

SPATIAL PRACTICE
BETWEEN
INSTALLATION ART
AND
ARCHITECTURE

M GOLDBERG
MRes 2013

**SPATIAL PRACTICE
BETWEEN
INSTALLATION ART
AND
ARCHITECTURE**

MAUD GOLDBERG

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements of the Manchester
Metropolitan University for the degree of
Masters of Research

Department of Art and Design Manchester
Institute for Research and Innovation in
Art and Design Manchester Metropolitan
University May 2013

INTRODUCTION

This study looks to explore the notion of spatial manipulation, in terms of its cross-disciplinarity, between installation art and architecture. It intends to define space as a space of possibilities and in that context, expose points of threshold, overlaps and boundaries between the two spatial practices of installation art and architecture.

The points explored in that context will be addressed from an art perspective to generate queries and analytic reflections by way of practice and considered theory.

This process will occur conjointly in order to permit an auto ethnographic art practice and reflective approach to be continuously confronted by wider contexts that underpin the research. Thus aiming to substantiate the development of various spatial practices such as architecture.

The experimental making process that leads this study will seek to adopt the objective rigour that characterises the controlled practice of architecture. This will aim to propose installation art as an investigator of different methods and their validity with regards to architectural practice. Debate upon that subject will occur through direct but occasional engagement of practitioners from the Manchester School of Architecture [MSA]. My own installation art practice will be used as basis for a discourse that will test the influence of restricting parameters to both an experimental art practice and architecture; to include the issue of collaborative practice.

This study will aim to raise cross-over points, between installation art and architecture, that could become catalysts to further develop a more experiential approach to architectural functionalism.

To that aim, practice will occur across three different environments. At first,

experiments will use a post-industrial site, then a domestic space, and last the 'white cube' of the contemporary gallery. The diversity of spaces should disturb a practice that, to date, has progressed around post-industrial site-specificity. This should provoke a sustained system of enquiry, analysis and synthesis in terms of the impact and affect of site upon practice.

Form, materiality and function, that will discern one site from another, may generate variances in the work. This should permit to test the potential in an experimental art practice to be versatile in its response to a space and examine it against that of the architect's response that is tailored to individual briefs.

The interdisciplinarity of installation art will be questioned, regards its ability to physically apply the concepts that underpin it to different spatial contexts.

The sets of experiments will help to assess a point of balance between the influence of functionalism versus form and materiality and theory versus the sensory, in respect of both spatial practices.

This paper will set out to depict experiments in a strict chronological order due to a sequential process of making, where planning seldom takes place, to leave room for an impulsive and sensory response to each interior space. The experimental method of practice permits a continuous testing of boundaries and points of threshold; the work often appears unfinished or imperfect as it never assumes a definite answer but is instead a temporal exercise that waits to be altered in response to previous experiments and reflective process.

In its concern to establish a humane spatial practice, the work will develop the interplay between spatial fabric and body by implementing interconnective materials that will, physically and visually, disclose the coexistence of body to space in their individual and relative materiality and form.

These materials, either imported or gathered from site, will be selected specifically for their homogenous or contrasting formal and material characteristics to both site and body. The presence or absence of the body will be suggested and at times objectified by using the arrangement of materials as transfer of a physical exchange between body and site. This system will intend to explore the interdependent coexistence of site and body in materiality and form. It will aim to define and expose the reasons for which certain elements of a spatial fabric and, certain materials are selected over others, to construct a sense of place; to go beyond the primitiveness of the sensory to explore how the tension and divide of a space lead to the resurgence of past experiences and how these meet with a present state of mind to generate a perception of space.

This experience will disclose the affect of their inter-related structure upon the experiential of space and vice versa. The making process will be by turns impulsive and considered; the core of the work stems from a primitive response to spatial fabric, subsequently subjected to a speculative process that considers theories, objectives and reflects upon the analysis of automatic action and preceding experiments. The work occurs as an attempt to find balance between impulse and synthesis.

Theories and philosophies that will inform and substantiate the analysis and synthesis of practical work, in the context of the question posed, have been

appropriated by spatial practices such as architecture. Post-war theorists and art practices will establish the contextual basis of this study as more complex and widespread discussions of space took place during this period.

There is no direct reference to be made between my work and the concept that defined minimalist practices yet, their content, form and subsequent affect upon the experiential of a space help to identify a concordance. In that respect, and for further reasons cited below, it appears that a relevance can be established between the work of Richard Serra, Robert Morris and that of my own practice. Both artists will become informative sources to the experiments and concurrent analysis that will lead this research.

In implementing geometric three-dimensional forms to a site, the architectural installations of Serra and Morris question the interior spatial fabric but also the invisible part of its structure. Their work extends beyond the visible limits of its site.

It measures space and becomes topographic by way of using scale and materiality and arranging form in a mathematical and physical manner. The rigidity of the employed geometry contrasts with the fluidity of the human body and by that, the practice of Serra and Morris is closer to architecture than mine may be. Yet, both affect and activate an exchange between body and site in the specific coexistence of their form and materiality to that of space. Although the form of Serra and Morris' work and that of the space with which it exists, follow each other in their cubic and angular geometry, dimension and scale seem to make that work impose upon the space. Yet, both works merge with site. To the difference of Morris, materials used by Serra reflect the heavy cubic, monochrome angular space.

Morris uses scale and form to obtain this kind of acquaintance between site and work.

In that respect, a reference to Le Corbusier's architecture will be made.

Monochromatic and simple geometric form contrast with the landscape but in that difference the natural context is brought to the fore. It is given further principality as it is used to activate the interior space built within and in response to the specifics of its surrounding scape. The imposing modernist architecture of Le Corbusier responds to site in an intimate and sensitive manner. The building, Villa Savoye, will be mentioned as an example of rare architectural designs that expose an interest for and an ability to apply the experiential to the functional, and refute or defy the ones that do not.

To substantiate such practices, philosophers and theorists used by Neil Leach in 'Rethinking Architecture' will often be referred to, as their research is temporally concurrent to the architecture and art used in this study.

The cross-disciplinarity of this literature will support an art interpretation of its subject matter and will consequently ascertain the significance of my practical work to the context of the question posed. This will directly facilitate the development of the work's architectural content. The relevance of other underpinning concerns that may otherwise be interpreted as extrapolating from traditional principles of architecture will also be substantiated by this reading

Elements of experimental installation art that, a domain of architecture focused upon politics, capital and technology may consider primitive and basic, could be disclosed as valid tools to incite the current practice of architecture to use a more experimental process in the context of a space as a space of possibilities.

Other texts, which over time have persistently participated in forming an understanding of concerns that underpin my work, will be used in this study to help generate an objective approach regards the 'extrapolating concerns' and their relativity to architectural practice. 'The Poetics of Space' by Gaston Bachelard is congruent to the context of this study, both in form and content. The former, a structure of chapters that navigate through particular elements of the domestic environment, may inform the sequential reflective process of my own research as it moves between sites. The latter, a content that presents a discourse upon universal notions of space, should become a point of reference to question the individual work that will lead this research. Chapters that will be specifically focused upon are, 'Corners', 'Drawers, Chests and Wardrobes' and 'Nests'. In depicting the domestic space as the first cosmos of childhood Bachelard exposes points that are applicable to numerous sites.

In human experience of space, this text concentrates upon the preponderance of spatial structure upon the psyche and the sensory. The affect of a site is depicted in various terms; for instance, its geometry is affiliated to the symbolism that results from implemented function to and from the spatial structure.

Bachelard's theory encompasses and explores architectural content and condition, yet these elements are often discerned in terms of the psychological and the sensory; a perspective not so common to architecture. Bachelard's discourse upon the relativity of site-specificity, the notion of nurture and nature and the fundamentals of constructed meaning and a sense of place will remain a rich referential source to recognise overlaps, boundaries and points

of threshold between art and architecture.

POST-INDUSTRIAL SPACE

The Mill, a post-industrial building on the bank of river Irwell in Manchester, is the first site where practical investigations of space as site of possibilities will contribute to the development of a model for potential collaborative practice between art and architecture.

The Mill's original 1950s print studio function is obsolete, the infrastructure remains and some structural specifics are reminders of past purpose. There is an atmosphere of absence and inactive presence, a sense of stillness.

The Mill is a three-storey site, work will take place on the 3rd floor. This position enables the numerous windows alongside both lengths of walls to bring an ample amount of light to the interior. Elongated shadows of pillars and window frames divide and fill the sparse open-floor space. There is an apparent coexistence between exterior natural light and interior structure. Distanced pillars and ceiling beams give a structural linear divide of long horizontals, short verticals and varying diagonals. Low ceilings and extensive wall lengths exaggerate horizontals and provoke a sense of vertical confinement. This expands horizontal perspective of the whole space and disperses natural light horizontally rather than vertically. Ceiling height reduces the potential of vertical emptiness in this semi-vacant space. A deep red painted concrete floor brings an illusion of warmth to an unheated environment. White brick walls reflect the already copious amount of incoming natural light. Aluminium cable rails and aluminium colour coated beam insulation bring the contemporary industrial to this 1950s post-industrial space.

From this 54sq meters floor space, I am to select an area of approximately

4sq meters. This seems, at first, to be quite reductive in such an ample and seldom used open space. Yet, infrequent human presence makes for the potential to temporarily augment the allocated individual spatial surface. At a very early stage of regeneration, this site could invite a certain amount of experimental freedom. Oscillating between the desire to use the perspective available from such spatial expanse and the need to find, in an open plan space, a place that would facilitate tangible connections between solid planes, I select a corner area. It is situated between a solid brick wall and a wall with window. The corner is not at a 90° angle and the floor is arched for drainage; this may pose some issues with parallels and the balancing of materials such as wood beams.

Each studio member is given fourteen beams. They are presented as material to be freely used but mostly considered for the construction of self-made office-like furniture.

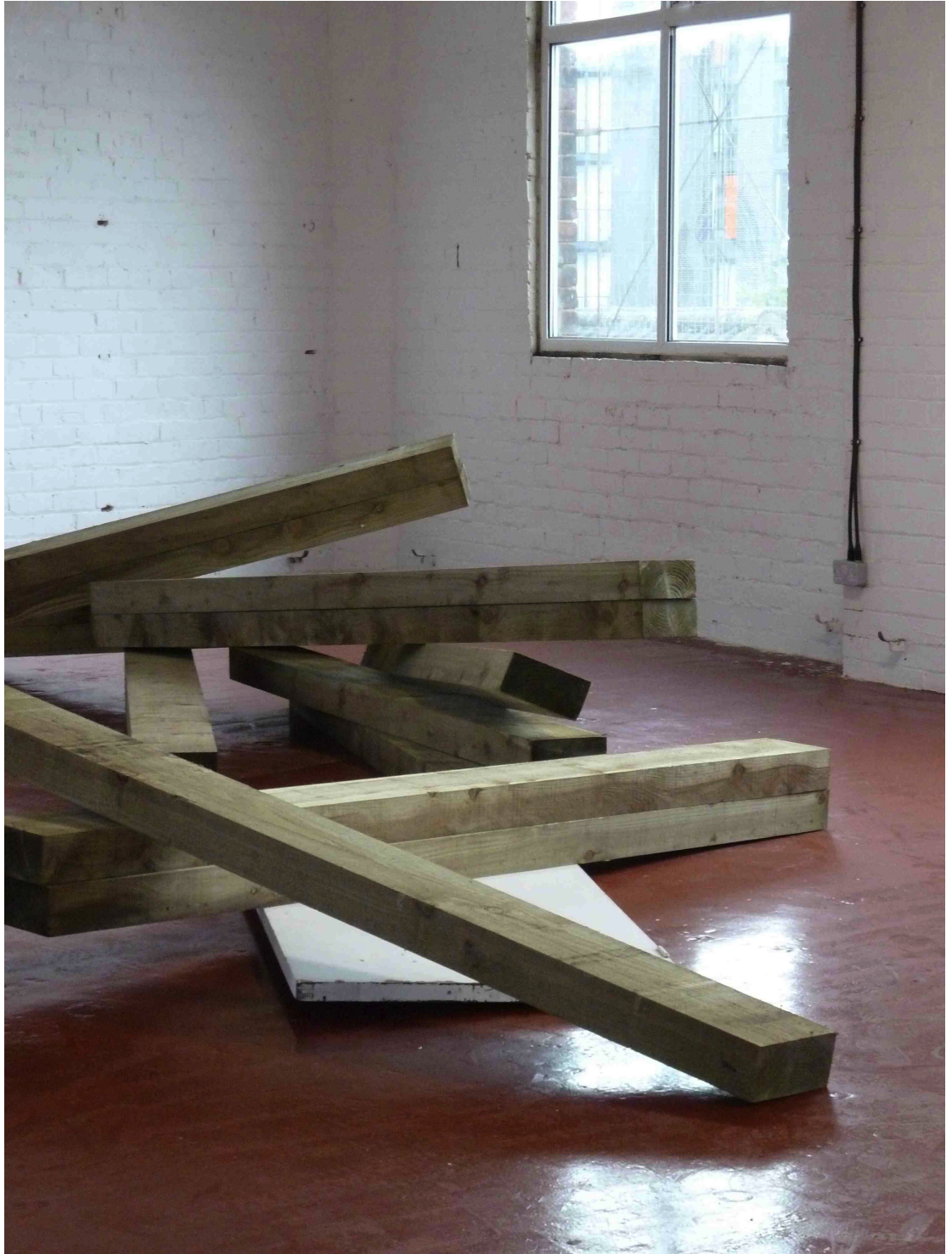
Fourteen beams are brought over. Tangibility of process, the practical storage of encumbering materials begins to define a small working space and construct a place. There is a sense of urgency in appropriating a floor surface, of which only 2 adjacent walls leave it open to the remaining space. At first, the beams are dumped in a purely functional manner, dismissive of the automatic response to spatial fabric, then placement grows more considered. The energy of the combined random and specific process brings a physical limit to the space. Walls

are not erected but the space is defined. Most of the floor superficity is taken over by the beams, of which the set up mark out uneven edges; these are walls to the remnant floor surface and studio space. The physical materiality of the inside demarcates the outside; "space came to dominate by

containing...all senses and all bodies'...'an order immanent to the totality of what existed".¹ The meaning of the beams is implicit within the work. Yet, it is not relative enough to the functional inhabitation of space that is attributed to conventional architecture.

