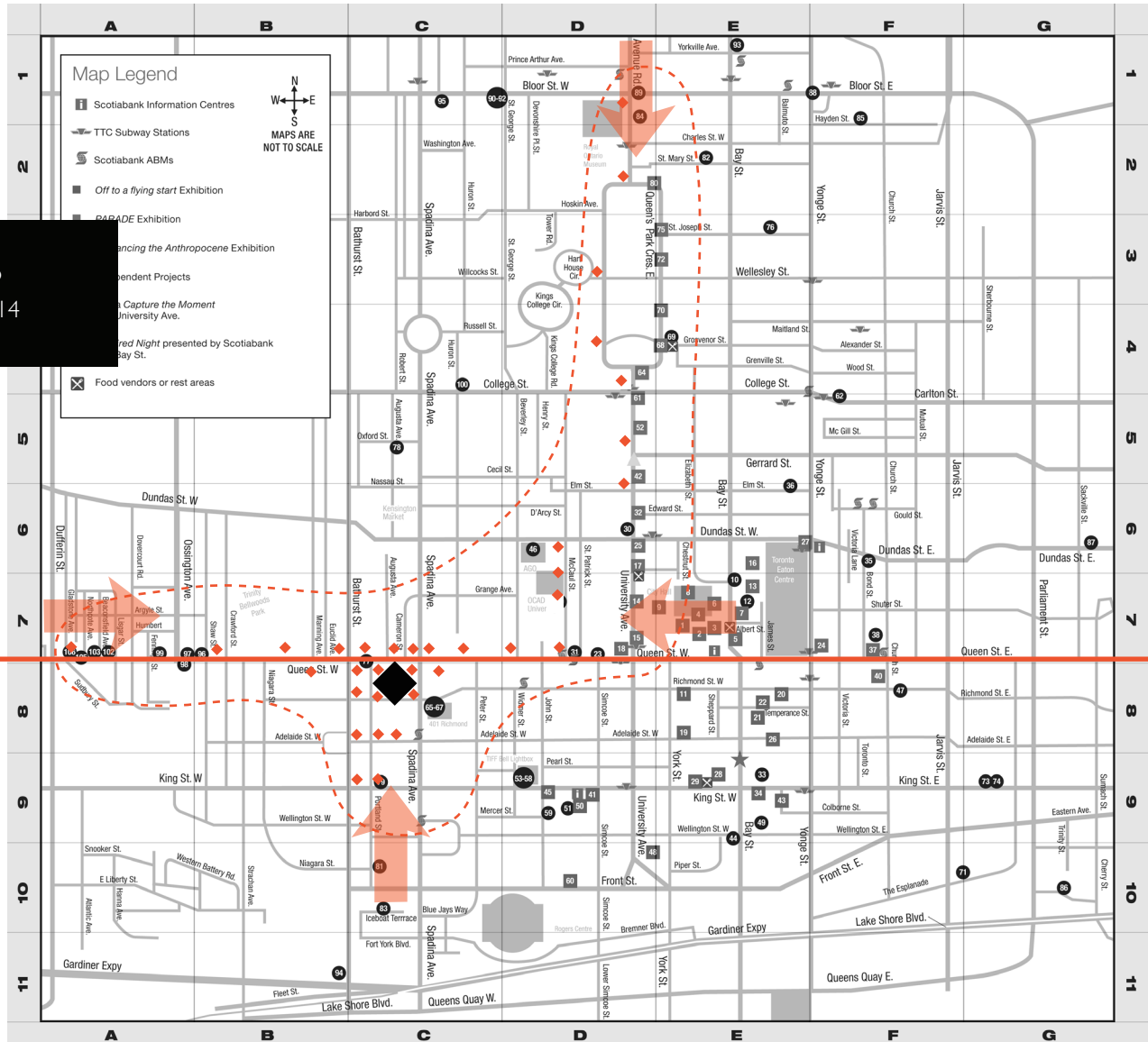
SIMCOE

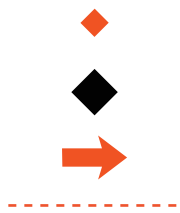UNIVERSITY

LABYRINTH'S MAP
Hacked map of Nuit Blanche 2014

Map Legend

	Scotiabank Information Centres
	TTC Subway Stations
	Scotiabank ABMs
	Off to a flying start Exhibition
	PARADE Exhibition
	...ancing the Anthropocene Exhibition
	...pendent Projects
	...a Capture the Moment ...University Ave.
	...red Night presented by Scotiabank ...Bay St.
	Food vendors or rest areas

