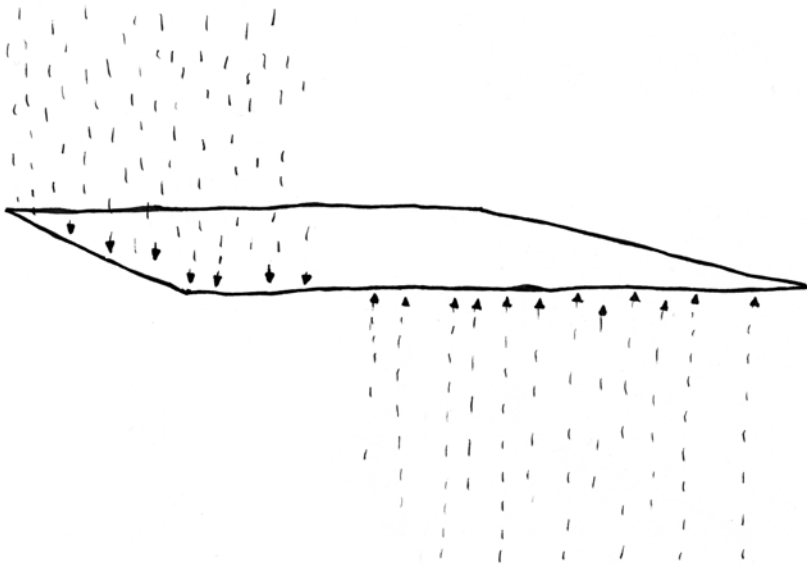


VIRTUAL MIRROR-RAIN

TAO G. VRHOVEC-SAMBOLEC



Mala galerija – Moderna galerija / Museum of Modern Art, Ljubljana

Besedilo / *Text* Brandon LaBelle

Virtualno ogledalo – dež / Virtual Mirror – Rain

TAO G. VRHOVEC SAMBOLEC

»Če arhitekturno delo govori samo o sodobnih trendih in sofisticiranih vizijah, ne da bi sprožilo vibracije v svojem prostoru, to delo ni zasidrano na svoji legi in zato pogrešam posebno težnost tal, na katerih stoji.«¹ – Peter Zumthor

Vprašanja o nesnovnem in neobstojnem v arhitekturi omogočajo razumevanja prostora v povezavi z dinamično čutno izkušnjo. Kot meni Peter Zumthor, so doživljanja arhitekture pogosto nasičena z energijskimi tokovi in teksturo zraka, ki dajejo ostrim robovom prostora moč, ki nekaj pomeni. Občutenje kraja ima torej velik vpliv na občutek umeščenosti.

Pri obravnavi vprašanja čutnih dimenzij prostora Jean-Paul Thibaud razdela pravi, da vzdušje kraja deluje kot energijski tok, ki prinaša v ospredje časovne in situacijske detajle prostorskega. ² V tem pogledu elementi svetlobe, zvoka, vonja in teksture, skupaj z vremenom, družbeno energijo in nihanji razpoloženja dodajo konkretnim strukturam prostora veliko dinamične prisotnosti. S tem, da posvetimo več pozornosti dozdevno nesnovnim elementom, poudarimo relacijsko naravo zgrajenega okolja, kar snovno obliko napaja s številnimi energijami in vsebinami.

V delu Taa Sambolca se vprašanja arhitekture in čutov oblikujejo na natančno dodelan, edinstven način. S performativnim posegom v dano arhitekturo Sambolčeva projekta *Virtualno ogledalo* in *Virtualna luknja* poskušata poudariti stopnjevani občutek za časovno in nestalno, za nesnovni tok pritiskov in energij, ki rojijo v prostoru in zunaj njega. Njegova strategija, da zunanost prenese

noter, da razgrinja in trga robove arhitekturnega prostora, zagotavlja bogat in ploden stik s tistim, kar je vedno že prisotno, a kar šele zdaj zaznavamo kot dejavnik vplivanja in učinkovanja. Sambolčev projekt z dejanji zrcaljenja zunanjih fenomenov ali pa s tem, da v zgradbo zvrta domišljijško luknjo, ki zunanjim elementom omogoča neposreden prehod, izpopolni tisto, kar bi lahko imenoval »poetika pritiska«. Ko ustvarja povezave med zunanjimi silami, ki obdajajo prostor, in notranjim prostorom, njegovo delo dobi funkcijo razpoke, pri čemer z domišljijško ali virtualno razvrstitvijo podre ločnice med zunanjim in notranjim.