Besides the use of geometry and physics, which may acquaint this first exercise to architecture in the way balance, weight, orientation and position are use to divide a space and mark a place, a first boundary is stated in this present incapacity to merge the experimental with the functional.

¹ Lefebvre, H. [1991] *The Production of Space*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.p.1.



In my position as artist and individual I attempt to find a private place within a semi-public space. Although the perspective is quite subjective in comparison to the attitude of the architect whom must somewhat detach himself from a subjective reading of space to respond eloquently to a brief, the generic idea of locating place in a public space correlates the two practices.

The uncertain stability of beams and its semblance of chaos do not invite entry without precaution. There is no function to this place, in the sense of an ergonomic and conventional inhabited space, but privacy is posed without a need for literal and obvious boundaries to keep the other at a distance. If the ground on the periphery of the beams could retain marks of surrounding wanderers, the limits posed by the artist via the beams, would be enhanced by the physical response of the outsider.

This interior location obviously differs from an exterior scape where the notion of desire paths has been established. To obtain a physical record of individuals' movements or physical response to an interior spatial structure may generate a more sensitive and humane perspective to resulting manipulations of space.

Desire paths may then be denoted as a natural experimental source for architecture.

In time, desire paths alter the topography of a space, presenting new possibilities in proposing autonomous spatial manipulations, similar to that of the artist.

The beams, similarly to these paths, set the presence of the maker in his absence. Materiality is central to the imposition of this pile-up, its weight

refutes the want of removal and perhaps access.

The original function of the beam in architectural terms is defied, they support nothing other than themselves, and reflect no other weakness or strength than their own within their amalgam. The beams are all of identical dimension, the uneven edges of the whole entity, balance and the coupling or alignment of some, manifest the making process as both an impulsive and careful act. What started as a functional motion of material transportation from one area to another then developed into a sensitive response to the relativity of the beams materiality and form to the physicality of the body and space. All beams either follow the geometry of this corner area or create diagonals to energise an otherwise vacant space.

The ordered and chaotic element of this installation and the making process remind me of Eva Hesse in that "order could be chaos [and vice versa], chaos can be structured as non-chaos".²It may also refer in some ways to Bernar Venet's 1996 'Accident' sculpture.³

Although Venet uses mathematics and physics in the development of his work, the final form of 'Accident' is ensued from his direct physical contact with the metal bars, the result is of concurrent chance and impulse.

In spite of the fact that 'Accident' does not involve the construction of a functional space in terms of the user specific conventional function of space associated to architecture, it is a combination of an underpinning interest for spatial sciences and a direct physical interaction between body, materiality, form and space.

² Hesse, E. cited in Lippard, L.R [1992] *Eva Hesse*. New York: Da Capo Press.p.172

³ Venet, B. [1996] *Accident* [Online] [Accessed on 2nd March 2013]
<http://www.bernarvenet.com>

This establishes a connection between both the architect and the artist working process within one practice.

In the context of architecture, and to develop the experiential of space, is an art practice that is primarily concerned with materiality and form as valid or informative as another of which the form and content stem from the precise technical use of physics and mathematics? Does the correlation made between 'Accident' and the beams ascertain the opinion that both processes and practices are as substantial as each other in proposing a space as space of possibilities?

Besides the fact that my work is not subjected to a mathematical preparatory process of investigation, it must inevitably be a physical response to physics and mathematics, as both sciences automatically contribute to spatial manipulation, the use of materiality and form and the interactive relativity between body and space.

This alludes to the benefit of developing a practice that has an equilibrium of nurture and nature in its response to space. In prioritising one over the other, a practice differs from another and together they offer an array of variant propositions and perspectives to take place. In art, the experimental and the abstract expand experiential possibilities within the context of applied nurture and nature; this can generate an approach that considers and combines nurtured knowledge to the emotional and the sensitive, in turn provoking a more humane experience of space. Whereas architecture, a practice that is

often enmeshed within economic and political agendas and prioritises functionalism, possibilities in spatial manipulation are generally less variable and humane. These parameters give a prescript to spatial manipulation in the practice of architecture, where the user seems to be objectified and desensitised.

The artist, under a lesser influence from the restrictive parameters of architecture, finds himself at the boundary between instigator and user. The dominance of the architect upon the long lasting organisation or set up of a public space does not pertain to a sequential and experimental art practice. Subsequently, the semi-public context of the Mill and the situation I find myself in, as an equal participant of that space to others, reduces play with the function of that environment. The difficulty to progress, in terms of integrating functionalism to an experimental practice that uses the abstract in the spatial fabric of a site to deploy experiential possibilities, is augmented by a sense of lost authorship that itself results from others' dominant implication in their physical and mental functional invasion of site.

The only remaining feasible working area is that of my corner, subsequently cancelling a depth of perspective that could have enabled the work to be incorporated to the entirety of this site.

The present public purpose of this site has invited numerous functional objects. A new and active functionalism in the coexistence of site and object seems to preside over and forbid an expanse of perceptive potential that I find available in the spatial fabric of an empty disused post-industrial site with its original function obsolete. This ghost-like environment permits one to observe and consider its architectural structure as a set of abstract forms to which the abstract in the experimental installation art practice can acquaint with ease

and intimacy.

Deleuze notes that:

'...The abstract does not explain, but must itself be explained; and the aim is not to rediscover the eternal or the universal, but to find the conditions under which something new is produced (creativity)'...⁴

The simplicity of the material and formal constitution of this site's infrastructure, although built for a past specific purpose, today generates a space of nonfigurative possibilities, the freedom of the abstract. The obvious function of structural elements such as large and numerous windows and supportive pillars can be joined to more curious parts such as short and wide metal hooks protruding from the walls. The past purpose of these hooks is uncertain and their position and orientation, in relation to the walls they protrude from and the lack of other solid structures nearby, I cannot relate to any actual function. These hooks' dissociation from site-specific functionalism facilitates the adaptation of their primary function to the content of an abstract installation. The curious can then be realigned for another later refined purpose. The subsequent abstract content and form of the work may have a potential to unfold the experiential of such spaces. This exercise may ascertain the capacity, in combining the functional, the abstract and the experimental, to help "find the conditions under which something new is produced."⁵

⁴ Roffe, J. [2005] *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy IEP*. [Online] [Accessed on 22nd February 2013] <http://www.iep.utm.edu/deleuze/>

⁵ Roffe, J. ref, 4

Still, the propinquity of others' arrangements in the remaining 50sq meters of space persistently disturbs my sense of freedom. As I desperately try to find a working connection, facing the corner of the selected area seems to provide a refuge; I try to mentally shut off the approximate 50sq meters surface of space, that I cannot work with or consider as an inclusive part of my 4sq meter area, by leaving it behind my back.

The context of sharing an open space with others, in which all set up individual areas are adjacent without structural boundaries, plays a role in the present difficulty. Nevertheless, a sense of failure arises, a boundary between installation art and architectural practice that I cannot overcome now and have to leave to one side.

The pile of beams becomes insignificant, a mess that does not respond literally to the aim of merging function and the experiential.

Perhaps I should begin to study the mathematics of this space, to be more pragmatic and work through this art - architecture boundary; the conscious use of sciences, less of a sensory approach.



Incidental hooks in the wall, of some unknown past purpose, support one beam at a time; verticals, horizontals and diagonals quantify the space. Given dimensions are drawn out. The hooks are simultaneously used and hidden; the seemingly floating beams bring the gaze to the hooks. The observer may be forced to alter his or her viewing perspective and kneel down, the beams, standing precariously above, pose tension between human, material and space. The two adjacent walls, either side of this less than 90° corner, are now the only remaining perspective. The beams' materiality, their weight, their straightness leaning against the wall, states the stale feeling of the restricted, the ordered; their precarious stance, a need to exit, a risk, the unprecedented. The work is somber.

I still feel incapable of materializing an overlap between the abstract experimental and the functional. To attempt working in a technical manner by intentionally considering geometry, scale, position and orientation in and with the functional negates impulse and the conflict deepens, the 'making do' stagnates. The architectural aspect of my work remains but its closeness to the functional practice of architecture is not fathomable. As I question the validity of my work, in the context of this research, I seem to begin relying upon by-products of my practice to regain some sort of confidence in making. My literal and figurative reading of functionalism overrides the imaginative, the poetics found in spatial specifics, materiality and form. I cannot work with the rigour of architecture to apply function to a space and withhold the poetics of the experiential. Which definition of function is the issue, the function of a

space, that of objects and materials within a space regards the user practicality in the every day?

My work has never been a figurative or direct attempt to dissect architectural functionalism, yet it questions the prerequisites of spatial habitation.

The functional space, in a user informed environment, is dominant. It over activates the space, subsequently leaving little room for a new perspective, for the imaginary, the abstract.

Objects (functional furniture) as described earlier become a problem when the meaning they give to an environment opposes to or distract my understanding and perception of a site. They do not distract when the authority of choice and arrangement is mine; this suggests a similarity between I, as an artist/user, and the submissive stance that is forced upon the viewer or user by the dominance of architecture. The purpose that these objects signify is used as an emotional or sensitive directive; it suggests the presence or absence of the body, indirectly; these objects are mostly considered for their form and materiality; that relative affair they permit between a space and a body, the substance that this brings to a space. The affect of the other is heightened by the presence of his objects; it affirms a sense of control upon the space. A compromise is reached with difficulty reached between my perception and that of others in the experiential of a site.

Does my potential as an informative intermediary between user and maker become negligible? If I cannot include the place of others in my consideration of space where does that leave me regards the installation art / architecture collaborative practice?

There is a sense of dislocation. In trying to find a place to localise the self in that environment, it seems that the place of others must remain at a distance.

The work's subjectivity and its impossibility to include others in dividing a space to construct a place for myself may consequently exclude the viewer. A localised individual place that is dislocated from public context, also detaches itself from the functionalism that is constructed for and by the existence of others within the site.

Perhaps my focus on the functional has aimed at a literal or conventional application which seems to have reduced imaginative reflection and in turn could have altered an enquiring experimental practice into mere representative work. The central concern of this research is not to explore the different variances of function in the context of a manipulated space and its users. Yet, to come across the restrictions that functionalism engenders, highlights some of my work's limits against that of architecture. What is assumed to be an incapacity of installation art should instead be regarded as a given freedom to approach other notions of spatial function with the abstract and the experimental. The coexistence of user and space can then be further debated upon via the materiality and form of these two components. Actions taken upon space can then continue to focus on the experiential by using the sensory and the psyche as a working informative basis.