MAPS ARE NOT TO SCALE

QUEEN WEST

Arrow

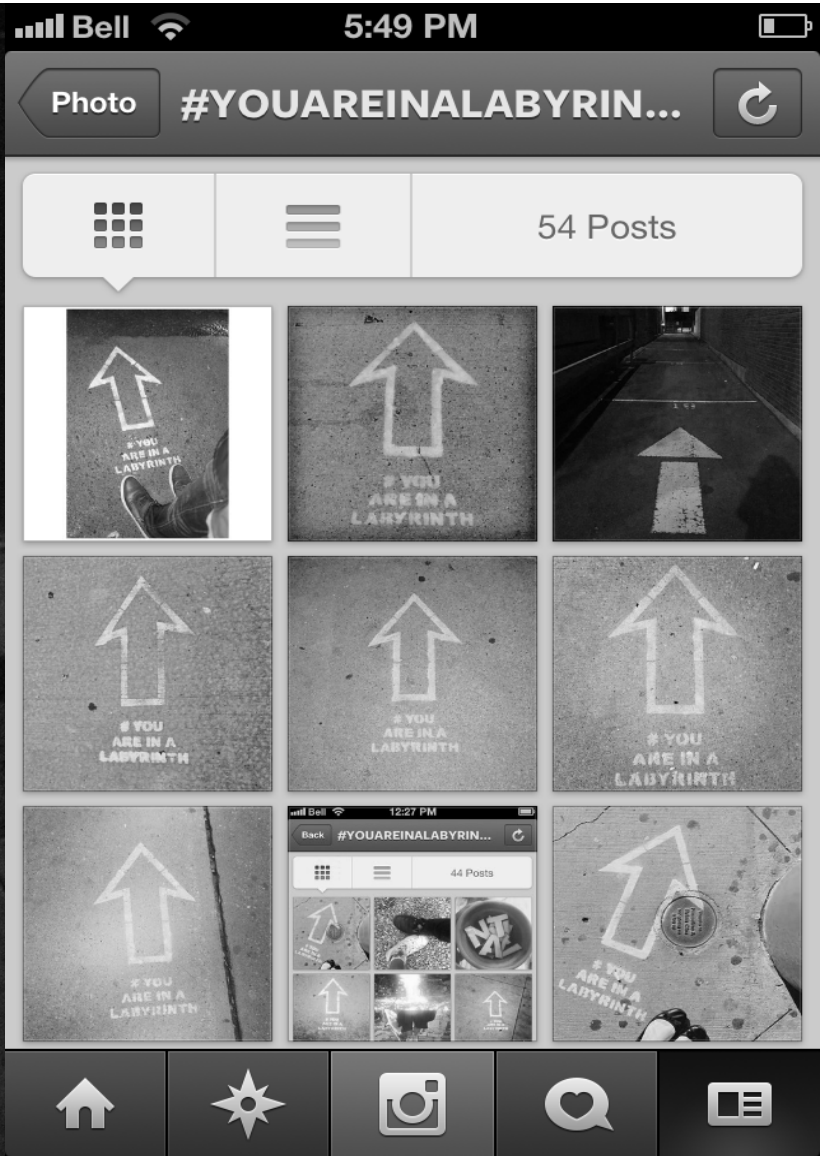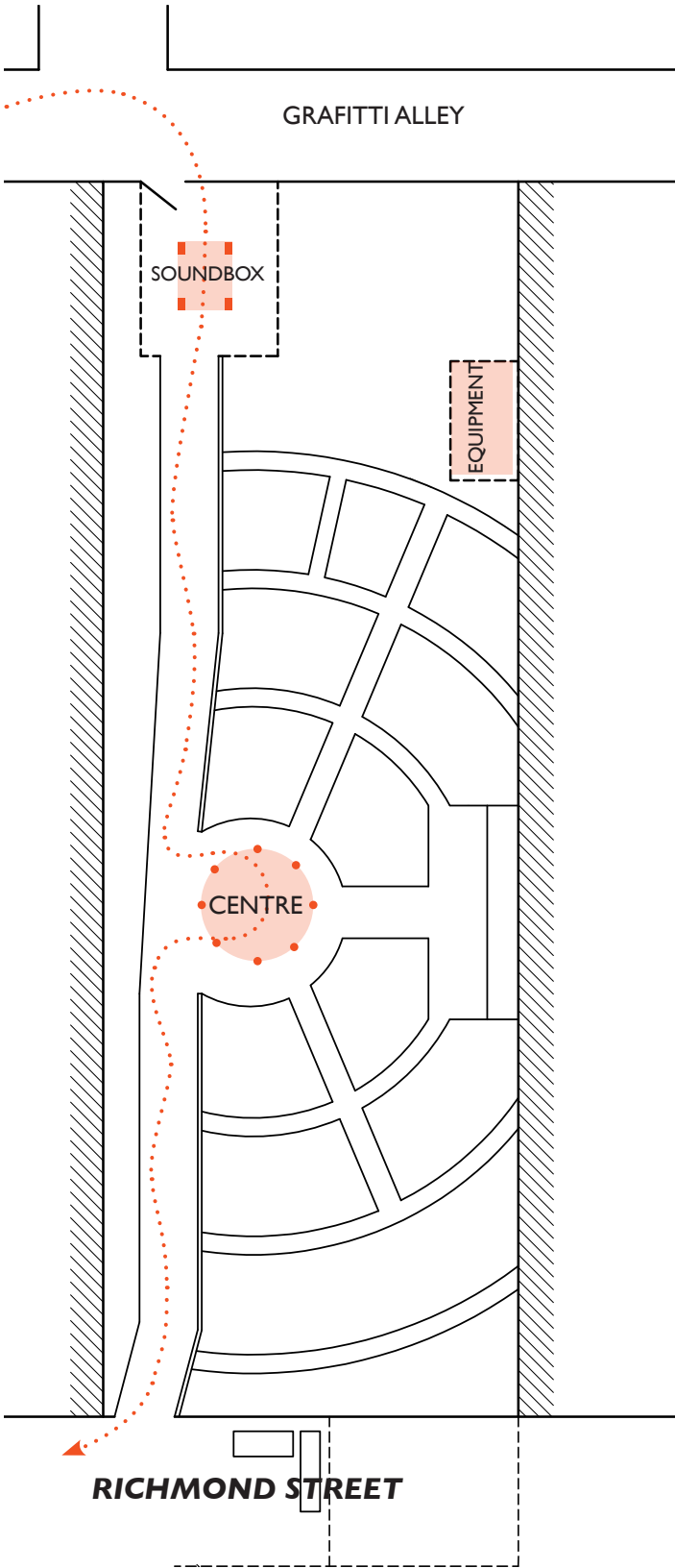Centre of Labyrinth
(Alex Wilson Parkette)

Direction of stencils

Area of intervention

76

MAKING OF THE LABYRINTH
The path made marking the city / Sharing by users on Social Media (Instagram)

YOU
ARE IN A
LABYRINTH

YOU
ARE IN A
LABYRINTH

GRAFITTI ALLEY

SOUNDBOX

EQUIPMENT

CENTRE

RICHMOND STREET

80

Wolseley St

Queen St W

Richmond St W

Bathurst

Adelaide St W

Back to Map
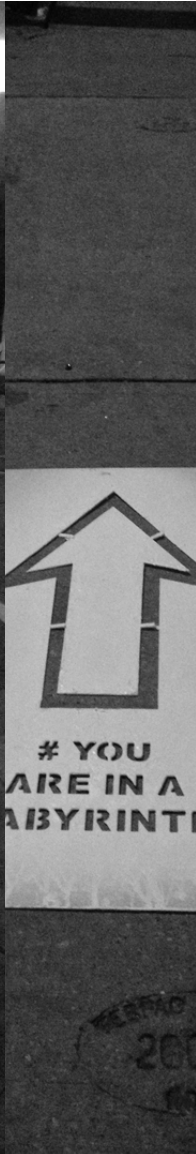
ALEX WILSON PARKETTE
View from Richmond Street

Google

ARRIVING TO THE SOUND BOX
People recording their voices inside the box

20b

CENTRE OF LABYRINTH
Surrounded by six speakers that project gathered voices, the visitors are immersed in the human soundscape of the city

21b

PROJECT IV.

THE WEYBOURNE PROJECT

DOORGAN
22b

ACTION : Turning a house slated for demolition into a gallery for spatial installations, art and performance

ACTORS : Society of Homo Ludens + Luff Gallery + 19 Artists

TOOLS : Construction tools, building material from inside the house

SITE : St. Lawrence Park, Toronto, CANADA

DURATION OF PROJECT : Two months

IMPLEMENTATION TIME : One night

EXHIBITION DATE : October 25th, 2013

DESCRIPTION : A one week residency for 19 artists and architects with the theme 'space as a medium' facilitated transformation of a century-old house into a gallery in heart of Toronto's most prominent residential neighbourhoods.
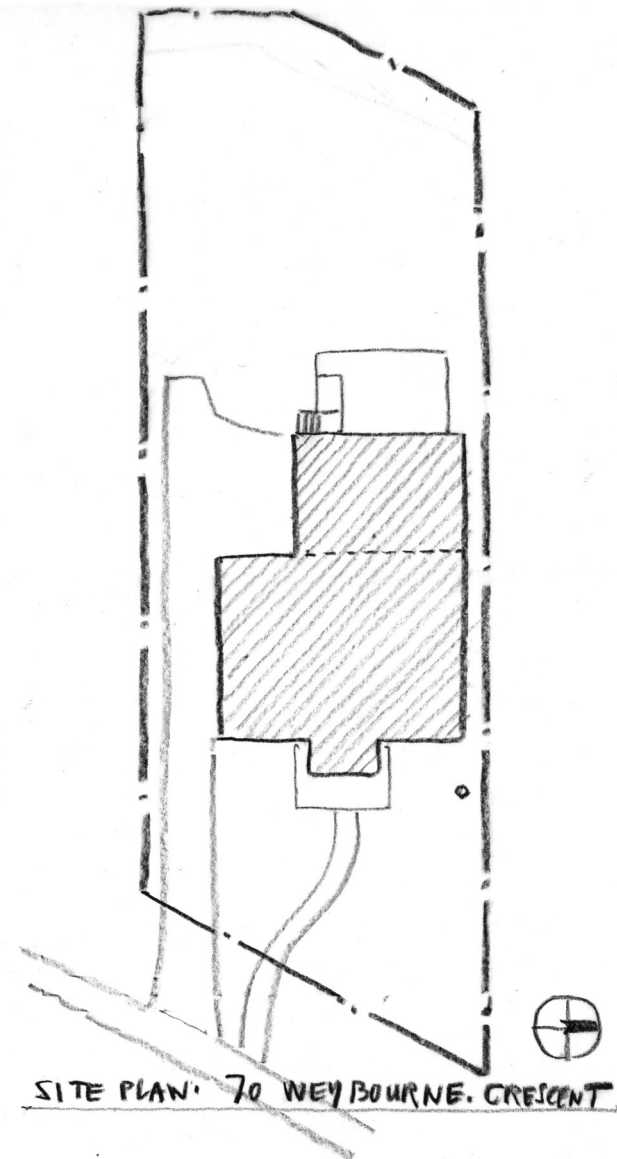
THE WEYBOURNE PROJECT