Novi projekt *Virtualno ogledalo – dež* je umetnikov poseg v Mali galeriji v Ljubljani, v katerem se osredotoča na odnos stavbe do zunanje sile dežja. Skozi zgrajeni digitalni zaznavajoči sistem se projekt temeljno odziva na prisotnost dežja: vsaka kaplja dežja, ki pade na posebej izdelano vodoravno ploščo, nameščeno pred vhodom galerije, sproži »zrcalno podobo« – iz tal galerije brizgne kapljica vode. Ta izjemno subtilna, a zato nič manj dramatična orkestracija ustvarja domišljijško igro. Gledalce nas vabi, da sledimo ustreznemu odnosu med zunanostjo in notranostjo, med oddaljenim vzrokom in njegovim učinkom. S tem, da vzpostavi povezavo med dežjem, ki pada zunaj, in notranjim dogodkom, Sambolec dramatizira možnost prodiranja zunanosti v notranjost. Prehodni trenutek dežja najde pot v stavbo, se vrne v obliki kiparskega učinka in popelje domišljijo skozi prostorske poetike, kjer se notranjost in zunanost sestaneta.

Arhitekt Bernard Tschumi, ki preko teme nasilja raziskuje, kar sam imenuje »arhitekturni dogodek«, pravi: »Telesa s tekočimi ali sunkovitimi gibi dolbejo raznovrstne nove in nepričakovane prostore. Arhitektura je torej samo organizem, ki nenehno občuje z uporabniki, katerih telesa se zaganjajo

v skrbno vzpostavljena pravila arhitekturne misli.«³ Gibanje telesa se vrine v prostorske lastnosti arhitekture, pri čemer v odnosu do načrta izraža element trajanja in naselitve. V Sambolčevem primeru se vdor telesa kot element stalnega poseganja v prostor spremeni v subtilnejše in nečloveške elemente. *Virtualno ogledalo – dež* potrjuje, da notranje napetosti v arhitekturi ne povzročajo samo telesa in načini, kako se gibljejo v prostoru. Tudi oblike naravnih ali elementarnih sil ter zunanje energije vplivajo na pogoje prostorskega – stalno obdajajo zgrajeno okolje, se ga dotikajo in mu dajejo teksturo. Kot je dejal Juhani Pallasmaa, nas obkroža igra ambienta in čutnih elementov, ki v arhitekturo vnaša občutenje doživetega časa.⁴ *Virtualno ogledalo – dež* uprizarja ta doživeti čas tako, da ga postavi v središče galerije.

Pritiski zunanosti so torej poteze, ki s tem, da zahtevajo odpor ali delni nadzor, dajejo občutek za minevanje časa. Nestalne razmere, ki nas obdajajo, od menjave letnih časov do minevanja dneva, so videti kot nasprotje stabilni in navidezno nespremenljivi naravi stavb. Stavbe lahko delno razumemo kot stvari, ki najbolj kljubujejo času, se upirajo pritiskom vsakdana in dajejo zavetje našim dnevnim ritualom. V nasprotju s tem pa spremembe svetlobe med letom, nihanje vremenskih razmer, zvočno valovanje, ki potuje skozi različna okolja – vsi ti pojavi oživljajo zgrajeno okolje ter prevajajo poetičnost trenutka v senco in svetlobo, tišino in hrup, dež in sonce.

Bežnost in začasnost postaneta aktivna elementa, s katerima lahko določimo ne le, kje v prostoru se nahajamo, temveč še pomembneje, kje smo v času.

Paul Carter v pronicljivem članku z naslovom »Ambiguous Traces, Mishearing, and Auditory Space« predstavlja prepričljivo raziskavo o zvoku in dejavnostih poslušanja v povezavi s temo

»dvoumnosti«.⁵ S trditvijo, da poslušanje kot komunikacijski kanal uteleša užitke in možnosti, ki so inherentni dvoumnosti, avtor začrta produktivno območje, v katerem »napačne slušne zaznave« sprožijo bogat interaktivni proces. Po Carterjevem mnenju dvoumnost zvoka semantičnemu pomenu zagotavlja stopnjo prožnosti in presenečenja, ki omogočata pojav subtilnih konotacij med govorjenjem.