The idea "to convert a place into a state of mind"⁶ should be pursued. This would further an understanding of the interdependence between a sense of place and a state of mind and how the manipulation of spaces may inform that relative affair. The work may regain purity by re-engaging the psyche and the sensory with the form and materiality of an interior structure. To disengage from a literal perspective would reinstate flexibility in the making and expand

⁶ Matta-Clark, G. (1976) *Matta Clark's Sketchbook*. [Online] [Accessed on 22nd February 2013] <http://www.cca.qc.ca/en/collection/7-gordon-matta-clark-a-w-hole-house>

the interpretation of the reciprocal affect between site-specificity and user. This practical research, or 'critical spatial practice'⁷, could then disseminate overlaps between installation art and the 'conceptual design'⁸ part of architecture. This may generate further discourse between art and architecture to define and develop a common experimental platform of investigation.

'Conceptual design' could be viewed as a system of detachment from the overbearing contextual influences that architecture is subject to. The art practice of Gordon Matta-Clark falls in that realm of disruptive research. His knowledge as a trained architect, substantiates his position within the field of architecture. In finding autonomous ways to physically disturb the structure of existing architectural spaces and mentally destabilise perceptual habits, Matta Clark's experimental work, took a strong stance in the interval between architecture and installation art, informing both fields of research. Matta Clark's particular situation, both as a trained architect and an installation artist, may defeat the potential inclusion of a non-architecturally trained installation artist, as I, to a cross-disciplinary collaborative field of research. Nevertheless, it is the experimental, in these examples of practice, that is a common point to a critical approach that can indicate points of connection and discourse between art and architecture.

The interdisciplinary theoretical context, that generates a more objective yet in depth reflective process and informs the experimental system of enquiry, ascertains the relativity of my work to the reformulation of spatial study

⁷ Rendell, J. (2010) *Art and Architecture a Place Between*. New York: I.B Tauris & Co Ltd. Intro.p.1.

⁸ Rendell, J. ref, 7

described by Jane Rendell: “[The] interdisciplinary terrain of spatial theory has reformulated the ways in which space is understood and practiced.”⁹

Whilst it may be true that this ‘terrain of spatial theory’ may alter the ways in which space is understood, it would be difficult to certify that it has altered how space is practiced.

Jacques Derrida may defy this opinion in ‘Architecture Where the Desire May Live’, as he explains that:

The question of architecture [as]’...’that of place, of the taking place in space. The establishing of a place, which did not make sense until then and is in keeping with what will take place there one day, that is a place.’...’The setting up of a habitable place is an event and obviously the setting up is always something technical. It invents something, which did not exist beforehand and yet at the same time there is the inhabitant, man...who requires the place prior to its invention or causing it.¹⁰

This defines a boundary between my work and that of the architect in his concern for creating something that will be accordant to future purposes. The ephemerality of experiments does not assume an eternal answer. Instead, throughout this research, practical exercises propose possibilities to generate a reflective platform of thought and practice upon present approaches to constructing place in a space. Where it does not surmise an anticipating capacity, it embraces flux and, in its constant system of enquiry, becomes adaptable to changing contexts.

Yet, Derrida states that ‘the setting up [in the context of] the setting up of a habitable place’...’is always something technical’. The term ‘technical’ is understood here as an indicator of a technicality that is specific to

⁹Rendell, J. (2010) *Art and Architecture a Place Between*. New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd. Intro, p.1.

¹⁰ Derrida, J. cited in Leach, N. (1997) *Rethinking Architecture, a reader in cultural theory*. London: Routledge.p.320

architecture; perhaps alluding to the application of scientific knowledge and a making process that relies upon precision and machinery, amongst other factors. In that, my work differs from architecture. Yet it deals with the common fundamental idea of setting up a place, perhaps not in terms of a 'habitable' place but in a broader philosophical context that itself includes the notion of 'habitable place'. The more generic context of place, that here is speculated over and specifically informed by materiality, form, the sensory and the psyche, still sets an overlap between art and architecture. The different methodology does not essentially denote a boundary, but perhaps more a point of threshold that should feed and liberate discourse between the two practices.

Experiments that investigate the localising of place in a space are informed in method and theory by a particular passage from 'The Poetics of Space' by Bachelard:

'...Every corner in a house, every angle in a room, every inch of secluded space in which we like to hide, or withdraw into ourselves, is a symbol of solitude for the imagination: that is to say, it is the germ of a room' ...¹¹

Where the architect installs objects that participate in inducing a particular function to a space, familiar objects of the everyday are used in my work to determine or instigate a sensory response to the notion of place in space. The symbolism attached to or that defines the purpose of these objects in functional conditions is used here to signify or suggest the presence or absence of a human body, actions related to that object and associated physicality such as, weight, balance, movement, orientation and position.

¹¹ Bachelard, G. (1994) *The Poetics of Space*. USA, Massachusetts: Beacon Press. p.136.

The aim is to emphasise, via the coexistence of the form and materiality of a space, object and body, the affect of these physical states upon the psyche and subsequent perception of place and interaction with space.



This is reflected in the chair, corner and two elevated beams. The chair, corner facing, distances the body from the space left behind.

The scale of the space posed between materials and object, the emplacement of the beams and chair are all directly relational to the scale of the maker/user. There is an embodiment of materials and space. Here, the choice of everyday object and the manner in which it is set insinuate body presence in its absence. Form and content may bring a sense of the universal to the work. The quadrilateral space constructed from beams, walls, corner and chair does not leave much room for escape. Reclusion and entrapment of a being into a restrictive space may remedy a sense of insecurity or loss; perhaps a way to re-establish strength in a sense of self, to reflect upon the hierarchal order between materiality and physical tension but also between the experiential and the functional. This may occur in the experience of a vast open space, may that be interior or exterior and public or a particular shared environment such as a studio or domestic space.

The suggested gaze, following the corner facing chair and its adjacent position to the beams and walls amplify a search for closeness between the self and space.

The corner is a sort of half-box, part walls, part door. It will serve as an illustration for the dialectics of inside and outside'¹²

The beams deepen the walls outwards and pose insulating additional corners. They begin to form a divide, a room within. The back of the chair is open to the rest of the space, the alluded presence of a body builds another wall; that invisible or unfinished closure of space and the narrow beam width permit a possible exit. The beams' height, in near reach of the ceiling and floor reduce spatial height.

¹² Bachelard, G. (1994) *The Poetics of Space*. USA, Massachusetts: Beacon Press.p.137

They, and the chair define verticals and horizontals, giving a depth of field further than the physical limits posed by the walls. Perhaps the beam elevation suggest a temporal suspension, or sinking into ground, of the humanized object in its given place.

Security is uncertain; a sense of flux is stated.

The intimate situation between objects and spatial specifics, the physical tension among beams, walls, corner and chair generate a tangible connectivity. The chair, the ready-made, the object or signifier is inevitably associated to the human body by origin, form and purpose. It is connected to the humane and the domestic. In turn, its physical intimacy with walls and beams, facing and staring at a corner, may let that defined space adopt a humane character and perhaps a sense of domesticity. The absent, but suggested body, stares at that corner. The geometry of the objects' physical situation concentrates the lack of space and the diagonal and verticals that cut through the chair and corner. The intangible body and the signified action in the arrangement of an object produce a tangible experience of a mental and physical state. There is a co-penetration of a narrative and measurement in the use of the found object, the everyday.

The intangible exposes the influence of tangible spatial materiality upon the localization of the self in space.



In the series of horizontal and vertical beams, a less chaotic version of the 'dumped beams', the implication of the self may be less evident, due to a lack of object of which the symbolism would prompt a direct reference to the human body.

Perhaps there is more of a direct or conventional attempt at considering the architectural content of this space, arranging only beams and one door in a more organized or systematic manner. The work moves away from the corner, it tries to include and respond to a series of structural elements; it occupies and uses greater floor, ceiling and wall surface, windows (natural light, the outside), intangible linear divisions, cables, sockets, cable rails, etc. 'Making do' with site given materials, of a restricted variety, provokes

inventiveness that relies upon an intimate observation of space to deduce the influential prominence of structural specifics in the making of place.

On a visit to the site, an architect from the Manchester School of Architecture (MSA) suggested to procure extra materials or alter beam dimension to fill gaps above, below or laterally to the beams in order to build solid planes between walls, floor and ceiling; a suggestion typical of conventional architecture.

Installation art may be more concerned with the atypical rather than the conventional in its aim to generate an experience of space differing from the norm as it explores the notion of space as a space of possibilities. The conventional with its hermetic attitude to digging into unknown, would refrain the experimental.

To follow the architect's suggestion would also have refuted the 'making do' method; the simple means of action and small material resource that authorise a rapprochement between the user/viewer and the work; to the difference of architecture, of which process, method and material choice may often alienate the user.

The gaps in question permit spatial features, such as ceiling beams, cables, sockets, pillars and window frames, that are often only viewed as part of a functional whole, to be given another presence. The beams frame and conjoin these components to alter the viewer's perspective of space beyond functionalism. They divert away from its primacy by physically and visually connecting the components through their materiality and form. That relativity exposes its affect upon the experiential of space and gives the site a sense of autonomous identity.

The beams may provoke a conflict between architecture and the experimental process of installation art. They may defy the dominance of functionalism in architecture by expanding a viewer's perspective to construct a sense of place through the observation of and interaction with the form and materiality of spatial components.

If a "space calls for action and before action the imagination is at work"¹³, the spatial-specificity of an installation should provide some flexibility to avail the development of the imaginary and generate progressive actions in the construction of meaning from space and place; for the maker who may also be considered as viewer and user, subsequently aiming to provoke perceptive reactions in others.

This process may be more arduous for architecture as it is under the influence of restraining contexts that could be noted as inherent parameters to its practice; in comparison to the available freedom that exists in experimental art and its presumed objective to defeat the restrictive.

In context of art and architecture, some architects such as Lacaton & Vassal are cited for the in betweenness of their practice. The emphasis upon "rigorously considered ideas about materials [and] space' [is something that could be affiliated to art]...'and an'...'impetus to do more with less"¹⁴ [more particularly to an artist's 'making do' process].

¹³ Bachelard, G. cited in Leach, N. (1997) *Rethinking Architecture, a reader in cultural theory*. London: Routledge.p91.

¹⁴ Slessor, C. (2009) *Nantes School of Architecture by Lacaton & Vassal, Nantes, France*. Architectural Review. [Online] [Accessed on 28th February 2013] <http://www.architectural-review.com/buildings/nantes-school-of-architecture-by-lacaton-and-vassal-nantes-france/8601117.article>

Lacaton & Vassal designed Nantes School of Architecture (France); "Many areas [of this site] are labeled 'espace libre appropriable'...'acknowledging the functions that relationships change over time".¹⁵ Although the purpose of this environment does not directly involve the wider populace, its aim to provide a space that considers the flux of life makes it a sustainable building that exposes the possibilities of architectural practice to adapt to evolving social situations and subsequently responds to the masses.

It overlaps with art in that it allows some experimental freedom in the manipulation of its internal structure.

It steps towards the construction of architectural environments that involve functional sustainability and adaptability in response to requirements for an unpredictable future. Yet the venture is not as compelling as the experience gained from an experimental art installation due to the loss in functionalism of the materials' potential to generate an enquiring spatial experience through the use of sensitive poetics in materiality and form. Although the building's concrete angular frame, the windows' industrial scale and extensive incoming natural light create, with shadows, ephemeral volumes that activate an otherwise vast 'empty' space.

Installation art, in appropriating the fabric of a space, and that may be indirectly underpinned by concerns of spatial functionality, seems to in a generic sense, demonstrate an ability to deploy more experiential variants in spatial aesthetic. That aesthetic, a result of nurtured knowledge and inherent/sensory perception, develops an affinity between the humane and spatial structure.

It appears that "Functionalism [has] paralysed architecture'...'If architecture [is] to fulfill its utopian function in line with art and

¹⁵ Slessor, ref, 11

literature, and provide a more intuitive means of experiencing the world'...'it [needs] to be more humane.¹⁶

The Nantes School of Architecture may be deemed a qualitative piece of engineering regards its aim and the present concerns of architecture.

Nevertheless, its aesthetic does not differ much from car parks, market halls and other environments of a similar ilk, certainly influenced by economics, politics and functionality, yet seldom informed by the humane.

Forms are no longer differentiated humanely, true to purpose: bungalow, airport (minus runway), theatre, university, slaughterhouse – all are rendered uniform in the domineering form of the glass box.¹⁷

It seems that undistinguishable purpose, ensued from contemporary buildings' formal aspects, is still valued as qualitative in the context of a multipurpose future sustainability, of which Nantes School of Architecture is a prime example. Purpose is often indeterminable in the aesthetic and form of buildings/spaces. There is a consequent sense of monotony in infrastructure that is ensued from a repetitive architecture as it succumbs to its governing economic and political parameters.