In meeting a local residential developer, an opportunity to transform another house into a spatial experiment was presented. In collaboration with Luff Gallery the project was conceived in form of a one-week residency with a mixture of established and emerging artists. Total of 15 works were created with a number of live performances during the night of the exhibition. This opportunity allowed us to further develop and test out the idea of SpaceSeries as a form of roving gallery and an alternative spatial strategy for museums and gallery spaces. The idea was presented in a form of short proposal in MOCCA as part of TBD exhibition (refer to Appendix X).
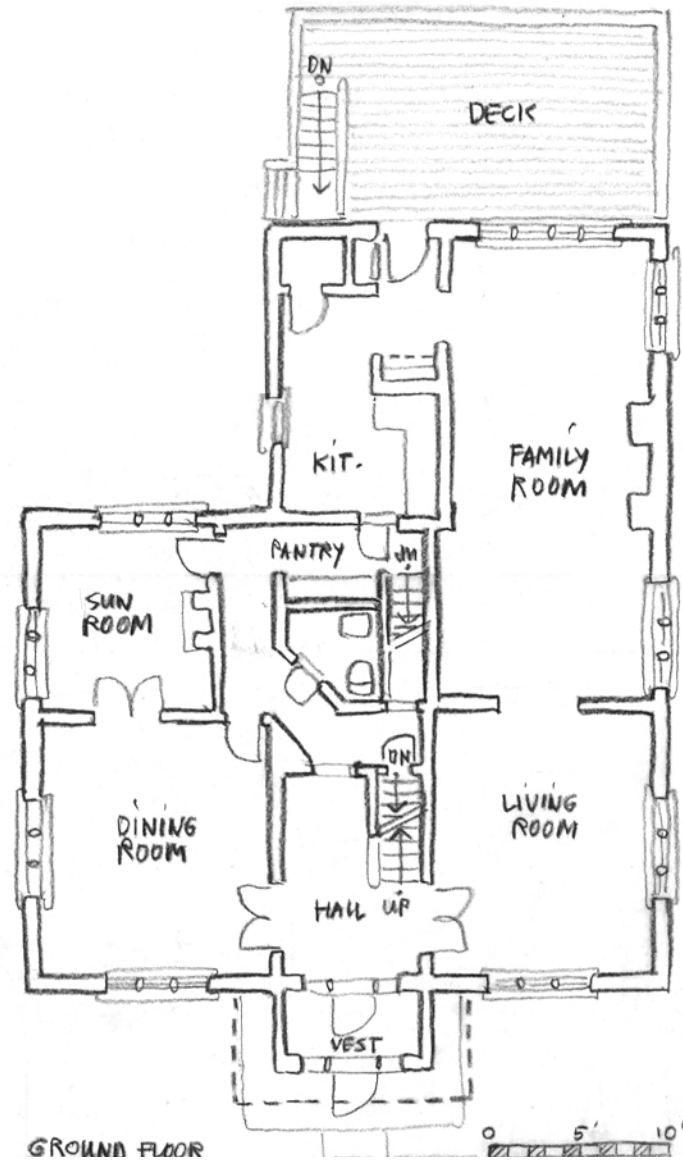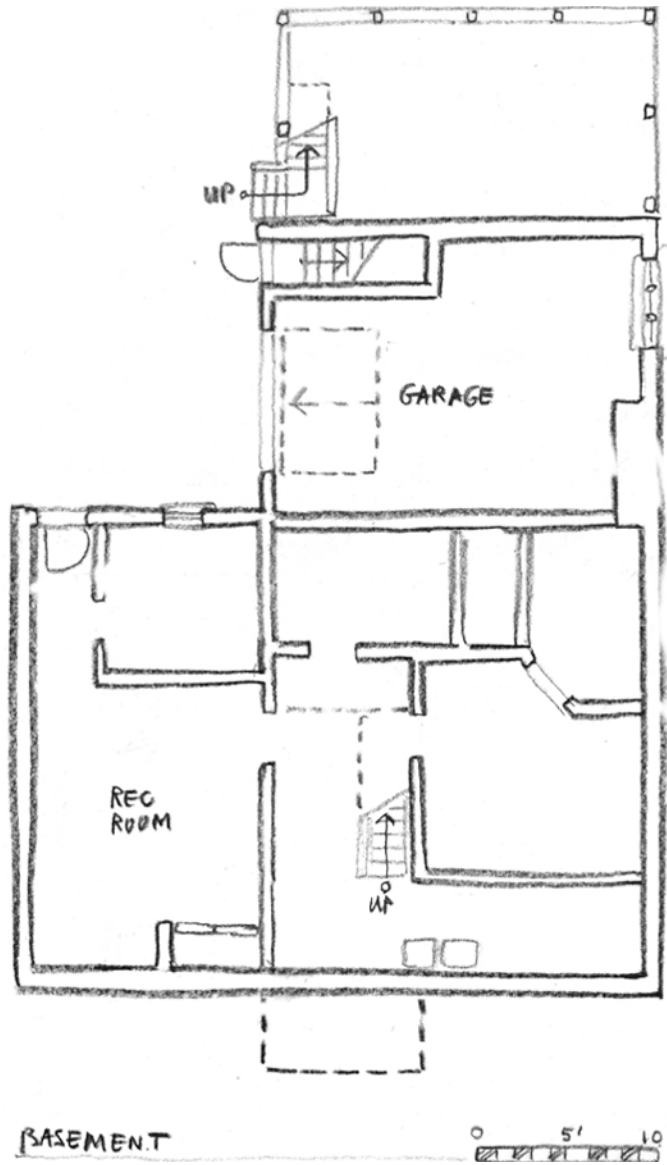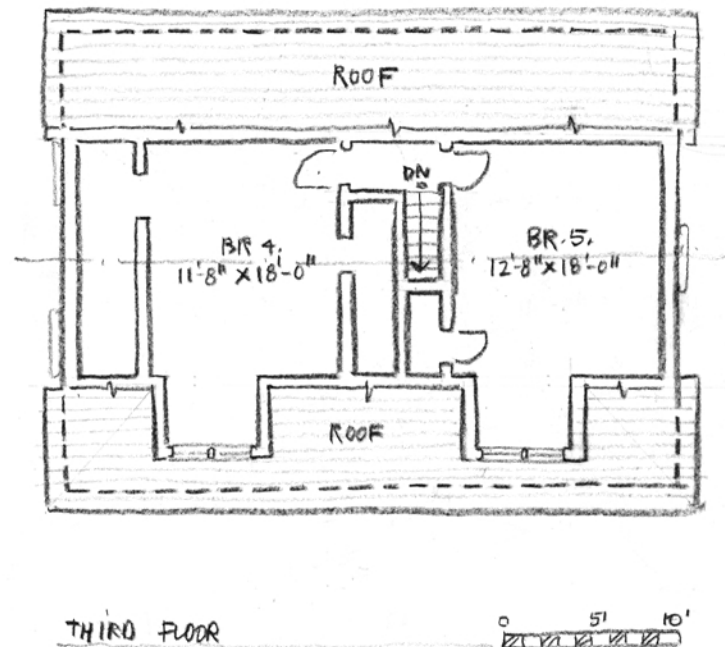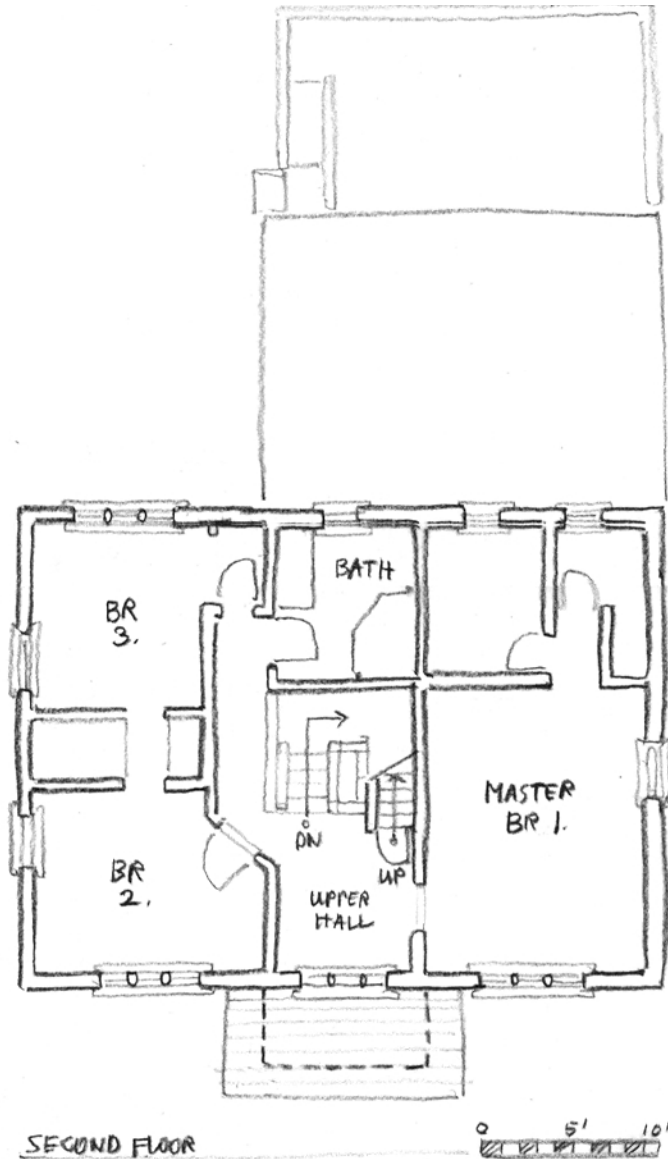