Čeprav se Carter osredotoča predvsem na zvok, menim, da pri njem zasledimo tudi vprašanja o časovnosti in bežnosti na splošno. Njegov pojem »produktivne dvoumnosti« bi lahko prispeval h globljemu in manj statičnemu razumevanju arhitekture. Če sprejemamo dejstvo, da okrog nas obstaja ambientalni tok, ki okolje oživlja in znotraj njega spodbuja dinamično igro odnosov, se to lahko zgodi le na nivoju, na katerem striktno funkcionalni in prostorski program arhitekture postane dvoumen.

Te ambientalne, elementarne poteze lahko spustijo v strogo logiko grajenega okolja piš dvoumnosti ter s tem v to okolje vpeljejo kanček užitka. Kot presunljivo namiguje Sambolčev projekt, ali je streha nad nami res tako trdna, kot si predstavljamo?

Brandon LaBelle

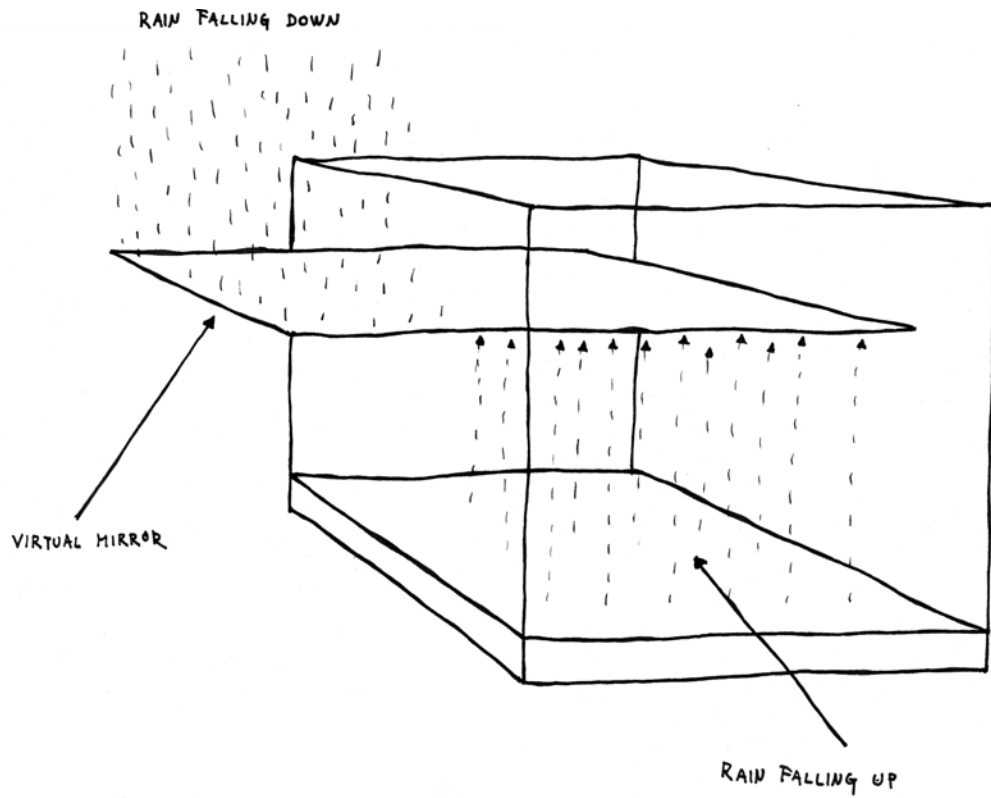
1 Peter Zumthor, *Thinking Architecture* (Zürich: Birkhauser, 1998), str. 37.

2 Jean-Paul Thibaud, »The three dynamics of urban ambiances«, v *Site of Sound: of Architecture and the Ear, Vol. II*, ur. Brandon LaBelle in Claudia Martinho (Berlin/Los Angeles: Errant Bodies Press, v tisku).

3 Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996), str. 123.