Partly in agreement and in dispute to what Bloch depicts as a lack of the humane in the generic trend of the 'glass box' uniformity, the modernist architecture of Le Corbusier is adopted here, evidently not relative to the idea of an improvised architecture but more in terms of the knowledge that can be constructed from formal geometric simplicity and the kind of functional and experiential flexibility that an open space can provide.

The 1930s Villa Savoye may be described as more of a concrete box, divided by a horizontal glass strip, standing on pilotis; the volume is subsequently less

¹⁶ Leach, N. (1997) *Rethinking Architecture a reader in cultural theory*. London: Routledge.p.41

¹⁷ Bloch cited in: Leach, ref, 14.p.45

heavy than that of the 'glass box' as the landscape is allowed to run visibly underneath its base. The interior space constitutes of a minimal number of walls, permitting the flexible set up of variant usage.

This may associate Villa Savoye to the "forms [that] are no longer differentiated humanely, true to purpose".¹⁸ It emerges imposingly out of the landscape. The angular geometry poses a severe contrast to its geographic environment and may consequently be considered aggressive and inhumane. Nevertheless, the careful investigation and application of the relativity among form, materiality, scale and site-specificity are all but inhumane.

Villa Savoye's sparsely-furnished, generously-scaled spaces emphasise continuities of material and spatial flow, and a concomitant exhilarating, fluid flexibility and freedom to the activities housed.¹⁹

This fluid flexibility, described as an affect to the function of space, equally characterises experiential poetics and spatial aesthetics. The long strips of walls and windows let the outside in. This generates a sense of flux to the interior space. It exposes the intimacy between inside, outside and the materiality and form of an architectural site. Villa Savoye becomes a topographic study of the interdependence between the experiential of a space and site-specificity. It is a platform for continuous topoanalysis and subsequently cultivates topophilia.

Le Corbusier exposes his ability to research and develop the experiential of space concurrently to function, something that is largely amiss in today's conventional architecture.

¹⁸ Bloch, ref, 17

¹⁹ Buchanan, P. (2012) *THE BIG RETHINK: Farewell to modernism – and modernity too*. The Architectural Review [Online] [Accessed on 1st March 2013] <http://m.architectural-review.com/8625733.article>

In a further attempt to combine the experiential of space with user function, the next stage of research is applied to a domestic site. This environment, closer to conventional everyday functionalism, will give me a different perspective that may facilitate overlaps or deepen boundaries between my installation art practice and architecture. This may permit me to further investigate the potential of installation art to develop the experiential possibilities of a space within its functional and architectural aspect. The experimentally restrictive nature of a working domestic space may be a challenge to the difference of a somewhat obsolete post-industrial space. The architectural character of the post-industrial site generated a freedom in praxis, which was disturbed by the negative input of MSA practitioners. Perhaps some physical distance from this kind of negative environment will help the domestic space become one that can generate and support a constructive merging of architectural contextual sources with praxis.

DOMESTIC SPACE

No matter the frustration that occurred from previous discourse with MSA practitioners, as the 2nd stage of research begins, they still have some kind of input. Subsequently, it seems that the bearing of architectural institution over the freedom of my making and consequent sense of conflict between the calculated and the impulsive, do not deter me from the assumption or hope that a semi-literal application of architectural process in the planning and making of work may produce a kind of practically autonomous and theoretically collaborative practice.

In the confine of my own home, physical distance from the institution may provide a refreshed confidence to produce work that could become a balanced proposition, in the manipulation of spaces, between architecture and installation art practice. This sense of independence may open the domestic environment as a space of possibilities, where the imaginary would develop the purpose of the functional into experiential.

In this semblance of a new start, a different perspective to making methodology is adopted; two-dimensional drawing could eventually be a meeting point in this study's current discourse.

If the work produced to date does not suffice to clarify or convey its objective to some MSA's practitioners, learning and adapting a part of their language, may facilitate a more fluid dialogue.

My drawings of the structural lay out and built in furniture of this domestic space expose the primitive skill of a technical drawing novice. There is

flatness and figurative representation that lacks tangibility and the individuality of installations or of earlier abstract drawings.

The removal of certain objects, aimed to clarify my perception of structural specificity. These drawings were supposed to become a two-dimensional platform to superimpose forms that would connect areas of space, otherwise drowned under the objectified figurative notion of the domestic environment. Further drawings, only containing outer and inner walls, doors and windows, mark out linear connections between exits and entrances. The space is divided into sections that may outline particular and repetitive body movements around the home. These divisions, later materialised in space with string, reduce the ergonomic functionality of everyday motion but solidify certain energy lines between points of threshold.

The drawings were more attractive, direct and meaningful than the string installation. The sole reason for this preference is the available ease and capacity of paper drawing to remove and disengage from the unwanted, the surplus of objects that distract from the infrastructure of the domestic environment. That surplus partially swallows up the meaning and perception of certain spatial values, the up, the down and the adjacency of flat planes. The prominence of their orientation and connection or disconnection will affect the experiential possibilities of a space, the imaginary and the sensory and consequently perception and action.

To the difference of the architect, the artist can be perceived as having more flexibility in terms of considering the whole or selecting elements of a spatial structure to explore and work with. While all parts of the architectural structure of a site inevitably inform and influence any spatial intervention

within, the accountability of the architect and the artist differ in terms of the impact of their work upon various contexts such as that of the public realm.

My attempt at reading a domestic space in a manner that could be as inclusive as that of the architect, in the technical consideration of all spatial specifics and their function relative to the purpose of this environment, is driving me away from a free and autonomous responsive process. There is a constant conflict, throughout this research, where the idea of the context and process of a collaborative practice with architecture seems to repeatedly reduce the autonomy of the experimental in my work. Yet, whilst still being open to collaborative possibilities, the utopia in searching for and finding a point of balance between the autonomous and the collaborative is not left aside, even though there is a permanent sense that architectural functionalism obliterates the poetics in the immediacy of materiality and the integrity of that experience. The functional priority of the domestic environment and its 'ready-mades' manufacture a political space and a kind of already existing performative identity. To draw a different experience and expose the other identity of this site through its formal and material structure requires some experimental freedom that the governing domestic functionalism does not seem to avail.

Returning to the potential of technical drawing, CAD could be used as a tool to produce a sketch of linear connections between points of threshold where added three-dimensional forms would simulate installations. The virtual may facilitate a reading of the spatial divide without needing to physically impede upon the everyday use of this space that is my home; it may also permit a

critical distance. Yet, CAD is inconsequent in the physical separatist attitude it engenders, as it lacks the needed humane integrity of the real that is found in the interactivity of a body with the tangible materiality and form of space. This tangibility and reality, in the domestic environment, is difficultly grasped due to the encumbrance of functionalism; to the difference of the post-industrial site where functional objects such as the chair were brought in to insert a sense of the humane into a space of which the architectural dominated the humane.

A rapprochement between the practice of architecture and my own may be easier to construct if the work could find a method to examine the affect of functional domestic structure and objects upon the self; this difficulty seems to be particularly relevant in terms of the functional specificity of certain types of spaces.

There is a mental and physical incapacity to dissociate these objects from each other and from their given situation. This stalls experimental spontaneity and the freedom of the imaginary that I could find within the pure urgency of materiality and form. The difficulty to do just that questions the strength of my work and the potential of its impact upon architecture.

This state of uncertainty may reinforce the impossibility to disturb, in the domestic environment, the role that the functional plays in forming a stable state of mind and body. The grounded belief of stability from the objectification of space by associations between objects and spatial layout cannot be broken for fear to destabilize what seemed to be a space that gave allowance to localize and nurture self identity. In the realm of the domestic environment, the interdependent coexistence of the self, objects and spatial layout leads the user to identify his self as a functional human object. To take

consciousness of this mental and physical state, in a space that should provide an individual with the mental and physical freedom to explore, experiment and form an individuality of character, makes this space no different to social environments where the influence of the politics of function rules.

This furthers insecurity as I find myself partly controlled by what I refute.

Some reassurance is gained, regards the potential of a dissociative process to generate work, as De Certeau's external definition of place is interpreted and associated to the interior:

A place (lieu) is the order (of whatever kind) in accord with which elements are distributed in relationships of coexistence...[and as] an instantaneous configuration of positions [that] implies an indication of stability.²⁰

I should feel free to play and disassociate the associated to discover a stability independent from the conventional use of the domestic environment. The conventional relativity between objects and space induced by domestic functionalism would be disturbed; a more natural and less nurtured perception of coexistence would be procured. Stability would be generated by the experimental; a stable flux? This system could be applied further afield, to generate an understanding and belief that the experimental can provide stability in states of flux.

The belief that rationality presides over the humane and the intuitive in architecture, presented by Ernst Bloch, is still of contemporary relevance:

Functionalism had paralysed architecture and stripped it of all imagination. If architecture was to fulfill its utopian function in line with art and literature, and provide a more intuitive means for experiencing the world...it needed to be more humane. Architecture should learn

²⁰ Rendell, J. (2010) *Art and Architecture a Place Between*. New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd. p.18-19.

lessons of art and sculpture and free itself from the harsh shackles of enlightenment rationality.²¹

Where some architecture does explore, theoretically and by practice, systems and processes that break away from the general architectural rational; it still does not reach the majority of a people as governing parameters continuously instigate, in the more common practice of architecture, a rationality similar to that described by Bloch. Therefore it can be understood that, in the context of art and architecture as spatial practices, the artist could be considered as an influential tool to demonstrate the benefit of an experimental process towards architecture's "[providence] of a more intuitive means for experiencing the world".²²

Faced with my personal space as a site of work, I should find a way to use my existing position of complicity between user and maker, as an informative provider.

At this point, my home is not a conductor for experiments that would respond to the aim of combining function with the experiential. Problems may result from the repetitive aspect of practiced functions inherent to an active domestic environment. That space is staged for multifarious purposes, yet all revolving around a series of sequential actions, both mental and physical. They often seem to take over the mental freedom that I expect to find in a space that I used to perceive as private and personal. The invasive sense of presence ensued from the interdependence of objects and site seems to forbid and drown the growth of the self aside from its location. This is a kind of stale

²¹ Bloch, E. cited in Leach, N. (1997) *Rethinking Architecture a reader in cultural theory*. London: Routledge.p.41

²² Bloch, E. ref, 2

point where the site becomes dull and my incapacity to find a system to merge the functional within the experimental becomes repetitious; a sense of monotony prevails. The risk I do not take to detach my work from a literal reading of function, refrains the lead to the idea of exploring different experiential possibilities within functionalism. This alludes to the distance, that seems relentlessly unbreakable, between the dual contextually specific and somewhat flexible practice of architecture and the, although site-specific, yet seemingly inflexible character of my work, regards its application to multifarious contexts.

The reasons for the difficulties encountered with the domestic may themselves be informative to the practice of architecture; it could be regarded as an overlap between art and architecture, where the latter struggles to integrate the experimental and the former the functional within their respective research process. To delve upon this awkwardness may facilitate a meeting point between these two spatial practices where they both recognise their limits and come to appreciate the input of the other towards the growth of a common working platform simultaneously to their individual progress.

Regards the development of my work's architectural content and its adaptability to various sites, to delve upon and confront difficulties may generate an interesting resource to expose and use the correlative within the differential of spaces.

Any attempt to assume an overarching all encompassing adaptability, would place my work and self within the realm of architects who believe that their practice can equate and envelop that of artists, users and engineers. Perhaps this is where insecurity and acceptance of individual limits become a respectful

trait of character and can generate work with a depth of clarity and purpose focusing upon its intrinsic concerns and competence.

Excluding functional objects from this site may seem to be an antithesis to the form and content of previous experiments within the post-industrial space as some objects were integrated for their functional specificity. The partial removal of the domestic will take place, but its specific character will remain in the scale and materiality of the spatial fabric that will be focused upon.

The work will use infrastructural components. Walls, built in features such as stairs, windows and door frames will be treated as elements which contribute to a sense of continuum, a multidirectional energy and boundaries and overlaps between areas of interior space and inside and outside.

The selected areas of work are chosen in a manner identical to that of the usual gathering of objects and materials. The first process of selection relies upon a spontaneous affinity for geometric simplicity, monochromatic colour spectrum, contrast of softness and violence, in the aesthetics of form and materiality, both of the domestic site and materials brought in.