WATCH THE VIDEO
Refer to attached CD

ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY
70 Weybourne

SITE PLAN: 70 WEYBOURNE. CRESCENT

23b

BASEMENT

0 5' 10'

GROUND FLOOR

0 5' 10'

DECK

DN

KIT.

FAMILY
ROOM

PANTRY

SUN
ROOM

DN

LIVING
ROOM

DINING
ROOM

HALL UP

VEST

GARAGE

UP

REC
ROOM

UP

BR 3.

BATH

BR 2.

UPPER HALL

DN

UP

MASTER BR 1.

ROOF

BR 4.
11'-8" x 18'-0"

DN

BR 5.
12'-8" x 18'-0"

ROOF

SECOND FLOOR

0   5'   10'

THIRD FLOOR

0   5'   10'

90

Bedroom 2 looking into Bedroom 3
SECOND FLOOR

24b

Family room looking into Living room
FIRST FLOOR

25b

Bedroom 3 with the door to Bedroom 2
SECOND FLOOR

26b

Sun Room looking into Dining Room
FIRST FLOOR

27b

Bedroom 5 looking into Bedroom 4
THIRD FLOOR

Kitchen
FIRST FLOOR

Recreation Room
BASEMENT

Garage
BASEMENT

31b

Stairs
THIRD FLOOR

Front Entrance
FIRST FLOOR

33b

South Facade looking from driveway
FIRST FLOOR

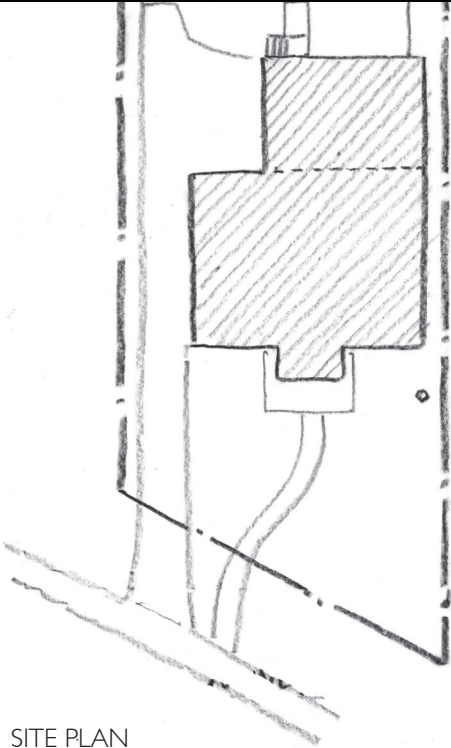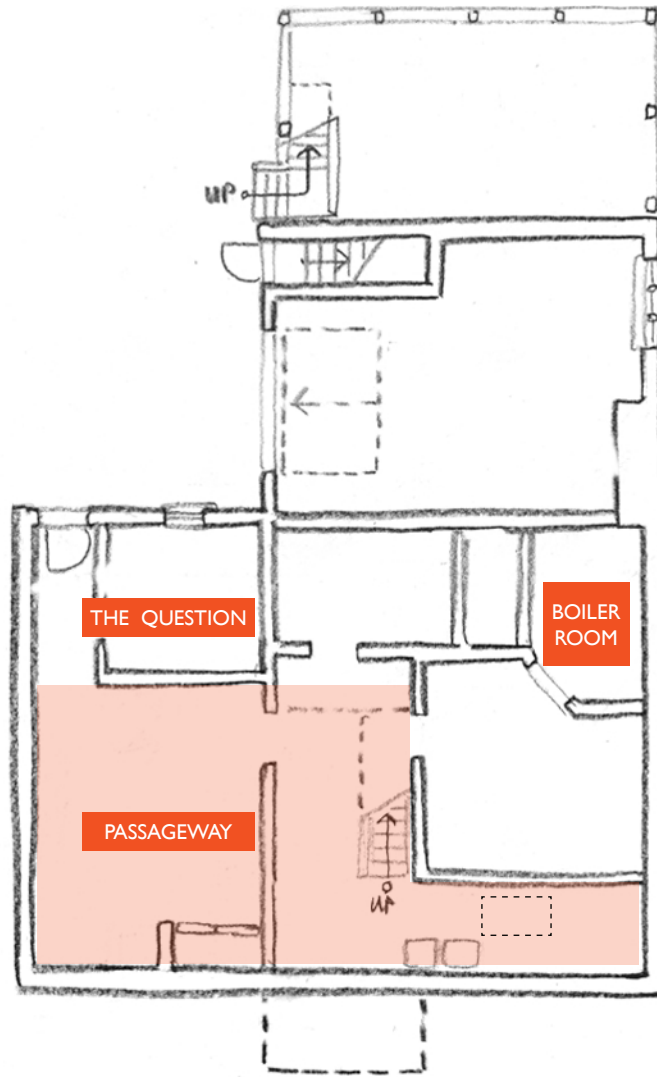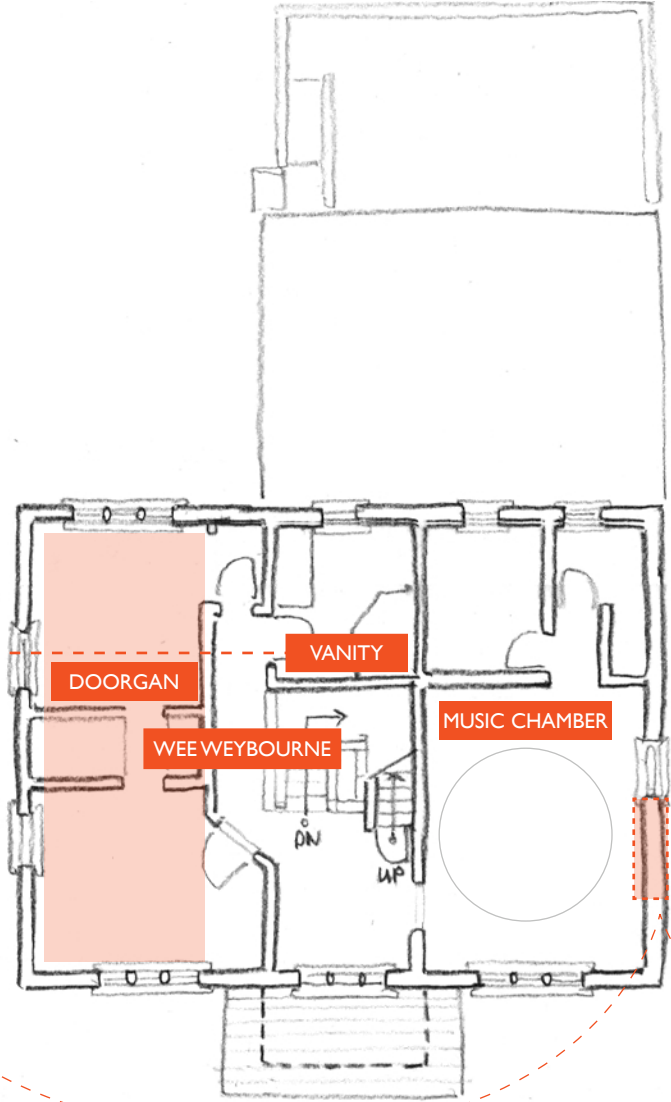34b