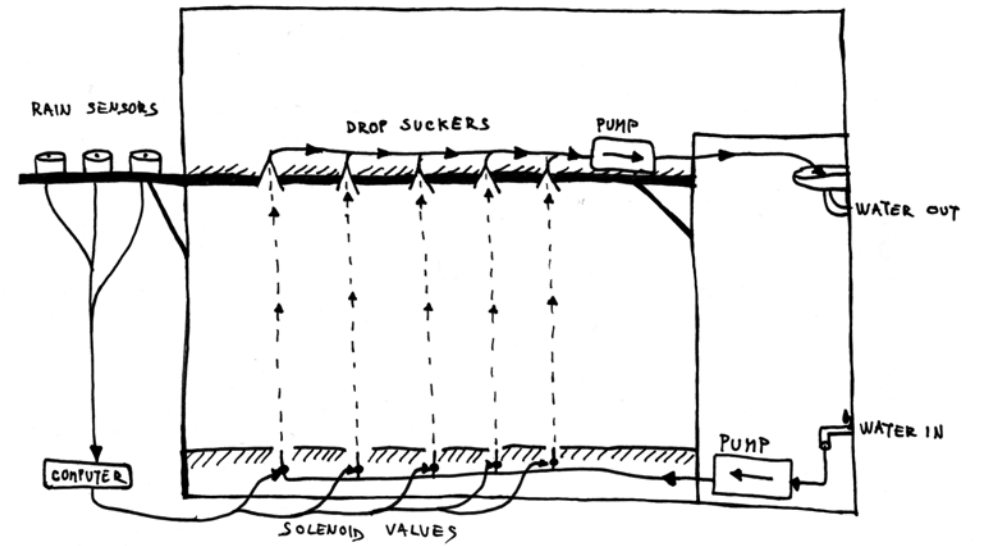
4 Juhani Pallasmaa, *Oči kože: arhitektura in čuti* (Ljubljana: Studia humanitatis, 2007).

5 Paul Carter, »Ambiguous Traces, Mishearing and Auditory Space«, v *Hearing Cultures*, ur. Veit Erlmann (Oxford: Berg, 2004), str. 43–64.



EVERY TIME A RAINDROP FALLS ON A RAIN SENSOR OUTSIDE, THE SAME RAINDROP IS BEING SYNTHESIZED AND REFLECTED BACK TO THE SKY FROM THE FLOOR INSIDE.

STRUCTURE:



"If a work of architecture speaks only of contemporary trends and sophisticated visions without triggering vibrations in its place, this work is not anchored in its site, and I miss the specific gravity of the ground it stands on."¹ – Peter Zumthor

Questions of the immaterial and the evanescent within architecture open up understandings of space to the dynamics of sensorial experience. As Peter Zumthor suggests, experiences of architecture are often charged by the flows of energy and atmospheric texture, contributing meaningful force to the hard edges of space. Feelings for a place thus impart great influence onto our sense of being located.

Jean-Paul Thibaud elaborates on the sensorial dimensions of space, suggesting that the "ambience" of place functions as an energetic flux bringing forward the temporal and situational details of spatiality.² In this regard, elements of light, sound, smell, and texture, along with weather, social energy, and the fluctuations of mood, significantly add dynamic presence to the concrete structures of space. By giving more attention to these seemingly immaterial elements, the built environment may be underscored as relational, infusing material form with multiple energies and input.

In following the work of Tao Sambolec, questions of architecture and the senses find unique elaboration. Through performative intervention within a given architecture, Sambolec's Virtual Mirror and Virtual Hole projects attempt to bring forward this heightened sense of the temporal and the transitory, the immaterial flux of pressures and energies that swarm in and around space. His strategy of bringing

the outside in, to unfold and fray the edges of architectural space, provides a rich and fruitful point of contact, which opens the senses up to that which is always already present, as an influencing and effective factor. Whether through acts of "mirroring" external phenomena, or by cutting an imaginary "hole" into a building so as to allow outside elements directly inside, Sambolec's project elaborates what I might call a "poetics of pressure": creating links between the exterior forces that surround an interior space, his work performs a rupture, breaking the demarcating lines between inside and out through an imaginary or virtual alignment.