A roll of cardboard, long, wide, plain, contains some fluidity and rigidity, some fragility and resilience.

The stairway; in this case no particular aesthetic can be evoked regards the choice of this area. Instead, it comes about as a new experience that engages with one of the child's earliest consideration of transitory spaces, the elevation of his body within a space facilitated by a spatial structure; he takes consciousness of the values of up and down in relation to the displacement of his whole body across a space. The stairway is a place of mobility that seldom

invites immobility. The stairway is a facilitator in the determination of spatial politics; it relates and separates the localisation of certain functions administered to particular floors.

The cardboard sheet shuts the stairs off from the areas they are attached to, the points in between which and for which they exist. Their original purpose is cancelled.

The landing is extended to form a ceiling above the stairs that leads to a closed space. The cardboard roof to the stairs extends as a wall that leaves a kind of opening shoot at the bottom. The lack of rigidity and density of cardboard and the ill fitting of this material to site dimensions do not provide the closure that a solid wall does. It is nothing other than a suggestion of the more obscure and definite alteration of space that a solid wall could provide.





To try and get this sense of a transitory space that leads to nothing other than itself, the cardboard roof is ripped, only the last three stairs are photographed and the rest of the environment is blacked out.



The ascent of the stairway then reminds of the descent to the cellar. Perception is no longer defined by the stairway's surrounding context but by a memorised sense of the desolate and somber often associated to the cellar. The present sense of loss and claustrophobia ensued from suffocating functionalism is exposed with past referential points or a sense of bleak solitude localised in the idea of the cellar.

Perhaps the sense of freedom expected from the intimacy of the self and a personal space is lost in the domestic environment where function overrules the experiential and the imaginary in materiality and form.

To change the dynamics of the house meant to discard the context within which this feature exists. The refuted site-specificity may situate this staircase in a wider context than that of my home. This may free up possibilities to interpret the coexistence of the experiential with the functional in the structural specifics of a space.

It could be argued that the photographic selective process of particular areas of space shows a lack of concern for the topography of a site; that may deepen a boundary between the obligatory all encompassing contextual practice of architecture and the freedom in the selective contextual character of installation art.

Photographic framing may detach the work from the whole entity of a site, yet this generates a different perspective of space. Consequently, this discarding process demonstrates the potential of an installation art practice to propose an experimental system of enquiry regards the functionalism of spatial structures in varied or more generic contexts. Since it appears that photography with its inherent framing capacity, proves to be a correlative tool to explore the idea of space as a space of possibilities, and because it somewhat ascertains the work's position as an informative practice in between art and architecture, it will be used again in this manner.

Yet the basis for this obliteration of spatial aspects that individualise or personalise a space is a direct result of the affect of architecture upon the body and the mind. Past experiences are resurgent in the present domestic

space. Framing an area of space, delocalising it from its context facilitates the transport of the mind into the past, to dig into underlying difficult events associated to the specificity of the domestic space. The body will follow the mind's amalgam of perception, adapting present to past and vice versa; ensuing physical actions will be a result of both the rising of memorised sensory responses to experiences and contemporary reality, a mixture of both the conscious and the subconscious, the objective and the subjective, the impulsive and the considered.

As Louise Bourgeois stated, "space does not exist...it is just a metaphor for the structure of our existence".²³

In that case, it could be said that space is formulated in response to the self's inherent needs. In architecture, the interior set up of spatial structures does reply to variants such as cultural and geographic differences. Yet the repetitive model of a domestic spatial fabric seems to allude to a belief for common or near to identical existential needs amongst all people. This forgets some individuality. There still exists a kind of given in the way that architecture organises the infrastructure of a space as it nurtures a hereditary perspective of the functionalism specific spatial manipulation where the formal, material and aesthetic character of an area of space is aimed at a particular function.

Although this symbolic use of space in architecture expresses an awareness of the interdependent coexistence of the self and space, this practice still

²³ Bourgeois, L. cited by Cooke, L. in *Louise Bourgeois long – term view*. Dia Art Foundation [Online] [Accessed on 13th November 2012] <http://www.diaart.org/exhibitions/introduction/78>

restricts, in some instances, the experimental and the development of a space as a space of possibilities.

The process of architecture can be affiliated to minimalism in their common use of mathematics to construct stable geometric rectilinear forms.²⁴ An application of mathematics is inevitable in all manipulations of space yet, installation artists for whom the coexistence of body and space is of central concern to their praxis may consider investigative avenues which may not use spatial mathematics as a main directive of practical or theoretical research. Mapping space and focusing on drawing the fluid out of the geometric rectilinear forms of architecture, a particular of Bourgeois' 1960s work, underpins the following experiments.²⁵

To physically draw out connections between transitory areas of the domestic site and inside and outside, a few trials occur using a mixture of similar man-made white textiles, nails and knots.

A corridor is built between an interior door-less doorframe and a door to the outside; another corridor is built from the same door to a tree trunk and a last corridor between two interior doorframes, passing by the ajar front door.

²⁴ Cooke, L. *Louise Bourgeois long – term view*. Dia Art Foundation [Online] [Accessed on 13th November 2012] <http://www.diaart.org/exhibitions/introduction/78>

²⁵ Cooke, ref, 20



This last short corridor became most cumbersome as was the case when originally faced with the array of functional objects that filled this domestic space. It stood across a central transitory point, in the entrance hall, blocking entrance or exit in and out of the front door, blocking passage to the upstairs,

or to the left or right on the ground floor. The corridor led to nowhere; as was previously the case with the stairs, both doorframes were obstructed.

This place of passage lost its meaning or purpose. The entrance hall is a place that does not invite long stay interaction with the space itself or its participants/users. It is a space to commute where mostly unintentional meetings occur. It is an area of space where people's respective journeys will cross and where communication will be timed by the specificity or nurtured perception of the function of that space. Here, the obstruction of exits and entrances pauses the body and the mind, there is no escape from presently restricted movement and physical freedom that this area usually avails. This construction of a corridor could be viewed as a spatial object, an object that cancels the social utility of the entrance hall and its functional capacity but which in turn clarifies its symbolic connotations that may otherwise not be immediately identified.²⁶

This temporary corridor deroutes the predisposition of user to architectural functionalism. This may generate more depth and diversity to reflect upon our perception of a site-specific dependent interaction of human to human and human to space.

The entrance hall should be considered as the core of the space it articulates. It is geographically localised as a point, where paths that lead to the various areas of a site, depart, end and cross. It sets a precedent for the values of the vertical, the horizontal, the diagonal, the centre, the circumference and so on with the influence of geometry upon the activation of a space and a body with a space. It guides directional body movement across a space,

²⁶ Eco, U. cited in Leach, N. (1997) *Rethinking Architecture a reader in cultural theory*. London: Routledge.p.187

subsequently defining the interactive coexistence between the form and materiality of the human body, as a physical substance, and that of a space. Its function and topography should result in it being perceived as a prominent conductor of energy, motion and experiences. Yet it seems that it is exactly that function that forbids it any further sensitive recognition. The experiential possibilities in materiality and form are seldom developed in the entrance hall as the temporality of its particular function restricts the potential to construct a sense of place within that area of space; time, in this instance, may also limit a reflective process to consider and analyse the affect of the entrance hall upon the sensory and the psychological.

As the original transitory capacity is annulled, the consciousness of its affect is raised. Constructed meaning of function and experiential is emphasised by the merging of a close memory of past purpose and interaction with present character. Conjointly, the present experience of place provides an 'instantaneous configuration of position'²⁷, both in the present reality that materialises a corridor of solitude within an otherwise common space and that of the past multi-directional and open transitory space. The space that now exists affirms the experiential potential of materiality and form in the past existence of purpose and function.

This construction has been mostly described from its interior, yet its documentation is an exterior view from the ajar front door. This perspective gives an idea of the mapped geometry, the point of intersection between the multi-directional paths of this space. The hung textile defines the '3 simple

²⁷ De Certeau, M. cited in Augé, M. (2008) *Non- An Introduction to Supermodernity* London: Verso.p.173

spatial forms' that Augé describes as the elements that map "anthropological place'...'the line, the intersection of lines and the point of intersection".²⁸

The sheet installs new limits to the entrance hall, further framed and accentuated with photography. This obliterates a large part of this structure's architectural context, but it also tries to bring an element of the abstract to the otherwise figurative and rational geometry of this space. The abstract is alluded to here because most of this installation's photographed content does not seem to be primarily concerned with figurative site-specificity but instead, to play with directional geometry, depth of field and off-center focus. The lock and the architrave are the only clearly figurative elements of this entrance hall that remain. Yet, their presence is of importance as it creates a contrast between the functional and the abstract, which is stated as an attempt to alter functional perceptive motion towards an experience derived from form and materiality.

The expected transitory character of this area is blocked; photography emphasises focus upon this obstruction. Topography is altered, a different analysis of geometry, physical perspective and associated body motion is generated. A new dialectic takes place in the photographically contained.²⁹

The imaginary is somewhat activated; "imagination augments the values of reality".³⁰

Either attachments at the sheet's extremities are not visible. This enables the continuity of the space to be imagined and tension to be localised along the

²⁸ Augé, M. (2008) *Non-Places An Introduction to Supermodernity* London: Verso.p.45

²⁹ Smithson, R. cited in Lipke, W.C., *Fragments of a Conversation*. Selected Interviews with Robert Smithson. [Online] [Accessed on 9th October 2012]
<http://www.robertsmithson.com/essay/fragments.htm>

³⁰ Bachelard, G. (1994) *The Poetics of Space*. USA, Massachusetts: Beacon Press. p.86.

run of fabric. Focus is upon the seldom observed yet frequently practiced, points of threshold, exits and entrances, of which the functionalism and geometry make this space a multi-directional commuting centre of the home. The energy of this space is two fold and relative to the interdependence of body movement to spatial geometry; people's paths will follow linear structure. As the sheet obstructs passage, it solidifies the presence of the navigational body in its absence. It reduces the profuse multidirectional geometry that is inherent to the diverse linear and angular constitution of this entrance hall. The rigidity is lesser as a suppleness is added with partial sheet tension and uncertain ends.

Arranged materials manipulate the space which subsequently takes on a different aesthetic. The interdependent coexistence of spatial specifics and materials alter the original aesthetic through the consideration of their respective and relative materiality and form. The space generates a different physical and mental affect to an otherwise familiar functional situation.

This may remind of Victor Burgin's situational aesthetics and respond to the idea that "objects formed are intentionally located partly in real, exterior space and partly in psychological, interior space".³¹

To observe a current domestic space has provoked a psychological resurgence and association of past experiences; the architectural or spatial relativity of these memorised experiences alters present visual experience of a different domestic space.

The present interactivity between body and domestic site seems to be drawn from an embedded and nearly automatic response to the functional; it seems

³¹ Burgin, V. cited in Stretberger, A. (2009) *Situational Aesthetics: Selected Writings by Victor Burgin*. Belgium: Leuven University Press [Online] [Accessed on 7th January 2013] http://books.google.co.uk/books/about/Situational_Aesthetics.html

to be an impulsive reaction to what that space symbolises in the realm of the emotional and the sensory.

Past difficulty to construct a sense of place within the home resurges in the present and appears to be projected upon the overwhelming presence of the functional, in spatial structure and objects. To then be able to find a place for the self, and explore the present coexistence of body and space, requires the work to simultaneously hide and expose what seems to be the root of a pre-constructed experience. The focus upon transitory areas of space is led by an interest for spatial points of tension that either assume a symbolic of the mobile or the immobile but is also informed by the inevitable governance of the psyche and the sensory upon past and present experiences of space.

This raised awareness leads me to wonder how ensuing experiments may be affected, particularly in terms of the impact of interdependent psyche and sensory upon underpinning concerns which participate to the making of work. There is now a risk for the original purpose of this research to be led astray, as it aims to expose overlaps, boundaries and points of threshold between art and architecture and establish a potential for collaborative practice.

Yet, the observation of a somewhat suggestive response to space characterises each and every individual.

Consequently, to find a balance between the concerns that underpin this research and those that are now engendered, may ascertain the feasibility of a collaborative practice between art and architecture, where the artist could be considered as an intermediary between architect and user.