LOCATION OF INSTALLATIONS
The Weybourne Project

BURN IT DOWN

THE QUESTION

PASSAGEWAY

BOILER ROOM

SECRETS

STRING THEORY

DOOR TUNNEL

SITE PLAN

BASEMENT

FIRST FLOOR

DECK

LIVE
MAPPING

Open to
above

Stairs down to Passageway

DOORGAN

VANITY

WEE WEYBOURNE

MUSIC CHAMBER

DN

UP

SECOND FLOOR

DECK

ROOF

DIMENSION

IN A SPLIT
MEMORY

THE
BITUMEN
LINE

CHIMNEY

ROOF

THIRD FLOOR

103
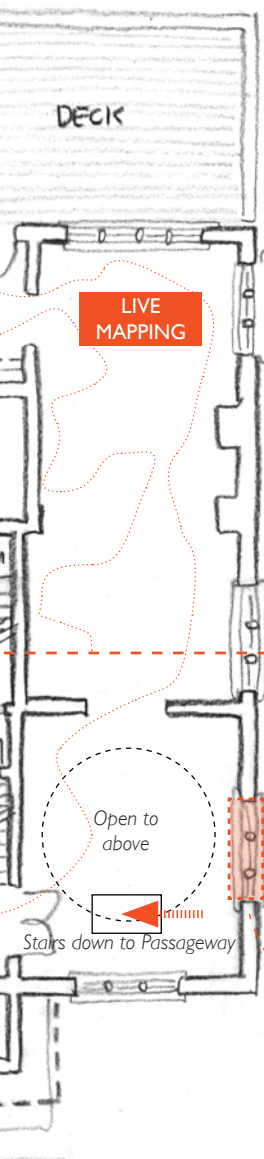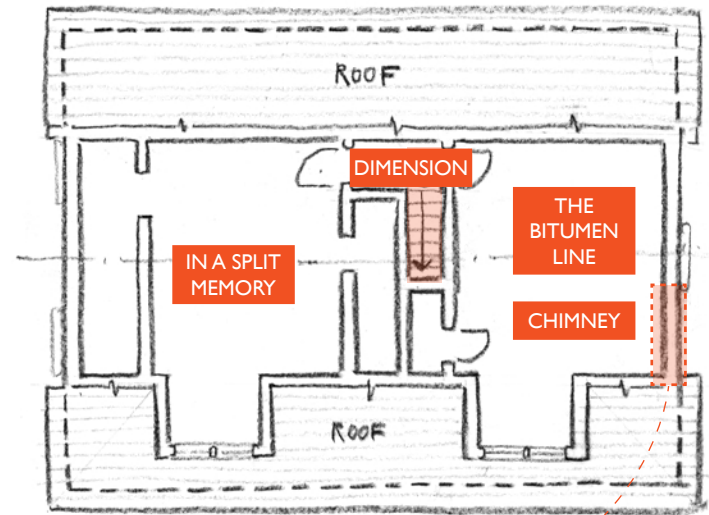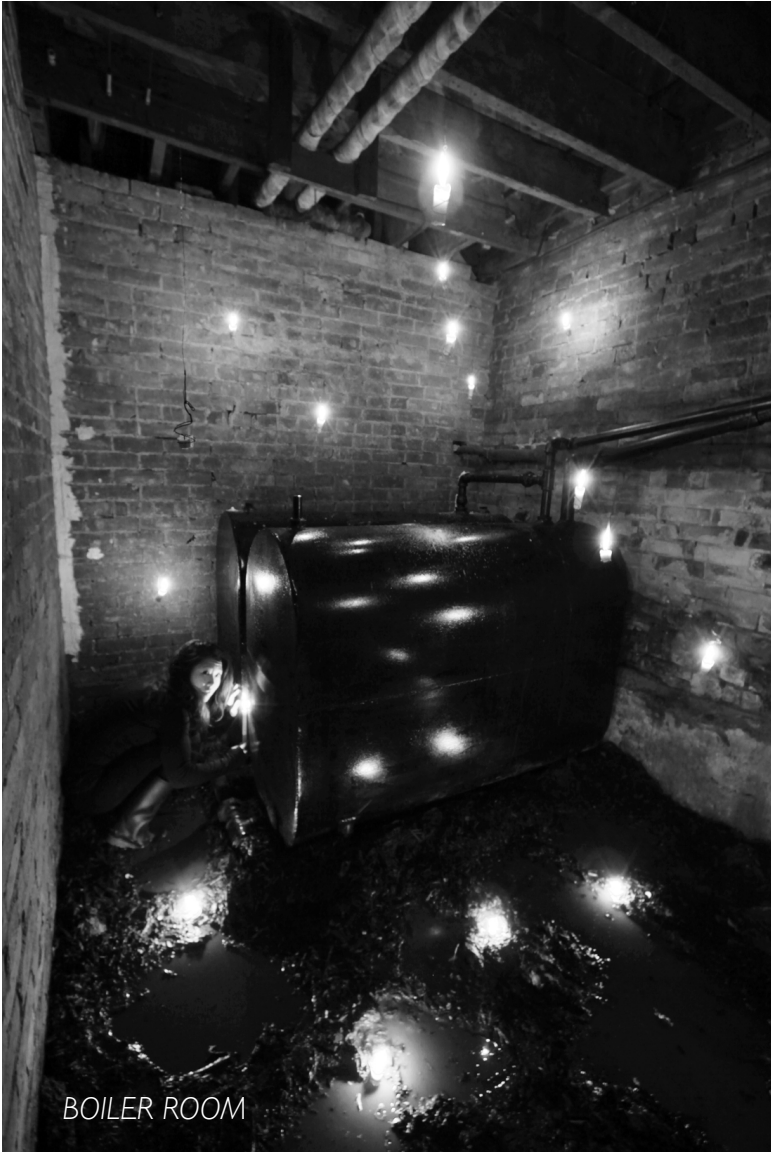
LIVE PERFORMANCE WITH DOORGAN