For instance, in his current project, Virtual Mirror - Rain, the artist has worked to create an intervention at the Museum of Modern Art, Ljubljana by focusing on the relation of the building to the exterior force of rain. Through the construction of a digital, sensing system, the project essentially responds to the presence of rain: each drop of rain as it falls onto a specially constructed horizontal plate mounted at the entrance to the Museum comes to trigger a "mirror image" in which a small drop of water rises from the floor of the Museum. This extremely subtle and yet no less dramatic orchestration comes to create an imaginary play. As viewers we are asked to follow the corresponding relation between an exterior and an interior, between a remote cause and its resulting effect. By forming a link between the rain outside, and the interior event, Sambolec dramatizes the possibility of the outside coming in. The transitory instant of rain finds a way into the building, returning in the form of a sculptural effect to lead the imagination through a spatial poetics, where inside and outside begin to converse.

The architect Bernard Tschumi explores what he calls the "event of architecture" through the theme of violence, proposing that "Bodies carve all sorts of new and unexpected spaces, through fluid

or erratic motions. Architecture, then, is only an organism engaged in constant intercourse with users, whose bodies rush against the carefully established rules of architectural thought.”³ The movement of the body intrudes on the spatial features of architecture, expressing an element of duration and inhabitation in relation to design. In Sambolec’s case, the intrusion of the body, as an element of constant intervention, shifts to more subtle and non-human elements. Virtual Mirror - Rain recognizes that what disrupts architecture is not only the ways in which we put to use space, as bodies, but importantly, how forms of natural or elemental force and energy continually envelope the built environment, to touch, to give texture, to effect and influence the conditions of spatiality. As Juhani Pallasmaa proposes, the ambient and sensorial elements at play around us give to architecture a feeling for lived time.⁴ Virtual Mirror - Rain starts to stage this lived time by placing it at the center of the Museum.

The pressures of the outside are then features that, while requiring resistance or partial control, impart a feeling for the passing of time. From seasonal changes to the passing of a day, the ongoing transitory conditions that flow around us are elements that may appear in contrast to the stability and seemingly immutable nature of buildings. Buildings might be partially understood as the things that mostly withstand time, that resist the pressures of the everyday and lend continuity to our daily rituals. In contrast, the shifts in light throughout the course of a year, the flux of weather conditions, and the sonorous undulations that flow over and around different environments, for example, all come to animate the built, rendering a poetics of the moment in shadow and light, silence and noise, rain and sun. The fleeting and transitory become active elements by which we might locate not only where we are in space, but importantly, also in time.

Paul Carter, in his insightful article “Ambiguous Traces, Mishearing, and Auditory Space”, gives a compelling examination of sound and acts of listening through the theme of “ambiguity.”⁵ Claiming that listening, as a communicational channel, incorporates the pleasures and potentiality inherent to ambiguity, the author stakes out a productive territory in which “mishearing” opens onto a rich process of interaction. For Carter, the ambiguity found in sound grants degrees of flexibility and surprise to semantic meaning, to foster the soft connotations that arise within speaking. Though Carter’s work focuses primarily on sound, I think it also starts to open up to questions of the temporal and ephemeral in general. His notion of a “productive ambiguity” may also lend to a deeper and more fluid understanding of architecture. For if we begin to appreciate the ambient flux around us, as animating and imparting degrees of effective play onto surrounding environments, it may be on the level of making ambiguous the strictly functional and spatial program of architecture. That is, these ambient, elemental features may give pleasure to the strict logic of the built environment by lending an air of the ambiguous. As Sambolec’s artistic project poignantly suggests, is the roof above our heads really as solid as we might imagine?

Brandon LaBelle

1 Peter Zumthor, *Thinking Architecture* (Zürich: Birkhauser, 1998), 37.

2 Jean-Paul Thibaud, “The three dynamics of urban ambiances” in *Site of Sound: of architecture and the ear, Vol. II*, eds. Brandon LaBelle and Claudia Martinho (Berlin/Los Angeles: Errant Bodies Press, forthcoming).

3 Bernard Tschumi, *Architecture and Disjunction* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1996), 123.

4 Juhani Pallasmaa, *The Eyes of the Skin: Architecture and the Senses* (Sussex, UK: Wiley, 2007).

5 Paul Carter, “Ambiguous Traces, Mishearing and Auditory Space” in *Hearing Cultures*, ed. Veit Erlmann, (Oxford: Berg, 2004), 43-64.

Tao G. Vrhovec Sambolec
Virtualno ogledalo – dež
Virtual Mirror – Rain

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