Lefebvre stated that,

the word 'space' had a strictly geometrical meaning'...'[until] Descartes had brought to an end the Aristotelian tradition which held that space and time'...'facilitated the naming and classing of the evidence of the

senses'...'As Object opposed to Subject.'...'space came to dominate, by containing them, all senses and all bodies.³²

There is a function and a space, both of which need to work in a synchronous manner, in the practice of architecture. The user responds to a space in a sensory manner with or without a particular function being served or evoked by that space. The inherent materiality and form of a human body inevitably begin an affair with that of a space. The mathematics and physics of a human body are the basis of a sensory response to that of a space, as the body impulsively or automatically projects itself upon and within spatial specifics. The individual's perception of space that may be subjective or objective or a synthesis of both is fundamentally an outcome of a primitive attachment to, or detachment from a space. Perception ensues from an organic interaction with space, simultaneously or sequentially informed by a nurtured mental process. A space manipulated or constructed for a specific function, will engage a sensory response to be influenced or perhaps directed by functionalism. In both cases of the post-industrial and the domestic, senses seem to be defined in a symbolic manner as, in an individual's interaction with the functionalism of an architectural space, they are linked to the symbolism of that space. Senses seem to be 'classified and named' by functionalism, perhaps alluding to the objectification of the body and to the death of natural impulse. This process nurtures a lack of independence and rawness in the response from individual to space.

Where the mathematics of a space are used to apply function to a site and vice versa, often it seems that a sensory response to spatial mathematics is diminished and channeled as function over-rides the experiential potential in spatial mathematics.

³² Lefebvre, H. (2011) *The Production of Space*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing. p.1

THE GALLERY

To escape the excessive functionalism specific to the domestic environment, the next stage of research will occur in a gallery. Although the latter is a contrived space in terms of its subservience to a specific function, the architectural aspect of its spatial structure is something that I relate more to that of the post-industrial space and therefore find more freedom potential within it.

It is characterised by some attributes of contemporary industrial sites such as open space, steel pillars, concrete floor, synthetic opaque blinds, large double glazed windows, fire doors and an ugly tiled ceiling that supports railings for tubular and spot lights; the kind of neutral, minimal and geometric aspect of this interior as much as its colour spectrum of greys and whites that runs across floor paint, walls, ceiling, pillars and blinds pertain to the typical 'white cube'.

Their function and/or inhabitants and objects seemed to disregard the significance of the abstract in form and materiality to generate open actions in terms of developing and/or exposing the experiential capacity of a space. Nevertheless, rules and regulations that may be partly responsible for restrained experimental freedom in the realm of architecture may be restrictive factors to making in the gallery context. CASC is a public space yet seldom frequented. This may facilitate an autonomous and impulsive working process.

There is a small studio adjacent to CASC that other artists in residency wish to make use of. This leaves me free to use the whole 'white cube' [besides times during which it may be used by others, but this seldom happens]. This space

is an area much greater than that of the Mill. Although it is inconceivable for me to make work for this entire space, a greater depth of perspective from various angles and positions is gained.

The vastness of CASC avails intuitive wander to localise and consider site-specific elements of interest and begin a selective process. Infrastructural objects that form part of the basic physical operation of this building are the only informative source of function. This site is brought closer to the disused post-industrial in that it is bare of human presence and objects that in the absence of a body suggest its occupancy of space. A sense of stillness contrasts with the wanderer's motion and makes the body increasingly apparent. The quietude of this post-industrial-like space reminds of a still machine of which the energy is derived from incoming natural light, spatial geometry, materials and objects locality, orientation and position. This appeals to the natural and organic intuitive and impulsive aspects of the human body. The minimalist interior seems to activate the imaginary. Monochromatic colour spectrum lets structural geometry and fixtures stand out. Form and materiality seem to construct meaning in their automatic coexistence.

This facilitates, to the difference of the often-encumbered domestic environment, a clarity of experience in term of an affair between spatial and body structure. Often left unobserved and reduced to the banal, here engineering functionalism is prevalent for its inherent structural purpose and relative materiality and form. The impact of these specifics upon me may allow me to connect again with the sensory and therefore diverge from the weight of the psyche imposed by the domestic functionalism and the resurgence of related childhood experiences.

Here, the finding and localising of place should subsequently be developed through a physical response to the interdependence of body and space in their materiality and form; the body becomes a tool to map space out.

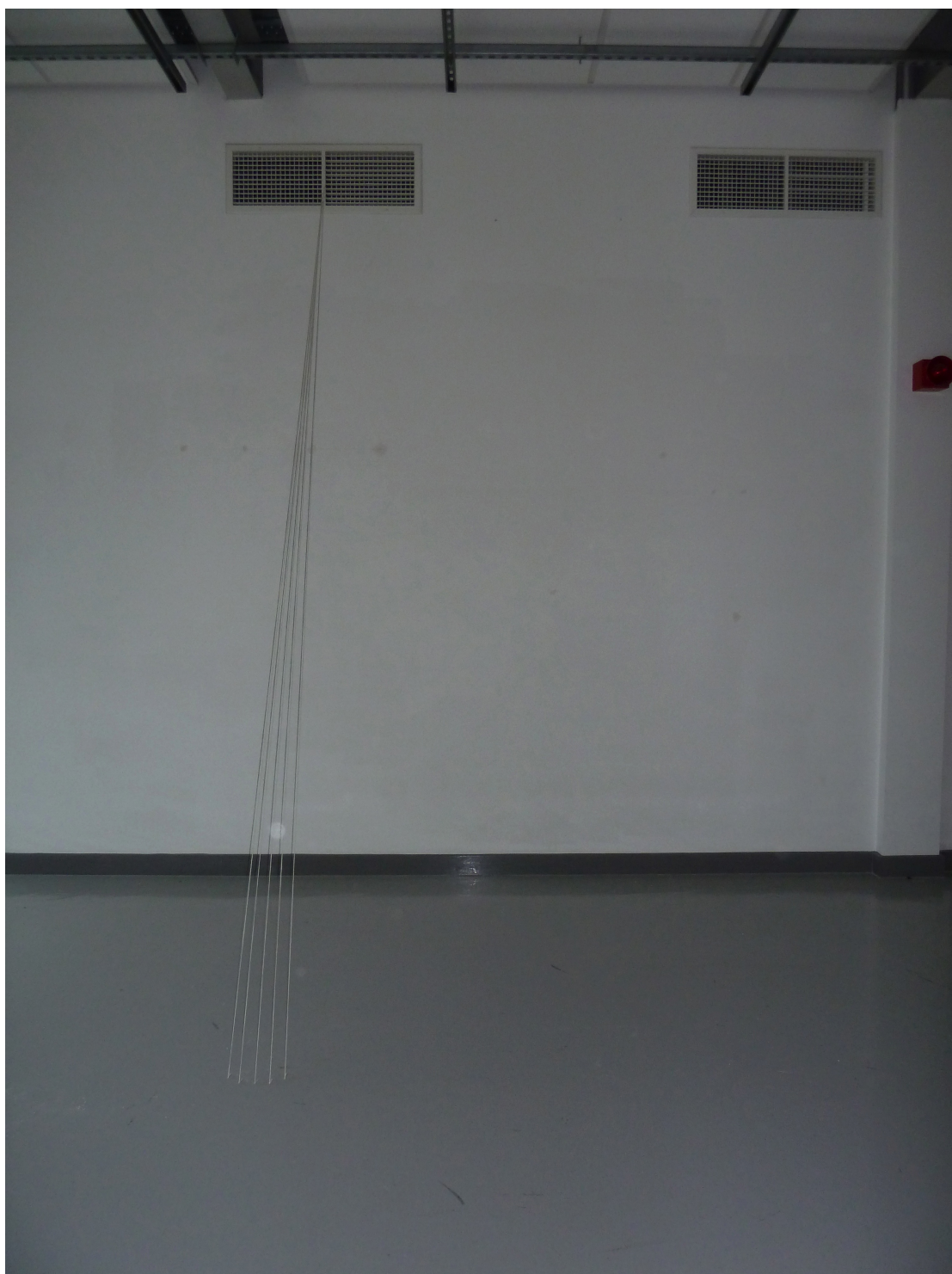
The singularity of a human body in this vast expanse of space makes for an observation of scale relative referential points. This physical projection may expose a primitive human need to make place, to find a habitat or refuge. To establish geometric connections between spatial specifics and the body permits the latter to become part of the whole.

The surfaces of walls are wide planes of white, edged at the base by a narrow grey strip of skirting board while the upper line is more uneven, dissected by beams, ceiling tiles, and placed just below the latter, a few vents; perhaps at a height close to that of a picture or curtain rail. Automatically and repeatedly, these vents caught my attention. Perhaps they loosen the density of this space, although they are in scale and function impracticable exits and entrances for a human body they still provide a sense of connectivity to the outer, the wall cavity, leaving an invisible space in between; something, in a manmade environment, that we do not control entirely or have easy access to; something of an intangible space.

Within their small rectangular surface their cross pattern reminds that of ceiling tiles and light rails but in a concentrated manner. Inner geometric content balances dimensional difference with most structural elements therein. Their material composition is weak, it differs from industrial solid sturdiness. Yet their form and position instigate a kind of weight and tension; sitting above eye level, as a pair, they have a kind of authoritative status and ascendancy upon the body below that is now infused with miniaturism.

As expressed by Hume and although in this context 'others' are the form and materiality of spatial structure: "[the] sense of self...seems actually to be generated through his contact with others...Identity is relational."³³

³³ Hume, D. cited in Ballantyne, A. (2007) *Deleuze & Guattari for Architects* Oxon: Routledge.p.12



Distanced from architectural functionalism, the contact between a body, a mind and the structure of a space, engages the self to define its identity relative to the form and materiality of that space.

To discern a sense of self in that context, a sensory response to spatial specifics can be the basis for the analysis of contrast and affinity between human and spatial fabric. That interactive process could evoke the Freudian theory of psychological projective identification. "It is through the connections that new identities and bodies are formed."³⁴ Materials are specifically chosen and arranged in response to site-specificity and its affect upon the self. The installations can be likened to new connective bodies. To observe and reflect upon experiments generates a conscious awareness of identities, which could be subsequently named 'new identities'. Hence the importance of an impulsive making process to disclose, with a raw integrity, the relational identity of the self and space. This system is supported by the minimalist formal and material conditions of the contemporary gallery and its anonymous aspect that differs from the restrictive functionalism of the often-overloaded domestic space.

The reductive and monochromatic character of this site lets structural components stand out and lend themselves to be observed. On approach, I find myself standing in line with the vents' central axis, a virtual isosceles triangle is constructed, where my head is visualised as the temporal vertex angle point. The line between my nose and the vent centre axis is an altitude that cuts the triangle incongruent base in half.

³⁴ Ballantyne, A. (2007) *Deleuze & Guattari for Architects* Oxon: Routledge.p.25

To make the vertex angle point tangible and accentuate the vents ascendancy, I lie down, feet against the wall, facing the vent, nose still in line with the central axis.

I'm interested in making a point in a designated area. That's the focal point. You then have a dialectic between the point and the edge: within a single focus, a kind of Pascalian calculus between the edge and the middle or the fringe and the center operating within a designated area.³⁵

The top of the head is outlined on the floor, 5 points in a convex shape; altitudes are materialised with string from central axis to head points. The geometry is not meticulously calculated but the three-dimensional idea of a communicative triangle between body and spatial form is constructed. The strings are diagonals between wall and floor or altitudes of which the convex extremity outlines an exterior angle. That expands the reach of this geometric form to the rest of the space and loosens the rigid mathematical format of an isosceles triangle. In both cases string tension softens and activates the space. Human presence is materialised in an abstract manner as it records a physical and visual memory of an intuitive response to spatial specifics and the marking of a transitory place.

The work requires the imaginary to perceive, from the exterior angle, the expansion of connectivity between that formalised place and the rest of the space. Although the difference in materiality between the string and Serra's steel is evident, the affect of the work may be acquainted in Kynaston McShine's description of Serra's 'Torqued Torus Inversion':

³⁵ Smithson, R. cited in Lipke, W.C. (1969) *Fragments of a Conversation*. (1996) Los Angeles: University of California Press. [Online] [Accessed on 9th October 2012] <http://www.robertsmithson.com/essays/fragments.htm>

It involves mental gymnastics in terms of the dialogue between the forms and the person moving on the inside or the outside.³⁶

There are no particular prerequisites in terms of the way in which the strings' installation should be approached or experienced. Its abstractness and physical dependence upon the fabric of the gallery make it a part of this space balancing between wall, floor and fixture.

The work "insinuate[s] itself into the fabric of the architectural space of the gallery'...'it includes the gallery wall in the fabric of the sculpture";³⁷ a characteristic of Robert Morris' 1964 'Seven geometric plywood structures painted grey'.