BOILER ROOM

CHIMNEY & THE BITUMEN LINE

STAIRS TO P

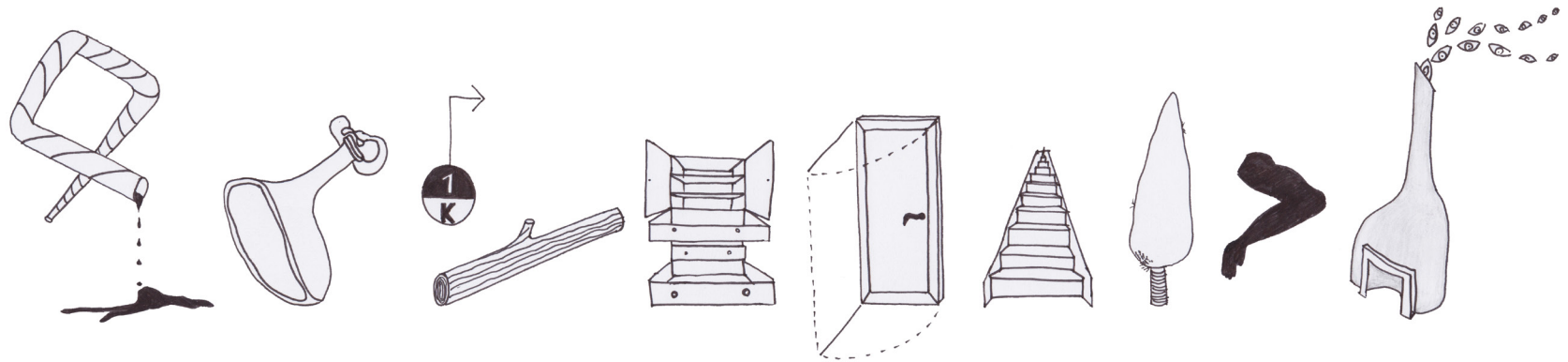PASSAGEWAY

DOOR TUNNEL

WATCH *"The Weybourne Project"*
On Vimeo

Environments :

DOORGAN ANDREAS BUCHWALDT
WEE WEYBOURNE JANIS DEMKIW
SECRETS FARSAN FARAHANI
THE BITUMEN LINE FICTIONAL TERRITORIES
PASSAGEWAY DONALD MILLER
STRING THEORY JESSICA LEVINE & ALEX KUSIAK
UNTITLED (CHIMNEY) COURTNEY PARKS
VANITY SANAM SAMANIAN
LIVE MAPPING CARA SPOONER
DOOR TUNNEL SUE TANG & SHAMIR PANCHAL
BURN IT DOWN VICTORIA TAYLOR
DIMENSION JAMES ANTHONY USAS
BOILER ROOM APRIL WONG
IN A SPLIT MEMORY RAMIN YAMIN
THE QUESTION GELAREH SAADATPAJOUH
MUSIC CHAMBER CHRISTOPHER WILLIS

Music Perfomances by:

ANNE BOURNE
RYAN BROUWER
ISLA CRAIG
COLIN FISHER
DANIEL HARLEY
GERMAINE LIU
NICOLE RAMPERSAUD
TOM RICHARDS
ALEX SAMARAS
HEATHER SEGGER
CHRISTOPHER WILLES

CONCLUSION
Projections & Alternatives

CONCLUSION : THE CITY AS A PALIMPSEST OF HUMAN EXISTENCE

Walking down Via dei Coronari, like most streets in central Rome, one feels immersed in an ancient world rich with life without pretension, so ordinary, so resolved–almost banal. The walls and the pavements, its grand architecture and trivial chitchats of cafe owners and residents attest to a complex, yet intimate flow of life. The street is populated with antique dealer shops and restorers. They come from a long lineage. Coronari is a derivative of "Corona del Rosario" a meditation bead that was sold along other devotional objects to the pilgrims passing through this part of the city. Via dei Cornoari, also known as via Recta, has been a prominent connecting corridor between Piazza Novena and Ponte St. Angel for pilgrims to Vatican on the other side of Tiber river. The tradition of selling big crosses, vintage religious forms and precious stones has persisted since. However, the street has existed even before creation of the Catholic Church. The area west of Tiber, before erection of Vatican, was home to Circus Caligula or Circus of Nero, the first major development west of Tiber and indeed a popular one. Maps show that Via dei Coronary has existed in its present form as early as 14 B.C as a walking path to connect the ancient city centre to the circus. Maintaining its original path for over 2000 years, the street has gone through many transformations, absorbed endless changes; and yet today it is a fully functional traffic route, and undeniably a pleasure to walk, experience and live. Centuries of small and large acts of individual and collective aspirations, and their direct influence on the architecture, culture and narrative of this space has made coexistence a natural quality of it. This presents a notion of urbanity that doesn't come about only by passing of time but essentially from an unconscious decision in accepting different patterns of growth upon a familiar territory.

Today there are cities built over a few short years that can accommodate millions of people. Mass urbanization poses unprecedented issues upon society and the resources of our planet. While the consequences are not entirely known, this process can be hardly overridden by anything else. The destiny of humanity is affected by the way we build, yet we cannot give up on the quality of life in these places. In the midst of this dizzying fast forward growth of cities, we have to look for possibilities for improving life experiences in every situation, every space and every constant of interaction between people and cities. There are endless opportunities to accommodate and foster a rich life even in the most mechanically produced spaces. In walking away from the perception of the city as a complete and permanent entity, accepting it as an unfinished project that is subject to constant change—regardless of how recently it has been built or in what state of decay it may be—people are finding alternative ways for building resilient and beautiful cities.

Management of culture in the context of local history is a vital process that is missing from rapid urbanization. As Charles Landry introduces the work of Hans Venhuizen in Game Urbanism he identifies this process and indicates that "cultural resources are the raw material of the city and are its value base". To understand a place and its possible futures one must focus on its culture, to discover the distinctive, the unique and the special in any place[1]. The connection that ordinary people have with these delicate nuances of their societies is proving to be an immense source of knowledge, information and inspiration even for professionals and governments, for developing more balanced cities. To engage people in the process of urbanization is to add a layer of wisdom and resolution that can only be achieved through a long-term practice of living in a place. Without falling into the realm of sentimental or nostalgia, by employing Tactical Urbanism for building cities we can tap into the diversity and strength of this newly rediscovered source. However, in this process it is key to avoid glorification of the local to the point of becoming disconnected from the global forces or larger contextual realities. Investing too much in people's opinion when a profound or complex issue is at hand, can equally be damaging. Although, long- term planning or scientific studies are

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1.Charles Landry "Think Cultural, Plan Imaginatively and Act Artistically" in *Game Urbanism : Manual for Cultural Spatial Planning* Hans Venhuizen (Valiz. Amsterdam : 2010). 31

essential, Tactical Urbanism can play significant role in future cities. And when practiced its actors have to be educated and informed about urban dynamics and the consequences and reverberations of changes they exert.

Tactics are used by a diverse type of players, and not only in a purely bottom-up format either. As an effective tool for quick implementation of ideas and temporary realizations, tactic has in fact succeeded in justifying a lot of projects that were previously difficult to take off the ground or even be considered in large scopes of city planning. Mostly in public realm and done with small or incremental provision of funding, a range of projects that serve individuals, communities, and at times, the society in large, has been delivered through Tactical Urbanism in the past couple of decades. It has been most commonly utilized for such urban interventions as reclamation of urban voids (empty sites) for shared activities, building low-cost housing, gardening, farming, narrative and identity-making or building playgrounds. All these projects are carried through a culture of voluntarism and generosity, and often for responding to second tier needs of their communities. However they occasionally also succeed to address the basic needs of people. For instance urban farming can in some level address the issue of food security in cities, and the methods of low-cost housing can be widely applied to provide shelter and safety. These initiatives are often taken by independently run collectives, NGOs or community associations. But it is not rare to see governments and large businesses to initiate the process from the top, but develop it from the ground up in a tactical format. Programs like 'Parks to Pavement' and Templehofer's site activation that were introduced previously are both good examples of state-run tactical projects, beneficiary both to the people on the community level and to the government for achieving their 'soft' goals in the context of their grand schemes.

The experiments which were discussed in this thesis, however, were all formed from the bottom, informally and at best only with an endorsement from city councillors. They heavily depended on the tactical use of resources, and recognizing moments of vacuum of control and power in the city. But most importantly what all these projects have in common is an objective to discover the uniqueness of each place beyond their common use or aesthetics, to build alternative narratives of Toronto. Thus, observing and examining each place from a ground level perspective, common to tacticians, was essential in excavating

and activating the beauty, the grand and the useful in them. The limitedness of resources, the urge for immediate results, and the persistence on borrowing meaning from the local conditions provided the necessary reasons for adopting tactic as the method of action, however unconscious it may have been.

The SpaceSeries for instance, is heavily dependent on Toronto's cycles of real estate economy, patterns in which small investors engage in the property market and the legal loop holes of the City. It is also reacting to the progressive cultural and artistic energies of Toronto by creating a public space in which those expressions could be framed autonomously and outside of the everyday of the city, while open to the public. In this way the privately owned property, the house, but publicly used space, the gallery, is radically different from POPS. These spaces sit vaguely between the private and public realm, and are better known as heterotopias. They are forms of incidental interruption in the spatial identity of a city to accommodate the marginal activities and the eccentricities of the society. Bathhouses, sport clubs, brothels or libraries can be identified as heterotopias. Similarly SpaceSeries, defined by alliance of a group of people with shared creative impulses, formed this moment of disruption in the monotony of the residential suburbs to accommodate a share interest and give place to alternative identities and narratives of the city.

In the same fashion, the more evolved practice of Playwalk, co-developed between Society of Homo Ludens and Studio JAYWAL, invests heavily in the everyday and the banal, yet offers a ludic space outside the everyday. It is made up of sensorial qualities of the city's built environment and the personal narrative of the city. Playwalk in its current form, post its first appearance in WQW Triangle, is a transgression from the 'norm' of the everyday experience of the city that is defined by functional use of space. By opening an ambiguous terrain in which the meanings are created only through relationships established in the 'here and now, the urban landscape can thus be appropriated, reinterpreted and transfigured, in its meanings and associations. The 'other' space begins taking shape parallel to the material world, in the space of narration and personal history.

In these localized utopias, in form of SpaceSeries and Playwalk, people can practice their differences in a collective way when the public spaces of the

city can be too restrictive and rigid for those purposes. It is worth mentioning that play is utilized as a tactic to create a formal separation from the rest of the world, and to suspend the existing rules in favour of revealing possibilities. Play also precedes culture. It is not a established norm yet allows establishing a community under made up rules.

Creation of public places that I could personally connect to instigated an unconscious embark on creation of heterotopias of creativity and narrative environments. But as illustrated this is a form of action hardly limited to these projects or to Toronto. Tactical Urbanism in itself has the mechanism for transferring the tactics of social resistances movements to the realm of urbanism[2]. As elaborated on this thesis the hard grip of function on cities has marginalized aspects of culture that are essential to human existence. In reaction to that we are witnessing a strong emergence of independent projects that take advantage of new cultures of collaboration, funding and production. This has become largely possible through digitization of culture and democratization of production. From 3D printers to shared labs and crowd-funding platforms, any good idea, no matter where they come from, can take off the ground and claim a share of the market. Tactical Urbanism in this context, with its approach and capacity for using alternative tools, can transform city-making from a solely state-run practice to an open source and available to everyone industry. Of course, this by no means is an invitation to undermine or create conditions for the state to withdraw from its most essential responsibilities in city-making. The privatization of urbanism as shown has had devastating effects on the city and its people, and a participative urbanism shall by no means be used as yet another excuse for the government to refrain due diligence in planning and building infrastructure, public spaces or housing. This thesis is a call for a more inclusive and multi-faceted development of the city. Connecting the bottom-up impulses with top-down resources and strategic planning can go far in achieving grand goals in a societal level. The re-emergence of a powerful collective that has become possible through internet certainly has a great impact on such movements, but so do have deconstruction of political power structures and the frequency of economic crises. The public, in form of grass-root leaders,

community organizations, neighbourhood associations, small businesses and entrepreneurs will demand a more balanced performance of space in regards to our lives in the city. Readily accessible platforms, for sharing ideas and forming positions, is allowing people to easily mobilize for the purpose of their demands and to pressure governments, experts and leaders to build better cities. Architects, as spatial practitioners, have to equally expand their field of action to include such forces.

> **"This is the future where the client or regulator will not be the state, but the public sphere itself. This is a future that will drive us to create architecture that embraces democracy in a structural sense, demanding architects to be operational and innovative in their design of social ecosystems. This is a future that displaces hard power with soft power, and recognizes design as a master tool of soft power….the only question remains is whether "architects" will strive for a role in this future, or will be banished to the annals of history. Either way the future won't fret[3]."**
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> *Indy Johar*

2. Aurora Fernandez Per "Editorial : Strategy and Tactic in Public Space" in *a+t Magazine* Issue 38 (2011)

3. Indy Johar "Architecture of the Civic Economy, A Manifesto for Soft power" in *Uncubed Magazine* no.20 ed. Sofie Lovell et al. http://www.uncubemagazine.com/magazine-20-12467995.html#!/page50 (accessed Nov 3rd, 2014)

# APPENDICES

"SPACE AS A KEY WORD"

In an attempt to demystify and explain the word "space" throughout endless modifications that it elicits David Harvey, an urban geographer and a Marxian theorist, has set up a none-hierarchical matrix of spatiality, partially based on Henri Lefebvr's tripartite division of space. The matrix is specifically made to explain urban processes beyond their physical expressions and in regards to political and social events that take place in them or contribute to making of them.

The different notions of space included in the matrix are often referenced to and further explained in the thesis to explain the intangible qualities of the city and the processes that are often ignored under planning regime. In short:

"If we regard space as **absolute** it become a 'thing in itself' with an existence independent of matter. It then possesses a structure which we can use to pigeon-hole or individuate phenomena. The view of **relative** space proposes that it be understood as a relationship between objects which exist only because objects exist and relate each other. There is another sense in which space can be viewed as relative and I choose to call this **relational** space - space regarded in the manner of Leibniz, as being contained in objects in the sense that an object can be said to exist only insofar as it contains and represent within itself relationship to other objects."

*1
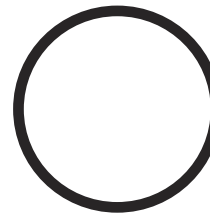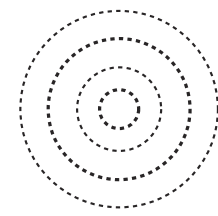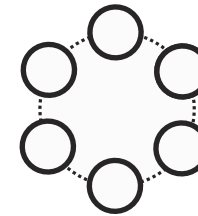
1. An abstract visulization of the absolute, relative and relational space, by the author

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*1

	Material Space (Experienced Space)	Representation of Space (conceptualized Space)	Spaces of Representation (conceptualized Space)
Absolute Space	walls, bridges, doors, stairways, floors, ceilings, streets, buildings, cities, mountains, bodies of water, territorial markers, physical boundaries and barriers, gated communities	cadestral and administrative maps, Euclidean geometry, landscape description, metaphors of confinement, open space, location, placement and positionality, (command and control relatively easy) - *Newtonian Descartes*	feelings of contentment around hearth, sense of security from enclosure, sense of power from ownership, command and domination over space, fear of other "beyond the pale"
Relative Space (Time)	circulation and flows of energy, water, air commodities, people, information, money, capital, cancelations and diminutions in the friction of distance	thematic and topological maps (e.g. London tube system), non-Euclidean geometries and topology, perspectival drawings, metaphors of situated knowledge, of motion, mobility, displacement, acceleration, time-space compression and dissociation, (command and control difficult requiring sophisticated techniques) - Einstein and Riemann	anxiety at not getting to class on time, thrill of moving into the unknown, frustration in a traffic jam, tensions one exhilarations of time-space compression, of speed, of motion
Relational Space (Time)	electromagnetic energy flows and fields, social relations, rental and economic paternal surfaces, pollution concentrations, energy potentials, sounds, odors and sensations wafted on the breeze	surrealism, existentialism, psychogeography, cyberspace, metaphors of internalization of forces and power, (command and control extremely difficult - chaos theory, dialectics, internal relations, quantum mathematics) - *Leibniz, Whitehead, Deleuze, Benjamin)*	visions, fantasies, desires, frustrations, memories, dreams, phantasms, psychic states (e.g. agoraphobia, vertigo, claustrophobia)

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1. **David Harvey.** *Spaces of Global Capitalism: A Theory of Uneven Geographical Development* (New York : Verso, 2006), 135.