That physical distance automatically freezes the work from the distance that is often imposed between art and viewer within the gallery environment.

Movements inside, outside and around the work are required for its observation and attainment of the adjoined experiential space. The lightness of strings and precarious attachment require attentive and gentle interaction, which may generate a more intimate experience; to the difference of Morris' plywood geometric forms of which the solid materiality permitted a more sustained direct physical play, in the 1970s installation of 'Bodyspacemotionthings' at Tate Gallery. The scale of that site provided a connective formal platform to the work. Some of the plywood shapes and the space's angles and walls fitted each other dimensionally. The work seemed to be supported or physically depend upon the fabric of that site.

³⁶McShine, K. (2007) *Richard Serra Sculpture: Forty Years*. New York: MoMA [Online] [Accessed on 29th March 2013]

<http://www.moma.org/visit/calendar/exhibitions/14>

³⁷ Coulter-Smith, G. (2008) *The De-Definition of Sculpture*. [Online] [Accessed on 29th March 2013] <http://artintelligence.net/review/?p=529>

The relativity of form between body and plywood constructions expanded to that of the space. The site subsequently permitted a kind of triangular interactive discourse. Yet, the work's physical properties such as scale, balance, gravity and weight, concerns that also underpin Serra's research, provoked the institution to override the purpose of the work. It forbid viewers to experiment with their own physical materiality and form in their coexistence with that of sculptures, in a manner as intuitive and playful as children.

Again in 2009, 'Bodyspacemotionthings' was installed at Tate Modern; a site of a much greater scale than Tate Gallery by which the installations were drowned. Although the post-industrial character of Tate Modern suited the industrial-like geometric constructions, no physical interdependence between site and work qualified this installation. The discourse that expanded from human and work to site could not occur. This time the geometric constructions were severely altered, seemingly in response to the fear that permeates the institution towards the tangibility of a physical risk. This subsequently omitted the possibility of such work to develop human perceptive faculty in terms of the affect of spatial materiality and form to their own physic and psyche. In 2009, viewers demonstrated that the human had been institutionalised to such extent that they forbid themselves the freedom to experience an affair between a body and the architectural fabric of space; they accepted to queue and protested as some participants jumped the queue to join in with others already at play.

Perhaps the monumental scale of these sculptures is partly responsible for this kind of public response; it seems that, in trying to blur boundaries between art and architecture, some works acquaint so closely to it that the overlaps are to the art and the viewer's detriment.

In the context of this research, an installation that is recognised as a final product, in as much as it becomes a strong informative precedent to further practice, exposes a boundary between this kind of art practice and that of architecture. In this case it is the aspect of the work's content, and not essentially the process, that differs from architecture, in that it seems unfinished, it is not perfected so to be long-lasting, there is no or very little precise and intricate mathematical application and it is a non-functional abstract arrangement. The unfinished and ephemeral character of that type of work supports the artist's propensity to remain in a state of flux, to never assume that presenting one possibility is a definite answer to a problem, but instead to follow a method that consists of a constant system of enquiry that permits and generates greater depth in the understanding and use of underpinning concerns. This is a humble way to propose ideas in as much as it exposes certain perspectives in a manner by which the content and form of the work suggest and invite further investigative modes of action. Incited discourse may result in a progressive and enquiring system of research within collaborative practice.

Although the term 'final' that qualifies certain content, in art and architecture, is used to describe work of which the specifics differ, the two practices meet in their exploratory process; both go through a system of research, of which the respective method may distinguish one practice from another, yet they both adapt or abandon ideas to lead to a final product that could then be considered as a preponderant piece of work.

Aiming to produce an installation that may be considered as a 'final' or 'finished' work, the next stage of research will adopt a different method of making that will be combined to usual material assembly. This will further the use of the body as a measuring tool in the mapping of space and simultaneously acknowledge issues that became apparent in the domestic site; the influence of the psyche upon the body in the defining of place in an interior space will be considered as an informative element, yet adapted to the architectural context of this study and content of the work.

An abstract form is then constructed to detach the work from and expand upon its subjective perspective as it uses the dimension of my own body to divide a space.



The cylinder gives an idea of a pillar-like body. The form was selected after finding images of Eva Hesse's 'Repetition Nineteen' (1967), a series of tubular forms resembling repetitive trials or prototypes, congregated on a floor surface, no site-specificity involved. Hesse's practice exposes her relationship to materiality and form; it is experimental, repetitive and meticulous; an inspirational source in terms of a search for equilibrium between the experimental and the meticulous. Multiple versions of this cylinder are produced with changes in materials and each set presents slight formal alterations. The work is raw, its integrity is found in the disclosure of a series of trials and errors. To group these receptacle-like hollow cylinders seems to give each variant a place, an amalgam of controlled process and unprecedented events.

From the use of papier-maché to fibreglass and latex, the cylinders exude fragility; the intimate sensitivity between Hesse, materiality and form can be discerned. The slight distortion in each unit of 'Repetition Nineteen' is a visual memory of Hesse's physical contact and response to materials. The induced sense of embodiment in materiality and form solicited me to use the geometric cylinder.

These characteristics in Hesse's working process can be associated to the practice of architecture, design and engineering. To the difference of these practices Hesse's work seems to expose, through 'Repetition Nineteen', the potential for a specific stage within the research process to be identified as a possible answer. This approach correlates with my own practice in as much as experiments, selected and disclosed for their relevant significance, originate from a pool of work entirely constructed from an impulsive response to anterior reflections and present situations. In this system there is a freedom

and integrity that seldom exists in architecture. Autocratic architecture could be reformed into a more humble and democratic practice, would practitioners and influential bodies consider the potential of such system to generate spaces that would be as sustainable as they would be progressive and responsive to contextually relevant fields of research such as art.

Affects are produced'...'when the building and the person come into contact, and people are 'prepared' in different ways by their life experiences, including their education [or] 'formation'.³⁸

In that case, the lack of craftsmanship in my work should not be considered an issue but just an individual response to spatial structure; a process derived from a certain life experience and 'formation'. The coexistence of a being to a space is a result of merged and interdependent affects, that of past and present space and past and present existence.

The making of the plaster bandage tube largely differs from Hesse's meticulous care. Craftsmanship is not a priority; there is no intricacy in the making, it is fast and simplistic. Wire mesh is used as a frame to obtain a rough idea of a durable and semi-solid form that could be moved across a space and manipulated without much difficulty. It is to be considered as a model to suit a purpose; an extension or projection of my own body form of which the aim is to facilitate objective perception of the interaction between human form and spatial fabric. This reminds me of Samuel Butler stating that:

I can dig much better if I pick up a spade. I can see further if I look through a telescope. These prosthetics extend and amplify the body's capabilities...when I need them they become part of me.³⁹

³⁸ Ballantyne, A. (2007) *Deleuze & Guattari for Architects* Oxon: Routledge.p.42

³⁹ Butler, S. cited in Ballantyne, A. (2007) *Deleuze & Guattari for Architects* Oxon: Routledge.p.33

To consider materials as prosthetics to develop a broader observation and understanding of body and space coexistence, may allow for an overlap between art and the objective practice of architecture. This could guide the underlying auto ethnographic aspect of my work towards an objective research process and subsequently develop it as an informative conductor to the more generic concern posed by this present study.

Although this cylindrical prosthetic is used here as a reference to the human body form with psychological and sensory implications, it and the pillar it faces are considered in the domain of architecture as primary geometric shapes.⁴⁰ Both forms, due to scale, orientation and position, are elevations of their respective shape and base, an oval and a rectangle. Although physically connected to this space, the materiality and irregularities in the form of the plaster cylinder and the wooden cuboid may give them an organic identity, which separates them from the fabric of this space. In architecture, position, orientation and visual inertia are three properties of form, which are depicted partly in function of the human visual sense. In "Architecture, Form, Space and Order"⁴¹ Ching, an architectural graphist, describes the three properties of form as follows:

Position [as] "the location of a form relative to its environment or the visual field within which it is seen; orientation [as] "the direction of a form relative to the ground plane, the compass points, other forms, or to the person viewing the form; visual inertia, [as] the degree of concentration and stability of a form. The visual inertia of a form depends on its geometry as well as its orientation relative to the ground plane, the pull of gravity, and our line of sight.⁴²

⁴⁰ Ching, F.D.K. (2007) *Architecture, Form, Space and Order*. New Jersey: John Wiley & Sons, Inc, p.38

⁴¹ Ching, ref. 40

⁴² Ching, ref. 40, p.35

The work of Serra demonstrates, to me, the merging of an understanding of architectural points with a human sensitivity for the experiential of spatial structures. The abstract aspect of Serra's work may involuntarily incite functionalist traditional architecture to dissociate itself from this kind of research and to not consider its importance and validity in terms of the development of architectural spaces as sites of possibilities.

Central aspects of Serra's work are common to architectural theory and practice and should therefore be taken into account; the topography, materiality and geometry involved in Serra's installations "emphasise'...'an engagement between the viewer, the site, and the work".⁴³ In an identical context and despite the scale contrast with Serra's present practice, the linear organisations of Hesse's work "express a direction and signify movement, extension and growth".⁴⁴

Although site-specificity does [did] not appear to be a primordial concern for Hesse, her sculptures and installations inevitably touch on basic points of architectural practice; the continuous search in the interactive coexistence of materiality and form and an intimate physical and intellectual involvement with these specifics that associate her working process to that of architectural, engineering or scientific research.

Consequently, the intimacy with form and materiality within the mental and physical processes which led to the making of the Modroc and wire mesh cylinder may help placing this installation within artistic practices of which the working processes can be related to architectural practice. Perhaps this installation can be perceived as an architectural exercise, which participates to

⁴³ MoMA, (2007) *Richard Serra Sculpture: Forty Years*. MoMA [Online] [Accessed 3 April 2013] <http://www.moma.org/visit/calendar/exhibitions/14>

⁴⁴ Ching, ref. 40, p.206

defining ways in which an installation artist can purvey the architectural within the humane and vice versa by exploiting a concern for the interdependence of the human psyche and sensory with the materiality and form of architectural structure. This affair further exposes the overlap between artistic practice and architectural practice when that concern reaches the realm of the spatial with which the human interacts. Furthermore, this installation begins to explore methods with which the artist may imbed himself in his constructed object and the space it inhabits, leading to a measuring of space with the human body through form and materiality and the resulting sensory experience.



The linear organisation of the cylinder, wood cuboid and/or plastic tubes and steel pillar articulates spatial direction. A sense of continuum can be discerned in the curve of plastic tubes. They begin to draw a circular line that delves into the invisible underground structure of this space. It initiates a mental process of perception to link the visible with the invisible, questioning the affect of the invisible structural and topographical composition of a space upon perception of the visible and tangible. Movement is made manifest in the plastic tubes' material flexibility and their physical contact with a wall, the floor, cylinder and pillar; an intrinsic dependence upon position, orientation and visual inertia is stated.

This mathematical and architectural depiction of the affect of the properties of form upon a physical and mental interactive experience of space can be associated to certain art practices that some have allocated to the realm of theatrical practice.

Fried declared that Robert Morris' 1964 installation of 'Seven geometric plywood structures painted grey' were "large, simple shapes [that] were not properly art at all, but belonged to the realm of the theater".⁴⁵ Arguably, as he disaffiliated Morris' site-specific installation of 'Seven geometric plywood structures painted grey' from its art context, Fried made a rapprochement to architecture and insinuated the possibilities for art to develop space as experiential space of possibilities.

The categorisation of art, architecture and theater as separate entities, deploys a language that nurtures boundaries between these fields of research and practice. Still, all deal with form and materiality in respect of the body and a space and in the conjunct experience they generate. Michel Serres

⁴⁵ Fried, M. cited in Coulter-Smith, G. (2008) *The Definition of Sculpture*. [Online] [Accessed on 4th April 2013] <http://artintelligence.net/review/?p=529>

argues the responsibility of language and sciences in the fall of sensory perception:

[His] contention is that the development of human language, and subsequently of the sciences, has veiled and militated against the glories of our initial sensuous perception of the world.⁴⁶

To acknowledge architecture as a science, and the rhetorical discourse in its functionalist preponderance, consequently affirms its role in the imposition of perceptive restrictions in the context of a sensory informed development of spatial practice. The fabricated distance between the practice of art and architecture, in that context, is not inherent but the result of a nurtured process, in intellectual and practical terms.

It would potentially be beneficial for the process and finished work of architecture, to further engage with the sensory in theory and method; this may be relevant to either, an architecture practice or in the context of an art / architecture collaborative situation. To otherwise ignore the sensory as a primary informative source in spatial practice may deny the architect a certain knowledge basis in respect of the interdependent relativity between body and space.