AN ALTERNATIVE SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR MUSEUMS

Since formation of Society of Homo Ludens, co-founded by Talayeh Hamidya & Gelareh Saadatpajouh, the research and development of the concept of a roving gallery has been one of the key activities of the studio. In 2012 the land where Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art (MOCCA) is located was sold to a developer for building residential condominiums. Confronting this fundamental transforming event MOCCA organized a call for entry in August 2013 to gather and exhibit ideas regarding its future, the architecture and embodiment of its art. As a response to this call MOCCAX was formed based on the premise of the physical changes that the fabric of the city is going through and the liminal condition that buildings enter before demolition. As part of the research we surveyed City's statistics of the demolition permits that were issued in 2013. Assuming that each of these buildings would be sitting idle for at least a week before their total destruction we projected the possibility of appropriating each space in the spirit of SpaceSeries discussed in this thesis and multiply MOCCA across the city.

The proposal was on exhibition between September 6 to October 26, 2014 as part of selected entries for theme title of *TBD*.

moCCaX

What if every neighborhood had a MOCCA? If the city could walk, its museums would travel the world, meet new people and experience different cultures. But cities don't walk and museums are rooted for most of their lives. In light of MOCCA's search for a new home and to challenge the conventional role of exhibition spaces within fast-growing cities and places we inhabit, Society of Homo Ludens introduces "MOCCA X", a series of roving exhibitions and places of negotiation utilizing idle spaces that are subject to major transformation.

The City of Toronto issued 2,407 permits in one year*, for buildings all across Toronto to be demolished.

Gelareh Saadatpajouh & Talayeh Hamidya
Society of Homo Ludens [dot] com

moCCaX 2,407

*(2014), Toronto Building - Improving the quality of building permit, pg. 20, http://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2014/au/bgrd/backgroundfile-67006.pdf

CITY INDISTINGUISHABLE, ROME

"City Indistinguishable" developed gradually as a personal narrative of a city that was discovered and experienced through flaneurie. The visual documentation aimed at capturing the views that solicited the walks but also intentionally aimed at revealing the position of the body in the mobile space of walking. The body clasped in the endless labyrinth of meandering streets of Rome is a device to read the city, archive its information and appropriate its meaning. The city is etched in the mind and the soul as a memory; wired with the memories before then. The views, directions and spaces are then organized according to a set of personal rules, anonymous and without figure. The river, the street or the stores lose their implied objective expression and are transformed to memories, dreams and desires, the subject of an active, evolving and porous story.

To exhibit this transformation a series of photographs were embedded in boxes with slits in them in a position that demanded the observer to look at the pictures from the exact angle that the pictures were taken. The boxes were then installed on a wall covered with a manipulated image of a sidewalk in Rome. Two boxes were also attached to the glazing of the windows on two sides that as the observer looked through its slits a specific view of neighbouring buildings were framed: a piece of the city that could be theirs.
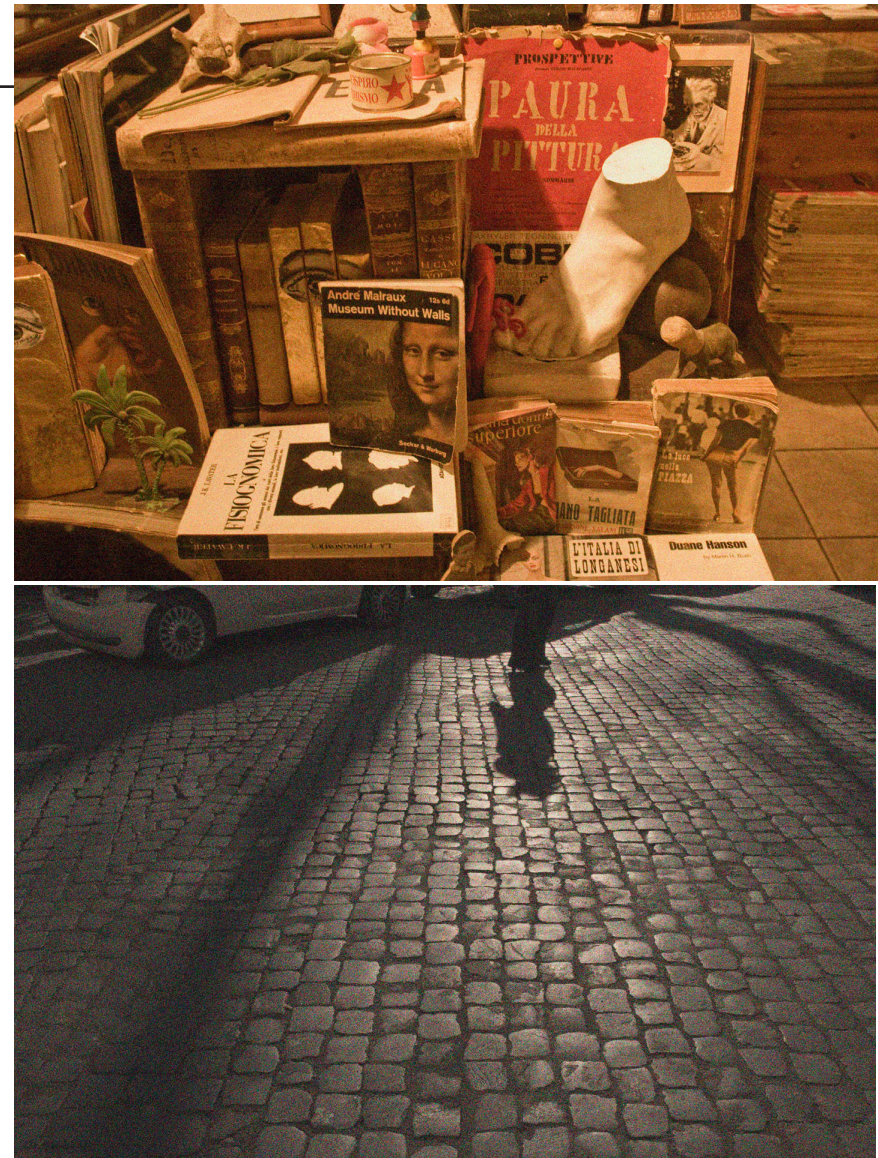
IMAGE DIRECTORY

CHAPTER I

1a : Manipulated version of a vintage postcard accessed at
chuckmantorontonostalgia.wordpress.com
2a : Constant. "Construction d'un Secteur" in New Babylon CONSTANT, Art
et Utopie ed. Jean-Clarence Lambert (Paris : Cercle d'Art, 1997), 53.
3a : Manipulated version of a photo by Jonathan Lin accessed at Flickr
4a, 5a : Manipulated version of Photographs by Mizah Rahman accessed at
www.asianurbanepicenters.com

CHAPTER II

1b : Promotional Material made by Jane Kate Wong
2b, 3b, 4b : Photograph by James Poborsa
5b, 6b, 7b : Photograph by Gelareh Saadatpajouh
8b : Still from Rogers TV. shooting for Daytime Toronto on Rogers TV
    published on June 21, 2012 on Youtube
9b : Photograph by James Poborsa
10b : Photograph by Gelareh Saadatpajouh
11b : Photograph by Labspace Studio
12b, 13b, 14b, 15b, 16b, 17b : Photographs by Oliver Pauk
18b : Photograph by Time&Desire Collective
19b : Still from video by Alex Bain
20b, 21b : Photograph by Nicolas
22b : Photograph by Robin Cerutti
23b : Drawing by Thom Payne
24b, 25b, 26b, 27b, 28b, 29b, 30b, 31b, 32b, 33b, 34b : Stills from "The Weybourne
Project" teaser by Natalie Logan

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