This claim finds support in the theory of Michel Serres where he notes that:

There is nothing in knowledge that has not first been in the whole body, which in gestura metamorphoses, mobile postures, in evolution itself, mimics its surroundings.⁴⁷

In accordance to the idea that the body is at the root of all knowledge and evolution, architecture should wield research upon the conditions of a sensory response to space. This should justify the potential in nurturing overlaps

⁴⁶ Serres, M. (2008) *The Five Senses A Philosophy of Mingled Bodies*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group.p.11

⁴⁷ Serres, M. (2008) *The Five Senses A Philosophy of Mingled Bodies*. London: Continuum International Publishing Group.p.14

between art and architecture towards a progressive cross-disciplinary spatial practice. To disseminate art practices that deal with spaces as spaces of possibilities on a sensory basis, should therefore, in the context of the development of architectural processes, further inform the evolution of organic and sustainable spatial manipulation.

The seemingly inevitability to 'mimic the body's surroundings' as materials and objects are arranged to manipulate spaces, substantiates the impulsive acts that formulate the content of installations such as the cylinder, pillar and tubes/wooden cuboid.

Both, pillar and cylinder mirror each other in their position, orientation and indentation. The distance between the two forms, marked out and moderated by the wooden cuboid, cultivates their affinity. Although this piece of wood has been machined, albeit roughly, its organic matter still contrasts with the industrial aspect of this space; that detachment is applied to the cylinder and pillar, which to some extent, now stand as an entity in themselves. The steel pillar is given an added function; as a main physical support to this space, it also acts as mentor to the cylinder and wooden cuboid. That acquaintance solidifies the coexistence of added materials with the space. Although the wood is too natural to concurrently contrast and merge with the spatial fabric, its materiality connotes an organic liaison between the body and others; others integrated in objects or objects perceived and manipulated as others. "Size and the nature of materials changes presence."⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Lippard, L.R. (1992) *Eva Hesse*. New York: Da Capo Press.p.109



It is apparent that materials and form are used as tools to instigate a body presence to a space. The emotional content of the work exists through selected and combined form and materiality and in the tension exerted from the physical interaction between materials and spatial fabric.

[These installations] pose the question of how, through abstraction, to reach affect, which in figurative sculpture or painting is given through the expressive face or body'...' They further ask how, through construction, to induce affects freed from the kind of determinate spaces that would attach them to the stories and plots of our everyday lives.⁴⁹

Works that reach affect, must automatically stimulate the emotional that can be prompted by or/and generate a sensory response. The relativity between the psyche, the sensory and the experiential of a space is focused upon when the form and materiality of that space are prominent contributors to the development of this affair. A spatial practice that disengages from the everyday, from the functionalism of architectural spaces, can concentrate on generating affects from spatial form and materiality, fundamentals of architecture. That kind of work deals with a universal context even though it is exclusive, in its disengagement from functionalism, of a central point of focus in the practice of architecture.

The figurative in a functional space often instigates a prescribed notion of that space. It is also perhaps the symbolism in the figurative, a codified language based on the figurative that leads to this notion. The abstract art practice may use form and materiality to discuss and defy this prescribed notion of space. The abstract invites diversity in constructing meaning. It can, to the

⁴⁹ Serra, R. (2007) *Richard Serra: Sculpture 40 years*. New York: MoMA [Online] [Accessed on 30th March 2013] p.68
http://books.google.co.uk/books?id=EDAbPknr8nMC&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

contrary of the figurative, be continuously adapted to various contexts and individuals and in that, can generate the renewal and questioning of anything it interacts with.

In that sense and in terms of the coexistence of man and space through their respective and interdependent formal and material aspects, the abstract can therefore participate to developing the impact of form and materiality upon the notion space as a space of possibilities.

While the emphasis here is upon installation art, which considers form and materiality in abstract terms and architecture, which considers and uses form and materiality for functional purposes, it seems that there is an overlap in terms of the fundamental place that materiality and form take within both spatial practices. Having been exposed as a resource that broadens perspectives upon the experiential of space and the notion of space as site of possibilities, the abstract in form and materiality may therefore be a constructive participant in the development of a more experimental and progressive architecture. Thus potentially expressing the constructive impact to further develop the involvement of installation art as a spatial practice within architecture.

CONCLUSION

It appears that boundaries, between installation art and architecture, could generate a constructive discourse to find a point of balance where an experimental avant-garde could be incorporated to conventional architecture. Form and materiality, in the interdependent coexistence of body and space, are common concerns to both practices. Although considered and dealt with differently they could be proposed as fundamental instruments to explore the mechanism of spatial experience in the context of an art – architecture experimental process of research. This could help identify a potential for architecture “to develop as a critical practice’...’and move outside the traditional boundaries of its field and into a place between disciplines”.⁵⁰

This enquiry begun with a belief that the installation artist benefited from a certain autonomy, which would enable it to apply and adapt architectural theories and defy the impact of contextual parameters themselves prominent influential factors to the practice of architecture. The theoretical context of this research was understood in terms of the practice of architecture and adapted to this installation art practice, subsequently informing both reflective process and experiments. The autonomy of the artist was challenged beyond original belief as the work attempted to reach the rigour of architecture in terms of its response to the specific function of a space or site.

Most experiments exposed a conflict between the abstract and the functional, which autonomy did not resolve as otherwise hoped. Nevertheless, this autonomy availed a certain experimental freedom, which permitted the work

⁵⁰ Rendell, J. ((2010) *Art and Architecture a Place Between*. New York: I.B. Tauris & Co Ltd. p.191.

to consider unprecedented events and maintain the unfinished aspect of its content. Here the unfinished should be considered, not as a lack of rigour but as a humble part of an ongoing investigative process that never assumes a response to be a final and definite answers. This subsequently allows for constant changes to be made as the work is engaged in a system of enquiry that constantly questions the form and content of experiments in respect of present and previous spatial contexts, considered theory and aims and objectives. Integrity in the unfinished stimulates an inquisitive process that is opened to the possibilities of the unknown.

This kind of work could be consequently considered as an investigative platform to generate the notion of space as a site of possibilities towards a less prescribed architecture.

The impact of the functional upon form in conventional architecture, which in some ways came to dominate in the post-industrial and domestic sites, was often observed as a limit to perceptive expanse.

It became difficult to focus upon form and materiality in spaces where the extent and diversity of experiments had to fit around the site's active function or its related human presence. To navigate a body through a space, aiming to construct a sense of place, in terms of their relative and independent form and materiality, meant to detach the work from the functional context of each site. The domestic engendered particular issues in that context. The structure of that environment led to the resurgence of past experiences, which associated to the architectural fabric of the space within which they occurred, gave its form a particular sensory and psychological significance. These narratives provoked intense self-analysis. The theoretical context of this research helped

to synthesise findings and form an objective outlook upon the universal meaning of certain spatial transitory points and areas.

Photography was then specifically used to frame and partially detach these structures from their site-specific geographic context to examine, on a more generic basis, the combined use of the abstract and the figurative within the functional. This led to observing possibilities in the abstract to analyse the affect of a spatial fabric upon the sensory and the psyche. The psychological terrain embedded in the spatial structure and functionalism of the domestic informed present coexistence of body and site and raised an interest to further investigate the mapping of space with body form.

Although the semi-public aspect of the post-industrial site provoked the work to engender some of the conflict that occurred in the domestic, the preferred formal and material character of this kind of environment, acquainted to that of the 'white cube', permitted a greater sense of authorised experimental impulse. In that respect, the gallery environment seemed to be an anonymous space that could provide a more objective study and expand the experimental potential of spatial practice. The physical body and a kind of body emulating abstract form were then considered as concrete visual coordinates prominent in mapping the immediate environment or architectural features, as a means of navigating the body within a space. That dual process of physical self-involvement and detachment permitted to work between the subjective and the objective; it gave a detailed mapping of an area of space while the abstract was used to let the work pertain to a wider context. The

gallery experiments stood between the intuitive and the methodical as scale and tension became more calculated rather than instinctively applied.

The work still retained its unfinished aspect but moved to a point of threshold in its making and reflective process that brought it closer to the practice of architecture.

In terms of a collaborative practice, the selective attitude of the artist may in some respect be thought to narrow his multi-contextual adaptability, yet the work produced defies this argument as it still considers and relies upon fundamental elements that underpin the practice of architecture.

It appears that conventional architecture often commits itself to an ingrained process from which ensues the monotonous and prescribed functional set up of a space; itself resulting from a complex subservient position to economic and political contexts.

To further deploy installation art as a joint informative component to the spatial practices of art and architecture, work to follow on from this study will aim to pursue with an experimental process that will concurrently use the intuitive and the calculated. These concerns will procure a constant reciprocal feedback so that both become the root of an organic process in the making of work. Experiments will look to include the functional, both in the structure of a space and objects. The geographic context will expand to the public realm, to let the freedom and subjective individuality of the artist further confront the restrictive parameters of architecture. The work will continue to be informed by post-war theorists and practices for closest relevance, but will also involve more recent research upon the subject, in terms of art and architecture practices as well as theory.

This should permit the next stage of study to be substantiated by a solid and in depth web of informative material, whilst becoming an investigative specimen in terms of establishing a place for a spatial practice between art and architecture.

The breadth of complex issues implicated in the search for a place in between may continue to generate conflict. Yet, progressive theoretical and practical processes of enquiry should aim to establish an empathetic and constructive state between the two spatial practices of installation art and architecture. Installation art should be an integral instrument in ensuring that this place in between is given an identity, which may not assume a sole narrative.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Barthes, R. (1977) *Image, Music, Text, Death of The Author*, London: Fontana Press [Accessed on 30th April 2013] [Online] Available from: http://camaraobscura.fot.br/arquivos/ebooksclub.org_Image_Music_Text.pdf

Bishop, C. (2008) *Installation Art A Critical History* London: Tate Publishing

De Certeau, M. (1984) *The Practice of Everyday Life* Berkley: University of California Press [Online] [Accessed on 30th April 2013] Available from: <http://danm.ucsc.edu/~dustin/library/de%20certeau,%20the%20practice%20of%20everyday%20life.pdf>

Fernie, J. Mullio, C Ursprung, P. (2006) *Two Minds Artist and Architects in Collaboration* London: Black Dog Publishing Limited

Friedman, K. (1998) *The Fluxus Reader* West Sussex Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, ACADEMY EDITIONS

Larsen, L.B. (1980) *The Mass Utopia of Art Activism: Palle Nielsen's The Model – A Model for a Qualitative Society* [Online] [Accessed on 30th April 2013] Available from: http://www.macba.cat/PDFs/lars_bang_larsen_eng.pdf

Lecoq, J. *LEM (Laboratory of Movement Study)* [Online] [Accessed on 11th August 2012] Available from: http://www.ecole-jacqueslecoq.com/en/lem_en-000003.html

Lockton, D. (2011) *Architectures, Architecture, urbanism, design and behaviour: a brief review* [Online] [Accessed on 17th December 2012] Available from: <http://architectures.danlockton.co.uk/2011/09/12/architecture-urbanism-design-and-behaviour-a-brief-review/>

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Thomson, I. (2011) *Heidegger's Aesthetics* [Online] [Accessed on 18th September 2011] Available from: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/heidegger-aesthetics/>

The Henry Moore Foundation, Henry Moore Institute, (2013) *Robert Filliou: The Institute of Endless Possibilities* [Online] [Accessed on 2nd February 2013] Available from: www.henry-moore.org/hmi/exhibitions/robert-filliou

Tuan, Y.F. (2008) *Space and Place, The Perspective of Experience* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press

IMAGE AND MATERIALS LIST

WORK AND PHOTOGRAPHY: MAUD GOLDBERG

POST-INDUSTRIAL SITE

Image A: Wooden beams, door

Image B: Two wooden beams, two hooks

Image C: Two wooden beams, two hooks, wooden chair

Image D: Wooden beams, door, windows, cables, sockets

DOMESTIC SITE

Image E: Staircase, cardboard sheet

Image F: Staircase, cardboard sheet, floor tiles

Image G: Staircase, ripped cardboard sheet

Image H: Corridor, doorframe, door lock, synthetic textile

GALLERY SITE

Image I: Vent, string, Sellotape

Image J: Modroc & wire mesh tube, wooden cuboid, pillar

Image K: Modroc & wire mesh tube, plastic tubes, pillar

Image L: Wooden cuboids, man-made textile, seat